Strathbogie Shire Council

Council Meeting Agenda

Tuesday 16 September 2025

Strathbogie
SHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda

Council Meeting

Tuesday 16 September 2025 at 4:00 pm

Meeting to be held at the Euroa Community Conference Centre and livestreamed on Council's website

https://www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au/council/our-council/council-meetings-and-minutes/

Councillors

Mayor Cr Ewart-Kennedy
Deputy Mayor Cr Jeffery
Cr Binks
Cr Carlson
Cr Halsall
Cr Holloway
Cr Stevens

Municipal Monitor

Marg Allan

Officers

Rachelle Quattrocchi	Chief Executive Officer
Amanda Tingay	Director People and Governance
Oliver McNulty	Director Sustainable Infrastructure
Rachael Frampton	Director Community and Planning
Michelle Harris	Interim Media and Communications Manager
Kerry Lynch	Governance Officer

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Meeting Procedure

1 Welcome

Councillors Vision

We will be a Councillor group that delivers valuable outcomes for our community through teamwork characterised by:

- respectful debate
- collaboration, and
- the commitment to being inclusive and transparent.

Councillor Values

- Respect
- Integrity
- Accountability
- Transparency
- Responsiveness

2 Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the places we live, work and play.
We recognise and respect the enduring relationship they have with their lands and waters, and we pay respects to the Elders past, present and emerging.
Today we are meeting on the lands of the Taungurung peoples of the Eastern Kulin nation, whose sovereignty here has never been ceded.

3 Privacy Notice

This public meeting is being streamed live via our website (Council Meetings and Minutes | Strathbogie Shire) and made available for public access on our website along with the official Minutes/Decisions of this meeting. All care is taken to maintain your privacy; however, as a visitor in the public gallery, it is assumed that your consent is given in the event that your image is broadcast to the public. It is also assumed that your consent is given to the use and disclosure of any information that you share at the meeting (including personal or sensitive information) to any person who accesses those recordings or Minutes/Decisions.

4 Governance Principles

Council considers that the recommendations contained in this Agenda gives effect to the overarching governance principles stated in Section 9(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. These principles are as follows:

1. Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law
2. priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations
3. the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted
4. the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making
5. innovation and continuous improvement are to be pursued
6. collaboration with other Councils and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought

7. the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured
8. regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making
9. the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

5 Apologies/Leave of Absence

6 Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

7 Confirmation of Minutes/Decisions of Previous Meetings

The minutes have been circulated to Councillors and posted on Council website Council Meetings and Minutes | Strathbogie Shire pending confirmation at this meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 19 August 2025 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

8 Petitions

Nil

9 Mayor and Councillor Reports

9.1 Mayor's Report

9.2 Councillor Reports

10 Public Question Time

Public Question Time

Questions for the Ordinary Council Meeting can be submitted to be read, and responded to, by the Chair, or a member of Council staff nominated by the Chair, during the Public Question Time. Questions must be submitted 30 hours prior to the Council meeting, by emailing info@strathbogie.vic.gov.au.

Public Question Time will be conducted as per Rule 35 of Strathbogie Shire Council's Governance Rules. The required form for completion and lodgement, and associated Procedural Guidelines, can be found on Council's website at www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au.

As the questions are a permanent public record and to meet the requirements of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*, only the initials of the person asking the question will be used in the Minutes of the meeting, together with a Council reference number.

11 Officer Reports

11.1 Strategic and Statutory Planning

11.1.1 Planning Permit Application P2025-033 Use of the land for materials recycling (concrete, bricks, roof tiles, road profiling)

AUTHOR	Manager Planning and Investment
RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR	Director Community and Planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An application has been received for the use of the land for materials recycling on a 36.5ha parcel of farming zoned land at Old Gooram Lane, Gooram.

The proposal seeks use of the land for materials recycling for masonry products which include concrete, bricks, roof tiles and road profiling. The site is within the Farming Zone and affected by the Erosion Management Overlay and Land Subject Inundation Overlay (partially).

The subject site is located in the lower hills of the Strathbogie Ranges and is comprised of two parcels. It sits amongst undulating topography, some of which is densely vegetated, with a waterway that traverses the site at the southeastern boundaries. This is an existing open cut hard rock extraction operation being carried out on private land, which has been in operation since 2012 under the current ownership. The quarry site is surrounded by farming land, with the nearest dwellings all more than 500m from the quarry site.

The application has been notified to adjacent and nearby owners and occupiers, and ten (10) objections have been received citing a number of concerns that have been detailed in the report **(attachment one)**.

A detailed assessment of the proposal against the relevant provisions of the Strathbogie Planning Scheme is contained within the Planning Officer report in attachment one. This assessment concluded that on balance, the proposal is supported by the Strathbogie Planning Scheme and recommends that Council issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

Having caused notice of Planning Permit Application No. P2025-033 pursuant to Section 52 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and having considered all the matters required under Section 60 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, decides to issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit under the provisions of the Strathbogie Planning Scheme in respect of the land known as Euroa Quarry, Old Gooram Lane, Gooram VIC 3666 (Crown Allotment 27B2 Parish of Gooram), for Use of the land for materials recycling (concrete, bricks, roof tiles, road profiling), in accordance with endorsed plans and subject to the following conditions:

NOTICE OF DECISION TO GRANT A PERMIT

Permit No.:	**P2025-033**

Planning Scheme:	**Strathbogie**
Responsible Authority:	**Strathbogie Shire Council**
ADDRESS OF THE LAND:	**Euroa Quarry Old Gooram Lane Gooram VIC 3666** **CA27B2 Parish of Gooram Gooram Gong**

THE PERMIT ALLOWS:

Planning Scheme Clause No.	Description of what is allowed
35.07-1	Use of the land for materials recycling (concrete, bricks, roof tiles, road profiling)

Compliance with documents approved under this permit

1. **At all times what the permit allows must be carried out in accordance with the requirements of any document approved under this permit to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.**

Layout not altered

2. **The layout of the use must not be altered from the layout on the approved and endorsed plans without the written consent of the responsible authority.**

General amenity provision

3. **The use must be managed so that the amenity of the area is not detrimentally affected, through the:**
   - **d) transport of materials, goods or commodities to or from the land**
   - **d) appearance of any building, works or materials**
   - **d) emission of noise, artificial light, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, vapour, steam, soot, ash, dust, wastewater, waste products, grit or oil**
   - **d) presence of vermin**

   to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

Hours of operation

4. **The use may only operate between the following times:**
   - **Monday to Friday: 7am till 6pm**
   - **Saturday: 7am till 1pm**
   - **Sundays or Public Holidays: Closed**

Limit to recycling materials received to site

5. **No more than 100 tonnes of clean waste and recyclables (non-contaminated materials) may be processed onsite per week, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.**

Noise control

6. **At all times noise emanating from the land must comply with the requirements of the Environment Protection Regulations 2021 (as amended from time to time) as measured in accordance with the Noise Protocol to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.**

Dust control

7. **Internal access roads, storage areas, external stockpiles and or vacant areas must be covered and maintained to avoid dust nuisance to the surrounding area to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.**

Light spill

8. **External lighting must be designed, baffled and located so as to prevent any adverse effects on adjoining land and road reserve to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.**

Storage of materials for recycling

9. **All materials brought to the site for recycling must be contained in a bunded area and kept in a neat and tidy manner to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.**

10. **All waste and recyclables must be stored in and collected from an area set aside for this purpose. This area must be graded, drained and screened from public view to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.**

11. **All waste material not required for further on-site processing must be regularly removed from the site to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. All vehicles removing waste must have fully secured and contained loads so that no wastes are spilled or dust or odour is created, to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.**

Country Fire Authority

12. **The masonry recycling operations must be sited a minimum 10 metres away from the edge of the adjoining vegetation (grass, trees) to the south of the proposed recycling area of operations.**

Goulburn Murray Water

13. **Sediment control principles outlined in EPA Publication 1834.1 Civil Construction, Building and Demolition Guide (September 2023) must be implemented on the site to ensure that no sediment laden run-off is able to leave the site or be discharged to waterways or drainage lines. Appropriate sediment control measures must be maintained to ensure their effectiveness.**

14. **Stormwater unaffected by the quarry/work site operations must be diverted around the site of operations as unconcentrated overland flow so as not to cause any erosion, channelling or discharge of sediment off-site.**

15. Raw materials must be stored in appropriately bunded areas in accordance with the requirements of EPA Publication 347.1, Bunding Guidelines (2015).

Expiry – Use

16. This permit as it relates to use will expire if the use does not start within two years after the issued date of this permit.

In accordance with Section 69 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* an application may be submitted to the responsible authority for an extension of the period referred to in this condition.

Planning Notes

<u>Goulburn Murray Water Planning Notes:</u>

- **The subject property is located within an area of Cultural Heritage Sensitivity. Should the activity associated with proposed development require a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP), planning permits, licences and work authorities cannot be issued unless a CHMP has been approved for the activity.**
- **The procurement of additional water entitlement to the proposal if required, is the responsibility of the applicant and not addressed through the planning permit referrals process. Any enquiries or applications regarding additional water entitlement for the proposal should be made to Goulburn-Murray Water's Diversion Operations on 1800 013 357.**
- **If water is to be taken and used for dust suppression, application must be made to Goulburn Murray Water. Applications for a Licence to Take and Use Water can be made to Goulburn Murray Water's Diversion Operations on 1800 013 357.**

<u>Environmental Protection Agency Planning Notes</u>

- **This permit is not an EPA permission/approval. Before the use or development authorised under this permit starts, the permit holder must ensure that any obligations or duties that arise under the *Environment Protection Act 2017* are met. This may include obtaining an EPA permission, approval or exemption, in accordance with the Environment Protection Regulations 2021.**
- **The *Environment Protection Act 2017* came into effect on 1 July 2021. The general environmental duty (GED) is a centrepiece of the laws. It applies to all Victorians. If your business engages in activities that may give rise to a risk to human health or the environment from pollution or waste, you must understand those risks and take action to minimise them as far as reasonably practicable.**
- **This involves a continuous, preventative approach and should be undertaken with the understanding that where an operation presents low-level risks, or already has appropriate risk mitigation measures in place, further mitigation measures may still be necessary at a future point.**

- **For further information on what the laws mean for Victorian businesses and community go to: What's the harm? | Environment Protection Authority Victoria (epa.vic.gov.au)**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of the report is to bring before Council a recommendation in response to an application for the use of the land for materials recycling (concrete, bricks, roof tiles, road profiling) within the Farming Zone for a decision.

The matter is being reported to Council for a decision in accordance with Council's Planning Permit Applications Referral to Council Policy.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Council is a Responsible Authority under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act).

In this role, Council administers the Scheme and, among other things, determines planning permit applications made for the use and development of land within the municipality.

Under delegated authority of Council, Council Officers determine some matters. However, this application is being presented to Council for a decision due to the number of objections the application has received in line with Council's Policy.

The subject site

The subject site is located in the lower hills of the Strathbogie Ranges, and is controlled by the Farming Zone, comprising of two parcels in total measuring 36.5 hectares. It sits amongst undulating topography, some of which is densely vegetated, with a waterway that traverses the site at the southeastern boundaries.

This is an existing open cut hard rock extraction operation being carried out on private land, which has been in operation since 2012 under the current ownership. It has been active since the 1950s in previous ownerships. It operates under an existing Work Authority (WA) and that WA includes the ability to receive and process clean fill. Access to the site is from a Department of Transport and Planning road, the Merton-Strathbogie Road, via a sealed council road, Old Gooram Lane. Surrounding the quarry site is farming land, with the nearest dwellings all more than 500m from the quarry site.



Planning Controls and Permit Triggers

The subject site is zoned Farming and affected by the Erosion Management Overlay (EMO) and Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO). The surrounding area is generally zoned Farming Zone.

Control	Clause(s)	Consideration
Farming Zone	35.07-1	Use of the land for materials recycling (Section 2)

The proposal

The application is for the use of the site for materials recycling which will comprise of disposing of waste masonry materials. There is no development proposed. This use will be incorporated into the existing works area and under the current Work Authority.

Up to five trucks per week will bring the waste product to the facility, passing first through the weigh station, where the materials will be scrutinised, and then delivered to an area adjacent to the crusher, where it will be processed and combined with other quarry products, which are then distributed to waiting customers for projects such as road maintenance and construction. The product is audited, and the final quality is paramount to the success of the business.

No more than 100 tonnes will be delivered per week within operating hours Monday to Friday 7am till 6pm and Saturday 7am till 1pm. The site will be closed Sundays and Public Holidays.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Individual applications consider these requirements through assessment phase of each application as per the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act) and the provisions of the Strathbogie Planning Scheme.

The application has been advertised pursuant to Section 52 of the Act, by:

- Sending letters to adjoining landowners/occupiers.
- Notification of the application on Council's website.

Ten (10) objections were received raising the following concerns:

- Impact on waterways including pollution
- Increase traffic and safety concerns
- Inadequate notice period and limited time for community engagement
- No environmental impact study/assessment
- Dust
- Noise
- Contamination and auditing of delivered products for recycling/ Stored materials/ Monitoring of loads
- Rubbish tip
- Objectors to original quarry proposal
- Industrial use in Farming Zone/ Not appropriate site
- Access alteration is a permit trigger
- Water Supply
- Visual and rural amenity
- Cumulative impact
- Impact on health
- Air quality
- Use of chemicals to manage dust
- Lack of information provided for notice
- Fairly new resident on a small farming lot adjacent to river
- OH&S concerns
- Application of an environmental overlay

The concerns raised by the objectors have been addressed in detail in the Planning Officer report **(attachment one)**.

Policy Assessment

A detailed assessment of the proposal against the relevant provisions of the Strathbogie Planning Scheme is contained within the Planning Officer report at (**attachment one).** A summary of this report and conclusions against the relevant planning provisions are detailed below.

The proposed materials recycling activity is to be located within an existing rock extraction site, and it is considered to be compatible with the existing business, given it will recycle materials that can be crushed to re-use in similar circumstances from where it was sourced (concrete and other similar infrastructure materials).

Given the existing site has gained approvals and has a current Work Authority, it is considered that the proposed use will not detrimentally impact the surrounding environment, and the proposed materials recycling use will be incorporated into the existing site boundaries. The site is not currently used for agriculture therefore the land will not be removed from productive agricultural operation.

The site is ideal for such use given its current activities which are compatible, and its location which provide for the ability of rural infrastructure projects to have easy access to a recycling facility.

The site has current approvals for rock extraction and processing and therefore has been extensively considered for amenity and environmental impacts. The setbacks from residential uses in the Farming Zone are all more than 500 metres from the site.

In conclusion, the proposal weights positively for support when assessed against the relevant policy. The land use conflict between agriculture and industry is not noted as a concern. This does not mean that it shouldn't be assessed appropriately, but this application asserts that the effect to surrounding uses as a result of the proposed use is negligible. The proposal is contained to the site and activities are not expected to overflow or impact to neighbouring sites.

Farming Zone (Clause 35.07)

The proposed use of the land for materials recycling will form a small part of a larger enterprise and activity for provision of primary resources for infrastructure projects such as roads and bridges. This site has been previously removed from agriculture for the use of rock extraction and processing. The proposal does not support agriculture; however, it will become part of the predominant use of the land that has gained consent from State Government. The proposal was referred to DTP, in relation to additional traffic because of the use. DTP did not respond and it is considered that they have no objection to the proposal.

Overall, the nearby agricultural uses will not be limited or impacted by the proposed use. The use will be contained to the site and has adequate buffers from neighbouring sites. The land is not currently or planned to be farmed. No detriment to the biodiversity of the area will be caused by the use as no vegetation removal has been proposed. The location for the proposed use is cleared in terms of vegetation and no significant flora or fauna has been identified on the site.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following key strategic focus areas and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

Objective One: Connect

We are committed to enhancing access for all residents, promoting healthy living, fostering connections, and providing opportunities to thrive and participate in community life.

Objective Two: Sustain

We aim to collaborate with others to foster a sustainable environment, a thriving economy and resilient communities.

Objective Three: Deliver

We are committed to delivering quality services and infrastructure that meets the needs of our community. We aim to strengthen the Council’s governance and provide improved, customer-focused experiences.

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

Responses to state planning policy are included within the Planning Officers Report in **Attachment One.**

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
VCAT appeal by objector(s)	Possible	Moderate	Low	A thorough assessment against the planning scheme

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

The application has been processed in accordance with the relevant legislation. VCAT is available to the objector(s) if they are not satisfied with the decision of Council.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

In the interests of transparency and open and honest communication with our community this report is presented to a public Council meeting.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Future financial costs could be incurred by Council through a VCAT hearing process should the objector(s) choose to lodge an appeal.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

There are no significant human rights implications arising from this report.

CONCLUSION

The proposed use represents a well-considered response to the requirements of the Strathbogie Planning Scheme. The proposal will offer a positive contribution to the local community by providing valuable resources for the transport and building industries. This is a low scale industrial use in the Farming Zone where the land is already used for extractive industry. The concerns raised can be addressed by conditions having regard to the distance from the proposed use to nearby dwellings.

Given its compliance with relevant planning provisions and its overall positive impact, it is recommended that Council issues a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit subject to conditions.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 - P 2025-033 Delegate Report

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

Delegate Report

Planning Application No.: P2025-033

Responsible Officer: Principal Planner

Conflict of Interest

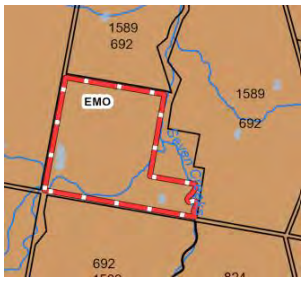
After reading the definitions of a general or material conflict of interest as defined by the *Local Government Act 2020*, do you have a conflict of interest?

Yes ☐

(if YES, please complete a Conflict of Interest and Declaration Making Declaration form)

No ☒

Application Details	
Applicant	Focus CDS Consultants
Proposal	Use of the land for materials recycling (concrete, bricks, roof tiles, road profiling)
Application lodged	16/4/2025
Statutory days	60 days = 16/6/2025 Objections received Council Meeting September 2025 due to number of objections
Property Details	
Property address	(Euroa Quarry) Old Gooram Lane Gooram VIC 3666 Comprising CA27A and CA27B Parish of Gooram Gooram Gong
Land Description	CA27B2 Parish of Gooram Gooram Gong (parcel which new use will be carried out on)

Land area	36.5ha
Existing Use	Extractive Industry – open cut extraction pits
Planning Controls	
Zone	Farming Zone 
Overlays	Erosion Management Overlay  Land Subject to Inundation Overlay 

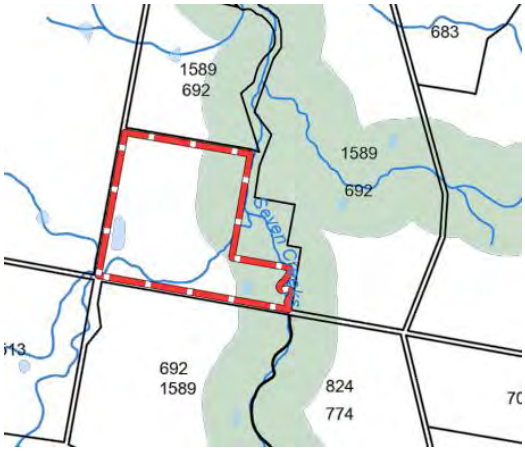
Particular Provisions	Clause 53.14 Resource Recovery
General Provisions	Clause 65.01
Permit Triggers	

Farming Zone

Pursuant to Clause 35.07-1 a permit is required to use land for materials recycling.

Other Matters to consider but not permit triggers

Clause 52.06 Car Parking – Materials Recycling needs to set aside 10% of the site for car parking. This equates to 3.6ha on a 36ha site. Car parking is already set aside near the weighbridge and office at the entrance. This is considered to be satisfactory. There is also room outside the entrance for additional car parking.

Considerations	
Minimum garden area	NA
Area cultural heritage sensitivity / CHMP Consider AH Regs 2018 and Tool	Is the activity within an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity (ACHS) area – Yes partially Is the activity a High Impact Activity (HIA) – The activity will not be located in the ACHS area. Has there been previous Significant Ground Disturbance (SGD) –  No new activity is being proposed with the ACHS.
Encumbrances & easements	Water Frontage Licence MI307877K

SWCA Consider Clause 66.02-5	No
Contamination Consider PPN30	Highly likely given the existing use
Adjacent to principal road network Section 55 to DoT	Yes There is no planning permit trigger as the access for the quarry already has a left-hand turning lane constructed from the DTP road and this is not being altered.
HP gas line Section 52 to APAProtection@apa.com.au	No
Is land owner consent required?	This is privately owned land
Bushfire Prone Area Consider Clause 13.02	Yes
Clause 71.02-3 'Integrated Decision Making' assessment	Considered in report
Clause 71.03-2 'Acceptable Outcomes	Considered in report

Provided documents

Application form ☒	Title ☒	Fee paid ☒
Plans of Proposal ☒	Planning Report ☒	LCA ☐
Geotechnical Report ☐	Bushfire Reports ☐	Biodiversity Report ☐
Pre-Application Meeting ☐ Document ID	Clause 54/55/56 ☐	Any other -

Site visit

Inspection date/s: April 2025	**Officer:** Principal Planner In addition to the initial inspection, a second visit was carried out which allowed access to the site, accompanied by the Senior Planner.



Site overview



Below showing the site where the materials will be delivered, in proximity to the crusher



Looking at the existing bunding around the proposed delivery site





Looking at the crusher from the delivery area

Further information

Relevant principles in relation to the operation of section 54 are expressed in *Calodoukas v Moreland CC*[4]. In *Calodoukas*, the Tribunal outlined:

- the purpose of the power in section 54 is to enable a responsible authority to properly deal with a permit application –e.g. to clarify the application, or to overcome a deficiency in the application that prevents the responsible authority from understanding or resolving a key issue raised by the application that need to be assessed before a decision can be made.
- the further information required must relate to the potential planning impacts of the development or use proposed in the application, and the matters that the responsible authority must consider before making a decision on that application.
- importantly, the further information required must be proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposal, and the issues to be assessed.

- a requirement under s 54 must be a bona fide request for information. It should not be used to delay an application, or to effectively seek changes to the application. Nor should it seek generic information not directly related to the particular application under consideration, or information that would ordinarily be required only after a decision to grant a permit had been made – e.g. by way of a subsequent permit condition.

Further Information Required:	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**

Background

Subject site, neighbourhood and environs

The subject site is located in the lower hills of the Strathbogie Ranges, and is controlled by the Farming Zone, comprising two parcels in total measuring 36.5 hectares.

It sits amongst undulating topography, some of which is densely vegetated, with a waterway that traverses the site at the southeastern boundaries.

This is an existing open cut hard rock extraction operation being carried out on private land, which has been in operation since 2012 under the current ownership. It has been active since the 1950s in previous ownerships. It operates under an existing Work Authority (WA) and that WA includes the ability to receive and process clean fill.

Access to the site is from a Department of Transport and Planning road, Merton-Strathbogie Road, via a sealed council road, Old Gooram Lane. Surrounding the quarry site is farming land, with the nearest dwellings all more than 500m from the quarry site.



Proposal

The application is for the use of the site for materials recycling which will comprise of disposing of waste masonry materials. There is no development proposed. This use will be incorporated into the existing works area and under the current Work Authority.

The proposal intends –

> Our client wishes to process and recycle waste masonry material sourced from the local construction industry. These will be crushed primarily using mobile crushing equipment, and occasionally the quarry's fixed plant. Products produced can be used as road base or blended with other quarry products.
>
> This will be a small scale operation, with the volume of products produced depending on the availability of the waste materials.
>
> The mobile crushing and screening plant and the stockpiles will be located within the extraction pit as shown on the Site Plans presented in Appendix 2.
>
> The finished products will be sold to the quarry's customer base. They will be distributed from the site by road trucks in the same manner as the existing quarry products.

The waste masonry materials to be recycled are:

- Waste concrete from building demolition and civil construction projects,
- Waste bricks and roof tiles from building demolition projects, and
- Road profilings from road maintenance and construction projects.

The projected amounts being received is 0 to 100 tonnes per week.

The projected vehicle movements are -

Up to 5 trucks (truck & trailer combinations) per week could be expected to bring waste materials to the facility. The increased number of trucks departing the quarry per week because of the recycled product could be up to 3 trucks. The increased traffic from the recycling operations is expected to average 3 – 4 movements per day.

The waste products will be delivered to the facility by trucks, stockpiled, crushed in a mobile crushing plant, or processed by the fixed crushing plant. The crushed product will be stockpiled on site waiting to be blended with other quarry products. It will then distribute off site by trucks. All concrete will be turned into road base materials. The existing employees will also operate the materials recycling facility.

Referrals		
Referral Authority	*Type of Referral*	*Response*
EPA	Section 52 (For comments)	No objection EPA registration required and has been received. EPA have given no conditions but suggested notes.
WorkSafe	Section 52 (For comments)	Site not of interest.
CFA	Section 52 (For comments)	Conditional consent.
GMW	Section 52 (For comments)	Conditional consent.
GBCMA	Section 52 (For comments)	No response.
Engineering	Internal	No response – the site accesses onto a Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) road

DTP / Vic Roads	Section 52 (For comments)	No response.
DEECA	Section 52 (For comments)	No objection.
Earth Resources	Section 52 (For comments)	No response.

Advertising

Is notification/advertisement required under section 52? ☒Yes ☐ No ☐ Exempt

Please provide comment if No:

Advertising Required		
☐Applicant	☒Council Website	☒Letters to Neighbors
Objections received?	☒ Yes ☐ No	Number:10

Concerns	**Officer Response**
Impact on waterways including pollution	The application has been referred to relevant water authority in relation to this matter and no concerns have been raised. Standard conditions have been included in relation the protection of waterways from runoff.
Increase traffic and safety concerns	The scale operation is small involving only 8 truck movements (5 in and 3 out) per week. The site is already operated as an extractive industrial use, and the additional traffic will have no unreasonable impacts. The application was referred to DTP who did not respond and therefore are considered to not have any objection.
Inadequate notice period and limited time for community engagement	The application was advertised in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.
No environmental impact study/assessment	The scale of the proposal is small, and it does not require any such study under

	the planning scheme for its operation. The application was referred to EPA who did not request for any such assessment. The assessment would have been undertaken during the process of establishing the extractive industry use.
Dust	The site is already operational for an extractive industrial use and the additional of the proposed use would not significantly increase the dust. Standard condition has been included on the permit in relation to the protection of amenity in terms of dust. The subject site is located within farming zone and the operation could be similar to a farm that crops, runs stock, or an orchard or vineyard, where dust is created and farm machinery can be heard.
Noise	The application was referred to EPA and no concerns have been raised in relation to this matter. A standard condition has been included on the permit in relation to the protection of amenity in terms of noise.
Contamination and auditing of delivered products for recycling/ Stored materials/ Monitoring of loads	It is noted that every truck which will come into the site has to go via a weigh station and there will be an operator in situ on truck arrival. It will be monitored at the weigh station what materials have been brought for recycling. The permit will be issued for the recycling of specific materials. It has also been explained by site management that the quality of the end product will be audited and if it does not meet quality standards then it can be rejected. That said, it is of no benefit to the management to allow for contaminants which would have to be

	removed from site at a cost or lead to rejected end products. It is of benefit to the operators to move the product brought to site as quickly as possible through the process, as the demand for end product is ever increasing.
Rubbish tip	Waste will be managed by the operator. No rubbish will be stored on site in association with the use. Materials will be recycled and then removed from site.
Objectors to original quarry proposal	Noted.
Industrial use in Farming Zone/ Not appropriate site	Materials recycling is a permit required use under the farming zone and it is not prohibited. The zone does allow such uses provided due diligence and assessment against the planning scheme is undertaken to ascertain if support can be given or not. The site is currently not used for agriculture and it is used for an industrial use. The proposed use will complement the existing use of the land.
Access alteration is a permit trigger	The application was referred to DTP in relation to this matter and no concerns have been raised.
Water Supply	The site has a storage dam and uses that for dust suppression. Drainage over the site is in place and manages stormwater across the site. This is considered to be of little difference to a farming enterprise, except the requirements under the Work Authority demand safe management. Drought has been raised as a concern and it is considered that water would be brought on site as farms do in these circumstances. No concerns have been

	raised by the water authority in relation to this matter.
Visual and rural amenity	No buildings and works have been proposed as part of the proposal that could impact the views. As mentioned above the scale of operation is small and it will complement the existing use of the land.
Cumulative impact	The scale of the proposed use is negligible when compared with the existing use of the land. Small number of additional trucks accessing the site will not intensify the operation significantly.
Impact on health	The use will not cause any health related issues.
Air quality	The application was referred to EPA in relation to this matter and on concerns have been raised.
Use of chemicals to manage dust	No such information has been provided by the applicant.
Lack of information provided for notice	The officers assessed the application and considered that all the information has been provided for the assessment of the application.
Fairly new resident on a small farming lot adjacent to river	The extractive industry use is operating from the site already. This concern is not a relevant planning consideration.
OH&S concerns	The proposed use will operate in accordance with the OH&S guidelines of the company.
Application of an environmental overlay	The site is not affected by any environmental overlay due to the reason that there are no significant environmental values on the land.

Overall, there is an existing rock extraction and processing facility operating on site under an existing Work Authority from Earth Resources. This activity requires an undertaking to protect the environment and ensure public safety. Throughout its life, a quarry must have in place processes that manage processing and quality control, environmental management and rehabilitation, safety and compliance with all relevant legislation, regulations and guidelines.

By carefully addressing these considerations throughout the process, a facility should ensure the integrity of the end product and minimise environmental and amenity impacts.

Consultative Meeting (if applicable)

Officers approached applicant regarding a site visit for objectors, to support mediation. The applicant declined the request due to OH&S concerns.

Applicant did provide response to the concerns raised in the objections.

Assessing officer provided response to the submitters.

Submitters were invited to Hearing of Submissions Meeting on 2/9/2025.

Assessment

Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) & Planning Policy Framework (PPF)

Clause 02.02 provides a Vision that means supporting local investment for population growth, shared wealth and wellbeing; facilitating the provision of infrastructure and sustainable economic development; and planning for long term sustainability in settlement patterns, the natural and built environment, community services and economic development and growth.

Clause 02.03-4 provides policy around agriculture and water. Strategic direction includes retaining areas of high quality rural land for farming and agricultural purposes.

Clause 02.03-7 provides policy around economic development and informs that the Shire's economy is based around agriculture, and that there is a lack of industrial land.

Clause 13 (Environmental Risks and Amenity) directs planning to identify, prevent and minimise the risk of harm to the environment, human health, and amenity through land use and development compatibility and effective controls to prevent or mitigate significant impacts. This policy also directs planning to identify and manage the potential for environmental changes to impact on the economic, environmental or social wellbeing of society; ensuring development and risk mitigation does not detrimentally interfere with important natural processes.

The objective at Clause 13.07 (Amenity, Human health and Safety) aims to protect community amenity, human health and safety while facilitating appropriate commercial, industrial, infrastructure or other uses with potential adverse off site impacts. This is to be achieved by ensuring that the use or development of land is compatible with adjoining or nearby land uses; avoid locating incompatible uses in areas that may be impacted by adverse off site impacts from commercial, industrial and other land uses; avoiding or minimising adverse off site impacts from commercial, industrial and other land uses through land use separation, siting, building design and operational measures; and protecting commercial, industrial and other employment generating uses from encroachment by use or development that would compromise the ability of those uses to function safely and effectively.

Clause 14.01-1S sets the objective 'to protect the state's agricultural base by preserving productive farmland'.

Clause 17.03 provides an objective for sustainable industry – to facilitate the sustainable operation of industry. To achieve this, policy directs planning to locate industrial activities in appropriate locations, in industrial zoned land.

Assessment

The proposed materials recycling activity is to be located within an existing rock extraction site, and it is considered to be compatible with the existing business, given it will recycle materials that can be crushed to re-use in similar circumstances from where it was sourced (concrete and other similar infrastructure materials).

Given the existing site has gained approvals and has a current Work Authority, it is considered that the proposed use will not detrimentally impact the surrounding environment, and the proposed materials recycling use will be incorporated into the existing site boundaries. The site is not currently used for agriculture therefore the land will not be removed from productive agricultural operation.

The site is ideal for such use given its current activities which are compatible, and its location which provide for the ability of rural infrastructure projects to have easy access to a recycling facility.

The site has current approvals for rock extraction and processing and therefore has been extensively considered for amenity and environmental impacts. The setbacks from residential uses in the Farming Zone are all outside 500 metres from the site.

In conclusion, the proposal weights positively for support when assessed against the relevant policy. The land use conflict between agriculture and industry is not noted as a concern. This does not mean that it shouldn't be assessed appropriately, but this application asserts that the effect to surrounding uses as a result of the proposed use is negligible. The proposal is contained to the site and activities are not expected to overflow to neighbouring sites.

Zoning

Farming Zone

The purpose is –

- *To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.*
- *To provide for the use of land for agriculture.*
- *To encourage the retention of productive agricultural land.*
- *To ensure that non-agricultural uses, including dwellings, do not adversely affect the use of land for agriculture.*
- *To encourage the retention of employment and population to support rural communities.*
- *To encourage use and development of land based on comprehensive and sustainable land management practices and infrastructure provision.*
- *To provide for the use and development of land for the specific purposes identified in a schedule to this zone.*

Appropriate decision guidelines are considered to be –

General issues

- *The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.*
- *How the use or development relates to sustainable land management.*
- *Whether the site is suitable for the use or development and whether the proposal is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.*
- *How the use and development makes use of existing infrastructure and services.*

Agricultural issues and the impacts from non-agricultural uses

- *Whether the use or development will support and enhance agricultural production.*
- *Whether the use or development will adversely affect soil quality or permanently remove land from agricultural production.*
- *The potential for the use or development to limit the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.*

Environmental issues

- *The impact of the proposal on the natural physical features and resources of the area, in particular on soil and water quality.*
- *The impact of the use or development on the flora and fauna on the site and its surrounds.*
- *The need to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the area, including the retention of vegetation and faunal habitat and the need to revegetate land including riparian buffers along waterways, gullies, ridgelines, property boundaries and saline discharge and recharge area.*
- *The location of on-site effluent disposal areas to minimise the impact of nutrient loads on waterways and native vegetation.*

Design and siting issues

- *Whether the use and development will require traffic management measures.*

Officer response

The proposed use of the land for materials recycling will form a small part of a larger enterprise and activity for provision of primary resources for infrastructure projects such as roads and bridges. This site has been previously removed from agriculture for the use of rock extraction and processing. The proposal does not support agriculture, however it will become part of the predominant use of the land that has gained consent from State Government.

The proposal was referred to DTP, in relation to additional traffic as a result of the use. DTP did not respond and it is considered that they have no objection to the proposal.

Overall, the nearby agricultural uses will not be limited or impacted by the proposed use. The use will be contained to the site and has adequate buffers from neighbouring sites. The land is not currently or planned to be farmed. No detriment to the biodiversity of the area will be caused by the use as no vegetation removal has been proposed. The location for the proposed use is cleared in terms of vegetation and no significant flora or fauna has been identified on the site.

Overlays

The Erosion Management Overlay and Land Subject to Inundation Overlay both apply to the land but neither provide a permit trigger.

Particular Provisions

Clause 53.14 Resource Recovery

The purpose is –

To facilitate the establishment and expansion of a Transfer station and/or a Materials recycling facility in appropriate locations with minimal impact on the environment and amenity of the area.

This clause applies to all land used and developed or proposed to be used and for a transfer station or a materials recycling facility.

The application requirements have been met.

The decision guidelines that the responsible authority has to consider are –

- *The contribution of the proposal to achieving resource recovery targets established by the Victorian Government.*
- *The impact of the proposal on the amenity of the surrounding area.*
- *The Victorian Recycling Infrastructure Plan (Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, October 2024).*
- *Relevant guidelines applicable to the application including the guideline for Designing, Constructing and Operating Composting Facilities (Environmental Protection Authority, 2015), the Guide to Best Practice for Organics Recovery (Sustainability Victoria, 2009) and the Guide to Best Practice at Resource Recovery Centres (Sustainability Victoria, 2009).*

Officer response

The applicant has informed that if this proposal is supported it will allow the management to take a more sustainable approach to their operations and contribute to the 80% resource recovery target, aligned with Australia's National Waste Policy Action Plan.

The materials recycling component will be a small, incorporated part of the overall operation and within the existing curtilage of the activities. Given its incorporation into the existing site and its proposed maximum capacity, which suits the current operations, it is unlikely to exacerbate any impacts within the site or into the surrounding amenity, that are already being managed.

General Provisions

Clause 65.01 Approval of an application or plan

Before deciding on an application or approval of a plan, the responsible authority must consider, as appropriate:

Consideration	Response
• The matters set out in section 60 of the Act.	Considered as part of the report
• Any significant effects the environment, including the contamination of land, may have on the use or development.	This proposed materials recycling is compatible with the current activities production the land.

• The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.	This has been considered throughout the report.
• The purpose of the zone, overlay or other provision.	This has been considered in the report.
• Any matter required to be considered in the zone, overlay or other provision.	This has been considered in the report.
• The orderly planning of the area.	It is considered that the outcome will provide for an orderly planning outcome given it is not prohibited.
• The effect on the environment, human health and amenity of the area.	This is managed through regulatory controls already in place.
• The proximity of the land to any public land.	The site is adjacent to a public area that identifies as a waterway which is to the northeast of the site. DEECA has not objected.
• Factors likely to cause or contribute to land degradation, salinity or reduce water quality.	Goulburn Murray Water were consulted and they have not objected.
• Whether the proposed development is designed to maintain or improve the quality of stormwater within and exiting the site.	The property holds an existing surface water license and GMW have informed they see no foreseeable potential impacts to waterways.
• The extent and character of native vegetation and the likelihood of its destruction.	Native vegetation within the work area is obviously removed and that is under the Work Authority. No native vegetation impacts are proposed under this current application.
• Whether native vegetation is to be or can be protected, planted or allowed to regenerate.	Not applicable to this application.
• The degree of flood, erosion or fire hazard associated with the location of the land and the use, development or management of the land so as to minimise any such hazard.	There is no flood overlay to indicate a raised level of flood risk. The CFA have provided a condition for any permit to issue that requires a setback from vegetation including grass and this will easily be achieved. The site has the Erosion Management Overlay applied but there are no buildings or works proposed.

• The adequacy of loading and unloading facilities and any associated amenity, traffic flow and road safety impacts.	The site is well set up and designed for trucks and other vehicles to move safely into and around and out of the site. The quarry has its own laneway from the TRZ2.
• The impact the use or development will have on the current and future development and operation of the transport system.	DTP were referred and have not responded, and it is considered they have no objection. Therefore, the extra number of truck movements is not of concern and will integrate into the existing network and vehicle movements around the locality.

Clause 71.02-3 Integrated Decision Making
Victorians have various needs and expectations such as land for settlement, protection of the environment, economic wellbeing, various social needs, proper management of resources and infrastructure. Planning aims to meet these needs and expectations by addressing aspects of economic, environmental and social wellbeing affected by land use and development.

The Planning Policy Framework operates together with the remainder of the scheme to deliver integrated decision making. Planning and responsible authorities should endeavour to integrate the range of planning policies relevant to the issues to be determined and balance conflicting objectives in favour of net community benefit and sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations. However, in bushfire affected areas, planning and responsible authorities must prioritise the protection of human life over all other policy considerations.

Planning authorities should identify the potential for regional impacts in their decision making and coordinate strategic planning with their neighbours and other public bodies to achieve sustainable development and effective and efficient use of resources.

Clause 71.03-2 Making Decision about Section 2 Uses
Because a use is in Section 2 does not imply that a permit should or will be granted. The responsible authority must decide whether the proposal will produce acceptable outcomes in terms of the Municipal Planning Strategy, the Planning Policy Framework, the purpose and decision guidelines of the zone and any of the other decision guidelines in Clause 65.

Relevant State Policy
- Plan for Victoria
- Hume Regional Growth Plan 2014

Relevant incorporated, reference or adopted documents
- Nil

Relevant Planning Scheme amendments
- Nil

Risk Management

The author of this report considers that there are no significant Risk Management factors relating to the report and recommendation.

Strategic Links – policy implications and relevance to Council Plan
The author of this report considers that the report is consistent with Council Policies, key strategic documents and the Council Plan.

Summary and conclusion

The proposed use represents a well-considered response to the requirements of the Strathbogie Planning Scheme. The proposal will offer a positive contribution to the local community by providing valuable resources for the transport and building industries. This is a low scale industrial use in the Farming Zone where the land is already used for extractive industry.

This proposal is a minor activity being added to and integrated into the current use on the site. The site itself is well managed regarding layout, access ways, drainage management, dust management, water reuse, surveillance and screening and containment of activities.

Given its compliance with relevant planning provisions and its overall positive impact, it is recommended that Council issues a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit subject to conditions.

Decision:

Councillor Connect and Date – 11 July 2025	**Council Report and Date –** 16 September 2025
NOD to Grant ☒ Refuse ☐	**NOD Issued -**
Hearing of Submissions Meeting – 2 September 2025	**Appeal lodged -**

Recommendation

That Council –

- Carried out notice pursuant to Section 52 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987; and
- Having considered all the matters required under Section 60 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, decides to issue a **Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit** under the provisions of the Strathbogie Planning Scheme in respect of the land known as **Euroa Quarry Old Gooram Lane Gooram VIC 3666 (Crown Allotment 27B2 Parish of Gooram)**, for **Use of the land for materials recycling** (**concrete, bricks, roof tiles, road profiling)**, in accordance with endorsed plans and subject to the following conditions;

▸ NOTICE OF DECISION TO GRANT A PERMIT

Permit No.:	P2025-033

Planning Scheme:	Strathbogie
Responsible Authority:	Strathbogie Shire Council
ADDRESS OF THE LAND:	Euroa Quarry Old Gooram Lane Gooram VIC 3666 CA27B2 Parish of Gooram Gooram Gong

THE PERMIT ALLOWS:

Planning Scheme Clause No.	**Description of what is allowed**
35.07-1	Use of the land for materials recycling (concrete, bricks, roof tiles, road profiling)

Compliance with documents approved under this permit

1. At all times what the permit allows must be carried out in accordance with the requirements of any document approved under this permit to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

Layout not altered

2. The layout of the use must not be altered from the layout on the approved and endorsed plans without the written consent of the responsible authority.

General amenity provision

3. The use must be managed so that the amenity of the area is not detrimentally affected, through the:
   a) transport of materials, goods or commodities to or from the land
   b) appearance of any building, works or materials
   c) emission of noise, artificial light, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, vapour, steam, soot, ash, dust, waste water, waste products, grit or oil
   d) presence of vermin

   to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

Hours of operation

4. The use may only operate between the following times:
   - Monday to Friday: 7am till 6pm
   - Saturday: 7am till 1pm
   - Sundays or Public Holidays: Closed

Limit to recycling materials received to site

5. No more than 100 tonnes of clean waste and recyclables (non-contaminated materials) may be processed onsite per week, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Noise control

6. At all times noise emanating from the land must comply with the requirements of the Environment Protection Regulations 2021 (as amended from time to time) as measured in accordance with the Noise Protocol to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

Dust control

7. Internal access roads, storage areas, external stockpiles and or vacant areas must be covered and maintained to avoid dust nuisance to the surrounding area to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

Light spill

8. External lighting must be designed, baffled and located so as to prevent any adverse effects on adjoining land and road reserve to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

Storage of materials for recycling

9. All materials brought to the site for recycling must be contained in a bunded area and kept in a neat and tidy manner to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

10. All waste and recyclables must be stored in and collected from an area set aside for this purpose. This area must be graded, drained and screened from public view to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

11. All waste material not required for further on-site processing must be regularly removed from the site to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. All vehicles removing waste must have fully secured and contained loads so that no wastes are spilled or dust or odour is created, to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

Country Fire Authority

12. The masonry recycling operations must be sited a minimum 10 metres away from the edge of the adjoining vegetation (grass, trees) to the south of the proposed recycling area of operations.

Goulburn Murray Water

13. Sediment control principles outlined in EPA Publication 1834.1 Civil Construction, Building and Demolition Guide (September 2023) must be implemented on the site to

ensure that no sediment laden run-off is able to leave the site or be discharged to waterways or drainage lines. Appropriate sediment control measures must be maintained to ensure their effectiveness.

14. Stormwater unaffected by the quarry/work site operations must be diverted around the site of operations as unconcentrated overland flow so as not to cause any erosion, channelling or discharge of sediment off-site.

15. Raw materials must be stored in appropriately bunded areas in accordance with the requirements of EPA Publication 347.1, Bunding Guidelines (2015).

Expiry – Use

16. This permit as it relates to use will expire if the use does not start within 2 years after the issued date of this permit.
    In accordance with Section 69 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 an application may be submitted to the responsible authority for an extension of the period referred to in this condition.

Planning Notes

Goulburn Murray Water Planning Notes:

- The subject property is located within an area of Cultural Heritage Sensitivity. Should the activity associated with proposed development require a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP), planning permits, licences and work authorities cannot be issued unless a CHMP has been approved for the activity.
- The procurement of additional water entitlement to the proposal if required, is the responsibility of the applicant and not addressed through the planning permit referrals process. Any enquiries or applications regarding additional water entitlement for the proposal should be made to Goulburn-Murray Water's Diversion Operations on 1800 013 357.
- If water is to be taken and used for dust suppression, application must be made to Goulburn Murray Water. Applications for a Licence to Take and Use Water can be made to Goulburn Murray Water's Diversion Operations on 1800 013 357.

Environmental Protection Agency Planning Notes

- A. This permit is not an EPA permission/approval. Before the use or development authorised under this permit starts, the permit holder must ensure that any obligations or duties that arise under the Environment Protection Act 2017 are met. This may include obtaining an EPA permission, approval or exemption, in accordance with the Environment Protection Regulations 2021.
- B. The Environment Protection Act 2017 came into effect on 1 July 2021. The general environmental duty (GED) is a centrepiece of the laws. It applies to all Victorians. If your business engages in activities that may give rise to a risk to human health or the

environment from pollution or waste, you must understand those risks and take action to minimise them as far as reasonably practicable.

- This involves a continuous, preventative approach and should be undertaken with the understanding that where an operation presents low-level risks, or already has appropriate risk mitigation measures in place, further mitigation measures may still be necessary at a future point.
- For further information on what the laws mean for Victorian businesses and community go to: What's the harm? | Environment Protection Authority Victoria (epa.vic.gov.au)

THIS PERMIT HAS BEEN AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:

Date of amendment	**Brief description of amendment**	**Name of responsible authority**	**Section of Act under which the permit has been amended**

Declaration:

In making this decision as a delegated Officer, I declare that I have had regard to the decision-making requirements of the Strathbogie Shire Council's Governance Rules 2020 outlined by Rule 6 and have:

Made a fair, balanced, ethical and impartial decision - Sub Rule 6(c)(i) ☒

Made a decision based on merits, free from favouritism or self-interest and without regard to irrelevant or unauthorised considerations· Sub Rule 6 (c)(ii) ☒

Applied the principles of natural justice to my decision, ensuring any person whose rights will be directly affected by the decision has been entitled to communicate their views and have their interests considered - Sub Rule 6(d) N/A

Identified the person or persons whose rights will be directly affected Sub Rule 6(e)(i) ☒

Given notice of the decision Council must make under Sub Rule G(e)(i) N/A

Ensured that such person(s) have had an opportunity to communicate their views and have their interests considered before I made the decision - Sub Rule 6(e)(i) N/A

Included information about how I've met these Sub Rules in my delegate report- Sub Rule 6(e)(iv) ☒

Attachments

Plans for endorsement Doc ID

Assessed by:	G Williamson Principal Planner 	**Reviewed by:**	Awais Sadiq Planning Manager 
Date:	13 August 2025	**Date:**	19 August 2025

Copy of permit to:

GMW

EPA

CFA

DEECA

DTP/VicRoads

GBCMA

WorkSafe

Earth Resources

Date sent: .....Initials: .....

11.1.2 Planning Applications Received and Planning Application Determined August 2025

AUTHOR	Manager Planning and Investment
RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR	Director Community and Planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides listings of all Planning Applications Received (Attachment 1) and Planning Applications Determined (Attachment 2) for the period of 1 August to 31 August 2025. The latest available Planning Permit Activity Performance (PPARS) Figures are also attached (Attachment 3).

The contents of this report are provided for information purposes only, the listing of current planning applications on public display can be found on the Council's website.

It is noted that there were seven (7) new planning applications received, and twelve (12) planning applications decided on during the reporting period.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Receive the report**
2. **Note that there were seven (7) new planning applications received, and twelve (12) applications decided on during the period of 1 August to 31 August 2025.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

To report to Council on the current planning application activity and matters considered under delegation.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Council is a Responsible Authority under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act). In this role, Council administers the Strathbogie Planning Scheme (Planning Scheme) and, among other things, determines planning permit applications made for the use and development of the land in the municipality. Under delegated authority of the Council, Council officers determine some matters.

Many types of use and development do not require a planning permit and may take place without being recorded as part of the planning approvals data. The statistics presented do not represent all development activity in the municipality. In addition, some planning permits are not acted on, or there may be a delay between when the approval is granted and when works take place.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Individual applications consider these requirements through assessment phase of each application as per the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the provisions of the Strathbogie Planning Scheme.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Failure to notify Council of a planning permit application of significant public interest or that is controversial in nature.	Possible	Moderate	Low	Regular reporting on planning permit applications received and decided.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

This report continues to demonstrate that the Council is being transparent in its position in relation to all applications received and determined by the Council.

CONCLUSION

This report is provided for Council to note the current planning permit application activity.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Planning Applications Received
Attachment 2: Planning Applications Determined
Attachment 3: Planning Permit Activity Performance Figures

Attachment 1: Planning Applications Received 1st-31st August 2025

Application No	Description	Property	Cost Of Development
P2023-098-1	Use and Development of Land for a Dwelling	230 Dorset Hill Road Earlston VIC 3669	$800,000
P2025-064	Alterations and Additions to Existing Aged Care Facility	22 Church Street Nagambie VIC 3608	$1,008,474
P2024-099-1	Development of Land for the Construction of Two Farm Sheds, Two Storage Sheds (Shipping Containers) and Associated Earthworks	2 Millards Lane Euroa VIC 3666	$93,375
P2025-066	Development of Land for the Construction of a Dwelling and Swimming Pool	Lot 5/106 Horseshoe Bend Lane Euroa VIC 3666	$1,500,000
P2025-067	Re-Subdivision of Land into Two (2) Lots	3-9 Kirkland Avenue Euroa VIC 3666	$0
P2025-068	Construction of a Farm Storage Shed	824 Longwood-Mansfield Road Creightons Creek VIC 3666	$23,630
V2025-014	Development of Land for a Farm Shed	Faithfull Road Longwood East VIC 3666	$29,077

Attachment 2: Planning Applications decided 1-31st August 2025

Date of Decision	Application No	Description	Property	Decision	Cost of Development
12-08-2025	P2024-111	Subdivision boundary realignment	Bonnie Doon Road Marraweeney VIC 3669	Withdrawn	$0
06-08-2025	P2025-008	Development of land for a small second dwelling and farm shed	341 Galls Gap Road Gooram VIC 3666	Permit Issued	$35,000
20-08-2025	P2025-045	Construction of a shed	72 Maxfield Street Longwood VIC 3665	Permit Issued	$20,000
15-08-2025	P2025-046	Development of land for a two lot subdivision	6-8 Kirkland Avenue Euroa VIC 3666	Permit Issued	$0
15-08-2025	P2025-047	Business Signage	301 High Street Nagambie VIC 3608	Permit Issued	$25,000
11-08-2025	P2025-054	Planning Permit for a Subdivision	13-15 Kirkland Avenue Euroa VIC 3666	Permit Issued	$0
13-08-2025	P2025-055	Buildings and Works to Construct a Replacement Dwelling	43 Taylor Drive Miepoll VIC 3666	Permit Issued	$500,000
22-08-2025	P2025-056	Construction of a new shed	667 Euroa-Mansfield Road Euroa VIC 3666	Permit Issued	$50,000
25-08-2025	P2025-057	Construction of a shed for storage	65 Dykes Road Marraweeney VIC 3669	Permit Issued	$26,530
04-08-2025	P2025-062	Two (2) Lot Re-Subdivision (Boundary Realignment)	10 – 12 River Street Nagambie VIC 608	Permit Issued	$0

22-08-2025	P2024-099-1	Development of land for the construction of two farm sheds, two storage sheds (shipping containers) and associated earthworks	2 Millards Lane Euroa VIC 3666	Permit Issued	$93,375
08-08-2025	V2025-013	Construction of a hay shed	493 Selectors Road Mangalore VIC 3663	Permit Issued	$100,089

OFFICIAL

Number of applications



Applications received
The number of applications received. This gives an indication of the pipeline of Planning applications and workload for responsible authorities (RA) along with supporting a comparison to the number determined or approved. This has been broken down into application type to demonstrate the proportion of new applications compared to amendments.

7

Responsible authority (RA) outcome
The number of applications with an outcome from the responsible authority, this includes any outcome which removes it from RA processing. This supports insight into the workload and delivery from RAs.
This has been broken down into application type to demonstrate the proportion of new applications compared to amendments.

12

Final outcome
The number of applications completed which includes outcomes from either the RA or through appeal where relevant, final outcomes are either 'Permit issued' or 'No permit issued'. Tracking the number of permits issued helps predict industry activity and potential impact to the economy. Other key stats below including 'Estimated cost of works', 'New dwellings' and 'New lots' all display statistics where the final outcome is permit issued

12

Final outcome	Amount
Permit issued	11
No permit issued	1

Permit issued	Amount
New application	10
Amended permit application	1

Processing timeframes

Within timeframe (All applications)

91.67%
11 of 12 applications have been processed within timeframe

Within timeframe (Standard applications)

90.91%
10 of 11 applications have been processed within timeframe

Within timeframe (VicSmart applications)

100.00%
1 of 1 applications have been processed within timeframe

Processing days to responsible authority (RA) outcome

All applications
Average: 60.50 days
Median: 47.5 days

Standard Application
Average: 65.00 days
Median: 48.0 days

VicSmart Application
Average: 11.00 days
Median: 11.0 days

Processing days to final outcome

All applications
Average: 60.50 days
Median: 47.5 days

Standard Application
Average: 65.00 days
Median: 48.00 days

VicSmart Application
Average: 11.00 days
Median: 11.00 days

11.1.3 Planning Permit Applications Referral to Council Policy

AUTHOR	Director Community and Planning
RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR	Director Community and Planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council first adopted a Planning Permit Applications Referral to Council Policy in 2022. In 2023, Council reviewed and adopted a revised Policy, making administrative changes.

The implementation of this Policy has resulted in significant improvements in Council's statutory planning performance. It enables a timely response to planning permit applications through an effective and efficient process that still provides transparency for Council and the Community.

The policy is due for a scheduled review. The review has been completed, and the below changes are recommended:

- remove reference to Council's planning performance and process prior to the introduction of a Policy, as it is out of date
- spelling and grammar
- include reputational risk within one of the triggers to refer the planning decision to Council
- Removal of monthly report and replace with a quarterly report to Council on planning permit applications received, planning applications determined and Council's planning performance, bringing it in line with other reports including financial, capital and other performance reporting.

The updated Policy is presented to Council for consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Adopt the Planning Permit Applications to Council Policy**
2. **Place the policy on Council's website, along with the publication of a notice in Council's weekly newspaper column and social media pages informing the community about the adoption of the policy.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of the report is to consider the Planning Permit Applications referral to Council Policy which has been updated as part of a scheduled review.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Council, as a Responsible Authority, has power under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* to grant, refuse or amend applications for planning permits under the Strathbogie Planning Scheme.

Council has a statutory obligation to decide on planning permit applications in a timely manner. The statutory timeframe for approval of a standard planning permit application is 60 days.

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a clear and transparent process for referring planning permit applications to Council for determination.

This Policy:

- Provides for a streamlined decision-making process for simple planning permit applications with a small number of objections
- Establishes clear direction on the process for referring planning permit applications to Council for a decision
- Ensures that applications that are strategic in nature, complex or controversial are decided on by Council providing an additional level of transparency and accountability in decision making.

A delegate must refer planning permit applications with the following triggers to Council for a decision:

- An application with five (5) or more objections
- An application that is called in by a Councillor
- An application that raises an issue of strategic significance, reputational risk, significant public interest, concern or controversy, or is likely to do so, and/or
- An application where officers believe that the application or any issue arising in connection with it should be determined by the Council rather by officers.

A quarterly report to Council on planning permit applications received, determined, and Council's statutory planning performance will be provided to Council on quarterly basis.

The introduction and application of this Policy have led to an improvement in decision making timeframes and a reduction in the backlog of active planning permit applications.

In 2024, Council processed 86.5% of planning applications within the statutory timeframes (the small and medium regional average was 65%).

The review has been completed, and the below changes are recommended:

- remove reference to Council's planning performance and process prior to the introduction of a Policy, as it is out of date
- spelling and grammar
- include reputational risk within one of the triggers to refer the planning decision to Council
- Removal of monthly report and replace with a quarterly report to Council on planning permit applications received, planning applications determined and Council's planning performance, bringing it in line with other reports including financial, capital and other performance reporting.

The updated Policy is presented to Council for consideration.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The author of this report considers that community engagement was not required on this matter.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following objectives and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

Objective One: Connect

We are committed to enhancing access for all residents, promoting healthy living, fostering connections, and providing opportunities to thrive and participate in community life.

Objective Two: Sustain

We aim to collaborate with others to foster a sustainable environment, a thriving economy and resilient communities.

Objective Three: Deliver

We are committed to delivering quality services and infrastructure that meets the needs of our community. We aim to strengthen the Council's governance and provide improved, customer-focused experiences.

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

This report is aligned with the following legislation, council policies and key strategic documents:

- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- S6 Instrument of Delegation to Staff
- Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (11A)

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Lack of Transparency with planning decisions	Possible	Minimal	Medium	Quarterly reporting to Council. Clear triggers to refer a decision to Council.
Delay and frustration with the length of time to determine planning applications	Possible	Moderate	Medium	The implementation of this policy is a mechanism to effectively and efficiently manage the volume of planning applications received that require a decision within the statutory timeframe.
Policy becomes outdated	Possible	Minimal	Low	Regular review schedule.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

The Policy provides a clear level of accountability and transparency for the Council to the Community in terms of the types of applications that will be determined by Council.

Quarterly reporting to Council on applications received and determined, as required by the Policy also enables oversight and transparency for Council and the Community.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Economic

The timely approval of planning permit applications assists with stimulating new development within the Municipality. This impacts the local economy through the creation of jobs and additional work for existing local businesses.

Social

Planning permits enable housing and generally effects the way in which land is used, this can have a significant social impact in the community. This Policy provides a consistent and clear policy in relation to permits that can be determined under Officer delegation and those that must be referred to Council for a decision.

This policy results in fewer delays and provides a consistent and streamlined process for residents and landowners with straightforward planning permit applications, reducing frustration with Council and increasing confidence in the planning system.

Environmental

There are no significant environmental impacts associated with this report. This policy does not impact referral to authorities as required under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, and in line with the triggers outlined in this report a planning application deemed to have significant environmental impact would be referred to Council.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

This Policy provides for continuous improvement in the service delivery of Council's Statutory Planning function by ensuring a larger number of planning permit applications are determined within the statutory timeframe, and those that need to go to Council for a decision do so in line with the identified triggers providing for greater consistency in Council's process.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The recommendation does not limit any human rights under the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.*

CONCLUSION

The scheduled review of the policy is complete, and the revised policy is presented to Council for consideration.

ATTACHMENTS

1. DRAFT Review Planning Permit Applications Referral to Council Policy

Strathbogie Shire Council

Planning Permit Applications Referral to Council Policy

April 2025

PLANNING PERMIT APPLICATIONS REFERRAL TO COUNCIL POLICY 3
PART 1 POLICY 3
1. PURPOSE 3
2. POLICY STATEMENT 3
3. APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY 4
4. ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES 4
5. DEFINITIONS 4
6. RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION 5
7. POLICY REVIEW 5
8. CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ACT 2006 AND THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ACT 2010 5

Planning Permit Applications Referral to Council Policy

Document ID:	805027
Effective Date:	20 September 2022
Last Review:	19 September 2023
Current Review:	April 2025
Date Adopted by Council:	16 September 2025
Next Scheduled Review Date:	April 2027
Responsible Officer:	Director Planning and Community

PART 1 POLICY

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a clear and transparent process for referring planning permit applications to Council for determination.

Council, as a Responsible Authority, has power under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* to grant, refuse or amend applications for planning permits under the Strathbogie Planning Scheme.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

This Policy:

- Provides for a streamlined decision-making process for simple planning permit applications with a small number of objections.
- Establishes clear direction on the process for referring planning permit applications to Council for a decision.
- Ensures that applications that are strategic in nature, complex or controversial are decided on by Council providing and additional level of transparency and accountability in decision making.

Council has a statutory obligation to decide on planning permit applications in a timely manner. The statutory timeframe for approval of a standard planning permit application is 60 days. Most planning permit applications that are referred to a Council Meeting for a decision take longer than the 60-day statutory timeframe. This increases overall approval times and leads to community frustrations with the planning permit process.

This Policy reduces the number of applications being presented to Council, particularly those with no objections or those with a small number of objections, speeding up overall approval times and freeing up more resources to process other applications.

Application of the triggers contained in this Policy ensures that applications of strategic importance are decided on by Council, while simple applications with a small number of objections are decided on under delegation without delay.

3. APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

A delegate must refer planning permit applications with the following triggers to Council for a decision:

- An application with five (5) or more objections
- An application that is called in by a Councillor
- An application that raises an issue of strategic significance, reputational risk, significant public interest, concern or controversy, or is likely to do so, and/or
- An application where officers believe that the application or any issue arising in connection with it should be determined by the Council rather by officers.

Furthermore, a quarterly report to Council on Council's quarterly planning performance.

Councillors will be formally notified of applications that are proposed for refusal, or those applications that are proposed for a decision under delegation that have received an objection/s, giving Councillors an opportunity to seek more information or call in an application for their consideration. This will give Councillors a good oversight of the decisions being made under delegation.

4. ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This policy applies to officers delegated under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*

Role	Responsibilities
Manager Planning and Investment	• Oversee adherence to the policy
Officers	• Apply the policy to refer the required planning permit applications to Council for determination.

5. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Responsible Authority	As defined in *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
Council	The Strathbogie Shire Council
Trigger	The cause to refer a planning permit application to a Council Meeting for a determination.
Delegate	A delegated Council officer appointed under a relevant Instrument of Delegation.

6. RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

The following Council, State, regional and national plans and policies are relevant to this policy under each subtitle.

Legislation

Planning and Environment Act 1987

Council Related Documents

S6 Instrument of Delegation – Members of Staff

7. POLICY REVIEW

Council may review this policy at any time and at least two years from the date of adoption.

8. CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ACT 2006 AND THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ACT 2010

The Council acknowledges the legal responsibility to comply with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*. The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 is designed to protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens. The Charter gives legal protection to 20 fundamental human rights under four key values that include freedom, respect, equality and dignity.

11.1.4 Draft Urban Growth Strategy

AUTHOR Manager Planning and Investment

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director Community and Planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council endorsement to release the draft Urban Growth Strategy (attachment two) for public consultation. The public consultation will take place for a period of four (4) weeks.

The draft Urban Growth seeks to provide comprehensive and coordinated framework to guide sustainable urban development across the municipality through to 2051.

Council has previously received formal updates on the progress of the Strategy at the Council meeting on 16 July 2024 to endorse the engagement plan and to authorise the release of the issues and opportunities report to the community for public engagement, and at the Council meeting on 10 December 2024 to seek the endorsement of the Community Panel Deliberative Engagement process.

Feedback received during the consultation period of the draft Urban Growth Strategy will help inform and guide the content of the Final Urban Growth Strategy that will form the basis of a future Planning Scheme Amendment.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Thank the Community Panel members for their contribution to the draft Urban Growth Strategy**
2. **Note the final Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy and Urban Growth Strategy Community Panel Outcomes Report March 2025**
3. **Endorse the draft Urban Growth Strategy for public exhibition and consultation for the period 22 September 2025 to 20 October 2025**
4. **Note Officers will provide a report to Council on the Community Consultation feedback and Urban Growth Strategy for final adoption at a future Council Meeting.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The need to develop a comprehensive Urban Growth Strategy was identified as a key recommendation of the Strathbogie Planning Scheme Review 2023.

Study Area

Main townships, Nagambie, Euroa, Violet Town, and Avenel serve as focal points for population growth, commerce, services, and community activity. Numerous smaller rural communities and hamlets such as Strathbogie, Longwood, Ruffy, Graytown, and Kirwan’s

Bridge each contribute uniquely to the Shire's rural character and community identity. Figure 1 below shows the location of major towns within the municipality.



Figure 1*

** The figures and tables presented in this report are provided for summary purposes only and may not be displayed with full clarity. For accurate and detailed figures, please refer to the original strategy document which is attached as an attachment to this report.*

The Issues and Opportunities Paper was placed on community consultation and referred to relevant authorities in November and December 2024. During the consultation period Council sought expressions of interest for a Community Panel to provide community input into the draft Strategy. Council endorsed this engagement approach at its Ordinary Council Meeting held on 10 December 2024. The Community Panel met three times in February 2025 to deliberate on key elements of the UGS and inform the draft Strategy. A Community Panel Outcomes Report was posted on the Share Strathbogie project page for the Community Panel members.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

The primary objective of the Urban Growth Strategy is to:

"The UGS will clearly define appropriate locations and forms of development, protecting environmental assets, rural landscapes, and local economies, while promoting vibrant, affordable, and attractive communities."

The Urban Growth Strategy recommends policy changes to the Strathbogie Planning Scheme by:

- Updating township structure plans
- Embedding growth boundaries in the Planning Scheme
- Aligning infrastructure delivery with development sequencing
- Monitoring housing approvals, land uptake, and environmental performance

Actions have been prioritised into short-term (one-two years), medium-term (two-four years), every five years and ongoing to be completed over the lifetime of the strategy. Priorities should

be periodically reviewed and reassessed in line with available budgets, resources and funding opportunities.

The Draft Urban Growth Strategy comprises:

- **Part A: Background and Context** – Outlines the introduction and purpose of the strategy, objectives, principles, policy and strategic alignment.

- **Part B: Planning for Sustainable Growth** – Comprises demographic and housing trends, land supply, infrastructure and servicing constraints, agricultural pressures, environmental risk and climate change and cultural heritage and landscape sensitivity.

- **Part C: Placed Based Planning and Delivery** – Details approach to Township Planning and Growth Hierarchy for townships, rural hamlets and localities and recommended changes to the Strathbogie Planning Scheme to enable implementation of strategic directions.

Part A: Background and Context

The draft Urban Growth Strategy sets out a clear vision and provides strategic direction for managing urban development sustainably and responsibly across Strathbogie Shire through to 2051.

The following principles shown in Table 1 below will underpin the Urban Growth Strategy, ensuring growth is managed sustainably, aligns with community values, and prepares the municipality effectively for the future.

Theme: Strategic Direction and Clarity		
Principle 1:	Provide clear strategic direction	Establish a transparent and community-driven vision for urban growth, clearly identifying suitable locations and infrastructure needs to sustainably manage development.
Principle 2:	Contain growth within defined boundaries	Direct growth within clearly identified township boundaries to protect rural land from fragmentation and inappropriate development.
Principle 3:	Regularly monitor and review growth boundaries	Undertake evidence-based reviews every five years, following census results, to monitor population change, housing demand, infrastructure capacity, and adjust growth boundaries accordingly.
Theme: Infrastructure-Led Development		
Principle 4:	Provide housing choice and diversity	Maintain sufficient land supply to accommodate diverse, well-designed housing options—including family homes, smaller dwellings, and accessible housing—to meet the evolving needs of residents.
Principle 5:	Encourage inclusive and social housing	Support housing diversity within existing townships, including affordable, social, and accessible homes that strengthen community cohesion and resilience.
Environmental Sustainability and Resilience		
Principle 6:	Minimise environmental and hazard risks	Discourage new growth in areas subject to bushfire and flooding hazards, clearly defining township boundaries in line with best-practice hazard management to protect life, property, and ecosystems.
Principle 7:	Preserve rural landscapes and township character	Protect valued rural landscapes, heritage assets, township character, and environmental features by carefully managing residential growth and its visual and physical impacts.
Principle 8:	Sustainably manage natural resources	Ensure growth decisions actively protect and sustainably manage natural resources, particularly high-value agricultural land and retaining important water resources critical to community and economic wellbeing.

Table 1

The relationships and interactions between the Urban Growth Strategy and other key Council strategies are illustrated in Figure 2 below, clearly demonstrating the integration and alignment between strategic planning frameworks across urban and rural contexts within the Strathbogie Shire.

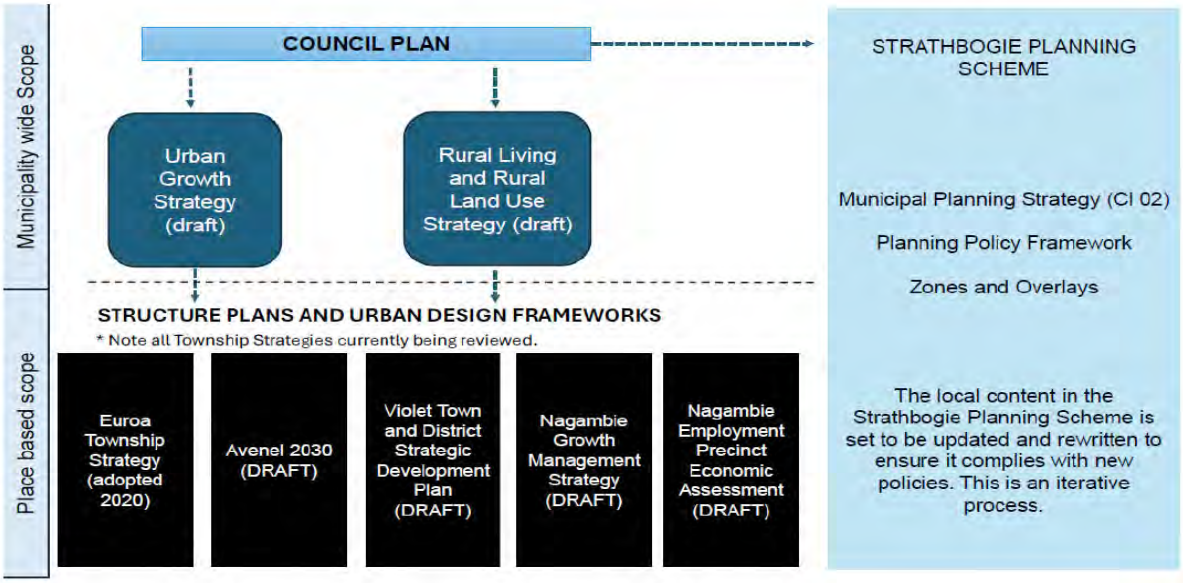


Figure 2

Part B: Planning for Sustainable Growth

Strathbogie Shire is facing increasing development pressure that, if unmanaged, could threaten its environmental, agricultural, and landscape values which are core to its identity and economy.

Key risks of unmanaged growth:

- Environmental degradation
- Infrastructure strain
- Land use conflict
- Loss of productive farmland

Residential capacity:

- Approximately 2,314 potential dwelling lots in township greenfield areas (95% in Nagambie, Euroa, Avenel, Violet Town).
- Up to 570 additional dwellings possible through infill subdivision, subject to feasibility and planning support.

Table two provides a summary of residential land availability across the Shire's main townships, based on current zoning and development potential.

Locality	Greenfield Capacity (lots)	Dwelling demand per year	Years of supply (specific township not municipal wide)
Nagambie	1328	33 - 60	22 - 40
Euroa	314	16-20	20-26
Violet Town	44	2-3	15-22
Avenel	511	13-17	30-39
Longwood	84	N/A	N/A
Strathbogie	33	N/A	N/A

Table 2

In addition to greenfield developments, existing townships offer significant infill development potential. "Infill supply" refers to the additional lots created if owners subdivide their established urban properties, thus increasing residential density and supply. Though predicting exact numbers is challenging, identified capacity is outlined below in Table 3:

Locality	Infill Area (ha)	Estimated lot yield
Nagambie	16.65 ha	134
Euroa	18.75 ha	162
Violet Town	47.23 ha	93
Avenel	29.45 ha	105
Longwood	17.17 ha	27
Strathbogie	26.99 ha	49

Table 3

The Victorian Government has set a target of 2,400 new dwellings in Strathbogie Shire by 2051. Existing zoned land can meet this target, with 31–41 years of supply available. The Urban

Growth Strategy promotes staged, infrastructure-led development within township boundaries to avoid strain on resources and protect rural land.

Urban expansion into rural areas risks land use conflict, loss of farming capacity, and degradation of landscape values. The Urban Growth Strategy prioritises preserving productive farmland and rural character. Growth is directed to well-serviced areas, supporting housing diversity and sustainable infrastructure investment.

Part C: Place Based Planning and Delivery Section

Urban growth boundaries are a vital planning tool for managing the orderly expansion of townships, preventing unplanned urban sprawl, safeguarding high-value agricultural land and environmental assets and promoting efficient infrastructure and service delivery.

The Urban Growth Strategy defines growth boundaries as:

"The allowable extent of urban use and development for a township or locality. It is a fixed outer boundary that encapsulates existing and future urban areas, providing long-term direction for land use and infrastructure planning."

Based on the analysis conducted, the following future nomination of classification is proposed for Strathbogie Shire's townships:

High Growth Town: Nagambie

Nagambie is identified as Strathbogie Shire's key growth area due to its infrastructure, tourism appeal, lakeside setting, and transport access. It will be the focus for structure planning, rezoning, and investment to support housing and employment growth.

The updated Framework Plan removes 240 hectares of speculative residential land from the 2022 draft, reducing oversupply risk and concentrating development within infrastructure-ready areas. This refined approach aligns growth with community expectations, landscape character, and service capacity (Figure 3 shows the current Nagambie Framework Plan which is in the scheme and Figure 4 shows the proposed Nagambie Framework Plan as part of Urban Growth Strategy).

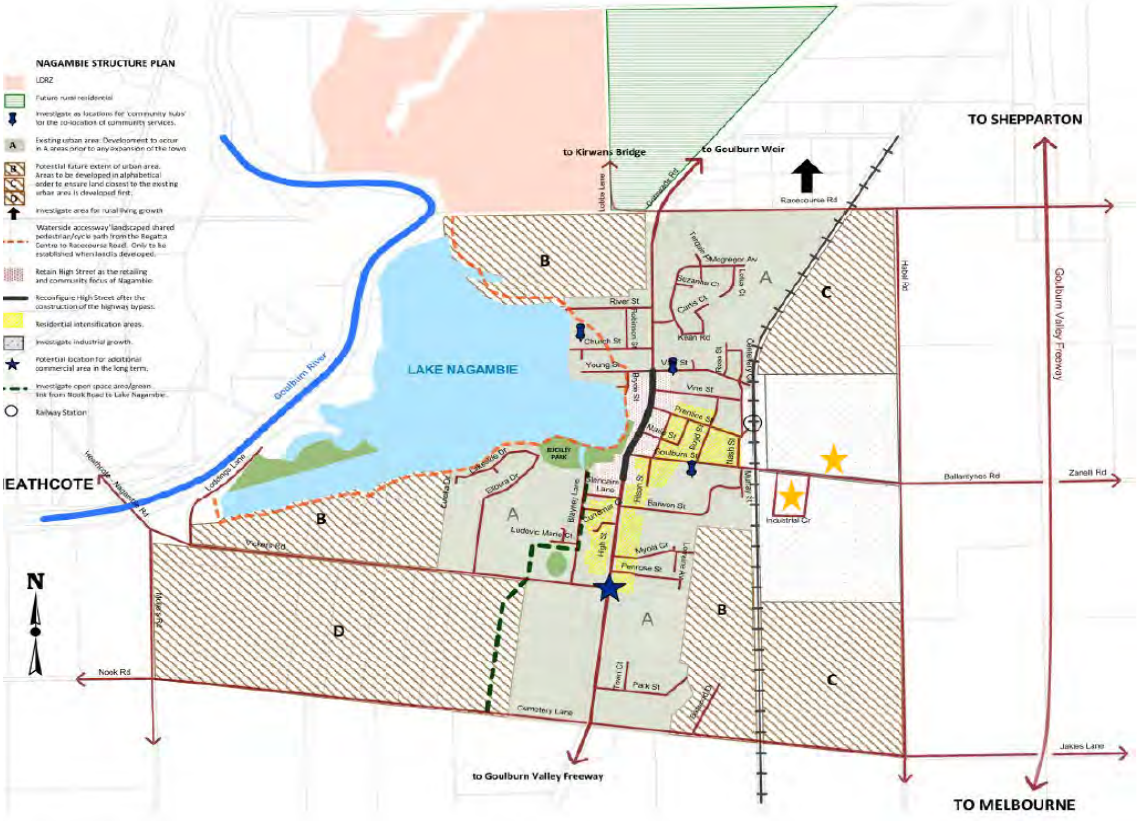


Figure 3 Nagambie Framework Plan (Currently in the Planning Scheme)

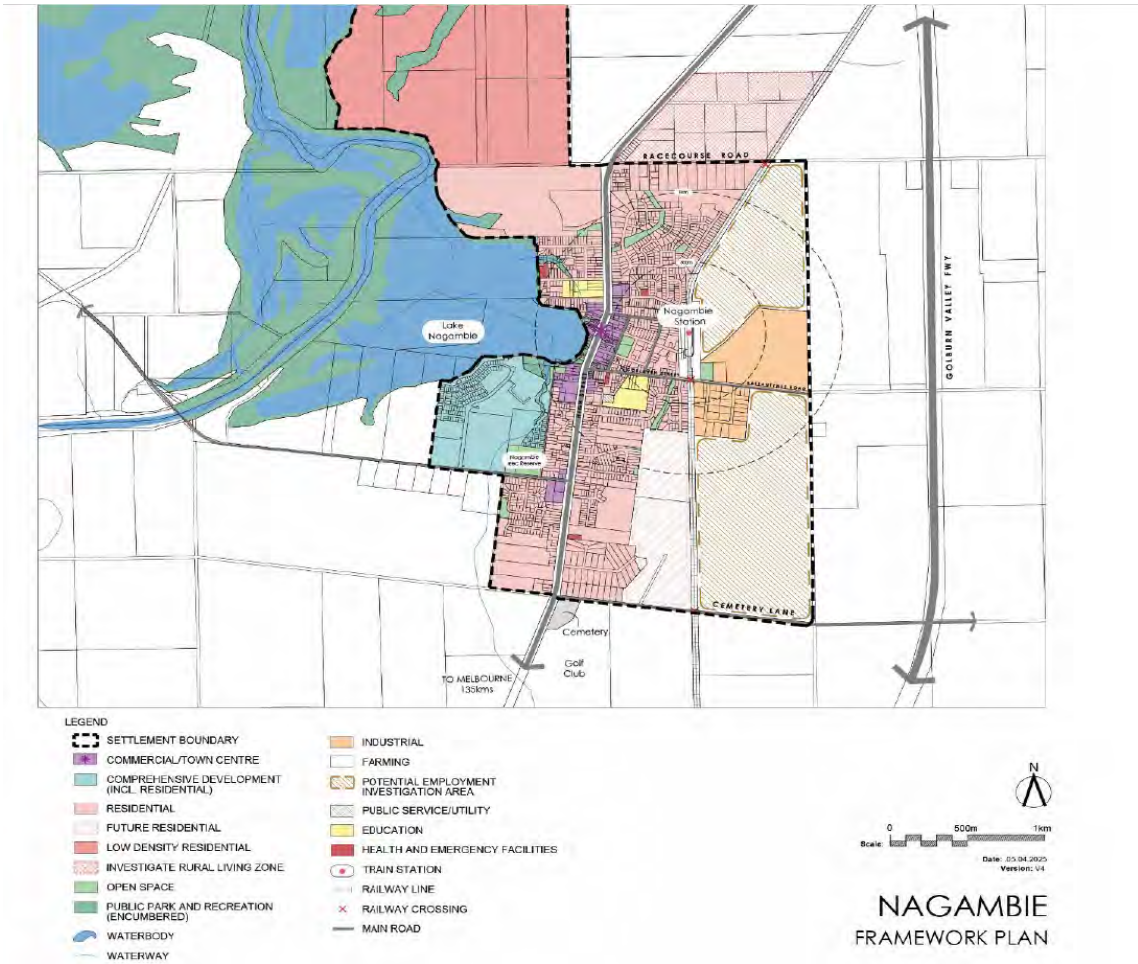


Figure 4 Nagambie Framework Plan (Proposed)

Moderate Growth Towns

These towns provide important regional services and community infrastructure and are expected to support moderate, managed growth over the long term. Their roles include strengthening local employment, supporting rural hinterlands, and enabling housing diversity. Growth will occur primarily within existing or logical extension areas defined by urban growth boundaries and supported by incremental infrastructure upgrades.

Euroa

Figure 5 below shows the existing Euroa Structure Plan which is currently within the planning scheme. The proposed Euroa Framework Plan (Figure 6) removes over 200 hectares of speculative residential land from Euroa's long-term planning considerations. It reinforces the shift toward focusing growth within existing zoned and well-serviced areas, in line with sustainable development principles and realistic housing demand.

While the Urban Growth Strategy does not propose expansion of the Rural Living Zone at this stage, it acknowledges the draft Rural Residential Land Use Strategy (RRLUS) recommendation to investigate opportunities east of the township for potential long-term rural residential development. This will be subject to future strategic assessment.

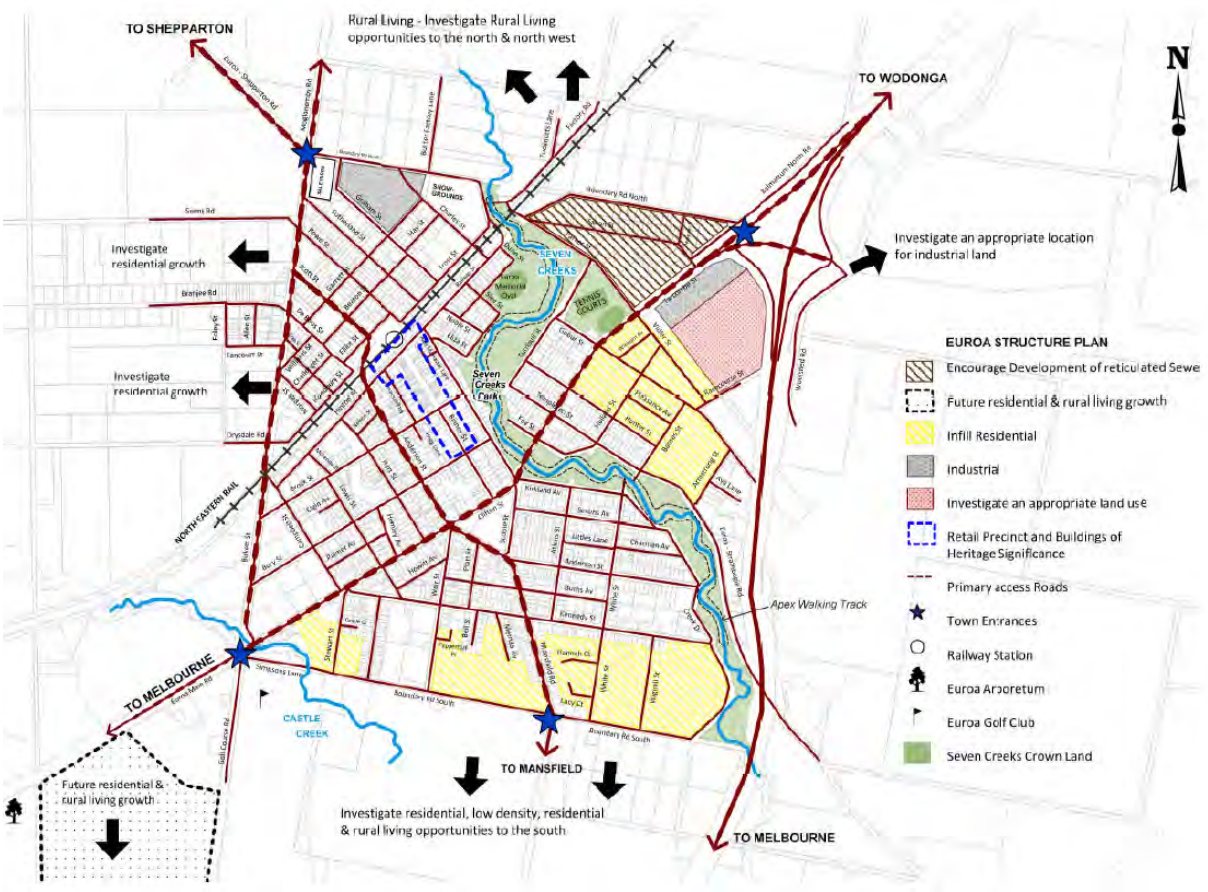


Figure 5 Euroa Framework Plan (Currently in the Planning Scheme)

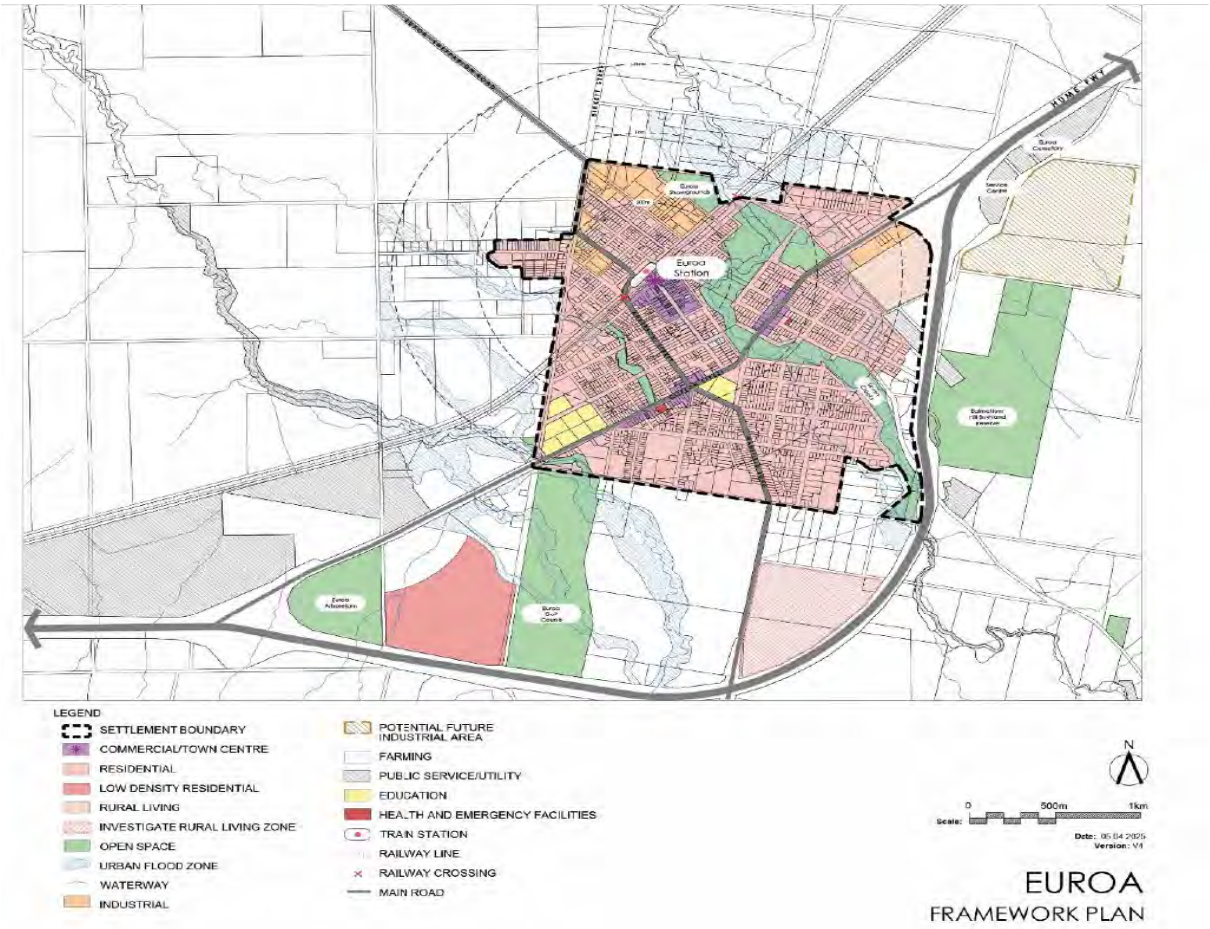


Figure 6 Euroa Framework Plan (Proposed)

Violet Town

Figure 7 below shows the existing Violet Town Structure Plan which is currently within the planning scheme. The proposed Violet Town Framework Plan (Figure 8) recommends the expansion of the township boundary to include approximately 9.5 hectares previously identified for residential growth (land bounded by Schiffner Street and Dookie-Violet Town Road) and notes a Rural Living Zone investigation area, consistent with recommendations from the draft Rural Residential Land Use Strategy.



Figure 7 Violet Town Structure Plan (Currently in the Planning Scheme)

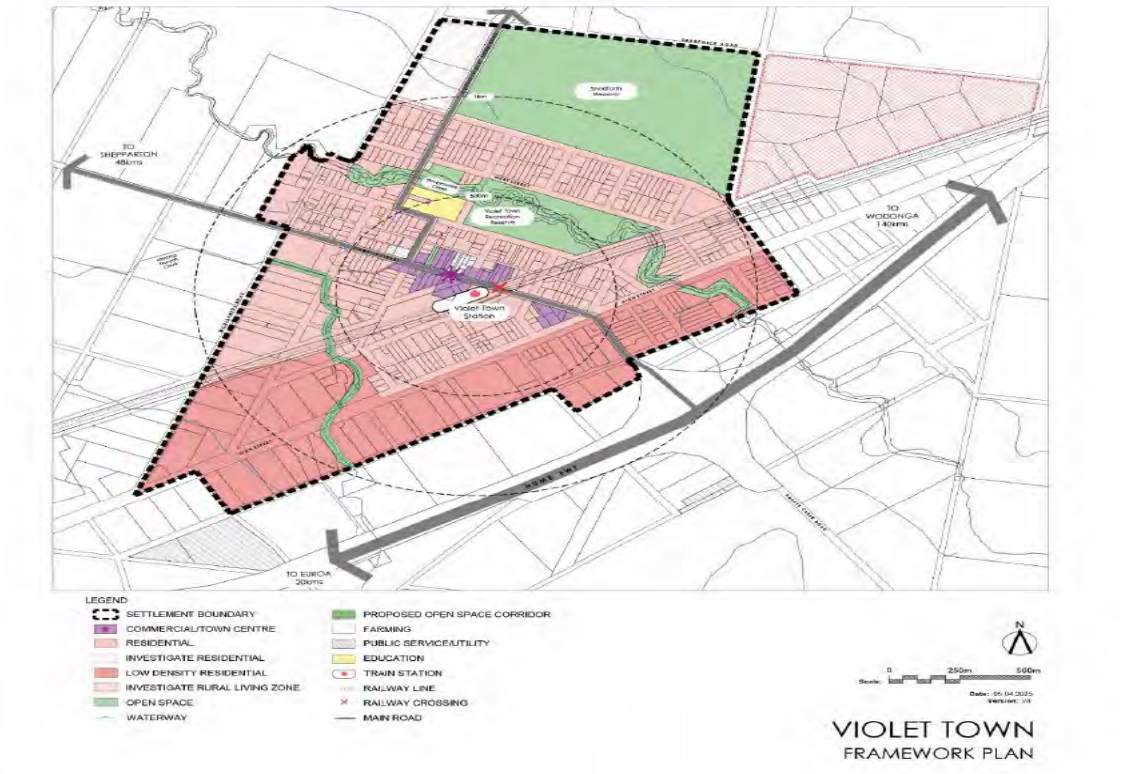


Figure 8 Violet Town Framework Plan (Proposed)

Avenel

Figure 9 below shows the existing Avenel Structure Plan which is currently within the planning scheme. The proposed Avenel Framework Plan (Figure 10) recommends no new residential growth areas for Avenel and confirms that future growth will be contained within existing zoned residential areas, including the Residential Zone and Low Density Residential Zone. As part of the UGS, minor adjustments have been made to the urban growth boundary to ensure it aligns more precisely with land currently zoned for residential purposes.



Figure 9 Avenel Town Structure Plan (Currently in the Planning Scheme)

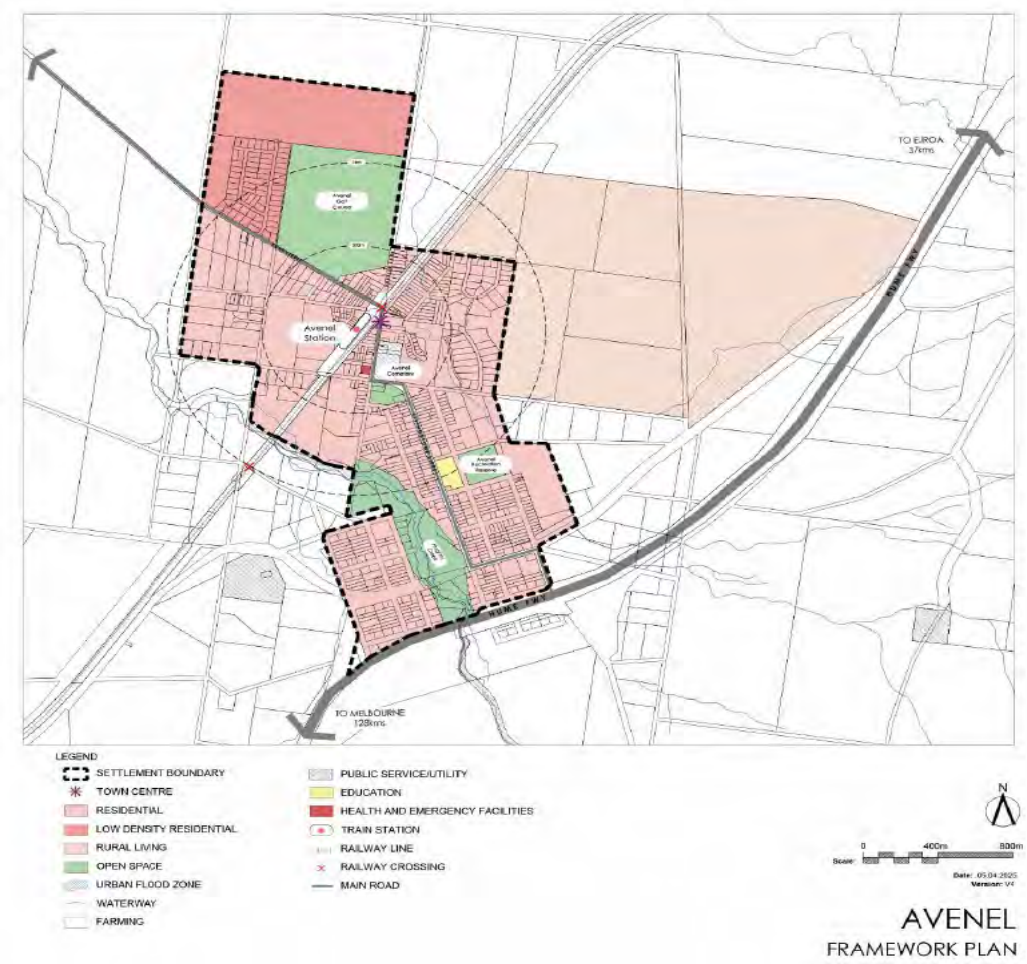


Figure 10 Avenel Town Framework Plan (Proposed)

Rural Localities and Hamlets

Longwood

Figure 11 below shows the existing Longwood Structure Plan which is currently within the planning scheme. The proposed Longwood Framework Plan (Figure 12) recommends applying growth boundaries that align with existing zoned residential extents. This will help clearly delineate the urban footprint, ensuring that non-residential zoned land is excluded from urban growth area.



Figure 11 Longwood Town Structure Plan (Currently in the Planning Scheme)



Figure 12 Longwood Town Framework Plan (Proposed)

Strathbogie

Figure 13 below shows the existing Strathbogie Structure Plan which is currently within the planning scheme. The proposed Strathbogie Framework Plan (Figure 14) recommends applying growth boundaries that align with existing zoned residential extents. This will help clearly delineate the urban footprint, ensuring that non-residential is excluded from urban growth area.

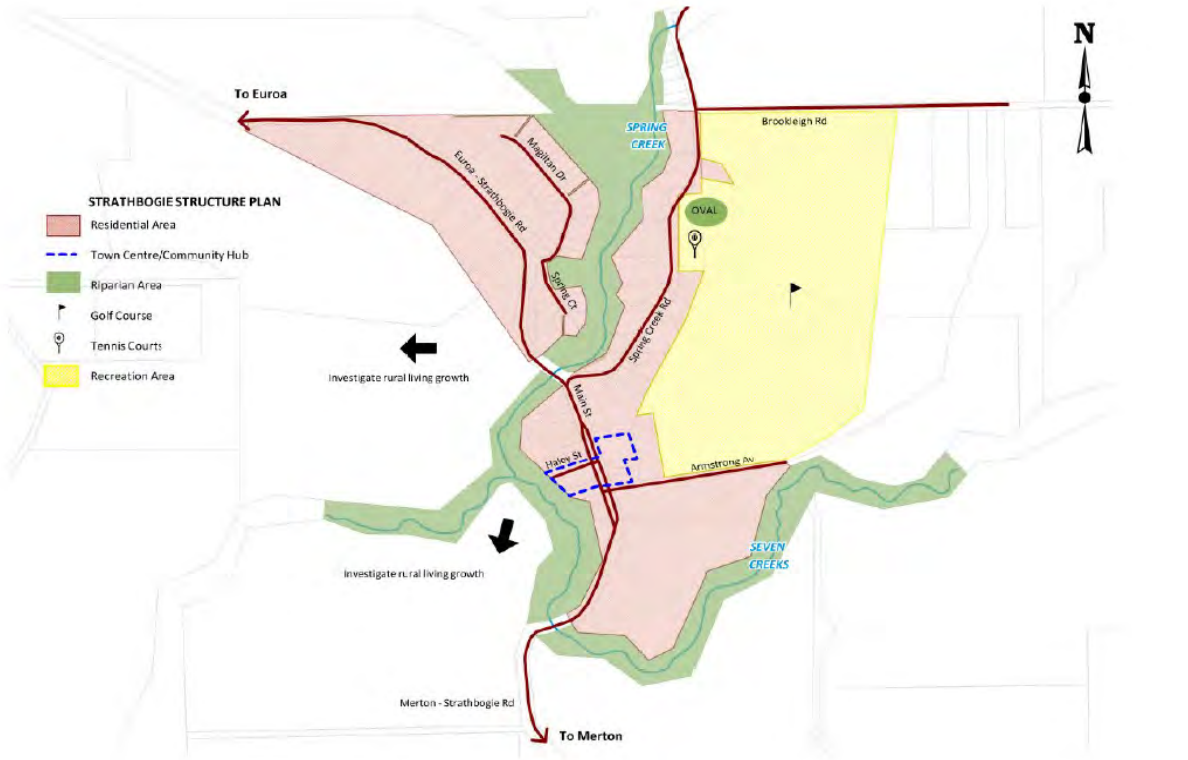


Figure 13 Strathbogie Town Structure Plan (Currently in the Planning Scheme)

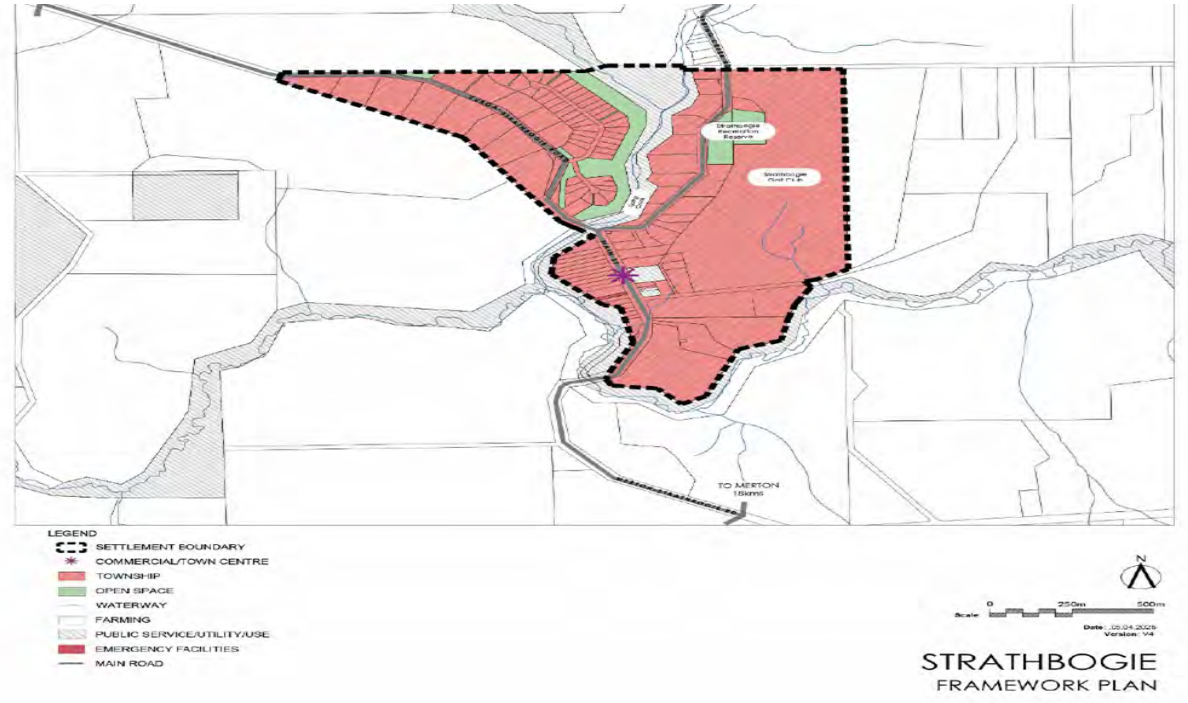


Figure 14 Strathbogie Town Framework Plan (Proposed)

Other Rural Hamlets And Localities

In addition to the main townships, Strathbogie Shire is home to a number of small rural hamlets and localities that offer unique lifestyle and housing choices within a more remote or rural setting. These areas include Ruffy, Graytown, Kirwan's Bridge, Goulburn Weir, Miepoll, Boho South, Mangalore, Mitchellstown, Tabilk, Locksley and Old Longwood.

Development in these areas continues to be guided by the Farming Zone provisions and is subject to stringent planning controls, particularly in relation to servicing, wastewater management, and rural character. No recent or specific strategic planning work has been undertaken for these localities. Under the Urban Growth Strategy, no expansion or rezoning is proposed. These areas will remain outside of the defined urban growth boundaries.

Implementation

A consolidated Implementation Plan has been included in the strategy (Page 81) showing actions that have been prioritised into short-term, medium-term, every 5 years and ongoing categories to guide the strategic work program priorities and the development of the future strategic work program.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This draft Strategy considers and was informed by the final RRLUS and Urban Growth Strategy Community Panel Outcomes Report March 2025 (attachment one).

The Draft Urban Growth Strategy will be placed on consultation for a four week period, opening on 22 September 2025 and closing on 20 October 2025 and include direct mail out (post cards) to all the properties within the shire, website, social media and newspaper advertising.

Engagement will be set at the 'Consult' level of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation. This is consistent with the Council's adopted Rural Residential Land Use Strategy and Urban Growth Strategy Engagement Plan.

Online submissions will be received via share Strathbogie, and hard copy submissions can be accepted via mail, email or hand delivered to customer service centres in Euroa and Nagambie. A hard copy draft Strategy will also be available at the Euroa and Nagambie Customer Service Centre's for viewing. Meetings or appointments can also be made to meet with a member of Council's Strategic Planning team to discuss the Strategy during the consultation period.

The planning scheme amendment for the implementation of any future Urban Growth Strategy will allow for additional formal consultation on the amendment.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following Objectives and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

Objective One: Connect

We are committed to enhancing access for all residents, promoting healthy living, fostering connections, and providing opportunities to thrive and participate in community life.

Objective Two: Sustain

We aim to collaborate with others to foster a sustainable environment, a thriving economy and resilient communities.

Objective Three: Deliver

We are committed to delivering quality services and infrastructure that meets the needs of our community. We aim to strengthen the Council's governance and provide improved, customer-focused experiences.

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision-making. This report is aligned with the following legislation, Council Policies and key strategic documents:

- The Planning Policy Framework
- Strathbogie Shire Council Plan 2025-2029
- Sustainable Strathbogie 2030 Strategy
- Economic Development Strategy 2023-2027
- Plan for Victoria 2025-2051
- Victoria Economic Statement 2024
- Victoria Housing Statement 2024-2034
- Hume Regional Growth Plan 2014.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risks:

Risk	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Project timelines not being met	Probable	Moderate	Medium	Regular Project Control and Working Group Meetings have been scheduled. Project Management training and mentoring has been undertaken by officers
Community and stakeholder submissions may require further investigation or major changes to the Urban Growth Strategy prior to adoption.	Possible	Major	Medium	Consultation and investigation to resolve submissions.

Additional funding, and or time may be required if significant further work to investigate and resolve submissions is required.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

This is consistent with the objectives of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the Strathbogie Planning Scheme. One of the overarching governance principles under section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Council decisions are to be made, and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law. There are no significant legal considerations associated with this report.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

This report will be presented to Council in a Council meeting, open to the public and live streamed to the public. This is consistent with the Council's Transparency Policy, enabling the community to have oversight regarding the matters being discussed by the Council and the decisions being made.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The Urban Growth Strategy, including community consultation, is included within the Council's Strategic Planning operating budget. There will be longer term implications associated with implementing the recommendations of the UGS via a future Planning Scheme Amendment which will require Council funding in future budgets.

Economic

Economic benefits of a Urban Growth Strategy:

- **Targeted Infrastructure Investment**: Directs growth to areas with existing or planned infrastructure, reducing costs and improving service efficiency.
- **Land Use Certainty**: Provides clarity for developers, investors, and landowners, encouraging long-term investment and reducing speculative development.
- **Protection of Agricultural Assets**: Prevents urban sprawl into productive farmland, preserving the local agricultural economy and food systems.

Social

The Strategy will improve amenity by promoting liveable, well-connected neighbourhoods with access to services, open space, and amenities.

Housing is considered a basic need and a key contributor to the social fabric of creating communities where people can and can't live and the conditions that they live in have a major impact on their health and wellbeing and the creation of community. The strategy will guide people where they can and can't live within the municipality, thereby having a significant social impact.

Environmental

The strategy will work to reduce urban sprawl and greenhouse gas emissions, and protect natural areas, leading to long-term environmental benefits associated with a healthier environment and fewer negative climate change impacts.

Climate Change

The Urban Growth Strategy will provide strategic support for the work Strathbogie Shire Council is undertaking through the Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment and the Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance. These projects include Sustainable Subdivisions Framework and Elevating Sustainable Development (Planning Scheme Amendment).

COLLABORATION

Council Officers have met with referral authorities and applicable government departments to ensure views of water, agriculture, and fire authorities (among others) have been considered for the preparation of Urban Growth Strategy.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

There are no significant human rights implications arising from this report.

CONCLUSION

The Urban Growth Strategy will be a key strategic document that will inform land use planning decisions within the Municipality for the next 15-30 years.

This strategy, alongside the draft Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy will work together to guide development across the whole municipality. The Urban Growth Strategy will provide much needed strategic support to assist Council Officers in making planning permit and planning scheme amendment decisions and meeting the needs of our current and future community.

Council endorsement for the consultation will ensure a comprehensive engagement approach is undertaken in the development of this key strategy to reflect the current and future aspirations of the community and provide the strategic justification for future planning decisions.

This report requests Council to endorse the release of the draft Urban Growth Strategy for public consultation purposes for the period 22 September 2025 to 20 October 2025.

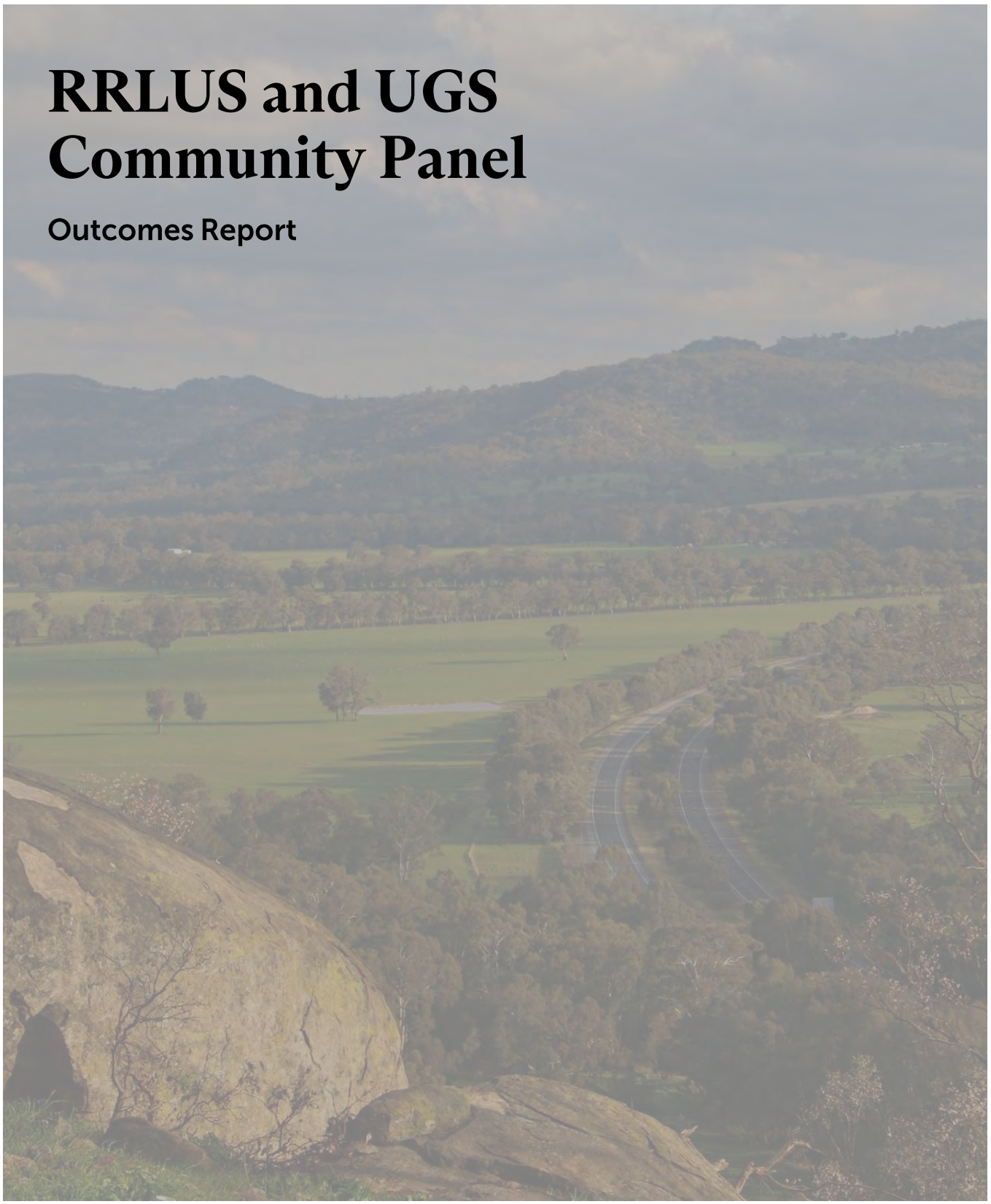
Feedback received during this time will assist in informing the final Urban Growth Strategy, and a further report will be presented to Council regarding the results of the consultation and a final Strategy.

ATTACHMENTS

1. RRLUS and UGS Community Panel Outcomes Report
2. Urban Growth Strategy
3. Avenel Framework Plan
4. Euroa Framework Plan
5. Longwood Framework Plan
6. Nagambie Framework Plan
7. Strathbogie Framework Plan
8. Violet Town Framework Plan

RRLUS and UGS Community Panel

Outcomes Report



Strathbogie Shire Council

17.03.25

capire

Giving every person a voice.

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Capire acknowledges and deeply respects the Wurundjeri people and the Traditional Owners of the Victorian land.

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Privacy

Capire Consulting Group and any person(s) acting on our behalf is committed to protecting privacy and personally identifiable information by meeting our responsibilities under the Victorian Privacy Act 1988 and the Australian Privacy Principles 2014 as well as relevant industry codes of ethics and conduct.

For the purpose of program delivery, and on behalf of our clients, we collect personal information from individuals, such as e-mail addresses, contact details, demographic data and program feedback to enable us to facilitate participation in consultation activities. We follow a strict procedure for the collection, use, disclosure, storage and destruction of personal information. Any information we collect is stored securely on our server for the duration of the program and only disclosed to our client or the program team. Written notes from consultation activities are manually transferred to our server and disposed of securely.

Comments recorded during any consultation activities are faithfully transcribed however not attributed to individuals. Diligence is taken to ensure that any comments or sensitive information does not become personally identifiable in our reporting, or at any stage of the program.

Capire operates an in-office server with security measures that include, but are not limited to, password protected access, restrictions to sensitive data and the encrypted transfer of data.

For more information about the way we collect information, how we use, store and disclose information as well as our complaints procedure, please see www.capire.com.au or telephone (03) 9285 9000.

Consultation

Unless otherwise stated, all feedback documented by Capire Consulting Group and any person(s) acting on our behalf is written and/or recorded during our program/consultation activities.

Capire staff and associates take great care while transcribing participant feedback but unfortunately cannot guarantee the accuracy of all notes. We are however confident that we capture the full range of ideas, concerns and views expressed during our consultation activities.

Unless otherwise noted, the views expressed in our work represent those of the participants and not necessarily those of our consultants or our clients.

VERSION	AUTHOR	AUTHORISED	DATE
1	Eliza Knox	Denise Francisco	11/03/2025
1	Eliza Knox	Denise Francisco	17/03/2025

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1. Introduction

This report details the deliberative engagement process and outputs of Strathbogie Shire Council's (Council) Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy (RRLUS) and Urban Growth Strategy (UGS) Community Panel. It summarises the Community Panel process, recruitment, members, outputs, reflections, evaluation and Councillor feedback.

Capire Consulting Group (Capire) was contracted by Council as an independent consultancy to facilitate and report on the Community Panel.

1.1. Background

The Strathbogie Shire community has expressed their desire for overarching directions for how land will be used in the future. As outlined in the Council Plan 2021-2025, Council are developing two new Strategies: a RRLUS and an UGS. Together, these Strategies will guide land use planning decisions within the Strathbogie municipality for the next 15 to 30 years. These strategies will work together in directing development across the municipality with the aim of maximising amenity for residential uses while not compromising the ongoing viability of agricultural, industrial, commercial businesses or future opportunities.

A multi engagement approach for both strategies were endorsed by Council at its ordinary Council Meeting on 16 July 2024. Council undertook broad engagement with the Strathbogie community in November and December 2024 consulting on the UGS and RRLUS issues and opportunities reports.

During the broad engagement, recruitment for a Community Panel, to participate in a deliberative engagement process was undertaken. The Community Panel is a group of randomly selected people that generally represent the diversity of the Strathbogie Shire community. Panel members looked at the issues and opportunities information to help inform direction in the preparation of the RRLUS and UGS. The recommendations of the Panel were presented to Council after Session Three of the Community Panel and initial feedback provided.

2. Community Panel overview

2.1. Scope of the Community Panel

2.1.1. Level of influence

The Community Panel sits at the *'Involve'* level of influence of the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum (see Figure 1). This means Community Panel members developed and presented recommendations to help Council draft the RRLUS and UGS. These strategies will guide land use planning decisions within the Strathbogie municipality for the next 15-30 years.

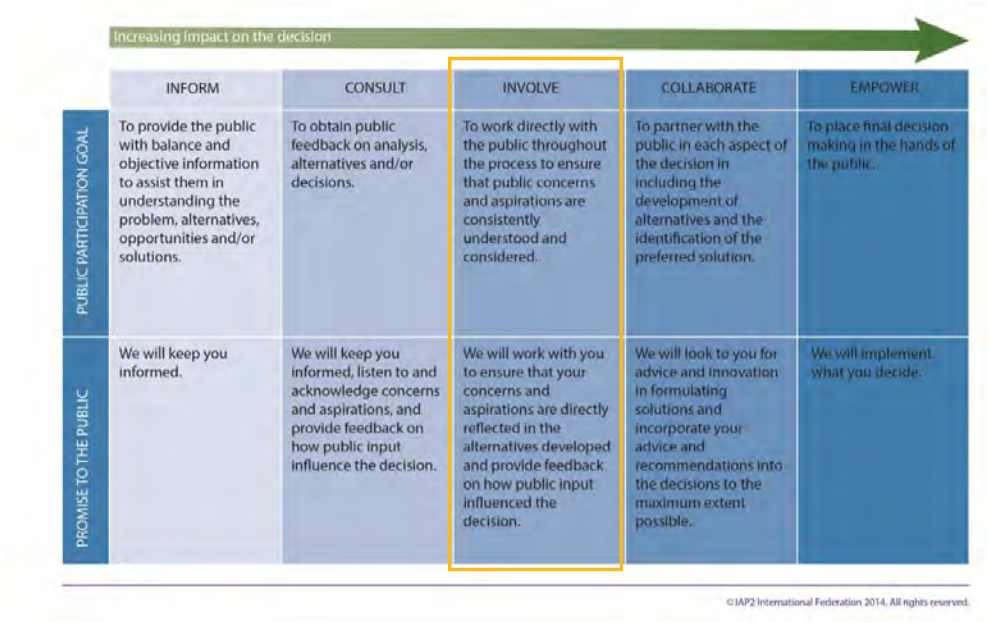


Figure 1: IAP2 engagement spectrum and where the Community Panel sat for level of influnce

2.1.2. The Remit

Community panels address a challenge or a 'remit' which defines the scope of the engagement and frames the conversations. The remit for the Community Panel was:

> *How should Council guide the growth in urban and rural residential development while continuing to protect other uses and values important to Strathbogie Shire's economy and liveability?*

2.2. Community Panel process

The Panel came together across three sessions, nine hours in total, to develop the following recommendations to help Council draft the RRLUS and UGS:

- Recommended principles
- Recommendations for six townships: Avenel, Euroa, Longwood, Nagambie, Strathbogie, Violet Town:
    - Recommended township status
    - Township boundaries reflecting locations for urban development
    - Recommend locations for Rural Living Zone relevant to townships
    - Any additional recommendations.

Table 1 provides an outline of each session including session objectives, and number of attendees.

Table 1: Overview of sessions

SESSION	OBJECTIVES	ATTENDEES
Session 1: Introduction and scene setting Thursday 13 February 5:00pm - 6:30pm	To enable Community Panel members to: • understand and be confident with the process and remit • have an improved understanding of the Strategies • understand the principles, broad engagement feedback and proposed changes for discussion • be comfortable and agree on principles to work together.	21
Session 2: Drafting recommendations Saturday 22 February 9:00am – 3:00pm	To enable Community Panel members to: • ask any questions in relation to the Strategies • review, refine the principles related to the UGS and RRLUS • develop recommendations regarding township statuses for accommodating future growth • develop recommendations regarding township boundaries reflecting locations for urban development • develop recommendations regarding locations for Rural Living Zone (RLZ) relevant to townships • make additional recommendations in response to the remit.	19
Session 3: Finalising and presenting recommendations Thursday 27 February 5:00pm – 6:30pm	• To provide an opportunity for any additional suggested recommendations. • To finalise recommendations including: o Recommended principles o Recommended Township status for each township o Township boundaries reflecting locations for urban development o Recommend locations for rural living zone relevant to townships. o Additional recommendations.	19

2.3. Information provided

2.3.1. Pre-Panel information

One week prior to Session one, the Community Panel were emailed pre-panel information for reading prior to Session one. This consisted of:

- Welcome from Council and Council Overview
- Welcome Pack from facilitators
- Issues and Opportunities Engagement (broad engagement) Summary Report
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Glossary of terms
- Key principles that were tested during the Issues and Opportunities engagement (broad engagement).

In the same email, Community Panel members were sent the details of Session one and a Welcome Survey. See Section 6 for the results of the Welcome Survey.

2.3.2. Private Share Strathbogie page

A private webpage was set up on Council's Share Strathbogie website for Panel members to share questions, comments, and to interact with each other and Council between sessions.

Additional resources that were emailed to the Community Panel between sessions were also added to the Share Strathbogie webpage.

2.3.3. Session summary reports

A summary report was provided to Community Panel members after each session to outline the session process and outputs, and to support Community Panel members to prepare for the next session. These reports were added to the Share Strathbogie webpage and may be read in conjunction with this overarching report.

2.4. Engagement limitations

All engagement processes have limitations. The following points highlight the limitations that should be considered when reading this report.

- It was assumed in good faith that the information provided by participants in their Expression of Interest (EOI) forms about their demographics was accurate, along with any declared perceived conflicts of interest.
- Capire independently selected Community Panel participants to represent Strathbogie Shire's diversity as much as possible, from the EOIs received. The final Panel membership can't be deemed a statistically accurate sample of the municipality.
- Some Community Panel members withdrew from their roles during the process, which is common between selection and delivery of sessions. Consequently, the number of participants varies across sessions. The reasons for withdrawal were due to unexpected personal commitments and reasons.
- While Community Panel members delivered a cross-section of views from across the municipality, it cannot be guaranteed that the community's complete set of views were represented.
- Strategic planning is complex and whilst nine hours of workshop time was resourced for the Community Panel process, the time allocation was limited and impacted the ability of panel members to deeply explore the issues identified.

3. Selection and participation

3.1. Recruitment

The Community panel recruitment process was independently managed by Capire with promotion and communication undertaken by Council. Recruitment took place through an Expression of Interest (EOI) process, which was promoted through a project page on Council's Share Strathbogie website: share.strathbogie.vic.gov.au/RRLUS-and-UGS/community-panel

The EOI was open for 10 weeks including during the broad engagement in November and December 2024, from Monday 11 November to Monday 20 January 2025.

Promotional activities undertaken by Council, included:

- Facebook posts
- Website promotion
- Paid Facebook and paid newspaper advertising
- Promotion in print newspapers and local newsletters
- Invitation to participate via email to Council's community directory contact list.

The EOI form included questions designed to help Capire assess the applicants and determine their suitability for the Panel. The form aimed to identify:

- demographics to enable selection against targets using Australian Bureau of Statistics data for the municipality
- availability to attend all three sessions.

3.2. Members

A total of 44 people expressed their interest in participating in the Community Panel. A group of 29 were randomly selected to become Community Panel members, confirmed their commitment and received an Information Pack prior to Session one. Multiple selected and confirmed Community Panel members needed to withdraw from the process due to unexpected personal commitments and reasons. This is anticipated and common for a deliberative engagement process. Consequently, the number of Panel members at all three sessions was lower than the selected number.

4. Community Panel outputs

By the end of Session three, the Community Panel developed the following recommendations to help Council draft the RRLUS and UGS:

- Recommended principles
- Recommendations for six townships: Avenel, Euroa, Longwood, Nagambie, Strathbogie, Violet Town
    - Recommended township status
    - Township boundaries reflecting locations for urban development
    - Recommend locations for Rural Living Zone relevant to townships
    - Any additional recommendations.

This section details these key outputs in addition to Panel members level of support with the recommendations.

4.1. Recommended principles

Issues and opportunities reports for the RRLUS and UGS identified some principles to guide the strategies. These principles were combined to test during the broad engagement.

The Community Panel were provided the principles, and explanation as to why they are important and the broad engagement feedback. During, between and after Sessions two and three, the Community Panel reviewed the principles, suggested updates, voted on their level of comfort on updated principles, updated them to create recommended principles and voted on their level of support for the recommended principles.

Table 2 outlines the recommended principles at the end of Session Three.

Table 2: Recommended Principles at the end of Session Three

RECOMMENDED PRINCIPLES
1. Provide clear strategic direction on the spatial distribution of urban growth, taking into account the provision of services and infrastructure required to service this growth within the Shire.
2a. Contain growth within identified locations across the municipality.
2b. Manage the release of new growth subject to infrastructure, facilities and services (including emergency services) to deliver in a timely and efficient way without affecting existing provision, levels or services. Note: Existing services and infrastructure should remain unimpacted by new development/growth
3. Monitor and review population growth, housing demand, existing infrastructure and adjust boundaries or urban areas as required. Note: The detail in the strategy should reflect what should be undertaken every five years (after census results published) or if there is an unprecedented growth rate.
4. Protect visual, environmental, economic, and infrastructure qualities by minimising impacts of residential development on rural areas with consideration of township character and heritage values.
5. OPTION 1: Discourage new, additional and increased housing supply in locations with bushfire and flooding hazards, to avoid risk to life, property and environmental systems. To do so, require hard edges to urban areas to prevent and meet best practice fire management.
5. OPTION 2: Discourage new, additional and increased housing supply in locations with flooding hazards, to avoid risk to life, property and environmental systems. To do so, require hard edges to urban areas to prevent and meet best practice fire management. Encourage management of bushfire hazard to avoid risk to life, property and environmental systems for locations of new, additional and increased housing supply in locations
6. Maintain an adequate supply of residential land, ensuring housing diversity meets housing needs for everyone across the Shire. Note: This includes accommodation types to support families and young people

RECOMMENDED PRINCIPLES
7. Encourage housing diversity in existing townships and growth areas, with an emphasis on varied housing types, connectivity and accessibility. Note: This includes young families.
8. Advocate to increase the supply of affordable and social housing within townships that is well designed, accessible and meets the needs of the community and economy. (Note that changes in Farming Zone have allowed for increased accommodation for farm workers)
11. Sustainably use existing natural resources, including productive agricultural land and water.

Figure 2 outlines the Panel members' level of support with most of the recommended principles.

4.1.1. Principle 9 and 10

Prior to Session Three, the draft recommended principles 9 and 10 were:

- **Principle 9:** Avoid conflicts between farming and other land uses, particularly by protecting productive agricultural land and directing growth to non-productive or marginal areas. Elsewhere: Define "productive agricultural land".
- **Principle 10:** Protect farmland and farming industries of significance.

During Session Three, Group 3 had a preference to not accept principles 9 and 10. They felt there hasn't been adequate discussion to enable a decision. They would like the opportunity to have further discussions regarding:

- dwellings in the farm zone.
- to define the land uses for agricultural land and investigate further what is non-productive or marginal land?

Following Session Three, Community Panel members were asked to share their level of support with these principles based on this. Figure 3 shows the result of this.

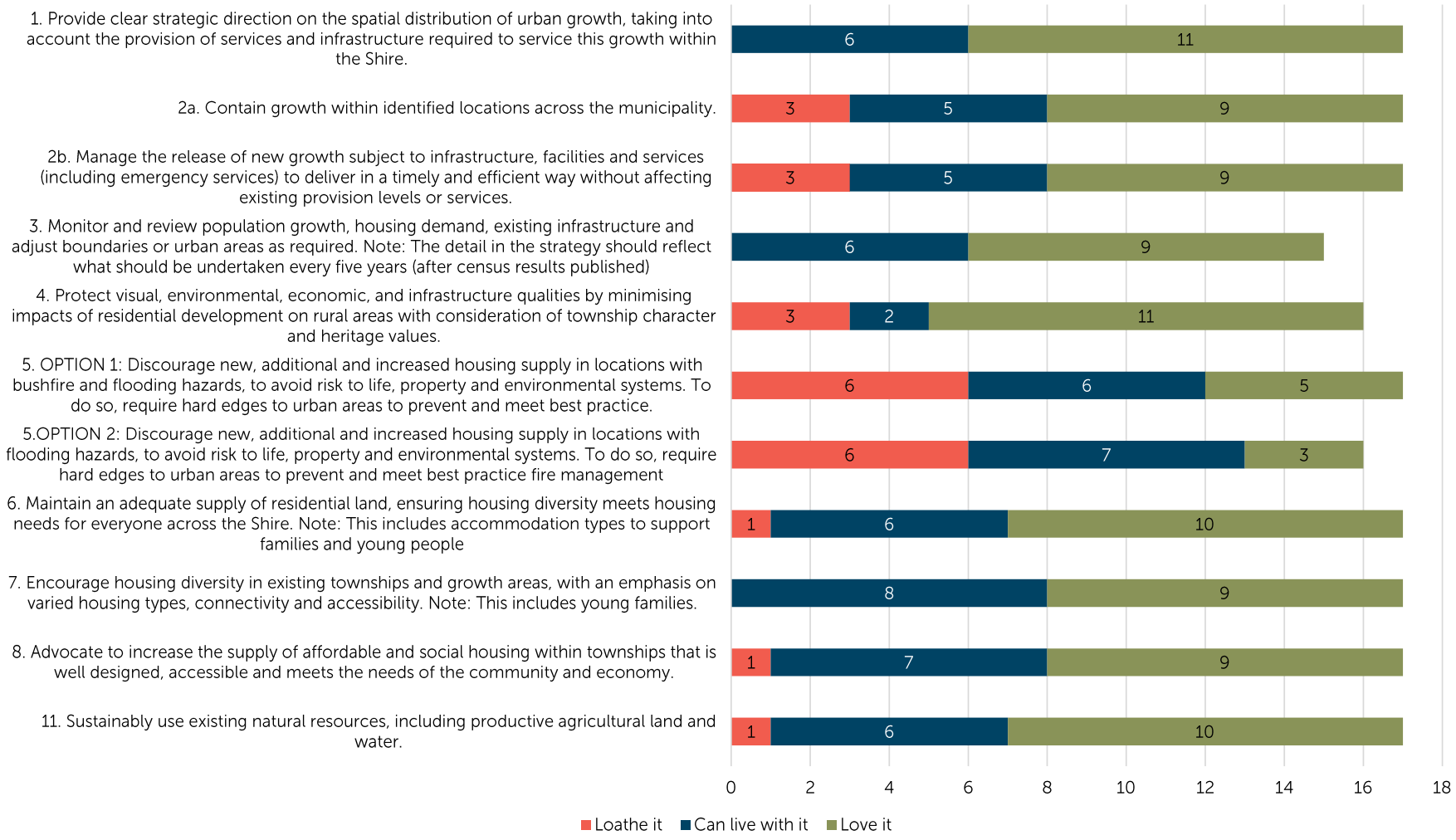


Figure 2: Result of the online level of support vote for the updated Principles (n=17)

Principle 2b includes - Note: Existing services and infrastructure should remain unimpacted by new development/growth
Principle 5 Option 2 also includes - *Encourage management of bushfire hazard to avoid risk to life, property and environmental systems for locations of new, additional and increased housing supply in locations*
Principle 8 includes - (Note that changes in Farming Zone have allowed for increased accommodation for farm workers).

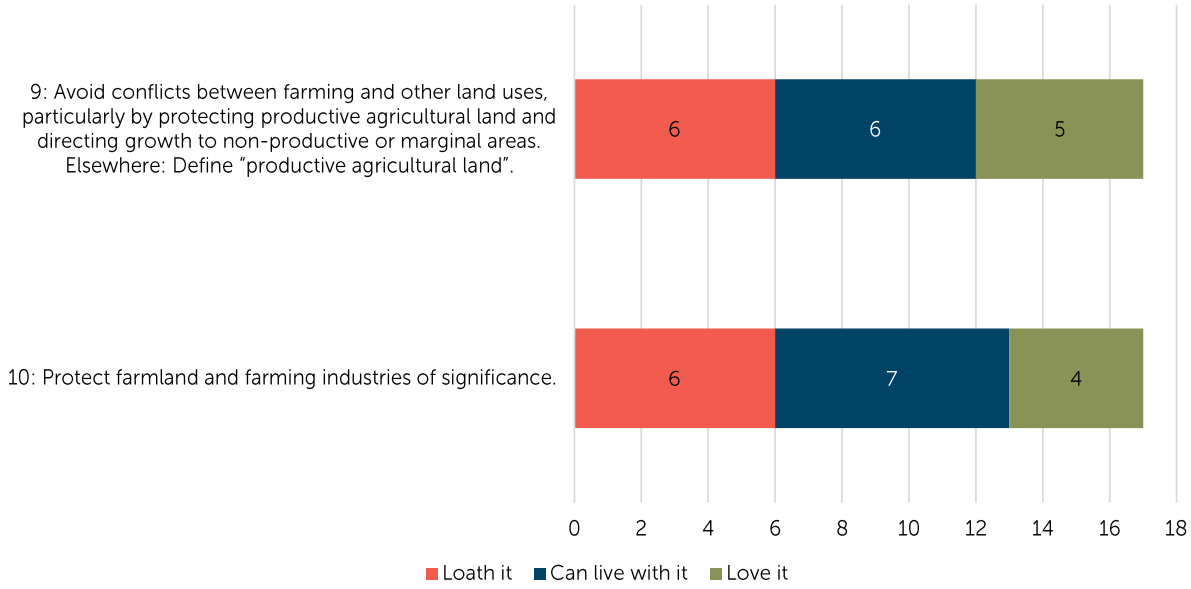


Figure 3: Result of the online level of support vote for Principles 9 and 10 given Group 3 in Session 3 recommend to not accept the Principles (n=17)

4.2. Township based recommendations

The Community Panel developed recommendations for six townships: Avenel, Euroa, Longwood, Nagambie, Strathbogie, Violet Town. These recommendations included:

- recommended township status
- township boundaries reflecting locations for urban development
- recommend locations for Rural Living Zone relevant to townships
- and any additional recommendations.

This section displays the recommendations per township in addition to the Community Panel's level of support for these recommendations.

4.2.1. Avenel recommendations

TOWNSHIP STATUS

- Keep Avenel identified for moderate growth.
- Consider the potential pressure for high growth given pressure from surrounding townships such as Nagambie.

TOWNSHIP BOUNDARIES

- No expansion required, utilise the existing boundary.
- Understand the three Natural boundaries:
    - Freeway
    - Hughes Creek.
- Address noise concerns in specific areas before confirming boundary expansions.
- Assess the feasibility for potential commercial opportunities (e.g., service centre) further.
- Further investigate the capability of certain areas, particularly regarding waterway constraints and topography.

- Factor in community preference for a mix of lot sizes and types into planning decisions.
- Monitor the Mangalore Airport Environment Overlay in case a future Masterplan alters development opportunities.

LOCATIONS FOR RLZ IN THE AREA

- No immediate expansion of the RLZ. Existing areas should be prioritised for development first before considering further expansion.
- Review, wait and watch the land with Bushfire Management Overlay depending on the capacity of the RLZ land to the east of the settlement boundary, and the purpose for larger rural land.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

- Review capacity and planning for rural living further out east.
- Review the extent of the existing RLZ.
- Note within the UGS that Avenel should be closely monitored if there is a shift in lot 'take-up'.

LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

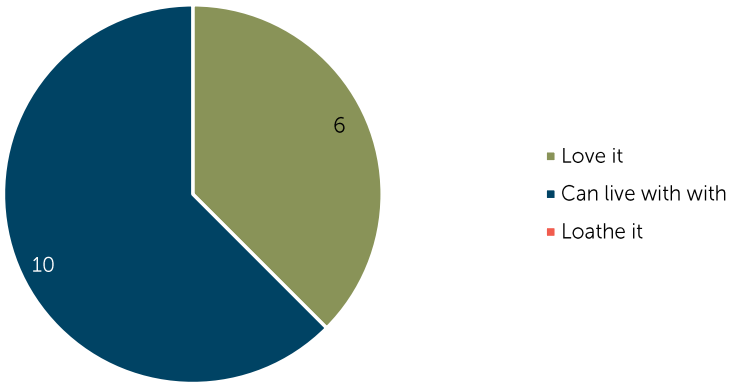


Figure 4: Result of the online level of support vote for the draft Avenel recommendations (n=16)

4.2.2. Longwood recommendations

TOWNSHIP STATUS

- Retain Longwood's designated recommendation as a low-growth township.
- Investigate a streamlined approach to the subdivision process to encourage appropriate development.

TOWNSHIP BOUNDARIES

- Maintain the township boundary but investigate the potential to extend to the east.
- Encourage housing including affordable housing due to nearby employment and industrial activities but consider the reluctance of existing generational farmers to convert agricultural land for residential purposes.
- Consider a township strategy that can address conflicts of use.

LOCATIONS FOR RLZ IN THE AREA

- Desire for rezoning the land to the east, south of Avenel-Longwood Road where lower-service amenities are expected.
    - The primary desire is for 20-acre lots, although there are concerns about what constitutes a manageable size as it is dependent on lifestyle choices.

LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

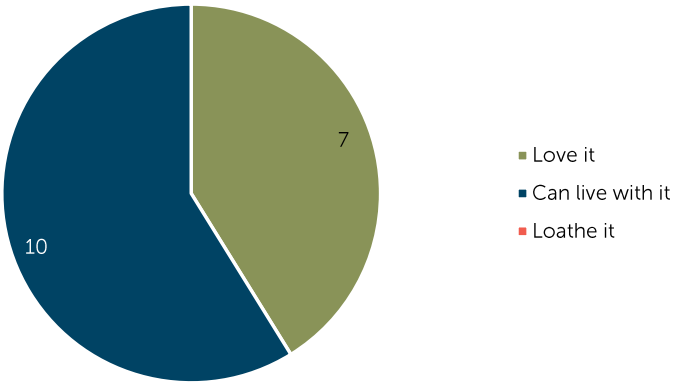


Figure 5: Result of the online level of support vote for the draft Longwood recommendations (n=17)

4.2.3. Strathbogie recommendations

TOWNSHIP STATUS

- Designate as a low-growth township, though the terminology could be reconsidered. This aligns with the view of the current level of infrastructure and services while acknowledging a desire for some population growth.

TOWNSHIP BOUNDARIES

- Keep the existing township boundaries unchanged.
- While there is interest in reducing the minimum lot size to allow for smaller rural residential properties, growth should primarily be directed toward other townships with existing services.

LOCATIONS FOR RLZ IN THE AREA

- Direct the RLZ near the golf course (Brookleigh Road area), where land is already functioning as rural residential.
    - This area is seen as having fewer constraints and would provide opportunities for residents seeking lifestyle properties.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

- There was some conjecture over development in Farm Zones: Undertake further engagement to better understand opportunities for rural living in Farm Zones.

LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

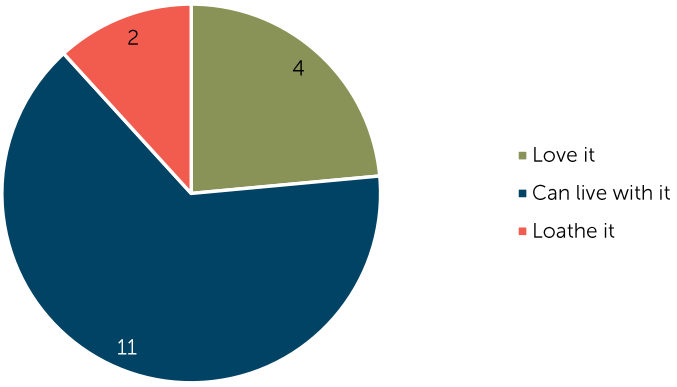


Figure 6: Result of the online level of support vote for the draft Strathbogie recommendations (n=17)

4.2.4. Violet Town recommendations

TOWNSHIP STATUS

- Support as a moderate growth township. There is some uncertainty about data and the implications for demand, vacant lots and the need for potential additional zoned land is suggested.

TOWNSHIP BOUNDARIES

- Test and explore additional land north and west of Shadforth Reserve (highlighted in blue hatched areas in Figure 7) to accommodate residential growth, including housing for health sector employees, noting other areas were identified by some Panel members.
- Undertake further research into appropriate housing types, what is required to maintain appropriate service levels, and the feasibility of infill development.

LOCATIONS FOR RLZ IN THE AREA

- Revisit and review the need for RLZ, however, multiple potential areas of interest were identified in all directions.
- Explore the settlement patterns of surrounding areas such as Harry's Creek and Long Gully to understand whether there is capacity for rural living.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Review the data to identity and match housing types with housing needs.
- Further investigate and discuss rural residential opportunities.

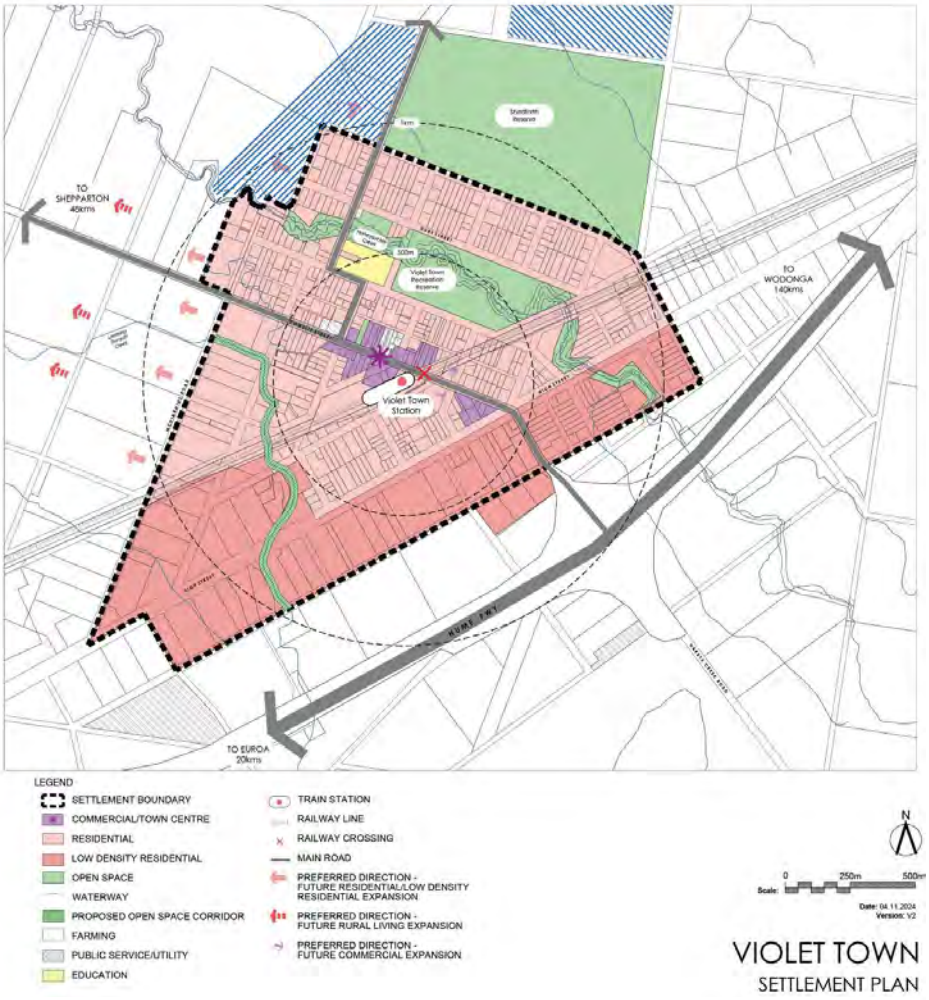


Figure 7: Recommended area to test and explore to accommodate residential growth including housing for health sector employees in Violet Town

LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

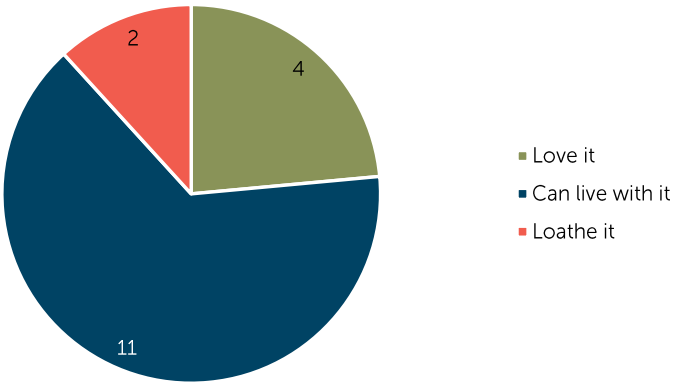


Figure 8: Result of the online level of support vote for the draft Violet Town recommendations (n=17)

4.2.5. Euroa recommendations

TOWNSHIP STATUS

- Retain it as a moderate-growth township, aligning with community expectations, despite its current 0.48% growth rate.

TOWNSHIP BOUNDARIES

- Retain the residential boundaries, with no further residential growth beyond existing allocations.
- Investigate the need to allocate land for industrial use.

LOCATIONS FOR RLZ IN THE AREA

- Provide RLZ in Euroa.
- Undertake further investigation into the potential for RLZ identified (highlighted in the pink hatched area in Figure 9). The area just south of Euroa is a more viable option due to fewer drainage and flooding concerns.
- Do not investigate the northern area of Euroa as it is unsuitable due to flooding issues.
- Investigate the potential to re-zone some additional land for industrial use.

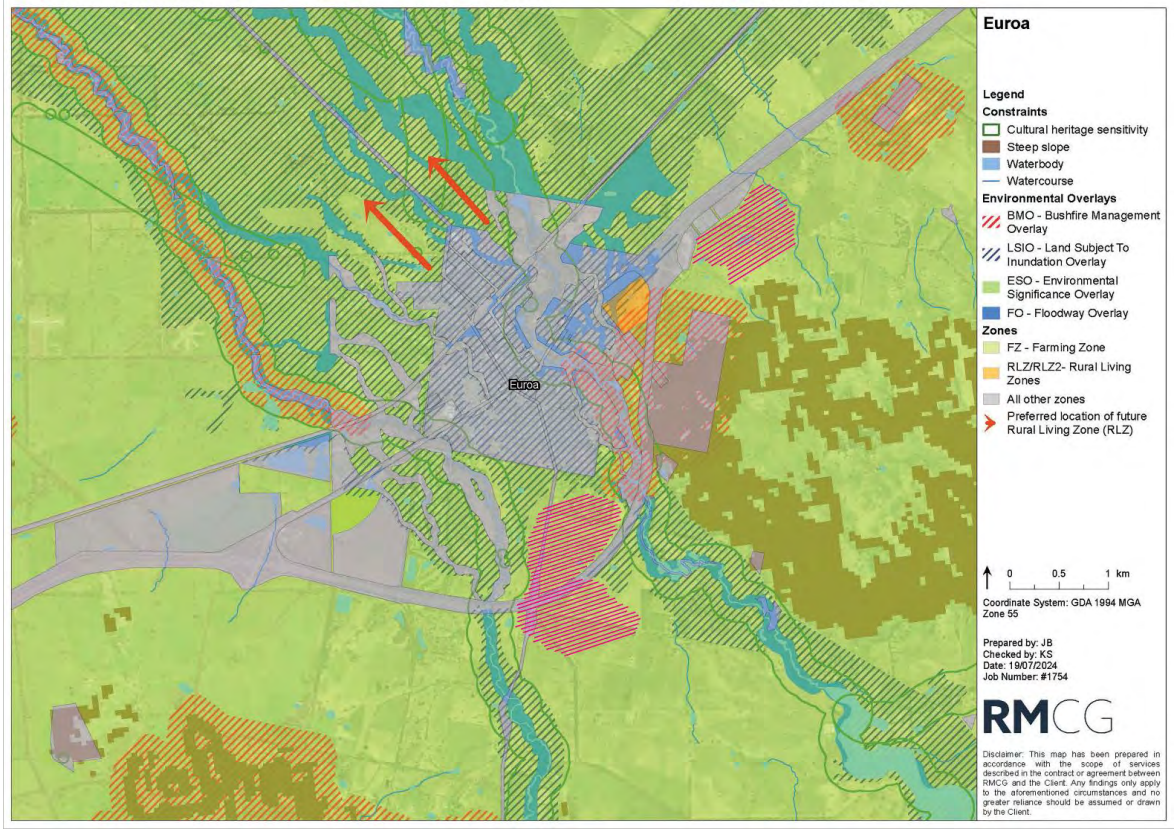


Figure 9: Suggested areas for RLZ in Euroa in purple

LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

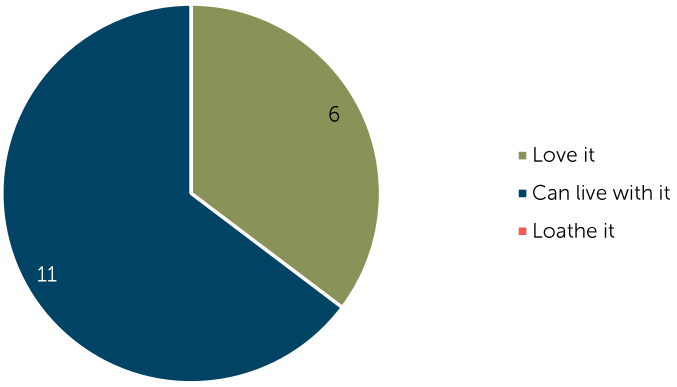


Figure 10: Result of the online level of support vote for the updated Euroa recommendations (n=17)

4.2.6. Nagambie recommendations

TOWNSHIP STATUS

- General support to identify Nagambie as a high-growth township. Note that there are concerns about insufficient infrastructure and the ability to sustain local businesses that contribute to a desire for moderate growth.

TOWNSHIP BOUNDARIES

- Remove the 'wedge' north of Racecourse Road (see pink hatched area on Figure 11).
- Remove south and north (to the lake) of Vickers Road from any investigations due to existing land fragmentation (see pink hatched area on Figure 11).
- Proceed with the potential employment investigation area south of Racecourse Road to Cemetery Lane. This area should not be residential in any manner. Leave anything east of railway as employment/industry - no residential (see purple hatched area on Figure 11).

LOCATIONS FOR RLZ IN THE AREA

- To provide diversity of residential options, consider five-acre lots.
- Investigate RLZ expansion in the north, north of Racecourse Road (see green on Figure 11).
- Do not proceed with the proposed Rural Activity Zone, as it is viewed as unlikely to be developed as intended and would likely be converted into residential land.

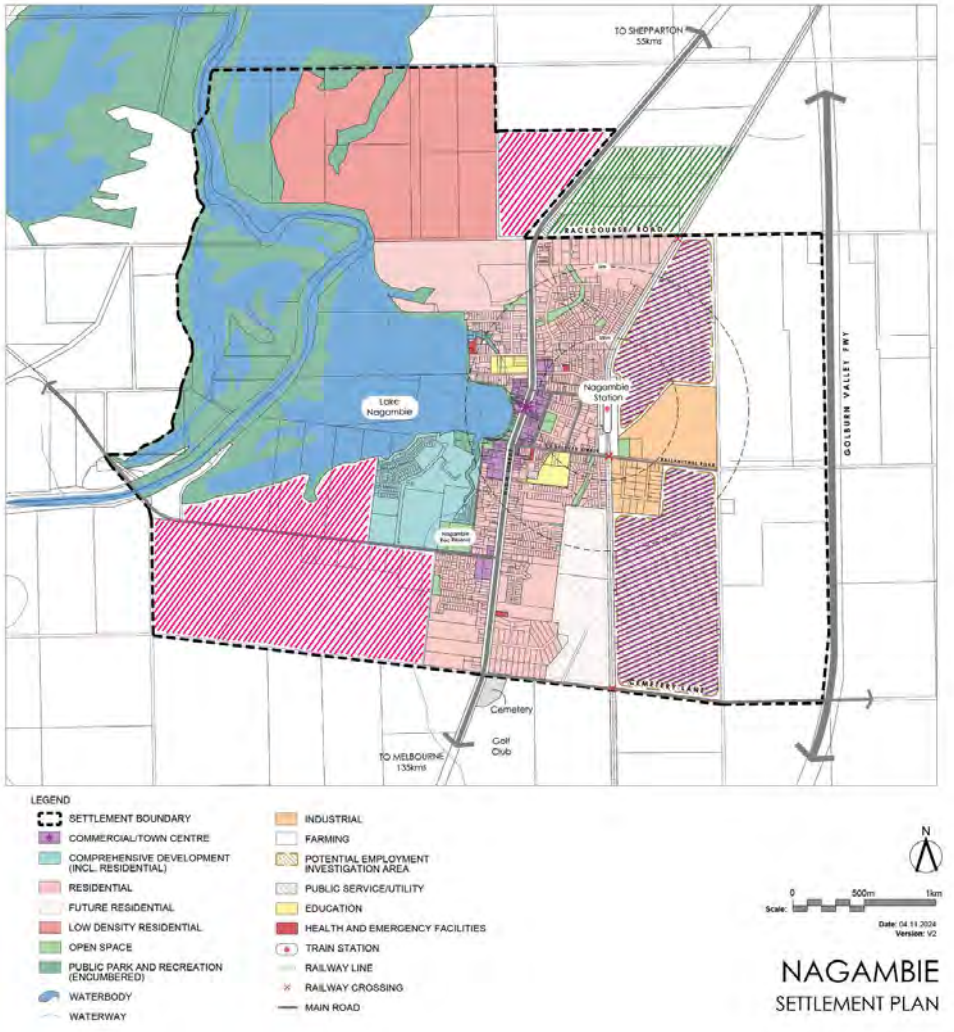


Figure 11: Areas of suggested changes in Nagambie (see recommendations for details)

LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

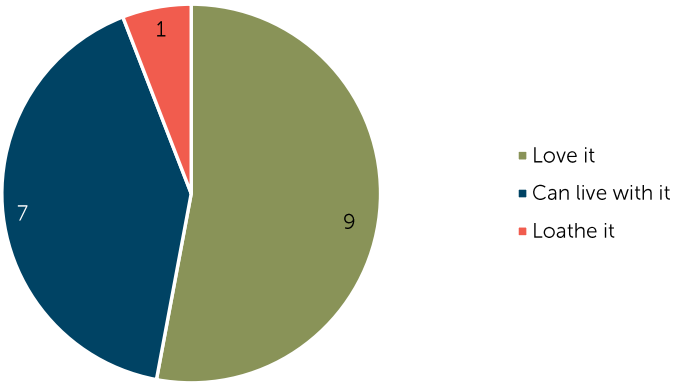


Figure 12: Result of the online level of support vote for the draft Nagambie recommendations (n=17)

4.3. Level of support comments

When asked for any comments at the end of the level of support online vote, the following provides an overview of Panel members' comments:

- *In general, a job well done.*
- Concerns raised included:
    - *No where near enough time to do this justice!!!*
    - *Ruffy not included yet can significantly be impacted by a potential REZ.*
    - *The ability of the CFA to influence and /or veto a planning application needs to be examined if any development in the Shire is to take place.*
    - Principle 2:
        - *This is far too wordy and is not grammatically correct. This would also imply that in areas that require additional infrastructure, land will not be considered for growth.*
        - *Principle 2b seems ungrammatical to me. Would be better to replace 'to deliver' with 'to be delivered' or 'to be supplied'.*
    - Principle 4
        - *This needs to be specific to urban growth and township character needs to be protected despite the desire for people to build more modern houses. Schedule needs to be put in place to prevent urban growth that is consistent with metro Melbourne rather than rural living E.g. minimum setbacks/not allowing 3 story houses.*
        - *The change in wording to 'with consideration of' diminishes the importance of township character and heritage values identified in the 2010 neighbourhood studies. Heritage values are an important tourist drawcard needed for economic growth (old buildings still in use, museums, art galleries in restored buildings, streetscape, memorials). Township character is predominantly 1-storey homes with some and 2-storey buildings (CBD and some homes) and needs protection by designating new subdivisions as NRZ (Neighbourhood Residential) and not GRZ (General Residential) where protection against 3 storeys is not possible through overlays or schedules. Protecting these two important elements of our townships will not impede 'creativity' in house design or diversity of houses.*
    - Principle 5
        - *While I agree that life should be protected, I also believe that this will be used against anyone who is intending to build anywhere outside the township zone. There are many houses on small acreage allotments that make up current rural settlements, allowing dwellings on marginal land in between these could reduce load/environmental risk due to clean up efforts and would not inhibit CFA further. This should be the individuals choice and responsibility if choosing to live in rural areas.*
        - *Principle 5a is too convoluted and not clear.*
    - Principle 8
        - *I do not agree with forcing social housing to towns with more infrastructure/services. Social housing is required everywhere, and residents should not be forced out of their town due to a lack of social housing. If council assisted more people to build, more rental homes would also become available however the only land for sale is in the farming zone. RURAL LAND/FARMING ZONE HOUSING NEEDS TO BE DISCUSSED FURTHER AND THE COMMUNITY PANEL NEEDS TO MEET AGAIN ON THIS TOPIC.*
    - Principles 9, 10 and rural living in the farming zone
        - *Define productive agricultural land*
        - *Understand the requirement to obtain a result but object to the technique of divide to conquer. Clearly more time is required to provide a suitable response especially in regard to*

Rural Residential. This is why I went negative with principles 9 and 10 as I do not have the full context provided by the group 3 so have to support their findings.

- *'Random' rural living decisions in the Farming Zone should be avoided on farming for reasons of fire and flooding risk, biosecurity and weed management and to maintain future opportunities for farm consolidation.*
- *Principle 10 needs to have 'productive' included before 'farmland'.*
- *The productive farmland definition should be public and a standard, so buyers and sellers clearly know their options. It should not be up to the council to determine what is productive and what is not.*
- *Greater focus on RLZ and the impact of these on farmland rather than the other way around. Farming should always be the priority - prioritising RLZ residents extends the wealth gap and prices out people who manage and care for land and is a cost to people's livelihood. One person's vista should not trump ones enterprise or livelihood.*
- *Certainly, more work and community discussion needs to be had on putting housing in the Farming Zone, particularly around Nagambie (which is where the near term pressures are likely to be). There just was not enough time dedicated to this aspect as part of this process and Council should ensure they circle back to this before formally adopting the recommendations*

- Avenel
  - *Avenel and the current status of the Service Station is detailed as "potential commercial opportunities (e.g., service centre)". This has been misrepresented as firstly the current operating conditions and the impact on the major arterial route needs to be addressed.*
- Strathbogie
  - *Township boundaries - On all of the tables I sat at. The idea to redirect to other towns, away from Strathbogie, was never mentioned. I strongly disagree with this.*
- *Violet Town*
  - *The Violet Town recommendations should include a specific reference to investigating a LDRZ (Low Density Residential Zone) in suitable land adjacent to the existing border as lots here over 4000sqm don't need sewerage infrastructure. There is existing defacto LDRZ housing on large unsewered blocks within the township zone already and a new LDRZ would be an extension of these and would be preferable to a RRZ so close to town. RRZ areas need to be further out. VT also needs a designated commercial centre expansion zone to allow for business growth opportunities.*
- Nagambie
  - *I 100% support the purple industrial zone; I support the green zone; I highly object to the red zone, especially the area north and south of Vickers Rd.*

5. Other considerations

During Session 3, the facilitator invited discussion for any other considerations or recommendations to be shared. Council representatives responded to questions and comments where required.

The below summarises verbal and written comments by Panel members noting they are connected to commentary shared regarding Principles 9 and 10 shown in Section 4.1.1.

- There was desire from multiple Panel members for further discussions around housing and dwellings in rural and farming zones:
    - It was noted that work has been done to date on the townships but not housing in rural zones.
    - Multiple Panel members agreed that housing could be built on certain areas of the farming zone that would not impact anyone (for example, east of the freeway). Desire for provision of exceptions was shared.
    - There is a need to clarify what is productive agricultural land e.g. good wool-growing country is still very valuable agricultural land.
- There were questions and comments regarding next steps including about if additional work that isn't budgeted for won't happen unless community members advocate.

6. Reflections and evaluation

This section details the results from the Community Panel evaluation. Evaluation occurred over two self-completion surveys.

1. The Welcome Survey was distributed to the Community Panel one week before Session One. It asked Community Panel members to identify their level of agreement on content and knowledge, trust and accountability, in addition to motivations to join the Community Panel and what is most valuable about community engagement process like this. A total of 22 Community Panel members completed the survey (n=22).
2. The Evaluation Survey was distributed to the Community Panel after Session Three. It asked Community Panel members to identify their level of agreement on content and knowledge, trust and accountability, the engagement process, in addition to what could be improved in future processes and what is most valuable about community engagement process like this. A total of 16 Community Panel members completed the survey (n=16).

CONTENT AND KNOWLEDGE BUILDING

Community Panel members rated their level of agreement with five statements regarding understanding of the strategies, land use planning, Council and broader challenges impacting land use planning.

Figures 13 to 17 display the results. Overall, there was an increase in agreement with all statements. The lowest increase was regarding the Community Panel members' level of understanding about how Council makes decisions.

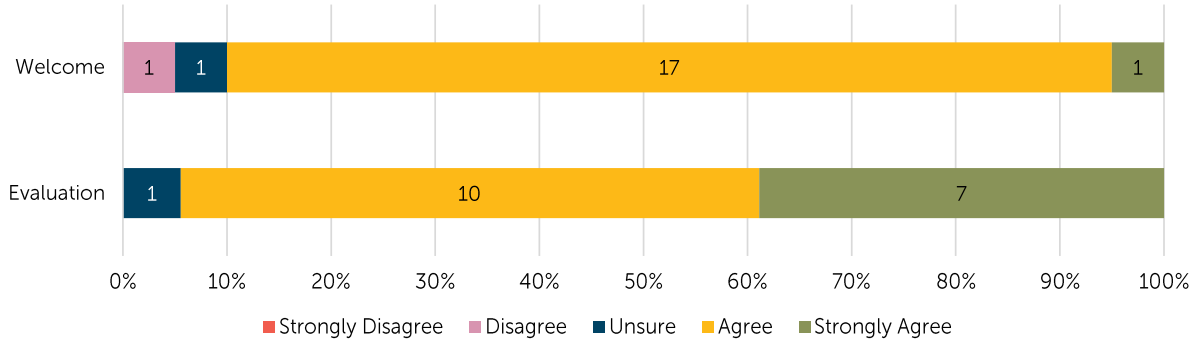


Figure 13: Welcome and Evaluation survey responses to the statement 'I understand the role of the Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy and Urban Growth Strategy.'

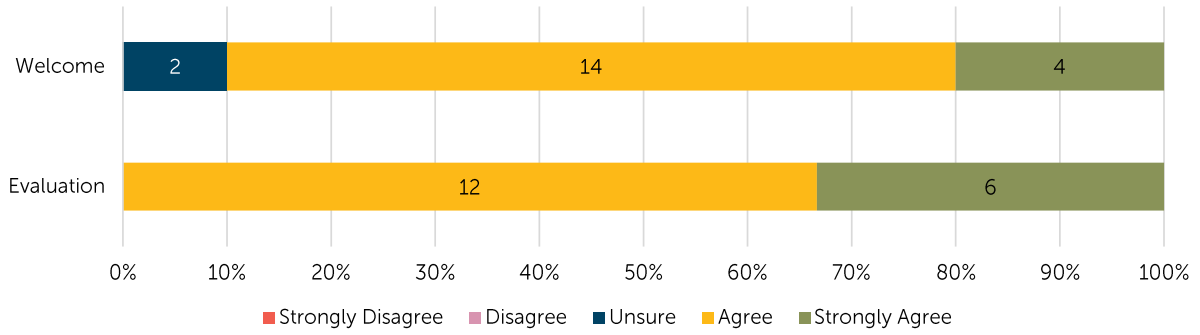


Figure 14: Welcome and Evaluation survey responses to the statement 'I understand Council's role in land use planning.'

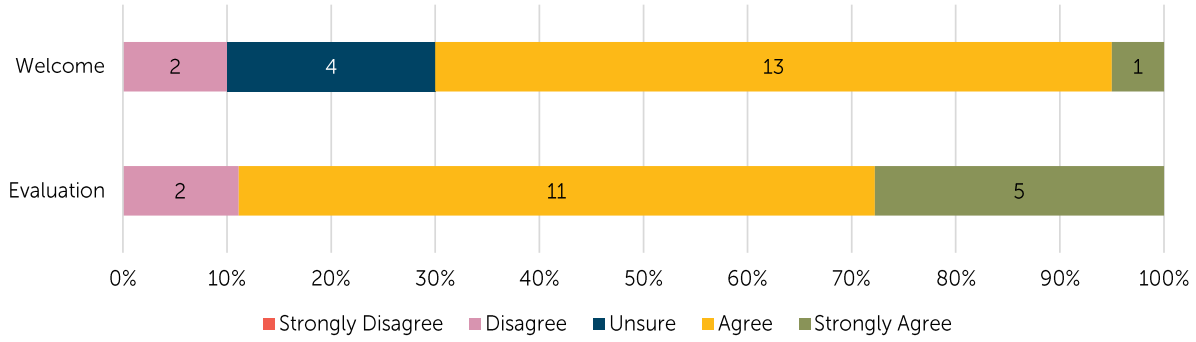


Figure 15: Welcome and Evaluation survey responses to the statement 'I understand the broader challenges impacting land use planning in Strathbogie Shire.'

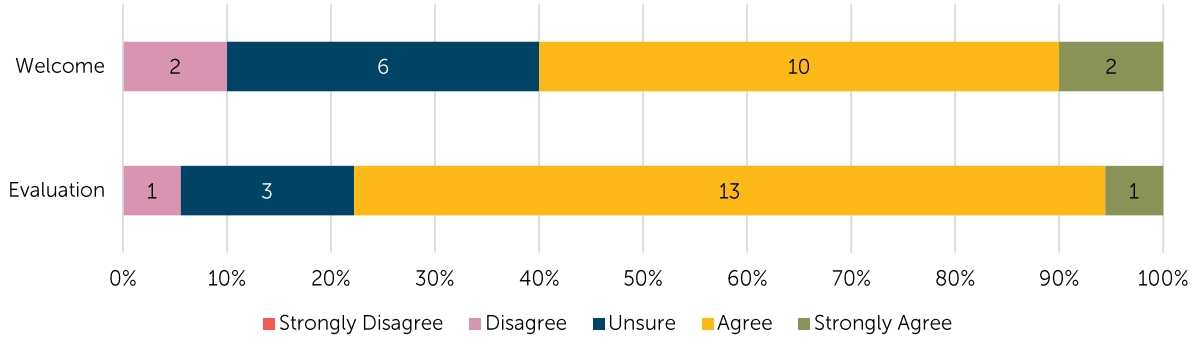


Figure 16: Welcome and Evaluation survey responses to the statement 'I understand what decisions are within Council's control and influence.'

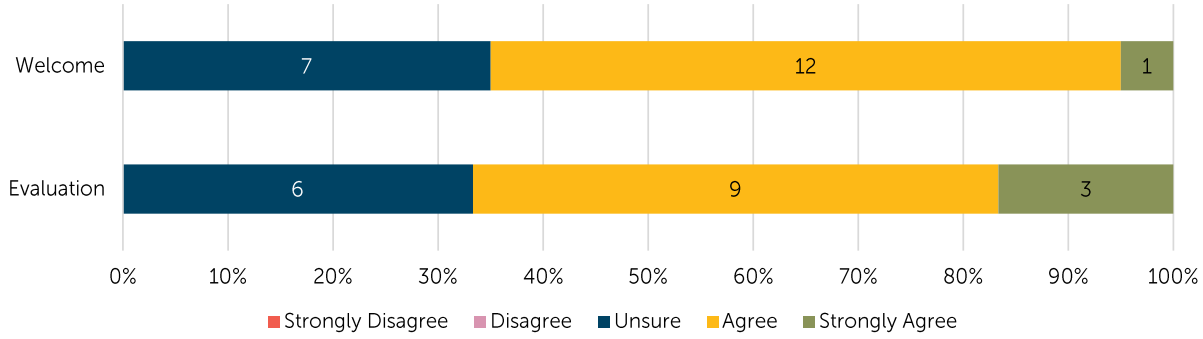


Figure 17: Welcome and Evaluation survey responses to the statement 'I understand how Council makes decisions.'

TRUST AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Community Panel members rated their level of agreement with five statements regarding their trust in Council and the process.

Figures 18 to 22 display the results. Overall, the main change is one to two more people disagreeing with all the statements, thus showing a minor decrease in trusting Council and the process. The level of agreement and neutrality across all the questions varies.

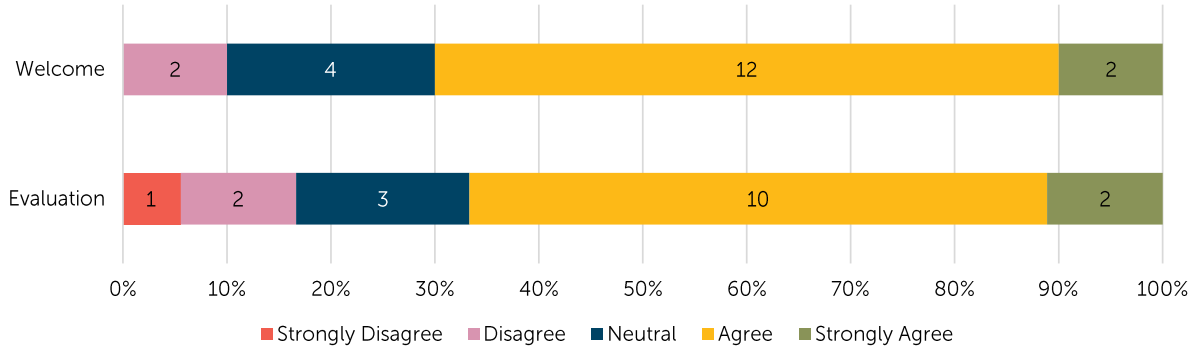


Figure 18: Welcome and Evaluation survey responses to the statement 'I believe Council is planning for the long-term future of the Strathbogie Shire.'

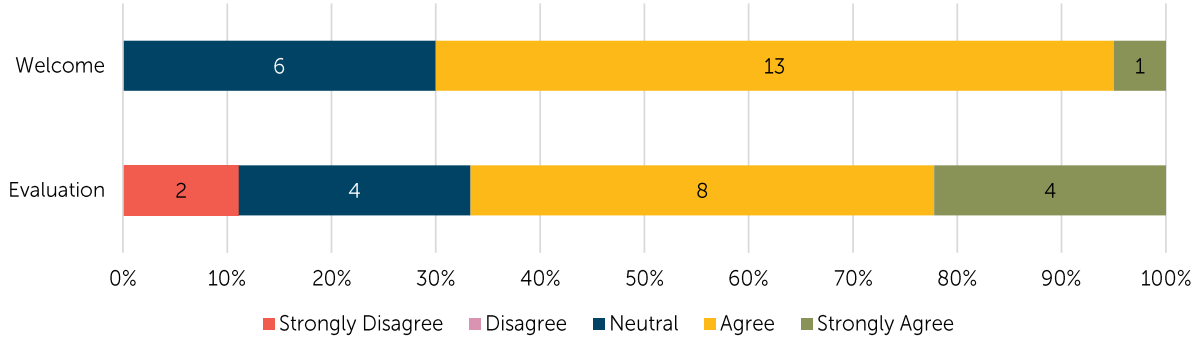


Figure 19: Welcome and Evaluation survey responses to the statement 'I have a positive relationship with Strathbogie Shire Council.'

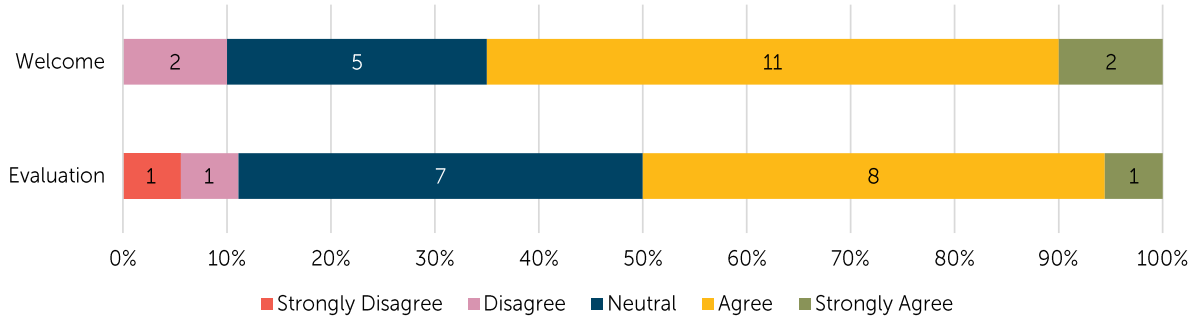


Figure 20: Welcome and Evaluation survey responses to the statement 'I trust that Strathbogie Shire Council actively supports community involvement in making decisions.'

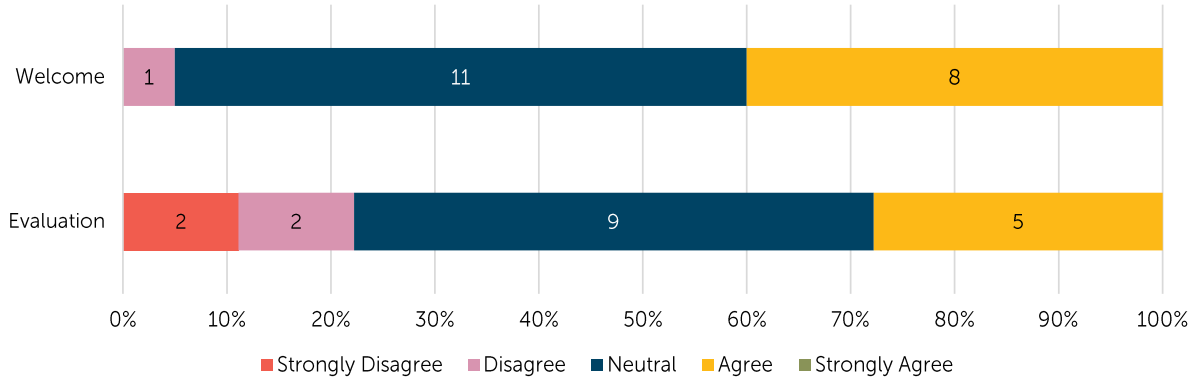


Figure 21: Welcome and Evaluation survey responses to the statement 'I am confident that Strathbogie Shire Council will honour the outcomes of this process.'

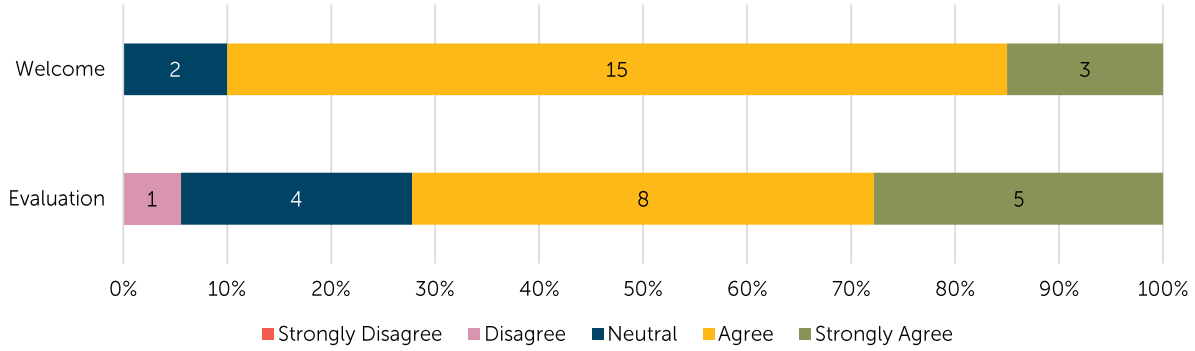


Figure 22: Welcome and Evaluation survey responses to the statement 'I had the skills and knowledge to contribute to Strathbogie Shire Council's decision making processes.'

ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

In the Evaluation Survey Community Panel members rated their level of agreement with five statements regarding their experience in the engagement process.

Figure 23 displays the result. Overall, there is high level of agreement with the exception that the quality of information assisted Community Panel members to form and opinion.

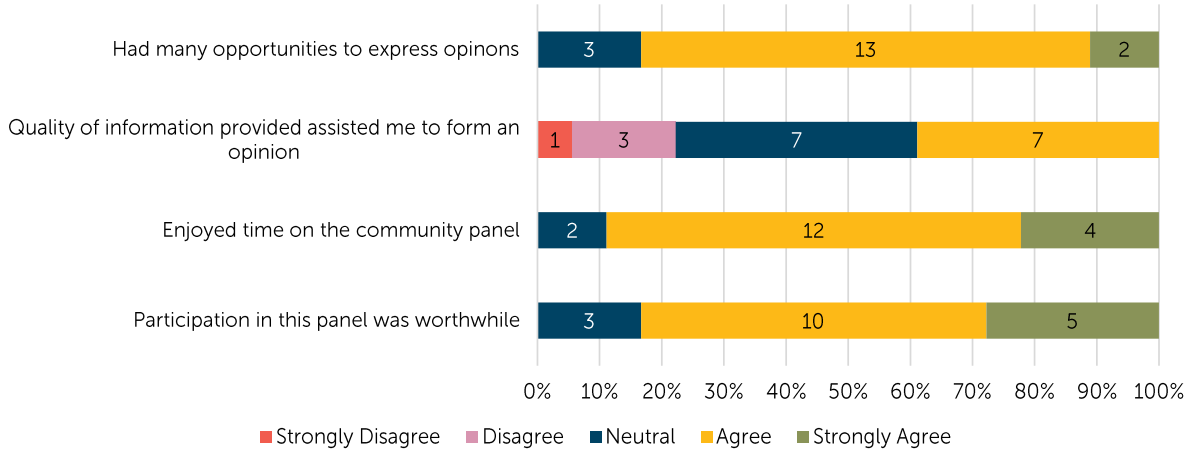


Figure 23: Evaluation survey responses to statements regarding the engagement process.

MOTIVATIONS TO JOIN THE COMMUNITY PANEL

The following is a summary of what motivated respondents to join the Community Panel before Session one:

- understanding decisions made through the process will impact Strathbogie Shire residents and wanting to partake in these decisions
- acknowledging or supporting a growing population whilst wanting to protect rural areas or prime agricultural land, see the area flourish, and minimise negative impacts
- interest in what Council is currently thinking and planning for including locations for growth and use of planning controls
- believing community engagement is essential in land use planning decisions and wanting to contribute to a beneficial outcome for the land and people
- interest or experience in the challenges and importance of strategic planning and wanting Council to make sustainable decisions with integrated outcomes
- understands community concerns about the quality, relevance and implementation of strategic planning including the lack of infrastructure to support development
- desire to provide a viewpoint as a new or young Strathbogie Shire resident
- concerns about the impact from energy targets on unique landscapes, biodiversity, areas of significance and rural residents
- belief that the existing strategies have not evolved over time to meet community needs and changing land use patterns.

I have lived and worked in the area for nearly 40 years, with strong involvement with both Landcare, CFA, and farming groups. I acknowledge our environment and have an understanding of it and also recognize the need for growth and sustainability. I also own land zoned Rural Living.

I have a great deal of community involvement working for the CFA, and also a lot of respect to the land we are living on. Having input from community is a wonderful thing to do, and working toward outcomes which benefit both the land and people was my motivation.

VALUES OF DELIBERATIVE ENGAGEMENT PROCESSES

In both the Welcome and Evaluation Surveys, Community Panel members were asked about what they found most valuable about engagement processes like this (deliberative engagement processes).

The below summarises responses from the Welcome Survey before the Evaluation Survey.

Welcome Survey

The following is a summary of what Community Panel members found most valuable about engagement processes like this before Session one:

- meeting interesting and different people which enables the Community Panel members and Council to hear and understand a variety of thoughts, opinions and views
- hopefully leading to an outcome and strategies that benefits and serves Strathbogie Shire residents
- actions and frameworks for growth that are based on diverse case studies, storytelling, discussions and community sentiments
- enables community members to understand the challenges, context and examples of land use planning including the use and need for different land use zones
- opportunity to contribute positively to the future land use of Strathbogie Shire
- acknowledging it is a collaborative and inclusive approach in the planning process that builds community confidence and genuine relationships.

Community engagement informs the Council, as the planning authority, about community priorities. Community engagement also serves to inform the community about the needs and priorities for the future management of the Shire.

The framework for any growth needs to be flexible and robust. Having diversity in ideas and opinions and importantly an environment that promotes genuine and meaningful discussion.

Evaluation Survey
The following is a summary of what Community Panel members found most valuable about engagement processes like this after Session three:

- An opportunity to bring together people with varying experiences to understand different views and opinions.
- Being able to share experiences and views to inform decision making processes.
- Hearing from planners about their rationale whilst also sharing local problems with them.
- Unsure until the final outcome is seen and enacted as actions speak louder than words.
- It assists Council and planners to understand and wants and needs from those who will be impacted the most by the long-term strategies.
- Independent facilitation so the process is respectful and does not become a political forum from alternative tangents.

It, grassroots democracy in action. It enables members of the community to express their views on decisions that will have a long-term impact on their community's future. It's also great to meet the planners and hear their perspectives and rationales.

Gaining the perspectives of a wide range of people who come to the meetings with different lived experiences and knowledge about their community, towns, rural areas and what is important to them, their families and neighbours.

I'm not sure a community panel with all its built in bias is the best way to land on the best strategic land use decisions. I think a panel of independent consultants / professionals - who drew on the local knowledge and community sentiment - would be better placed to make a judgements - dismiss the red herrings - and put appropriate weight to the various options.

IMPROVEMENTS FOR FUTURE COMMUNITY PANEL PROCESSES

In the Evaluation Survey, Community Panel members were asked what could be improved in future Community Panel processes. The following summarises their responses:

- More time is needed during and between sessions as it felt rushed and pressured. This would enable more conversations about housing in the rural and farming zones, more time to collaborate on larger townships, adapt to issues that arise in earlier sessions, being able to hear for-and against views on issues, help make decisions, understand long reports and more time to vote.
- More accurate and up to date information to inform decision making was needed including updated flood overlay maps, planning rules, regulations, zones and history in addition to non-planning speak about what the strategies are hoping to achieve.
- A better process to make decisions given the last group had greater influence on the recommendations.
- An earlier check-in with panel members about whether the process is meeting their expectations and understanding of the Panel's purpose.
- A clearer explanation about the commitment needed to consider materials and vote on decisions.
- Clearer outcomes.
- Less clunky online forms.

I understand this is a balancing act, but more time dedicated to the more contentious issues. If these issues are identified in the early sessions, they should be nimble enough so that the remaining sessions can be changed to accommodate more discussion.

More information regarding current planning rules and regulations, about the various zones and what they all mean. Some history would also be good.

7. Councillor reflections

On Tuesday 4 March 2025 during a Councillor workshop, Capire presented an overview of the Community Panel process before Capire, Council, Shannon Davies from SD Planning and two Community Panel members presented the outputs and preliminary level of support votes (13 voters) and comments to Councillors.

Councillors were invited to share reflections. These are summarised related to the principles and township recommendations below.

PRINCIPLES

- Councillors observed that 65% of the Community Panel members can live with principles 1,2,3 and 4 and there still was not consensus for the two Principle 5 options.
- Councillors appreciated the Community Panel members' sharing their experience and thoughts on prime agricultural land, rural living, land care, townships and bushfires.

AVENEL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Given the level of support votes were preliminary (13 votes before a total of 17 voters in the end) and there were only 12 voters for the Avenel recommendations, it was questioned why there were discrepancies in the numbers reported.

STRATHBOGIE RECOMMENDATIONS

- A Councillor asked if there were any comments on the Loath it.
- It was questioned if people wanted more growth in Strathbogie. Following confirmation by a Panel member that people want more rural residential, a Councillor raised the consideration for rural living east of the golf course along Brookleigh Road.

VIOLET TOWN RECOMMENDATIONS

- A Councillor asked if there were constraints on the Rural Living Zone and specifically if there is an impact on agriculture and land with lots of sheep, for land that is changed from Rural Living Zone.
    - After the question was answered that the main restriction is to lot sizes, there was clarification asked around if high intensity farming is excluded, as high intensity farming is the only possible thing on a small block.

EUROA RECOMMENDATIONS

- Councillors clarified details including zoning and adequate storm water needed on the Euroa map (Figure 9).
    - After Council officers responded, it was stated there is still potential flooding concerns for the areas identified for further investigation for the Rural Living Zone.
- Questioned what the availability of industrial land noting the Euroa growth strategy and estimated growth.
- One Councillor questioned the growth data for Euroa, suggesting some population data might not have been accounted for.

NAGAMBIE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Councillors clarified and questioned the different areas on the map (see Figure 11).
    - A Councillor thought the recommendations for removing current highlighted areas were short-sighted and not very visionary but understood the removal of the township boundary north of Vickers Road.
    - A couple of Councillors agreed about removing the area south of Vickers Road to increase the value to the land.

  - Councillors discussed residential next to the railway line. One Councillor questioned who would want to live next to a railway line whilst another shared that downsizers do.

- It was commented that wording regarding 'do not' recommendations need to be thought about when undertaking amendments to the planning scheme.
- It was highlighted that there is a need to consider future stages of growth and development in Nagambie and acknowledge the information and the data available. A Community Panel member commented that the Community Panel highly valued the heritage of the core in Nagambie and not wanting to detract from that.
- Once Councillor acknowledged that heritage and tourism are important and need to be protected but questioned that the process did not comment on the need for hospitals and areas such as industry and how this should be linked to appropriate locations for growth.

GENERAL COMMENTS ON OUTPUTS

- It was commented that the recommendations were routine and relevant to planning for what is happening now, rather than planning for communities and building a 25-to-50-year strategy.
  - It was stated that it will be interesting to see if Council can address the planning related issues.
- There was acknowledgement around concern for growth in different areas and asked if there was anxiety about that and where the description for 'growth' is.
  - A Councillor acknowledged that potential growth will surprise some people and that we need to be ready for that, especially as Nagambie and Avenel have unlimited water support but the other townships do not.
  - One Councillor questioned that if growth is directed to one township for example, Nagambie, does that mean that investment in infrastructure, for example water, will not be made in other townships where it is needed for example, Euroa.
- Infrastructure
  - It was shared that Nagambie has freeway access and is more liveable being 15 minutes closer to Melbourne where the difference is noticed.
  - One Councillor shared that we need to take the opportunity with what is happening in Nagambie to fight for better infrastructure and use the momentum to focus on growth in other areas too.
    - Two Councillors agreed with the need of connecting infrastructure and intelligent planning including connection to good infrastructure in existing developments rather than possible developments that don't currently have developers.
  - There was discussion regarding rough roads and the chicken and egg situation of infrastructure before or after developers arrive. It was stated that advocacy and data help with this.
- It was shared that farming and housing is still a big complex conversation and that these stories need to be shared.
- There were comments regarding bushfires, specifically hard boundaries between townships and rural land. The need for an enforceable boundary was questioned.
- With respect to concern around heritage and not rezoning near railway lines, it was commented that heritage can still be respected and potentially protected but it is about creating ambience and a township culture. The Seymour Police Station was given as an example of an old building that was maintained with a new police station next door.

PROCESS QUESTIONS

- There were questions regarding the number and involvement of the Community Panel members and any perceived conflicts of interest.

8. Next steps

The next step is drafting the RRLUS and UGS before the draft strategies are shared with the community for comment. Additionally, the township strategies will be updated.

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Capire acknowledges and deeply respects the Wurundjeri people and the Traditional Owners of the Victorian land.

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VERSION 1

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Urban Enterprise is located on Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Country. We pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging and also acknowledge all Traditional Owners of Country on which we work.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Dwelling - A structure which is intended to have people live in it, and which is habitable on Census night. Some examples of dwellings are houses, motels, flats, caravans, prisons, tents, humpies and houseboats.

Flat or apartment - all dwellings in blocks of flats or apartments. These dwellings do not have their own private grounds and usually share a common entrance foyer or stairwell.

Median sales price - the value of the middle item when all sale prices are arranged in ascending order of magnitude.

House - a combination of detached home, semi-detached/terrace home/row house, house and flat/studio.

Semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse - These dwellings have their own private grounds and no other dwelling above or below them. They are either attached in some structural way to one or more dwellings or are separated from neighbouring dwellings by less than half a metre.

Separate house – A house which is separated from other dwellings by a space of at least half a metre.

Unit – Include a combination of single strata unit/villa unit/townhouse, conjoined strata unit/townhouse, residential company share unit (ground level), residential company share unit (within multi-storey development), strata unit or flat, residential investment flats, individual flat, retirement village unit.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. ENGAGEMENT

Urban Enterprise was engaged by SD Planning on behalf of Strathbogie Shire Council (Council) to prepare a residential demand and supply assessment to inform the preparation of an Urban Growth Strategy (UGS) for the municipality.

1.2. SCOPE

The scope of the assessment relates to the demand and supply of housing in the main townships of Nagambie, Euroa, Avenel, Violet Town, Strathbogie and Longwood. These are the only towns in the Shire with land in urban residential zones.

The location of the towns within the scope of the assessment is shown in Figure 1.

F1. LOCATION OF TOWNS IN STRATHBOGIE SHIRE



Source: Strathbogie Planning Scheme.

1.3. REPORT STRUCTURE

This report includes the following content:

- Section 2 provides an overview of the existing housing available in the Shire and current property market conditions at the municipal level, as well as analysis of housing affordability.
- Section 3 includes an analysis of the demand for housing and projections of the location and type of demand that is expected to occur across the Shire.
- Section 4 includes a residential land supply assessment for the main towns.
- Section 5 provides an analysis of demand and supply indicators at the local level for each study towns; and
- Section 6 summarises findings and implications for the Urban Growth Strategy.

2. HOUSING AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This section provides a summary of the existing housing stock available in the municipality and the demographic profile of the community.

2.2. DWELLING PROFILE

In 2021, a total of 6,143 dwellings were present in the municipality.

As shown in Table 1, 95% of all dwellings were detached houses, and 75% of dwellings had 3 or more bedrooms. From 2016 to 2021, dwellings that were detached houses, and those with 4 or more bedrooms, increased as a proportion of all dwellings.

Just over a quarter (28%) of dwellings in 2021 were owned with a mortgage and a further 18% of dwellings were rented, relatively low shared compared with the State average.

Over the preceding 5 year period, there were an additional 480 dwellings counted, representing an average increase of 96 dwellings per annum.

T1. SUMMARY OF DWELLING STOCK, STRATHBOGIE MUNICIPALITY

Strathbogie LGA		2021		2016	
		#	%	#	%
Dwellings	Total Private Dwellings	6,143	-	5,663	-
Dwelling Type	Separate House	4481	95%	3866	93%
	Semi-detached	179	4%	124	3%
	Flat or apartment	13	0%	94	2%
	Other	66	1%	68	2%
No. of bedrooms	Studio apartments*	44	1%	36	1%
	1 bedroom	241	5%	219	5%
	2 bedrooms	856	18%	792	19%
	3 bedrooms	2344	49%	2119	51%
	4 bedrooms	1053	22%	842	20%
	5 or more bedrooms	207	4%	134	3%
	Not stated	434	-	397	-
Tenure	Owned outright	2381	52%	1963	49%
	Owned with mortgage	1286	28%	1196	30%
	Rented	822	18%	817	20%
	Other tenure type	133	3%	47	1%
	Not stated	118	-	146	-

Source: ABS Census 2021. Not stated excluded from calculation of proportions.
* also includes bedsitters.

Table 2 shows a breakdown of dwelling size and tenure for each of the study towns. The analysis shows that:

- Larger dwellings and dwellings owned with a mortgage are prominent in Avenel;
- Smaller dwellings are more common in Nagambie and Violet Town; and
- Euroa and Nagambie have the highest proportion of dwelling stock that is rented.

T2. SUMMARY OF DWELLING STOCK, TOWNSHIPS IN STRATHBOGIE LGA

		Nagambie	Violet Town	Euroa	Avenel	Longwood	Strathbogie LGA
Dwellings	Total Private Dwellings	1,071	376	1,773	418	255	6,143
No. of bedrooms	Studio apartments*	0%	0%	1%	0%	2%	1%
	1 bedroom	6%	10%	5%	2%	6%	5%
	2 bedrooms	21%	20%	19%	14%	19%	18%
	3 bedrooms	48%	55%	55%	56%	49%	49%
	4 bedrooms	23%	14%	18%	25%	21%	22%
	5 or more bedrooms	3%	0%	3%	5%	3%	4%
Tenure	Owned outright	48%	52%	48%	47%	57%	52%
	Owned with mortgage	27%	25%	27%	36%	31%	28%
	Rented	25%	22%	25%	16%	8%	18%
	Other tenure type	0%	1%	1%	2%	4%	3%

Source: ABS Census 2021. Not stated excluded from calculation of proportions.
* also includes bedsitters.

DWELLINGS OCCUPIED BY DIFFERENT HOUSEHOLD TYPES

Table 3 shows a breakdown of the main dwelling types and tenures occupied by each of the main household type in Strathbogie Shire in 2021. The data shows that:

- Couple families without children are most likely to own a house outright than other household types, and most of these households occupy larger dwellings with 3 or 4 bedrooms.
- Couples with children are the most likely household type to have a mortgage, while one parent families are the most likely to rent.
- Lone person households are the most likely to occupy smaller dwellings with 1 or 2 bedrooms, and almost a quarter of these households rent.

T3. STRATHBOGIE SHIRE TENURE AND DWELLING SIZE BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE, 2021

Household Type	Tenure	Top 3 Dwelling Size
Couple Family with no Children	Owned Outright (67%) Owned with a mortgage (23%) Rented (8%)	3 bed (56%) 4 bed (23%) 2 bed (15%)
Couple Family with Children	Owned with a mortgage (55%) Owned Outright (28%) Rented (14%)	3 bed (43%) 4 bed (40%) 5 bed or more (10%)
One Parent Family	Rented (36%) Owned Outright (3%) Owned with a mortgage (28%)	3 bed (55%) 4 bed (25%) 2 bed (12%)
Lone person household	Owned Outright (56%) Rented (24%) Owned with a mortgage (16%)	3 bed (46%) 2 bed (30%) 1 bed (12%)
Group household	Rented (39%) Owned Outright (39%) Owned with a mortgage (17%)	3 bed (44%) 5 or more bed (22%) 2 bed (18%)

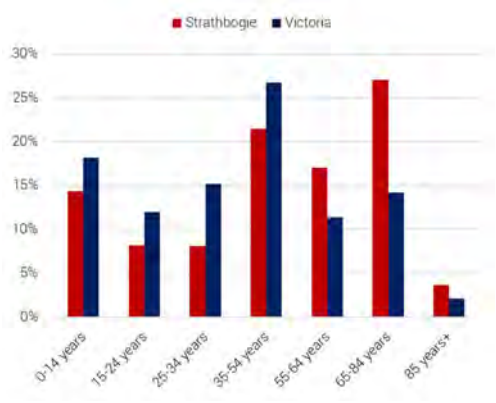
Source: ABS Census, 2021.

2.3. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Figures 2 to 7 provide a snapshot of the demographic profile of the existing community and an indication of the projected future demographic changes based on State government population projections (Victoria in Future 2023). Key points are:

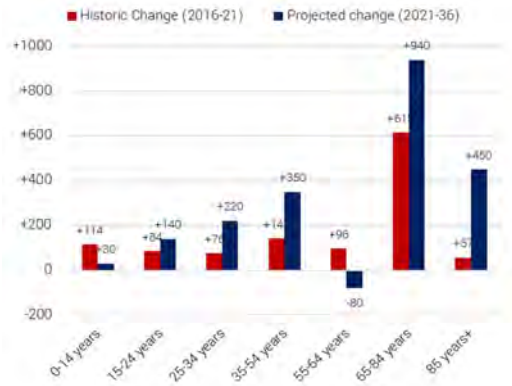
- Age:
  - Strathbogie Shire has a considerably older population than Victoria overall. The median age of 53 years compares with 43 years for regional Victoria and 38 years across the State.
  - 31% of residents are aged 65 years and over, compared with 16% across Victoria, and population projections show that 68% of the net change in population will be in the age groups above 65 years.
- Household type:
  - In 2021, Strathbogie Shire had a relatively low proportion of families with children compared with regional Victoria, and a higher proportion of couples without children and lone person households.
  - Population projections show that lone person households will be the household type which experiences the greatest proportional increase over the period to 2036. Lone person households are projected to comprise 44% of the net change in households over the period 2021 to 2036.
- Income:
  - The Strathbogie community is characterised by relatively low household incomes compared with regional Victoria overall, with 38% of households in the lowest income quartile in Victoria.
  - When the 2016 and 2021 Census results are compared, a substantial proportion of the net additional households over the period (24%) were in the highest income quartile, indicating that recent arrivals to the municipality may have different socio-economic attributes compared with the existing community, (on average).

F2. AGE DISTRIBUTION



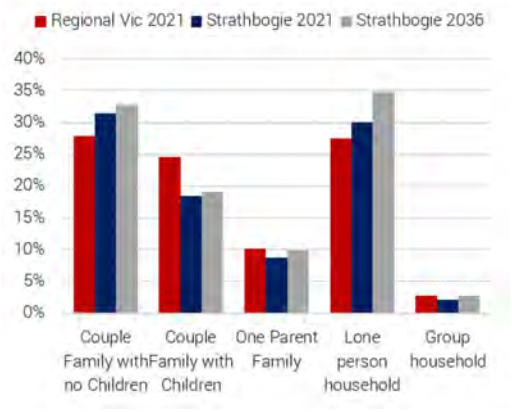
Source: ABS Census.

F3. POPULATION CHANGE BY AGE



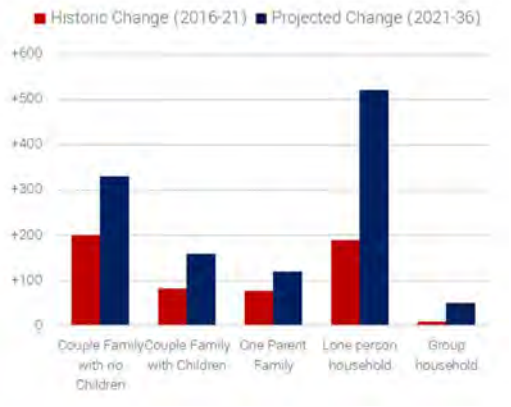
Source: ABS Census and Victoria in Future 2023.

F4. HOUSEHOLD TYPE



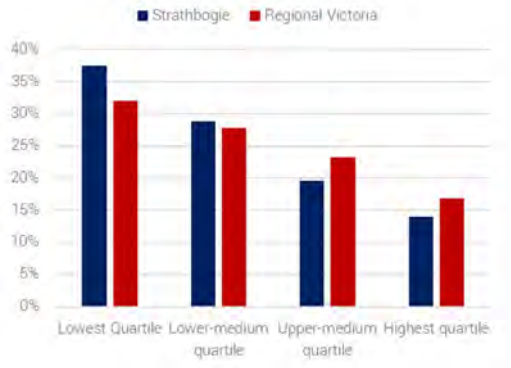
Source: ABS Census and Victoria in Future 2023.

F5. HOUSEHOLD TYPE CHANGE



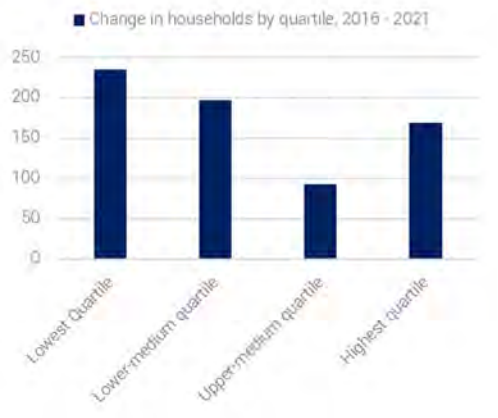
Source: ABS Census and Victoria in Future 2023.

F6. HOUSEHOLD INCOME, 2021



Source: ABS Census, compiled by .id (informed decisions)

F7. INCOME QUARTILE CHANGE, 2016-2021



Source: ABS Census, compiled by .id (informed decisions)

2.4. HOUSING MARKET CONDITIONS

SALES AND PRICES

Table 4 and Figure 8 show residential property values and trends across the Shire. The data shows that:

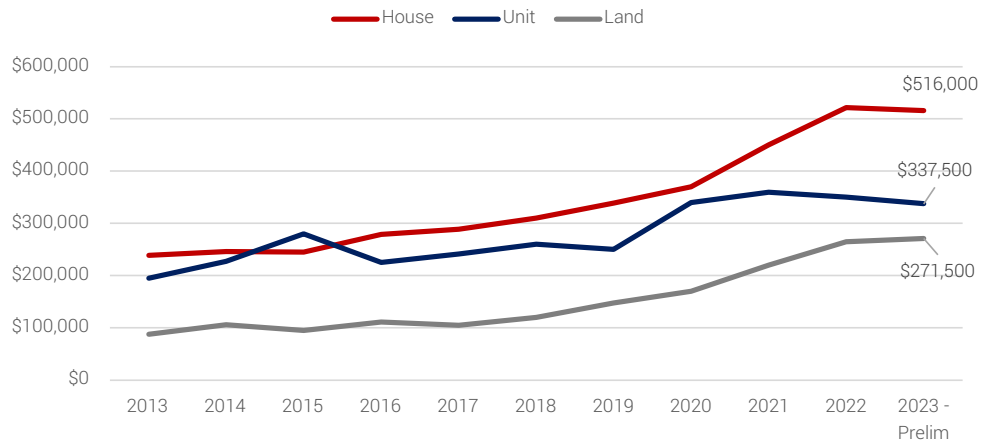
- House and vacant land prices in the municipality have seen significant growth in the past 5 years, at a much higher rate than the preceding 5 years. Houses have appreciated at a year-on-year average rate of almost 11%, whilst vacant land has more than doubled in the past 5 years and reflects an average annual growth rate of 18%. Unit prices have experienced less growth, averaging 5-6% per annum over the past 10 years.
- In 2022 and 2023, house and unit price growth has abated consistent with the broader market (influenced to a large extent by a period of sustained interest rate rises), however the vacant lot price has continued to increase. This is a potential indicator of a constrained level of supply of new house lots available to the market relative to demand.

T4. HISTORIC PROPERTY VALUES BY TYPE

Type	2013	2018	2023	AAGR (2013-2018)	AAGR (2018 - 2023)
House	$238,750	$310,000	$516,000	5.4%	10.7%
Unit	$195,000	$260,000	$337,500	5.9%	5.4%
Land	$88,000	$120,000	$271,500	6.4%	17.7%

Source: A Guide to Property Values, 2023.

F8. STRATHBOGIE MEDIAN RESIDENTIAL VALUES BY PROPERTY TYPE, 2013-23



Source: A Guide to Property Values, 2023.

The state of Strathbogie's residential property market can also be analysed by reference to sales and transaction volumes. Data on these indicators in Table 5 and Figure 9 show that:

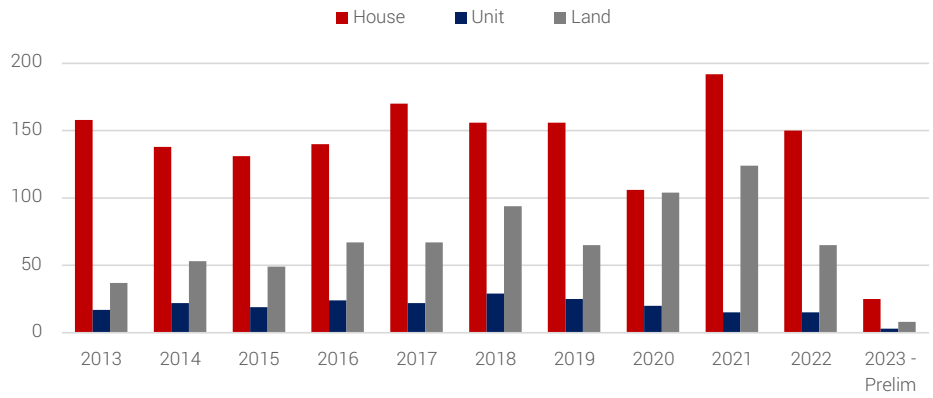
- House sale volumes have remained relatively stable, other than a reduction in 2020 due to the COVID pandemic and a subsequent increase in 2021.
- Lot sales have steadily increased over the period, from less than 40 in 2013 to a peak of 124 in 2021. Vacant lot sales decreased significantly in 2022, which could be attributed to both a lack of supply or a 'pull forward' of demand into 2021.

T5. STRATHBOGIE SALES VOLUMES BY PRODUCT TYPE, PAST 5 YEARS AND LONG TERM SUMMARY

Property type	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023 - Prelim	Average Sales (Past 10 Yrs)
House	156	156	106	192	150	25	150
Unit	29	25	20	15	15	3	21
Land	94	65	104	124	65	8	73

Source: A Guide to Property Values, 2023

F9. STRATHBOGIE SALES VOLUMES BY PRODUCT TYPE, 2013-23



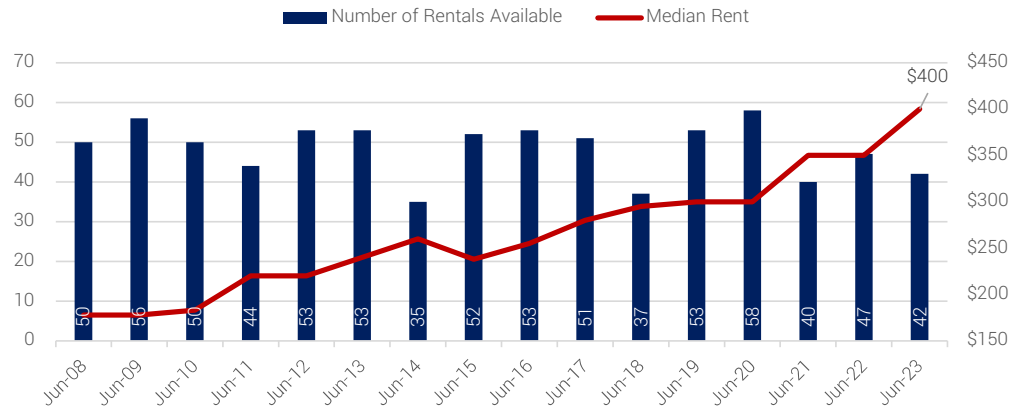
Source: A Guide to Property Values, 2023.

RENTAL MARKET

Strathbogie Shire's rental market is relatively limited in terms of volume. Figures 10 and 11 show that:

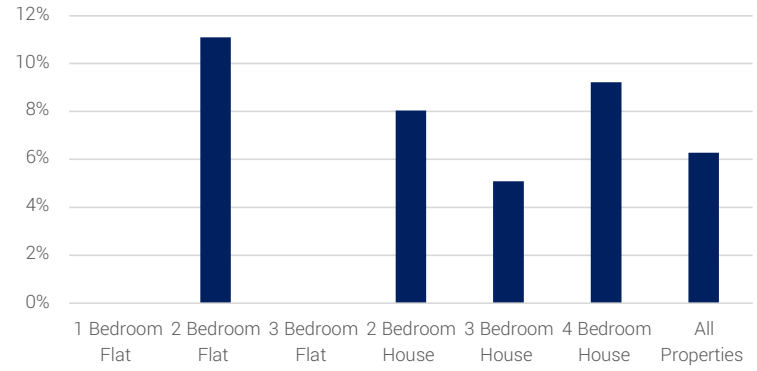
- On average, the municipality has had 48 'available' rentals on the market at any given point in time over the past 15 years. This relates to rentals advertised. This volume has remained relatively consistent since 2008, despite ongoing dwelling growth overall.
- The median rent in June 2023 was $400 per week. Rents have continued to increase at an average of 6.3% per annum over the past 5 years.
- The highest rate of rent price growth over the period 2018 – 2023 was for 2 bedroom flats (+11% per annum), an indication of high levels of demand for this dwelling type relative to supply.
- The number of active bonds held by the Residential Tenancies Bond Authority in Strathbogie Shire increased relatively steadily from 2008 to 2021, but has since declined. As a proportion of total dwellings, only 10% of all dwellings in 2021 has an active rental bond.

F10. STRATHBOGIE LGA RENTAL AVAILABILITY AND MEDIAN RENT HISTORY



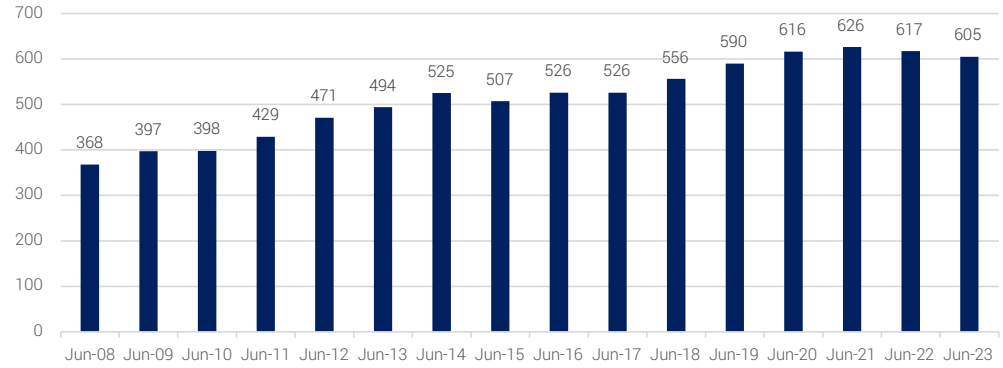
Source: Rental Report, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, 2023.

F11. AVERAGE ANNUAL RENT GROWTH BY DWELLING SIZE, 2018 - 2023



Source: Rental Report, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, 2023. No data available for 1 bedroom and 3 bedroom flats.

T6. ACTIVE RENTAL BONDS, STRATHBOGIE LGA



Source: Rental Report, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, 2023.

MARKET CONDITIONS AND KEY MARKET SEGMENTS

Consultation was undertaken with real estate agents to discuss current residential market conditions and key housing market segments across the Shire. The following summarises comments made by agents:

- A significant component of the attraction of the LGA to residents is the proximity and ease of access of the major townships to Shepparton, Benalla, Seymore and Greater Melbourne. Buyers moving from metropolitan Melbourne are a primary source of housing demand.
- Spatially, demand can generally be considered within two distinct corridors based around the Goulburn Valley Highway (Seymour/ Nagambie / Shepparton), and the Hume Highway (Seymour / Avenel / Longwood / Euroa / Violet Town / Benalla). Buyers generally do not consider alternatives in the 'other' corridor to their area of interest.
- Price is increasingly a factor that influences purchasing decisions. Recent strong price growth in vacant land prices is causing greater demand for smaller lot sizes.
- Retirees who purchase in Strathbogie (whether from within Strathbogie or outside the LGA) tend to look for lifestyle villages, or vacant lots to build a retirement home on.
- Several agents commented on the significant number of investors, downsizers and second home buyers active in the market. Investors and builders typically purchase newer vacant land (although not exclusively), while second home buyers generally seek holiday homes or a dwelling in close proximity to family. A significant proportion of downsizers move to Strathbogie from Shepparton.
- House and lot sales were steady pre-pandemic but boomed during and immediately after the pandemic. A significant proportion of purchasers during the pandemic were those priced out of areas further south such as Broadford. In 2023, however, market activity has been subdued by comparison.
- There was also a noticeable increase post-pandemic in buyers seeking a second home in an attractive setting with the flexibility to work from home in Strathbogie and commute occasionally to Melbourne.
- While some younger purchasers (eg. professional couples) are entering the municipality, very few families are attracted to the area, and those that do move often then move out of the Shire. A lack of available childcare facilities in the municipality was noted as a major deterrent for families.

2.5. HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

OVERALL AFFORDABILITY

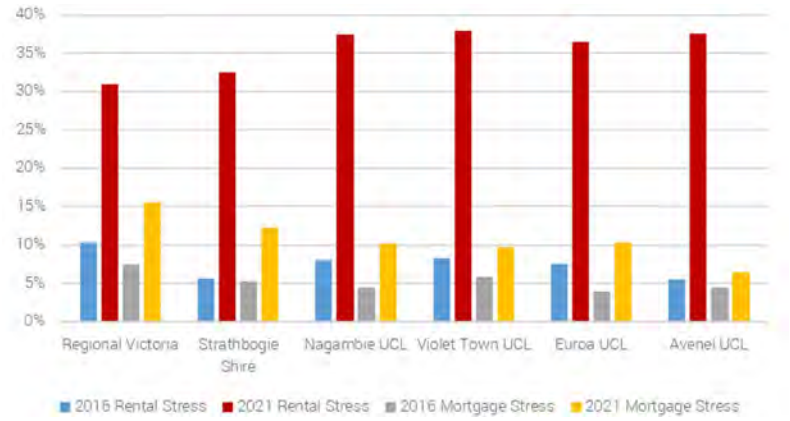
Two measures of housing affordability are published through the ABS Census:

- Rental Affordability Indicator (RAID); and
- Mortgage Affordability Indicator (MAID).

These variables identify, at the household level, if mortgage or rent costs are more or less than 30% of the household's income. The results for Strathbogie in 2016 and 2021 are shown in Figure 12, showing that:

- One third (33%) of Strathbogie Shire households renting in 2021 were in rental stress, a higher proportion than the regional Victorian average (31%). The incidence of rental stress was even higher in the main towns of Nagambie, Violet Town, Euroa and Avenel (all either 37% or 38%).
- The proportion of households in rental stress increased significantly from 2016 (6%) to 2021 (33%).
- Mortgage stress was considerably less common in the Shire (12%) than rental stress, however the proportion of households experiencing mortgage stress in 2021 was more than double the proportion in 2016 (5%).

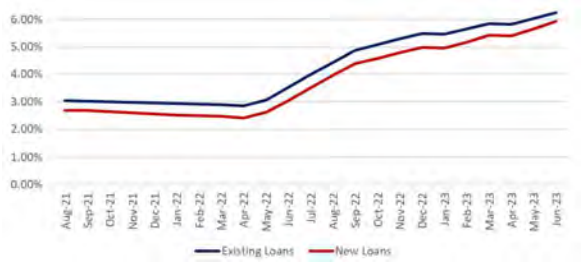
F12. HOUSING AFFORDABLITY CENSUS MEASURES, STRATHBOGIE SHIRE AND MAIN TOWNSHIPS



Source: ABS Census; Urban Enterprise.

It is noted that since the Census data was collected in August 2021, a series of interest rate rises have occurred which have significantly affected housing affordability for mortgage holders with a variable interest rate. As shown in Figure 13, the average variable interest rate increased from 3% per annum in August 2021 to over 6% in June 2023. These changes will have substantially increased the proportion of Strathbogie households with a mortgage who are experiencing mortgage stress from the proportions shown in Figure 12.

F13. AVERAGE VARIABLE HOME LOAN INTEREST RATE CHANGES, 2021 - 2023



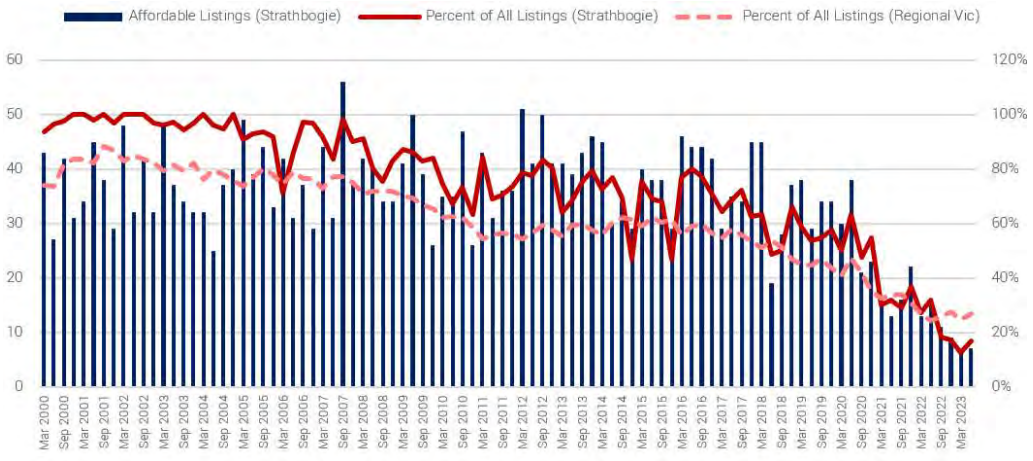
Source: RBA.

AFFORDABLE RENTALS

The Department of Families, Fairness, and Housing publish estimates of the number and proportion of rentals that are considered affordable in each quarter. A rental property is defined as affordable if the rent is less than 30% of the income of a low-income household.

As shown in Figure 14, the proportion of rentals in Strathbogie LGA categorised as affordable for low income households has steadily decreased since 2004, following a similar pattern to Regional Victoria overall. In June 2023, less than 20% of rentals in Strathbogie Shire were categorised as affordable.

F14. AFFORDABLE RENTALS, STRATHBOGIE AND REGIONAL VICTORIA



Source: Rental Report, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, 2023.

An analysis was prepared to more closely consider the ability of Strathbogie households on lower and moderate incomes to afford rental housing in the municipality, including a breakdown by household type and dwelling type. The assessment calculates whether lower and moderate income households can afford to pay for a typical rental property[1] in the Shire without experiencing rental stress.

The results are shown in Table 7 with findings as follows:

- Single adults (which make up 30% of all households in Strathbogie Shire) cannot afford typical rental properties of any size if they are classified as low or very low income households.
- Couples with very low incomes cannot afford typical rental properties of any size, and couples with low incomes are only likely to be able to afford to rent units / flats, not separate houses.
- Couples with dependents (i.e. families) on very low incomes can not afford typical rental properties of any size, and those on low incomes are unlikely to be able to afford larger 4 bedroom houses.

Overall, the findings indicate the difficulty of low and very-low income singles and couples in affording market rental housing without experiencing rental stress. This is a particularly important consideration for Council given the age profile of the community and the projections for the majority of net change in households to be older singles and couples over the next 15-20 years.

[1] Based on the median rent, with a 10% discount to take into account that lower income households would generally seek lower rent properties. A rent of 10% lower than the median generally reflects a property around the 25% percentile of all rental properties, however the distribution varies.

T7. VERY LOW-, LOW-, AND MODERATE-INCOME RENTAL AFFORDABILITY – STRATHBOGIE LGA

Weekly Income - Single Adult	Typical property affordable without rental stress				
	Property Type	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23
VERY LOW INCOME					
$417	1 Bedroom Flat	No	No	N/A	N/A
	2 Bedroom Flat	No	No	No	No
	3 Bedroom Flat	N/A	No	N/A	N/A
	2 Bedroom House	No	N/A	No	No
	3 Bedroom House	No	No	No	No
	4 Bedroom House	No	No	No	No
	All Rental Properties	No	No	No	No
LOW INCOME					
$668	1 Bedroom Flat	No	No	N/A	N/A
	2 Bedroom Flat	No	No	No	No
	3 Bedroom Flat	N/A	No	N/A	N/A
	2 Bedroom House	No	N/A	No	No
	3 Bedroom House	No	No	No	No
	4 Bedroom House	No	No	No	No
	All Rental Properties	No	No	No	No
MODERATE INCOME					
$1,002	1 Bedroom Flat	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A
	2 Bedroom Flat	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	3 Bedroom Flat	N/A	No	N/A	N/A
	2 Bedroom House	Yes	N/A	No	No
	3 Bedroom House	No	No	No	No
	4 Bedroom House	No	No	No	No
	All Rental Properties	No	No	No	No

Weekly Income - Couple, No Dependents	Typical property affordable without rental stress				
	Property Type	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23
VERY LOW INCOME					
$626	1 Bedroom Flat	No	No	N/A	N/A
	2 Bedroom Flat	No	No	No	No
	3 Bedroom Flat	N/A	No	N/A	N/A
	2 Bedroom House	No	N/A	No	No
	3 Bedroom House	No	No	No	No
	4 Bedroom House	No	No	No	No
	All Rental Properties	No	No	No	No
LOW INCOME					
$1,002	1 Bedroom Flat	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A
	2 Bedroom Flat	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	3 Bedroom Flat	N/A	No	N/A	N/A
	2 Bedroom House	Yes	N/A	No	No
	3 Bedroom House	No	No	No	No
	4 Bedroom House	No	No	No	No
	All Rental Properties	No	No	No	No
MODERATE INCOME					
$1,503	1 Bedroom Flat	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A
	2 Bedroom Flat	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	3 Bedroom Flat	N/A	No	N/A	N/A
	2 Bedroom House	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes
	3 Bedroom House	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	4 Bedroom House	No	No	No	Yes
	All Rental Properties	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Weekly Income - Couple with Dependents	Typical property affordable without rental stress				
	Property Type	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23
VERY LOW INCOME					
$876	1 Bedroom Flat	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A
	2 Bedroom Flat	No	No	No	No
	3 Bedroom Flat	N/A	No	N/A	N/A
	2 Bedroom House	No	N/A	No	No
	3 Bedroom House	No	No	No	No
	4 Bedroom House	No	No	No	No
	All Rental Properties	No	No	No	No
LOW INCOME					
$1,403	1 Bedroom Flat	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A
	2 Bedroom Flat	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	3 Bedroom Flat	N/A	No	N/A	N/A
	2 Bedroom House	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes
	3 Bedroom House	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	4 Bedroom House	No	No	No	No
	All Rental Properties	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
MODERATE INCOME					
$2,104	1 Bedroom Flat	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A
	2 Bedroom Flat	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	3 Bedroom Flat	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A
	2 Bedroom House	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes
	3 Bedroom House	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	4 Bedroom House	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	All Rental Properties	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: Urban Enterprise. Income bands based on Government Affordability Thresholds for Regional Victoria.

SOCIAL HOUSING

The Victorian Housing Register includes data on the number of applicants for social housing who have nominated particular region and housing size preferences. The data areas of relevant to Strathbogie Shire are Nagambie, Benalla (which includes Benalla, Euroa, Violet Town and Lurg) and Seymour (which includes Seymour, Avenel and Whiteheads Creek).

As shown in Table 8, there is a total of 1,339 households on the VHR waiting list who have listed locations in the Strathbogie region as their preference. The greatest area of preference is the Benalla Region (653 applications, including 392 priority access applications).

In terms of dwelling size, the majority of application preferences are for 1 bedroom dwellings (67%).

T8. VICTORIAN HOHSING REGISTER APPLICANTS IN STRATHBOGIE REGION, SEPTEMBER 2023

VHR Waiting List Areas	Priority Access Applicant Location Preferences					Register of Interest Applicant Location Preferences					Total
	1 bed.	2 bed.	3 bed.	4+ bed.	Total	1 bed.	2 bed.	3 bed.	4+ bed	Total	
Nagambie	41	11	7	<5	62	22	8	<5	<5	35	97
Seymour	262	63	28	19	372	102	70	33	12	217	589
Benalla District	310	44	30	8	392	156	62	37	6	261	653

Source: Homes Victoria VHR Application Data. Priority access indicates those households most in need of housing, and includes households which meet criteria relating to issues such as natural emergencies, unsafe housing, family violence, special housing needs and disabilities.

2.6. KEY FINDINGS

- **There are approximately 6,100 dwellings in the municipality, 95% of which are detached dwellings. Three-quarters of all dwellings have 3 or more bedrooms.**
- **Strathbogie Shire has a considerably older population than Victoria overall. This is projected to continue, with more than two-thirds of the net change in population by 2036 projected to be in age groups above 65.**
- **The municipality has a relatively low proportion of families with children compared with regional Victoria, and a higher proportion of couples without children and lone person households. Lone person households are projected to experience the greatest increase over the period to 2036.**
- **House and vacant land prices in the municipality have seen significant growth in the past 5 years. Houses have appreciated at a year-on-year average rate of almost 11%, whilst vacant land has more than doubled in the past 5 years and reflects an average annual growth rate of 18%. The high rate of vacant lot price growth is a potential indicator of a constrained level of supply of new house lots available to the market relative to demand.**
- **The median rent in June 2023 was $400 per week. Rents have continued to increase at an average of 6.3% per annum over the past 5 years. The highest rate of rent price growth over the period 2018 – 2023 was for 2 bedroom flats (+11% per annum), an indication of high levels of demand for this dwelling type relative to supply.**
- **Key housing market segments are downsizers, retirees and younger couples, along with secondary demand from investors and holiday home buyers.**
- **Despite historically having a relatively affordable housing market by regional Victorian standards, Strathbogie has experienced a significant decline in housing affordability over recent years. Affordability challenges are particularly stark for households that are renting, especially singles and couples on lower incomes.**

3. HOUSING DEMAND

3.1. INTRODUCTION

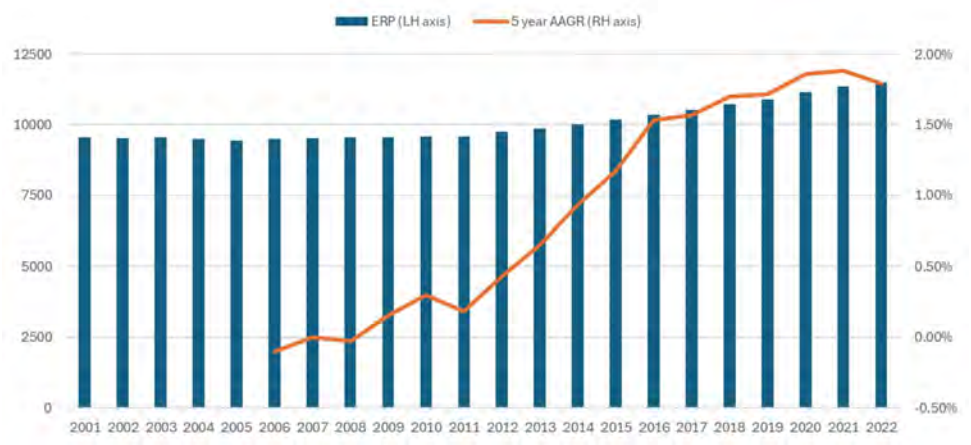
This section provides an assessment of demand housing across the Strathbogie LGA.

3.2. POPULATION AND DWELLING GROWTH

Strathbogie Shire had a population of 11,150 residents June 2022. The population increased at an average rate of 1.68% per annum over the period 2012 – 2022.

As shown in Figure 15, population growth was very low (and occasionally negative) over the period 2001 to 2011, before beginning to increase in 2012. The rate of population growth (measured over a rolling 5 year period) increased steadily from 2012 to 2021 when, during the COVID pandemic, the rate peaked at 1.88% per annum.

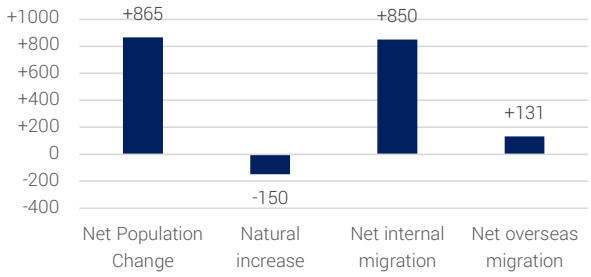
F15. ESTIMATED RESIDENT POPULATION, STRATHBOGIE SHIRE



Source: ABS.

Population growth from 2018 to 2022 was driven almost exclusively by net internal migration as shown in Figure 16. Natural decrease occurred (more deaths than births) over the period, along with very low levels of net overseas migration. The municipality recorded natural decrease in each of the past 5 calendar years.

F16. STRATHBOGIE LGA COMPOTENTS OF POPULATION CHANGE (2018 TO 2022, 5 YEARS INCLUSIVE)



Source: Regional Population and Components, Australian Bureau of Statistics 2023.

MIGRATION AND WORK PATTERNS

Analysis of Census data revealed the following insights regarding the origin of new migrants to Strathbogie over the period 2016 – 2021:

- The highest proportion of interstate migration is sourced from New South Wales (46%), followed by Queensland (20%).
- As shown in Table 9, intrastate migration primarily originates from municipalities proximate to Strathbogie, especially to the immediate south in Mitchell and Whittlesea and the immediate north (Greater Shepparton and Benalla).

T9. SOURCES OF INTRASTATE MIGRATION INTO STRATHBOGIE, 2021

Rank	LGA SOURCE (1 YEAR)	Total persons	LGA SOURCE (5 YEARS)	Total persons
1	Mitchell	111	Mitchell	306
2	Greater Shepparton	56	Greater Shepparton	150
3	Whittlesea	40	Whittlesea	81
4	Benalla	23	Yarra Ranges	67
5	Mornington Peninsula	20	Benalla	56
6	Yarra Ranges	19	Hume	54
7	Stonnington	19	Mornington Peninsula	50
8	Casey	19	Murrindindi	43
9	Moira	17	Stonnington	42
10	Hume	16	Macedon Ranges	39
Total Intrastate	650		504	

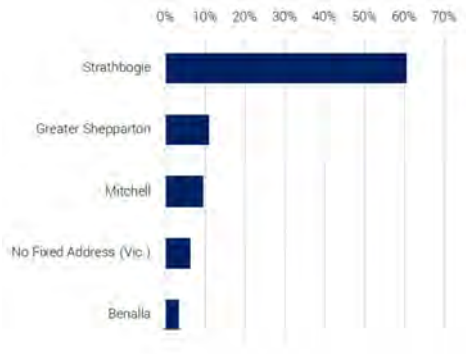
Source: Census of Population and Housing, 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Townships within Strathbogie are conveniently served by linkages such as the Goulbourn Valley Highway and Hume Freeway that connect each major township – for example, Avenel, Longwood, Euroa and Violet Town are all situated on the Hume Highway. Avenel-Nagambie Road also presents a shortened route connecting Nagambie to Avenel.

The local road network also links townships in Strathbogie to other major employment centres such as Shepparton, Benalla and Seymour, all of which are within a reasonable commuting distance from the municipality's largest townships.

As shown in Figure 17, the top 5 LGAs of place of work for employed Strathbogie residents are Strathbogie Shire (61%), Greater Shepparton (11%), Mitchell (10%) and Benalla (3%). Greater Shepparton, Rural City of Benalla, and Mitchell Shire account for 24% combined (just under 1,200 workers in total).

F17. STRATHBOGIE RESIDENT PLACE OF WORK BY LGA



Census of Population and Dwellings 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics

3.3. DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

DWELLING APPROVALS

Table 10 and Figure 18 show the number of dwellings approved for construction across the Shire since 2015. Key findings are:

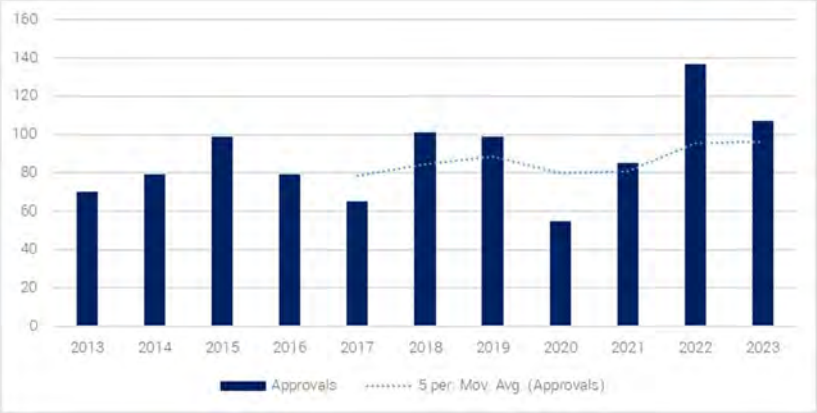
- Over the past 5 full financial years, an average of 97 new dwellings were approved per annum. The 5 year rolling average has increased over recent years, from 80 in 2017.
- Peak dwelling approvals per year occurred in 2022 at 137 dwellings in the financial year.
- 'Other' dwelling approvals (townhouses and apartments) have been extremely low, with only 17 such dwellings approved over the period 2015 – 2023, comprising 3% of all dwellings approved.

T10. DWELLING APPROVALS BY FINANCIAL YEAR, STRATHBOGIE SHIRE MUNICIPALITY

Financial Year	New Houses	New Other Residential	Total New Dwellings
2015	87	12	99
2016	76	3	79
2017	65	0	65
2018	101	0	101
2019	99	0	99
2020	55	0	55
2021	85	0	85
2022	135	2	137
2023	107	0	107
Average (2018-2023)	96.2	0.4	96.6

Source: Building Approvals, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2023

F18. DWELLING APPROVALS BY FINANCIAL YEAR, STRATHBOGIE SHIRE



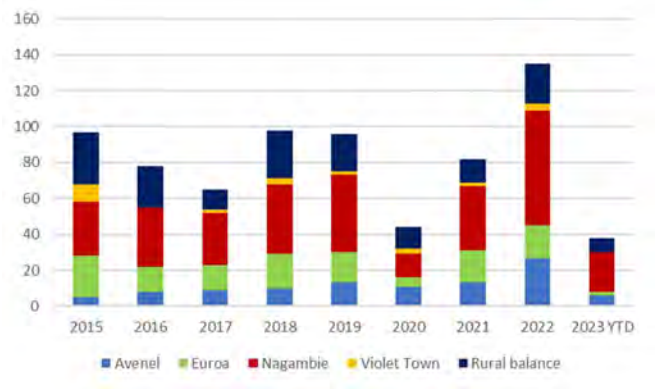
Source: Building Approvals, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2023.

Figure 19 shows a breakdown of approvals by location, showing that:

- Nagambie has accommodated the greatest share of approvals, averaging 37 per annum over the period and 42% of all approvals across the Shire;
- Euroa and Avenel have contributed 18% and 14% of approvals respectively, with Avenel experiencing an increasing rate of approvals over time. In 2022, Avenel accommodated 20% of approvals in the municipality.
- The rural balance (which includes the townships of Longwood and Strathbogie) has experienced relatively consistent approvals volumes which have accounted for 23% of all approvals over the period.

It is noted that in both Nagambie and Avenel, recent housing development has occurred at the urban fringes outside the township SA1s in Elloura and Waterways Lifestyle Village (Nagambie) and Vineyard Estate and Bayley Drive (Avenel). These developments have been captured in the township data by including the SA1 areas which are adjacent to the township SA1s in Nagambie and Avenel.

F19. DWELLING APPROVALS BY LOCATION, 2015 - 2023



Source: ABS, Urban Enterprise. Note: data boundaries for townships are shown in Appendix A.

RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISION

Table 11 summarises data provided by council showing planning permits issued for residential subdivision across the municipality. The data shows that:

- A total of 807 net additional lots were approved for creation over the period 2015 – 2023 in 221 subdivisions.
- 61% of the additional lots were in Nagambie, while the rural balance of the Shire accounted for 11%.
- Nagambie had the largest average subdivision size and was the only location with 50+ lot subdivisions.
- Smaller subdivisions creating 4 or less lots have accounted for a third (33%) of all net additional lots created.

T11. RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISION DATA BY LOCATION, 2015 – 2023

					No. subdivisions by net additional lots approved				
Location	No. subdivisions	Additional lots created	Ave lots per sub.	% of new lots created	1	2-4	5-9	10-49	50+
Avenel	26	114	4.4	14%	16	7	1	1	1
Euroa	52	92	1.8	11%	39	8	4	1	0
Nagambie	53	490	9.2	61%	28	15	4	3	3
Violet Town	19	22	1.2	3%	17	2	0	0	0
Rural balance	69	90	1.3	11%	51	18	0	0	0
Total	219	808	4	100%	151	50	9	5	4

Source: Strathbogie Shire; analysed by Urban Enterprise. Data relates to net additional lots (i.e. 2 lot subdivision creates 1 additional lot).

3.4. PROJECTED FUTURE HOUSING DEMAND

Official State government projections of population, households, and dwellings are published in Victoria in Future's 2023 update (VIF2023). Population projections are available to 2051 for Victoria and major regions, and to 2036 for local government areas. Projections are based on trends and assumptions for births, life expectancy, migration, and living arrangements.

As summarised in Table 12, VIF2023 projects that:

- The municipal population will increase at an average rate of 1.1% per annum over the period 2021 to 2036, resulting in an additional 2,050 residents (+137 residents per annum);
- There will be an additional 1,170 households over the period, requiring an additional VIF2023 projections 1,130 dwellings at a rate of 75 additional dwellings per year.

T12. STRATHBOGIE POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD PROJECTIONS, 2021-36

Measure	2021	2026	2031	2036	Total Change (2021-36)	Annual Change (2021-36)	Rate of Increase
Population	11,360	12,070	12,760	13,410	2,050	137	1.1%
Households	5,260	5,670	6,070	6,430	1,170	78	1.3%
Dwellings	6,160	6,540	6,920	7,290	1,130	75	1.1%

Source: Victoria in Future, 2023.

When projected population growth and dwelling requirements are compared with recent experience, it is evident that projections are somewhat less than recent growth.

For example:

- Recent population growth at the municipal level has exceeded 1.5% per annum for the past 6 years, compared with projections for an average of 1.1% per annum over the next 15 years; and
- The rate of dwelling growth over the past 5 years has averaged 97 per annum, which compares with projections of the need for an additional 75 per annum over the next 15 years.

The future rate of housing demand in Strathbogie will depend on a range of variables, including the availability of land and housing for occupation, migration levels and patterns, the extent to which the effects of the COVID pandemic subside or are entrenched, and many others. Given the recent increasing trends in population and dwelling growth both prior to and following the COVID pandemic, it is recommended that a higher growth scenario than that projected by VIF2023 is also taken into account.

Adopting an annual dwelling demand rate of 100 (based on the 2018 to 2023 average of 97 additional dwellings per annum) is recommended for the higher growth scenario.

The two projection scenarios are shown in Table 13 – these are adopted as the overall rates of likely housing needs in the municipality over the period 2021 to 2036.

T13. DWELLING PROJECTIONS, STRATHBOGIE LGA

Scenario	2021	2036	Change (2021-36)	AAG (2021-36)	AAGR (2021-36)
VIF 2023	6,160	7,290	1,130	75	1.1%
Higher growth scenario	6,160	7,660	1,500	100	1.5%

Source: Victoria in Future, 2023; ABS; Urban Enterprise.

3.5. LOCATION OF FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS

Official population and dwelling projections are not available at the township level, however VIF2023 does include projections at the SA2 level. Strathbogie Shire is split into the following two SA2s:

- The Nagambie SA2, which includes the towns of Nagambie, Avenel and the surrounding rural areas making up the south-western section of the municipality; and
- The Euroa SA2, which includes the towns of Euroa, Violet Town, Strathbogie and Longwood, as well as the surrounding rural areas which make up the north-eastern section of the municipality.

The SA2 level projections are shown in Table 14, indicating that the Nagambie SA2 is projected to accommodate approximately two-thirds (65%) of the overall dwelling growth in the Shire over the period 2021 – 2036.

T14. SA2 POPULATION AND DWELLING PROJECTIONS

	SA2	2021	2026	2031	2036	Growth	AAG	AAGR
Population	Euroa	6,866	7,042	7,334	7,620	754	50	0.70%
	Nagambie	4,509	5,037	5,438	5,804	1,295	86	1.70%
Dwellings	Euroa	3,682	3,818	3,948	4,079	397	26	0.68%
	Nagambie	2,490	2,736	2,982	3,226	736	49	1.74%

Source: Victoria in Future 2023.

The VIF projections by SA2 are consistent with the recent patterns of growth which were presented earlier in this section, with the township areas of Nagambie and Avenel have together accounted for 63% of new dwelling approvals since July 2018.

Table 15 shows an indicative distribution of both the Victoria in Future dwelling projections and the higher growth scenario to the township level. For the higher growth scenario, the VIF SA2 split was adopted, and in order to distribute growth to townships, the average annual rate of dwelling approvals over the period 2018 – 2023 was used.

T15. LOCAL DWELLING SCENARIOS

Area	Total over 15 years		Annual	
	VIF	Higher Growth	VIF	Higher Growth
Strathbogie Shire	1,130	1,500	75	100
Nagambie SA2	734	975	49	65
Avenel	192	256	13	17
Nagambie	489	650	33	43
Rural Balance	52	69	3	5
Euroa SA2	396	525	26	35
Euroa	186	246	12	16
Violet Town	34	45	2	3
Rural balance	176	234	12	16

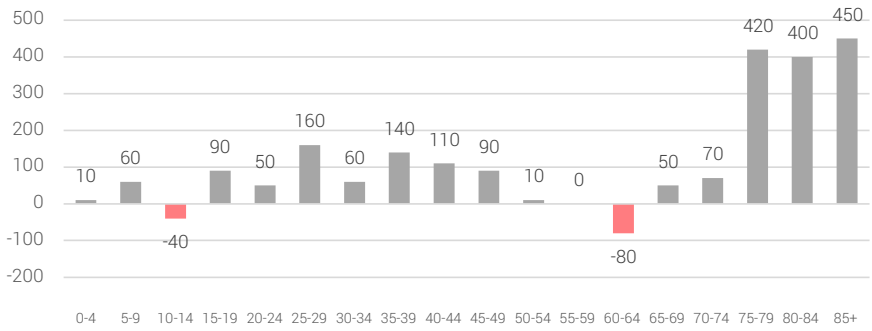
Source: Urban Enterprise, based on VIF2023 and ABS Building Approvals.

3.6. PROFILE OF FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS

The following factors will influence the type and size of dwellings needed over the period of the growth strategy:

- The projected continued ageing of the community, with 62% of the net additional population to 2036 expected to be aged 75 years and over (see Figure 20).
- The projected substantial increased in the number and proportion of lone person households, resulting in the need for a greater proportion of 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings, including retirement living and aged care facilities.
- The need to provide ongoing availability of rental housing, especially for single parent families and lone person households who have a higher propensity to rent.
- Expected ongoing demand from secondary markets such as holiday homeowners, younger couples and families, and lifestyle buyers occasionally commuting to Melbourne.

F20. STRATHBOGIE SHIRE POPULATION CHANGE BY 5 YEAR AGE GROUPS – 2021-2036



Source: Victoria in Future, 2023.

IMPLICATIONS FOR DWELLING TYPES AND LAND SUPPLY

The main implications of the above analysis for dwelling types and land supply are:

- The existing profile of dwellings and recent development patterns indicate that the overwhelming majority of demand for housing in Strathbogie Shire has been for separate dwellings, warranting a planning approach to provide sufficient residential land to accommodate at least 90% of dwellings in locations where new separate dwellings can be delivered.
- Although medium density dwellings do not form a significant proportion of the existing housing stock, the continued ageing of the population and smaller household sizes will generate substantial need for smaller dwellings, units, retirement living and aged care opportunities. The Urban Growth Strategy should seek to encourage and facilitate these housing types wherever possible.
- Housing in a range of different development settings will be needed, including:
  - Inner township areas where services can be accessed by short trips and walking, with housing accommodated generally through infill development, lifestyle villages and retirement communities;
  - Outer township areas that can accommodate both conventional density and lower density housing for families and couples in relatively affordable estates; and
  - Lower density and lifestyle locations which meet the needs of holiday home buyers, Melbourne buyers and lifestyle seekers (including some retirees).

3.7. KEY POINTS

- Strathbogie Shire had a population of 11,150 residents in June 2022 and increased at an average rate of 1.68% per annum over the period 2012 – 2022.
- Population growth in recent years has been driven almost exclusively by net internal migration. A key factor attracting residents to the Shire is the proximity to employment opportunities within a reasonable timeframe in Shepparton, Benalla, Seymour and northern metropolitan Melbourne.
- Over the past 5 full financial years, an average of 97 new dwellings were approved per annum in the municipality, with approvals in Nagambie comprising the largest share (42%). The rural balance, especially the areas along the Hume corridor, has accounted for 23% of all approvals over the period, demonstrating relatively strong demand for housing outside larger towns and urban areas.
- Official State government population projections expect moderate population growth of 1.1% per annum over the period to 2036, requiring 75 additional dwellings per year. Nagambie SA2 is projected to accommodate approximately two-thirds (65%) of the overall dwelling growth.
- Government projections are lower than the recent rates of growth which have been generally increasing year on year, warranting consideration of a higher growth scenario as part of settlement planning.
- Demographic projections and housing market characteristics present the following demand-side considerations for settlement planning:
    - Planning should seek to provide sufficient zoned residential land in order to accommodate at least 90% of dwellings in locations where new separate dwellings can be delivered.
    - The continued ageing of the population and smaller household sizes will generate substantial need for smaller dwellings, units, retirement living and aged care opportunities. The Urban Growth Strategy should seek to encourage and facilitate these housing types wherever possible.
    - Housing in a range of different development settings will be needed, including:
        - Inner township areas where services can be accessed by short trips and walking, with housing accommodated generally through infill development, lifestyle villages and retirement communities;
        - Outer township areas that can accommodate both conventional density and lower density housing for families and couples in relatively affordable estates; and
        - Lower density and lifestyle locations which meet the needs of holiday home buyers, Melbourne buyers and lifestyle seekers (including some retirees).

4. RESIDENTIAL LAND SUPPLY

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This section contains an analysis of the availability of residential land in the study towns to accommodate residential development and additional housing.

The supply assessment was prepared in early 2024 and relates to a supply year of 2023. Refinements to the supply assessment to capture all known permit and current development constraint information were made in April 2025.

4.2. RESIDENTIAL ZONES AND SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

The supply assessment relates to land in zones which can accommodate housing in urban areas in the study towns. There are four zones applied in the study towns which have been assessed as summarised in Table 16.

T16. RESIDENTIAL ZONES IN THE STRATHBOGIE PLANNING SCHEME

Zone	Purposes relevant to housing role	Spatial distribution
General Residential Zone	To encourage development that respects the neighbourhood character of the area. To encourage a diversity of housing types and housing growth particularly in locations offering good access to services and transport.	Euroa Nagambie Violet Town
Township Zone	To provide residential development and a range of commercial, industrial and other uses in small towns To encourage development that respects the neighbourhood character of the area.	Avenel Longwood Strathbogie Violet Town
Comprehensive Development Zone	To provide for a range of uses and the development of land in accordance with a comprehensive development plan incorporated in this scheme	Nagambie only
Low Density Residential Zone	To provide for low-density residential development on lots which, in the absence of reticulated sewerage, can treat and retain all wastewater.	Avenel Euroa Longwood Nagambie

4.3. METHOD

A summary of the method undertaken to estimate the capacity of residential land supply in these zones is shown in Table 17.

The method adopted approximates the capacity of larger lots across the study zones to accommodate additional housing, including sites that are categorised as 'broadhectare', as well as other sites which would be better described as major infill development opportunities.

The extent to which the capacity of these sites can and will be realised will depend on the intentions of individual landowners. The assessment does not consider the quantity of existing single vacant lots in the towns, which would contribute further capacity to meet housing needs.

T17. LAND SUPPLY AND CAPACITY ASSESSMENT METHOD

Step		Method
1	Property base	All properties located within study zones were identified and profiled based on Council's property cadastre and rating database.
2	Identification of Larger sites with subdivision / development potential	Larger properties with capacity to accommodate multi-lot subdivision were identified through the criteria shown in Table 18. Existing uses and ownership which would likely prevent housing development on the site were excluded based on council's property database, including civic, community, recreation, health, education, aged care, accommodation and industrial uses. Each remaining site was then reviewed by reference to aerial photography to confirm the presence of existing uses, potential constraints and likely development opportunity. Sites were categorised as either: • Vacant/broadhectare, being those sites that are vacant and/or larger sites able to be developed into a significant subdivision; or • Infill, being those sites that are occupied by an existing dwelling or business and, due to the size, yield and/or extent of existing uses or improvements, are considered to represent a smaller redevelopment opportunity which would require relocation of the existing uses, as opposed to more straight forward subdivision of vacant and/or larger broadhectare lots.
3	Capacity of site for housing	The capacity of identified sites to accommodate dwellings was estimated by reference to the following: • Where a Development Plan Overlay, known subdivision permit or proposed estate development plan is available, the maximum or expected dwelling yield of the relevant plan was adopted; • Where no plans are in place or known, the likely yield of the site was approximated by Urban Enterprise, taking into account known encumbrances (such as existing and proposed flooding overlays), areas with known servicing constraints, standard deductions for local roads and open space and an average lot size applicable to the relevant zone as shown in Table 18. It is noted that some sites in the GRZ and TZ would have greater capacity than shown if smaller lot sizes were delivered.

Source: Urban Enterprise.

T18. LAND SUPPLY CRITERIA AND ASSUMPTIONS

Zone	Minimum site area for inclusion in assessment	Deduction to account for local roads, drainage and open space	Lot Size adopted to calculate capacity
TZ	1 ha	30%	1,500sqm*
CDZ1	0.5 ha	30%	None (Development Plan yield adopted)
GRZ1	0.5 ha	30%	700sqm
LDRZ	1 ha	30%	2,000sqm*

Source: Urban Enterprise. * except Strathbogie and Longwood which are not sewered, and areas south of the railway line in Violet Town and District Strategic Development Plan as low density areas, where 4,000sqm is applied.

4.4. SUPPLY RESULTS

The results of the supply assessment are shown in Table 19 and Table 20, with maps of supply sites and their estimated yield capacities shown in Appendix B.

The data shows that:

- Vacant and broadhectare lots have capacity to accommodate approximately 2,314 dwellings in the study towns; 2,197 (95%) of which are in the main townships of Avenel, Euroa, Violet Town and Nagambie.
- Nagambie has the most substantial capacity remaining, with an estimated 1,328 lots across vacant and broadhectare sites.
- Candidate sites for infill development have an approximate capacity for a further 570 lots, however this capacity could only be realised through the redevelopment of a large number of sites currently substantially occupied by dwellings and other uses.

T19. RESIDENTIAL LAND SUPPLY, VACANT AND BROADHECTARE LOTS

	Avenel	Euroa	Violet Town	Nagambie	Main towns sub-total	Longwood	Strathbogie	Total
Developable area (ha)								
GRZ1	0.00	14.03	1.98	93.52	109.53	0.00	0.00	109.53
LDRZ	50.91	46.26	0.00	125.76	222.93	13.77	0.00	236.70
TZ	58.61	0.00	21.54	0.00	80.15	25.06	18.64	123.85
CDZ1	0.00	0.00	0.00	33.67	33.67	0.00	0.00	33.67
Total	109.52	60.29	23.52	252.95	446.28	38.83	18.64	503.75
Estimated Lot Capacity								
GRZ1	0	162	20	782	964	0	0	964
LDRZ	204	152	0	200	556	28	0	584
TZ	307	0	24	0	331	56	33	420
CDZ1	0	0	0	346	346	0	0	346
Total	511	314	44	1328	2197	84	33	2314

Source: Urban Enterprise.

T20. RESIDENTIAL LAND SUPPLY, INFILL SITES

	Avenel	Euroa	Violet Town	Nagambie	Main towns sub-total	Longwood	Strathbogie	Total
Developable Area								
GRZ1	0.00	18.75	0.45	16.65	35.85	0.00	0.00	71.70
LDRZ	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TZ	29.45	0.00	46.78	0.00	76.23	17.17	26.99	196.62
CDZ1	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	29.45	18.75	47.23	16.65	112.08	17.17	26.99	268.32
Lot capacity								
GRZ1	0	162	0	134	296	0	0	296
LDRZ	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TZ	105	0	93	0	198	27	49	274
CDZ1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	105	162	93	134	494	27	49	570

Source: Urban Enterprise.

4.5. ADEQUACY OF SUPPLY

Table 21 provides a comparison of existing land supply against projected demand. This comparison is made on the basis that:

- The urban areas of Nagambie, Euroa, Avenel and Violet Town will need to accommodate 80% of the demand for housing across the municipality; and
- Planning should seek to accommodate 90% of the overall urban dwelling requirement in separate dwellings, with the remainder planned for smaller subdivisions, units and semi-detached dwellings.

The table shows that:

- At the municipal level, there is a need to plan for up to 72 separate dwellings per annum in the main townships.
- Existing land supply has capacity to accommodate 2,197 lots in the main townships, which equates to 31-41 years supply.

The adequacy of land supply within each major town is considered in the following section.

T21. SUMMARY OF RESIDENTIAL LAND SUPPLY – MAIN TOWNS

Scenario	Dwelling requirement (per annum)	Main Urban Areas (80%)	Separate dwellings (90%)	Lot capacity of zoned land in main towns (vacant and broadhectare)	Years Supply in main towns
VIF Scenario	75	60	54	2,197	41
Higher Growth Scenario	100	80	72	2,197	31

Source: Urban Enterprise.

4.6. KEY FINDINGS

- **The main locations where additional housing can be accommodated in Strathbogie Shire are the towns of Nagambie, Euroa and Avenel.**
- **Nagambie and Avenel have the greatest capacity for housing, however in both towns, larger broadhectare development sites are depleting quickly given the recent increase in development and housing construction activity in the towns.**
- **Overall, the main towns are estimated to have a total land supply of 31-41 years in vacant and developable sites. Further housing capacity could be realised through re-subdivision of medium-sized lots that are currently occupied by dwellings.**

5. TOWNSHIP LEVEL ANALYSIS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This section provides township level analysis of housing demand and supply for each study town.

5.2. NAGAMBIE

POPULATION GROWTH AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 22 show recent population growth in Nagambie, and Figures 21-26 show demographic indicators for the town. The following observations are made from the data:

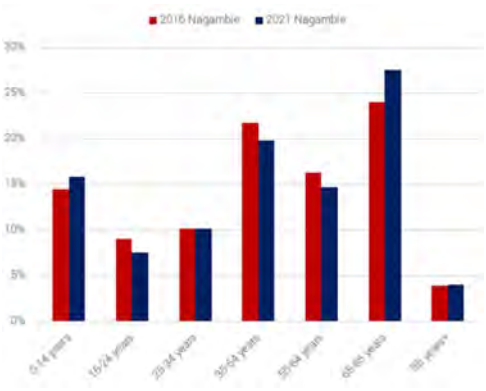
- The township experienced strong population growth from 2016 to 2021 at 3.5% per annum. Population growth has been primarily led by residents aged over 65, however growth in the number of children and younger adults has also occurred. The median age in Nagambie (51) is lower than the municipal median of 53.
- There is a relatively high proportion of lone person households (35%) compared with the municipal average.
- Income levels are relatively polarised, with higher proportions of residents in both the upper and lower quartiles relative to the Shire overall.

T22. NAGAMBIE TOWNSHIP POPULATION GROWTH

Area	2016	2021	Change (2016 - 2021)	AAG	AAGR%
Nagambie	1,712	2,033	321	64	3.5%
Strathbogie LGA	10,357	11,368	1,011	202	1.9%

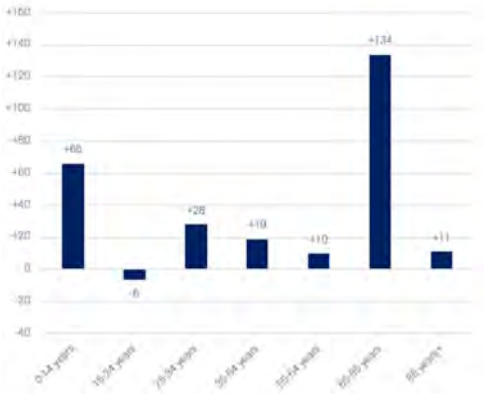
Source: ABS Census; Urban Enterprise.

F21. NAGAMBIE AGE DISTRIBUTION, 2016-21



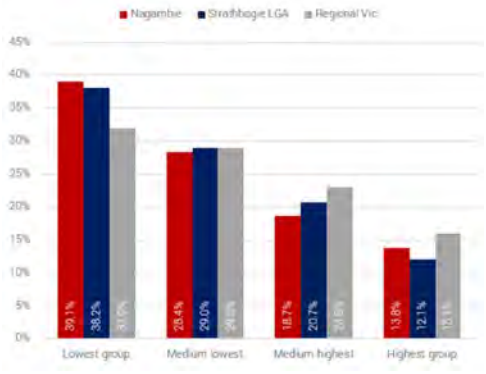
Source: Census of Population and Dwellings 2016 and 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics

F22. NAGAMBIE POPULATION CHANGE BY AGE



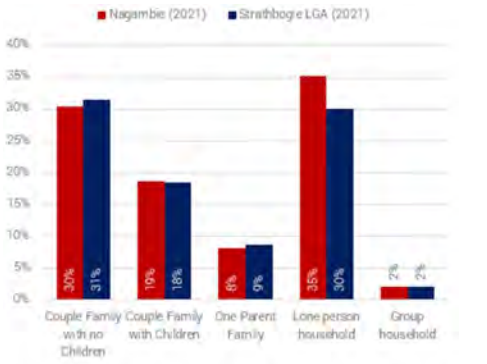
Source: Census of Population and Dwellings 2016 and 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics

F23. NAGAMBIE HOUSEHOLD INCOME QUARTILES



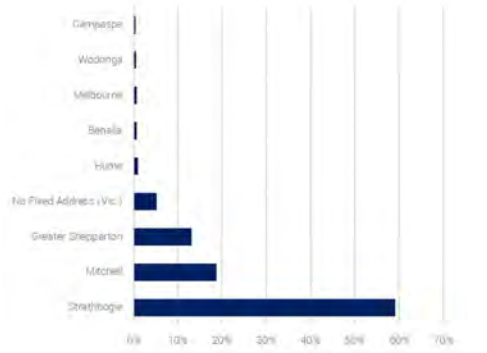
Source: Census of Population and Housing 2021. Compiled by .id (informed decisions)

F24. NAGAMBIE HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE



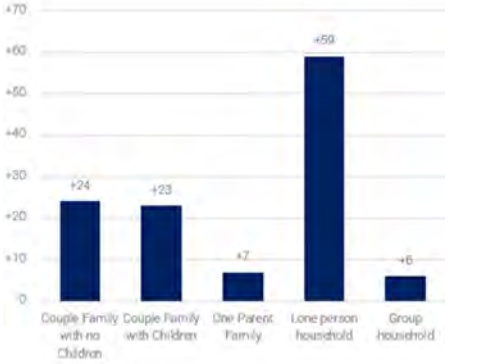
Source: Census of Population and Dwellings 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics

F25. NAGAMBIE RESIDENT PLACE OF WORK (LGA)



Source: Census of Population and Dwellings 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics

F26. NAGAMBIE HOUSEHOLD CHANGE (2016 21)



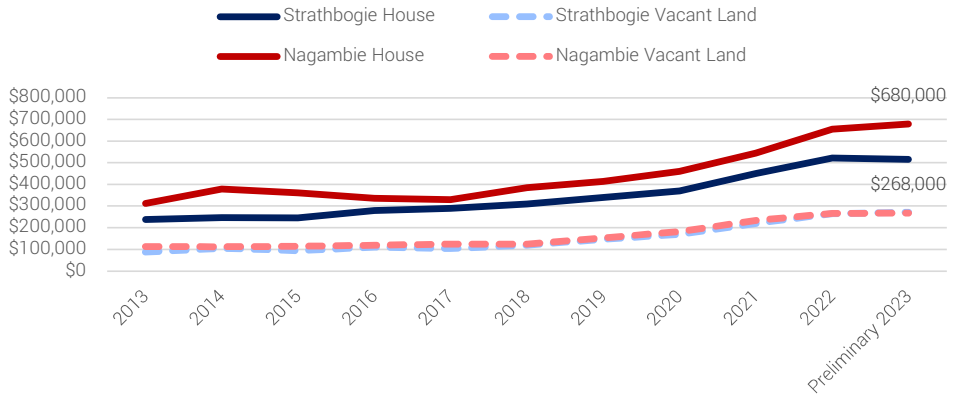
Source: Census of Population and Dwellings 2016 and 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics.

PROPERTY VALUES AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

Figure 27 shows property price trends in Nagambie, and Figure 28 summarises dwelling approvals in the town. The following observations are made:

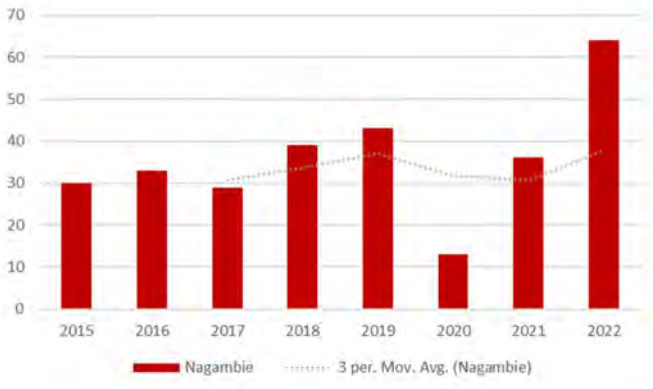
- Houses and vacant house lots have experienced very high rates of growth, with vacant lots increasing at 16.5% per annum. The vacant lot price in 2023 was $268,000. The high rate of vacant lot price growth indicates strong demand relative to supply and points to the potential for latent demand within the local market.
- An average of 37 dwellings have been approved in the town per annum since 2015, with a substantial increase occurring in 2022 (64 approvals).

F27. MEDIAN RESIDENTIAL VALUES BY PROPERTY TYPE, 2013-23



Source: A Guide to Property Values, 2023.

F28. DWELLING APPROVALS, NAGAMBIE



Source: Building Approvals, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2023.

LAND SUPPLY

Table 23 summarises the current land supply in Nagambie. It is noted that:

- Vacant and broadhectare sites have capacity for more than 1,300 lots.
- Around two-thirds of vacant and broadhectare supply are in three sites:
  - The Lake Nagambie Masterplan area / Elloura, under development with 346 lot capacity remaining;
  - The Nagambie Lifestyle Village (~251 lots) & 19 Lobbs Lane area (~148 lots) and has a total lot capacity of 392 lots; and
  - The Box Grove Low Density Residential Zone site, which is yet to be developed and has an estimated 200 lot capacity.

T23. LAND SUPPLY, NAGAMBIE

Zone	Vacant and broadhectare lot capacity	Infill lot capacity
GRZ1	782	134
LDRZ	200	0
TZ	0	0
CDZ1	346	0
Total	1328	134

Source: Urban Enterprise.

COMPARISON OF DEMAND AND SUPPLY

Table 24 shows a comparison of the demand and supply metrics for Nagambie, based on the analysis shown in Section 4.

The demand rates shown in Table 24 also consider a higher local growth scenario for Nagambie of 60 dwellings per annum – this is to test the sensitivity of existing land supply levels to the potential for a sustained period of dwelling demand at the rate which occurred during 2021/22. Although this demand rate was underpinned by the immediate post-pandemic surge in demand for rural township property, low interest rates and government stimulus, ongoing high lot price growth and an overall increasing trend in annual dwelling approvals indicates that demand for housing in Nagambie could feasibly exceed the modelled demand rates.

The following points are noted:

- Vacant and broadhectare land supply has nominal capacity to meet demand for between 22 and 40 years, depending on the rate of demand which occurs over the forward period.
- Taking into consideration that 200 lots of the supply is in a single LDRZ property which is not currently under development, it is possible that residential land accommodating conventional housing supply in Nagambie becomes limited later in the planning period for the Urban Growth Strategy.
- Other opportunities for housing supply exist which are not captured in the baseline demand and supply metrics shown in Table 24, including infill development, medium density and retirement living (if provided in established areas).

T24. DEMAND AND SUPPLY COMPARISON, NAGAMBIE

	Measure
Dwelling demand rate	33 – 43 - 60
Vacant and broadhectare supply	1328
Years supply	22 - 40

Source: Urban Enterprise.

5.3. VIOLET TOWN

POPULATION GROWTH AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 25 shows recent population growth in Violet Town, and Figures 29-34 show demographic indicators for the town. The following observations are made from the data:

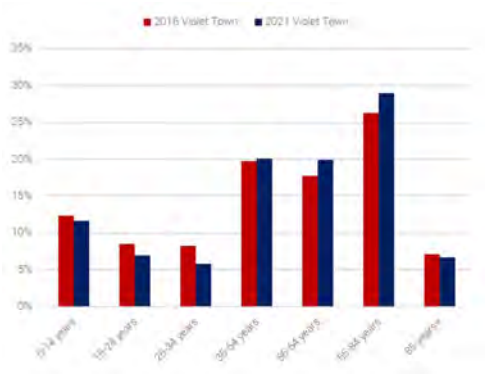
- The population of Violet Town increased marginally (+30 residents) between 2016 and 2021.
- In terms of age, the population of the age group 55-84 years increased the most over this period, with a reduction in residents aged under 34 years.
- Violet Town has a higher proportion of low income households and lone person households than the Shire average and Victoria overall.

T25. VIOLET TOWN POPULATION GROWTH

Area	2016	2021	Change ('16 - '21)	AAG	AAGR%
Violet Town	688	718	30	6	0.9%
Strathbogie LGA	10,357	11,368	1,011	202	1.9%

Source: ABS Census; Urban Enterprise.

F29. VT AGE DISTRIBUTION, 2016 AND 2021



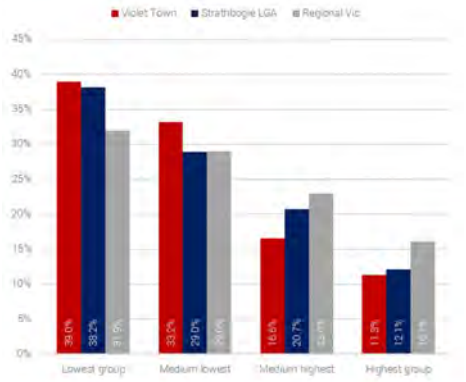
Source: Census of Population and Dwellings 2016 and 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics

F30. VT POPULATION CHANGE BY AGE



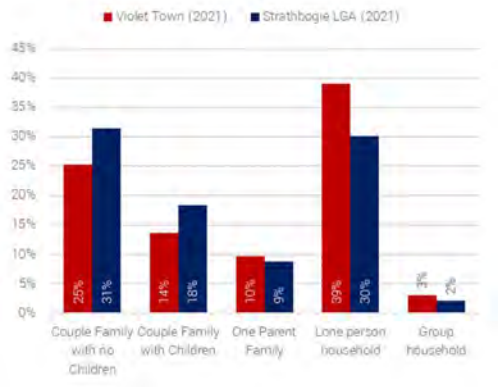
Source: Census of Population and Dwellings 2016 and 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics

F31. VT HOUSEHOLD INCOME QUARTILES



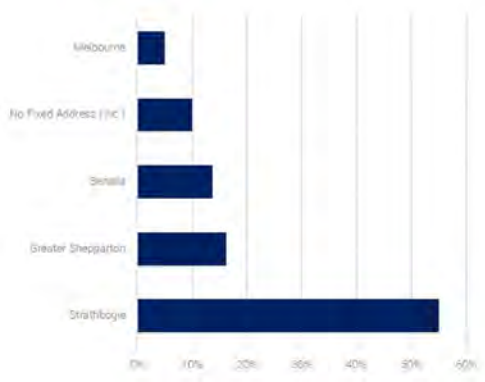
Source: Census of Population and Housing 2021. Compiled by .id (informed decisions)

F32. VT HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE



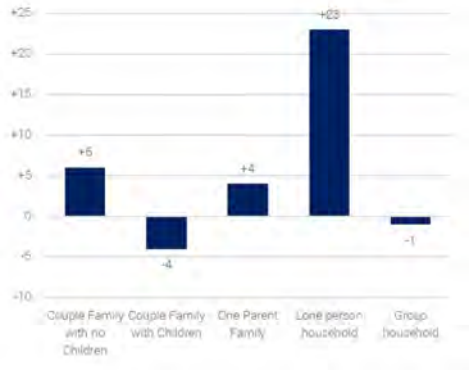
Source: Census of Population and Dwellings 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics

F33. VT RESIDENT PLACE OF WORK (LGA)



Source: Census of Population and Dwellings 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics

F34. VT HOUSEHOLD CHANGE (2016-21)



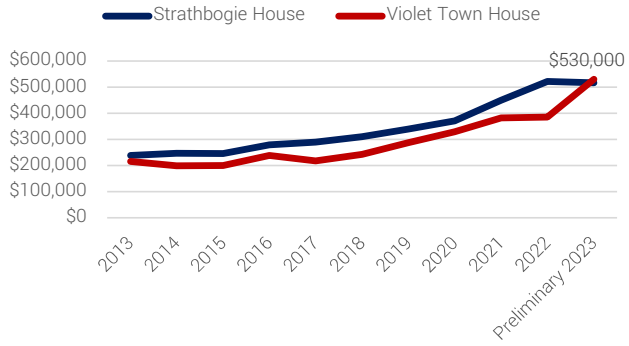
Source: Census of Population and Dwellings 2016 and 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics

PROPERTY VALUES AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

Figure 35 shows property price trends in Violet Town, and Figure 36 summarises dwelling approvals in the town. The following observations are made:

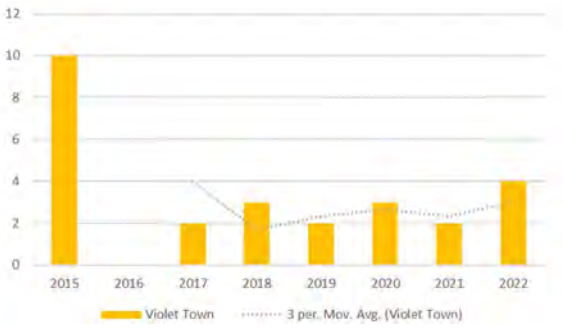
- Houses have experienced very high rates of growth in recent years at 17% per annum over the period 2018 – 2023.
- An average of 3 dwellings have been approved in the town per annum since 2015, very low levels compared with other main towns in the municipality.

F35. MEDIAN RESIDENTIAL VALUES BY PROPERTY TYPE, VIOLET TOWN, 2013-23



Source: A Guide to Property Values, 2023

F36. DWELLING APPROVALS, VIOLET TOWN



Source: Building Approvals, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2023.

LAND SUPPLY

Table 26 summarises the current land supply in Violet Town. It is noted that:

- Vacant and broadhectare sites have capacity for approximately 44 lots.
- Sites with infill development potential have relatively substantial capacity compared with vacant lots (93 lots), however this is mostly located on larger rural house blocks which would require re-subdivision in an area that is not currently sewered (south of High Street).
- There were no active subdivisions or developments observed in the town at the time the assessment was prepared.

T26. LAND SUPPLY, VIOLET TOWN

Zone	Vacant and broadhectare lot capacity	Infill lot capacity
GRZ1	20	0
LDRZ	0	0
TZ	24	93
CDZ1	0	0
Total	44	93

Source: Urban Enterprise.

COMPARISON OF DEMAND AND SUPPLY

Table 27 shows a comparison of the demand and supply metrics for Violet Town, based on the analysis shown in Section 4.

T27. DEMAND AND SUPPLY COMPARISON, VIOLET TOWN

	Measure
Dwelling demand rate	2-3
Vacant and broadhectare supply	44
Years supply	15 - 22

Source: Urban Enterprise.

5.4. EUROA

POPULATION GROWTH AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 28 shows recent population growth in Euroa, and Figures 37-42 show demographic indicators for the town. The following observations are made from the data:

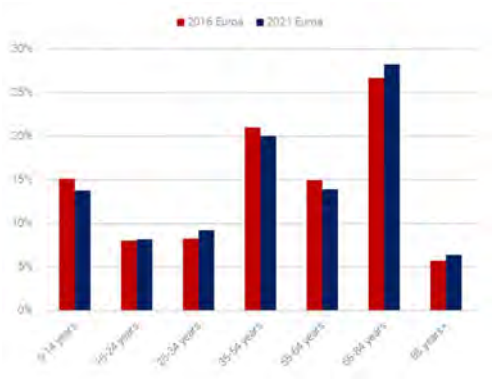
- The population of Euroa increased at a high rate of 2.7% per annum between 2016 and 2021, resulting in an additional 79 residents per annum residing in the town during this period.
- The town now has a population in excess of 3,000 residents which is approaching the scale of town that can support a wide range of services.
- The majority of population growth during this period was due to residents aged 65-84 years, however there were also increases in younger cohorts, especially young adults aged between 25 and 34 years.
- Couples without children were the household type which contributed most to the change in households over the period 2016 to 2021, however lone person households remain the most common in the town.

T28. EUROA TOWNSHIP POPULATION GROWTH

Area	2016	2021	Change 2016 - 2021	AAG	AAGR%
Euroa	2,721	3,115	394	79	2.7%
Strathbogie LGA	10,357	11,368	1,011	202	1.9%

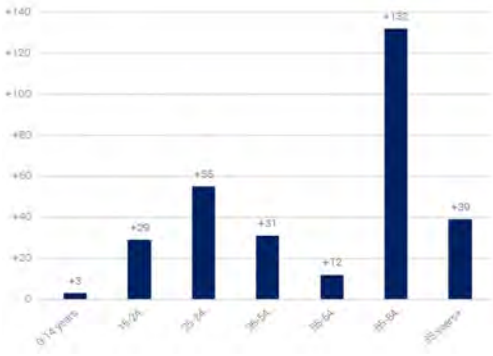
Source: ABS Census; Urban Enterprise.

F37. EUROA AGE DISTRIBUTION, 2016 VS 2021



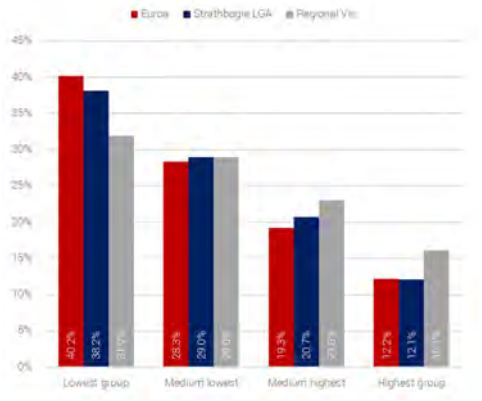
Source: Census of Population and Dwellings 2016 and 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics

F38. EUROA POPULATION CHANGE BY AGE



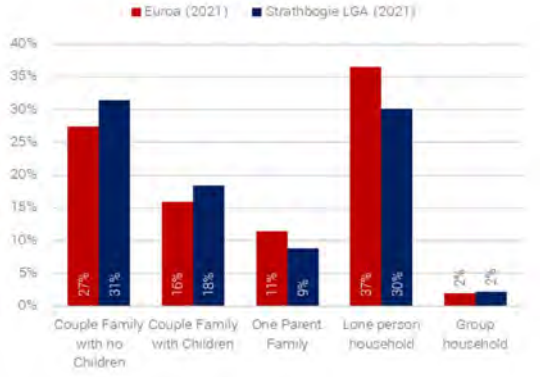
Source: Census of Population and Dwellings 2016 and 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics

F39. EUROA HOUSEHOLD INCOME QUARTILES



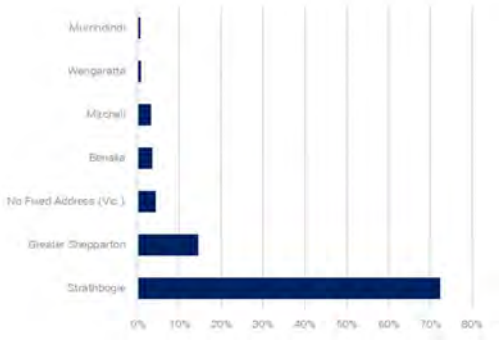
Source: Census of Population and Housing 2021. Compiled by .id (informed decisions)

F40. EUROA HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE



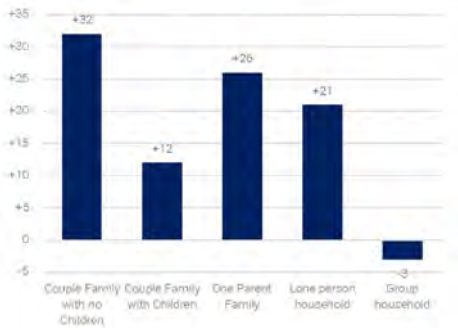
Source: Census of Population and Dwellings 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics.

F41. EUROA RESIDENT PLACE OF WORK (LGA)



Source: Census of Population and Dwellings 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics

F42. EUROA HOUSEHOLD CHANGE (2016-21)



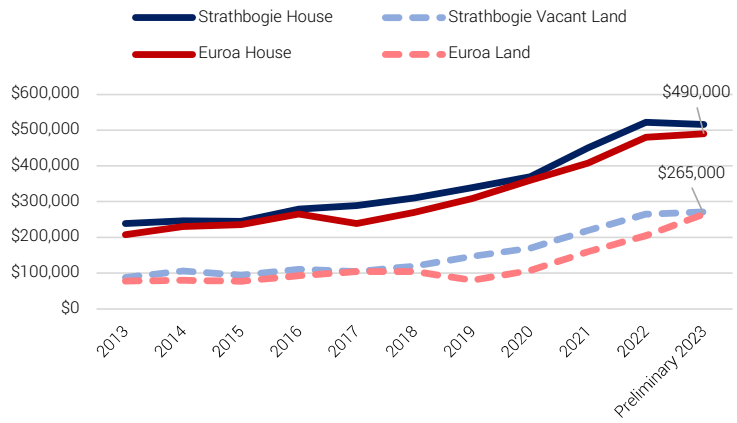
Source: Census of Population and Dwellings 2016 and 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics

PROPERTY VALUES AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

Figure 43 shows property price trends in Euroa, and Figure 44 summarises dwelling approvals in the town. The following observations are made:

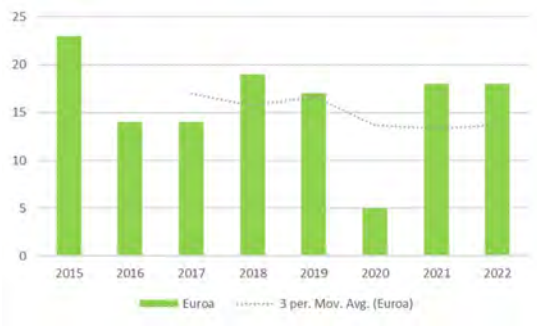
- Vacant land price growth in Euroa has been strong in recent years, averaging 20% per annum between 2018 and 2023. Although vacant lot prices in Euroa have generally been lower than the municipal median, the median price increased in 2023 to $265,000, which is almost equivalent to the municipal price.
- Dwelling approvals rates have been reasonably consistent, averaging 15 approvals per annum over the period 2018 – 2023. Approvals have not demonstrated an increasing trend in the same way as has been evident in the other main towns of Nagambie and Avenel.

F43. MEDIAN RESIDENTIAL VALUES BY PROPERTY TYPE, EUROA, 2013-2023



Source: A Guide to Property Values, 2023.

F44. DWELLING APPROVALS, EUROA



Source: Building Approvals, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2023.

LAND SUPPLY

Table 29 summarises the current land supply in Euroa. It is noted that:

- Remaining supply in the town is relatively limited, with only 162 lot capacity remaining in the General Residential Zone.
- A substantial LDRZ property to the south of the town (known as Eastern Gateway) has capacity for 152 lots.
- A high proportion of the land supply remaining is affected by the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO), and parts of the town are yet to be sewered. These circumstances could limit the extent to which the estimated supply levels can be realised.

T29. LAND SUPPLY, EUROA

Zone	Vacant and broadhectare lot capacity	Infill lot capacity
GRZ1	162	162
LDRZ	152	0
TZ	0	0
CDZ1	0	0
Total	314	162

Source: Urban Enterprise.

COMPARISON OF DEMAND AND SUPPLY

Table 30 shows a comparison of the demand and supply metrics for Euroa, based on the analysis shown in Section 4.

T30. DEMAND AND SUPPLY COMPARISON, EUROA

	Measure
Dwelling demand rate	12 – 16
Vacant and broadhectare supply	314 (162 in GRZ)
Years supply	20-26 (or 10-14 years if LDRZ excluded)

Source: Urban Enterprise.

5.5. AVENEL

POPULATION GROWTH AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 31 show recent population growth in Avenel, and Figures 45-50 show demographic indicators for the town. The following observations are made from the data:

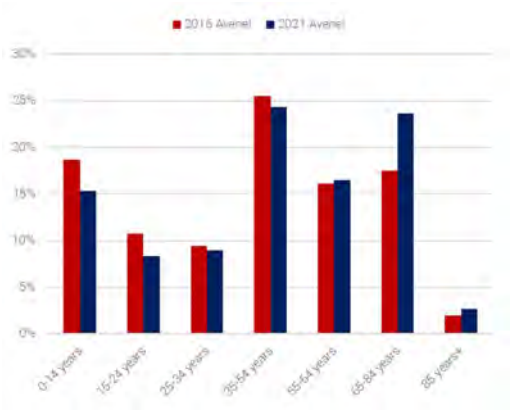
- The Avenel population increased at an average rate of 1.5% per annum over the period 2016 – 2021.
- Avenel generally has a younger age profile than other parts of the municipality, a greater proportion of families, and a higher income profile. However, the majority of recent population growth in the period 2016 – 2021 was due to an increase in residents of retirement age (65-84 years).

T31. AVENEL TOWNSHIP POPULATION GROWTH

Area	2016	2021	Change (2016 -21)	AAG	AAGR%
Avenel	1,115	1,202	87	17	1.5%
Strathbogie LGA	10,357	11,368	1,011	202	1.9%

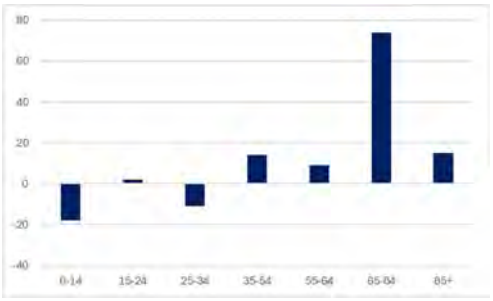
Source: ABS Census; Urban Enterprise.

F45. AVENEL AGE DISTRIBUTION, 2016 AND 2021



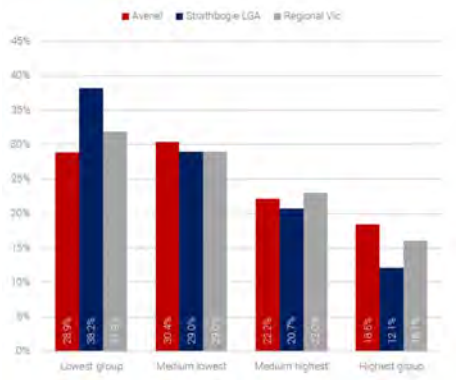
Source: Census of Population and Dwellings 2016 and 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics.

F46. AVENEL POPULATION CHANGE BY AGE



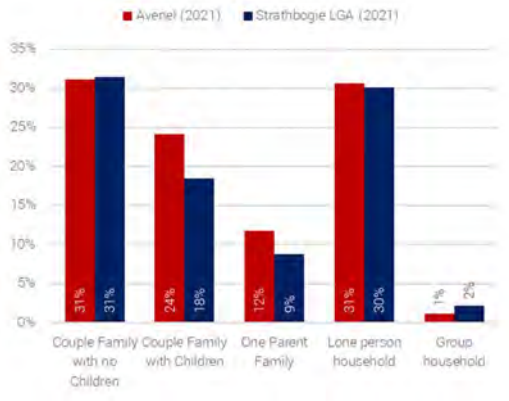
Source: Census of Population and Dwellings 2016 and 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics

F47. AVENEL HOUSEHOLD INCOME QUARTILES



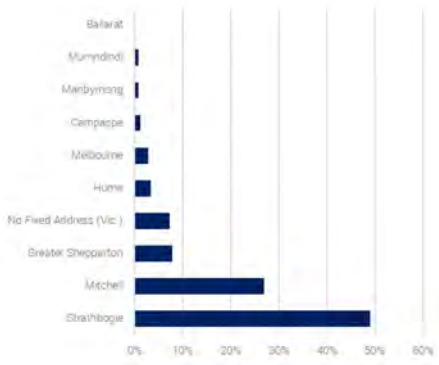
Source: Census of Population and Housing 2021. Compiled by .id (informed decisions)

F48. AVENEL HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE



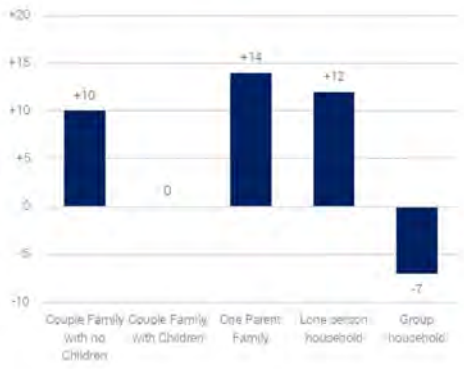
Source: Census of Population and Dwellings 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics.

F49. AVENEL RESIDENT PLACE OF WORK (LGA)



Source: Census of Population and Dwellings 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics

F50. AVENEL HOUSEHOLD CHANGE (2016-21)



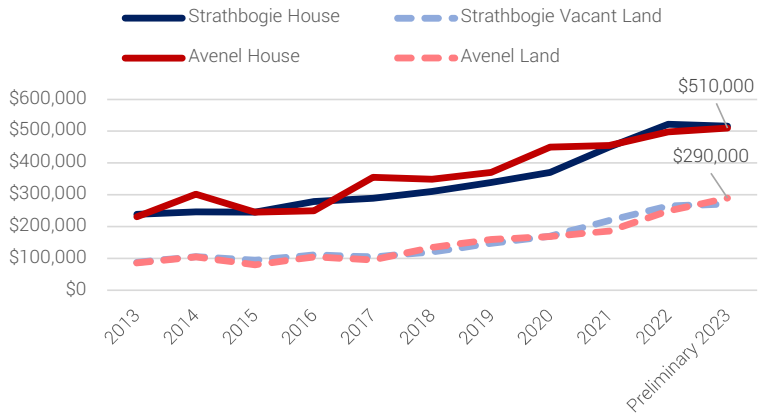
Source: Census of Population and Dwellings 2016 and 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics

PROPERTY VALUES AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

Figure 51 shows property price trends in Avenel, and Figure 52 summarises dwelling approvals in the town. The following observations are made:

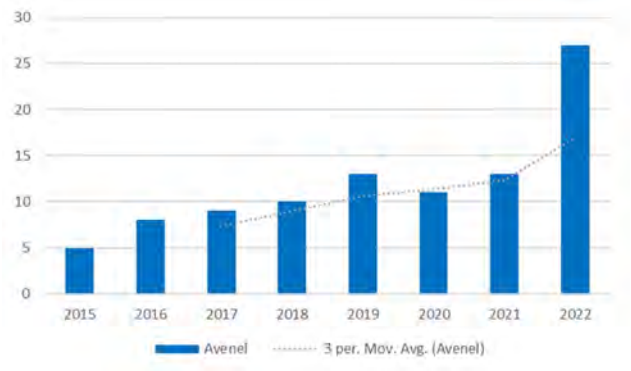
- Vacant lot prices in Avenel have increased at an average rate of 16.5% per annum over the period 2018 – 2023, demonstrating strong demand conditions.
- The rate of dwelling approvals has increased steadily over the past 5 years, from less than 10 per annum between 2015 and 2018 to a peak of 27 approvals in 2022.

F51. MEDIAN RESIDENTIAL VALUES BY PROPERTY TYPE, AVENEL, 2013-2023



Source: A Guide to Property Values, 2023.

F52. DWELLING APPROVALS, AVENEL



Source: Building Approvals, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2023.

LAND SUPPLY

Table 32 summarises the current land supply in Avenel. It is noted that:

- Avenel has a significant number of larger lots throughout the township. Some of these are vacant and are logical candidates for development, however many others are occupied by dwellings and gardens which could limit the extent to which the nominal housing capacity of the town is realised.
- Several broadhectare sites are present, including in both the Township Zone and LDRZ. The overall capacity of these sites is estimated at 511 lots.

T32. LAND SUPPLY, AVENEL

Zone	Vacant and broadhectare lot capacity	Infill lot capacity
GRZ1	0	
LDRZ	204	0
TZ	307	105
CDZ1	0	0
Total	511	105

Source: Urban Enterprise.

COMPARISON OF DEMAND AND SUPPLY

Table 33 shows a comparison of the demand and supply metrics for Avenel, based on the analysis shown in Section 4.

T33. DEMAND AND SUPPLY COMPARISON, AVENEL

	Measure
Dwelling demand rate	13-17
Vacant and broadhectare supply	511
Years supply	30-39

Source: Urban Enterprise.

5.6. STRATHBOGIE, LONGWOOD AND RURAL SURROUNDS

DEMAND INDICATORS

Table 34 summarises the population and dwelling numbers in the SA1 which include the Strathbogie and Longwood townships. Each of these SA1s extends into the rural areas surrounding the towns.

The Strathbogie SA1 experienced significant population and dwelling growth relative to its small size, with an additional 34 dwellings counted from 2016 to 2021, an average annual increase of 7 per annum. The Longwood SA1 experienced an increase of 16 dwellings over the same period.

T34. POPUATION AND DWELLINGS, LONGWOOD AND STRATHBOGIE

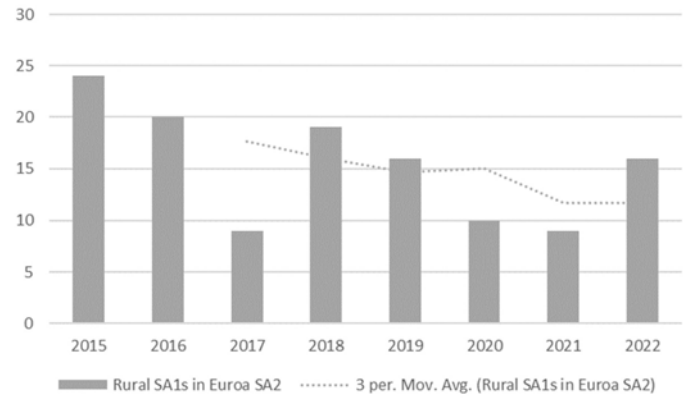
	Strathbogie SA1		Longwood SA1	
	2016	2021	2016	2021
Population	320	387	411	470
Dwellings	214	248	239	255

Source: ABS Census. Population = Usual Resident Population. Dwellings = all private dwellings.

Figure 53 shows that over the period 2015 – 2022, a total of 123 dwelling approvals were recorded in rural SA1s in the Euroa SA2, which includes Strathbogie, Longwood and all other rural areas in the SA2 and excludes the towns of Euroa and Violet Town (15 per annum).

Although the trend has been generally decreasing, the ongoing dwelling construction activity in these largely rural areas demonstrates steady demand for housing in areas outside the main towns.

F53. DWELLING APPROVALS, RURAL SA1S IN EUROA SA2



Source: ABS.

LAND SUPPLY

Table 35 summarises the current land supply in Strathbogie and Longwood. It is noted that:

- Strathbogie has an indicative capacity for 82 additional lots including vacant and infill opportunities, however the town is not sewered and each development proposal must comply with land capability requirements. The yield shown in this assessment is based on an average of 4,000sqm per new lot created.
- In Strathbogie, the majority of the housing capacity in vacant lots is within the properties located south of Armstrong Avenue.
- Longwood has an indicative capacity for 111 lots including vacant and infill opportunities, however as per Strathbogie, the town is not sewered which is a limitation to growth. The capacity assessment is based on an average of 4,000sqm lots.
- In Longwood, the majority of the housing capacity is within a large Township Zone property at 12 James Grant Lane to the north of the township, and a single LDRZ property at 397 Avenel-Longwood Road.

T35. LAND SUPPLY, STRATHBOGIE AND LONGWOOD

Zone	Vacant and broadhectare lot capacity	Infill lot capacity
	Strathbogie	
TZ	33	49
LDRZ	0	0
Total	**33**	**49**
	Longwood	
TZ	56	27
LDRZ	28	0
Total	**84**	**27**

Source: Urban Enterprise.

The ability of these towns to perform any significant housing role in the future will be limited by the current lack of reticulated sewer infrastructure. Recent dwelling approvals and population growth demonstrates steady demand for housing in these general areas of the Shire, so the Urban Growth Strategy will need to consider ways to accommodate demand for rural and small township housing in this context.

Council is undertaking a Rural Land Strategy concurrent to the Urban Growth Strategy which will deal directly with rural considerations, including rural housing issues.

6. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

EXISTING HOUSING

1. The existing housing stock is mostly larger separate dwellings, which is not well aligned to the size and type of households which is weighted towards smaller households and older residents.
2. Residential property prices (especially vacant lots) have increased significantly in recent years, which is both an indicator of strong housing demand and a cause of rapid deterioration in housing affordability.
3. There is a relative lack of rental housing available across the municipality and at least a third of households renting are categorised as experiencing rental stress. When this is considered alongside substantial waiting lists for social housing in the region, the availability of affordable rental housing is a key challenge.

FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS

4. Approximately 75-100 dwellings per annum will be needed across the municipality, approximately two-thirds of which will be needed in the south-western parts of the Shire, primarily in Nagambie and Avenel.
5. Given the relatively high recent rates of population growth and dwelling construction activity, Council should plan for the possibility of housing demand remaining elevated over the coming years, although the post-pandemic demand surge has now subsided, as is the case across much of regional Victoria.
6. Demographic projections are for growth to be primarily driven by older age cohorts, with two-thirds of growth projected to occur through residents aged over 65. The continued ageing of the population and smaller household sizes will require ongoing delivery of smaller dwellings, units, retirement living and aged care.
7. Based on an analysis of housing demand patterns and projections, future housing in Strathbogie will be needed in the following main development settings:
    a. Inner township areas where services can be accessed by short trips and walking, with housing accommodated generally through infill development, lifestyle villages and retirement communities;
    b. Outer township areas that can accommodate both conventional density and lower density housing for families and couples in relatively affordable estates; and
    c. Lower density and lifestyle locations which meet the needs of holiday home buyers, Melbourne buyers and lifestyle seekers (including some retirees).

RESIDENTIAL LAND DEMAND AND SUPPLY BALANCE

8. The majority of residential land supply with the potential to be readily developed is in Nagambie and Avenel, with secondary supply in Euroa.
9. Although Nagambie and Avenel have the greatest capacity for housing, in both towns, larger broadhectare development sites are depleting quickly given the recent increase in development and housing construction activity in the towns.
10. Overall, the main towns of the Shire are estimated to have a total land supply of 31-41 years in vacant and developable sites. Further housing capacity could be realised through re-subdivision of occupied lots.
11. At the township level:
    a. Nagambie is the location of highest demand. If demand rates remain elevated, Nagambie will require additional residential land in the medium term;
    b. Euroa has a relatively constrained level of supply which, if further housing opportunities are not realised either within the township or through additional supply, may result in adverse market impacts;
    c. Other main towns have sufficient supply to accommodate medium to long term demand, although the availability of infrastructure and urban services to support development (especially sewer) will be important to realise housing opportunities in Avenel and Violet Town. Although historical population and dwelling growth has been very low, Violet Town has a limited number of developable sites which may

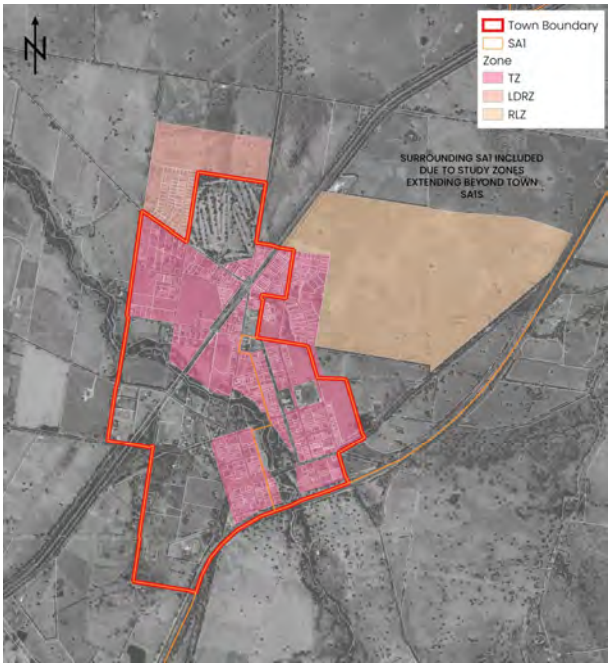
have limited dwelling growth in recent years, warranting consideration of the need for other residential growth opportunities.

d. Rural areas, especially in the north-east of the Shire, have experienced steady housing demand. It will be important to balance demand for housing outside main towns with other rural planning and settlement objectives.

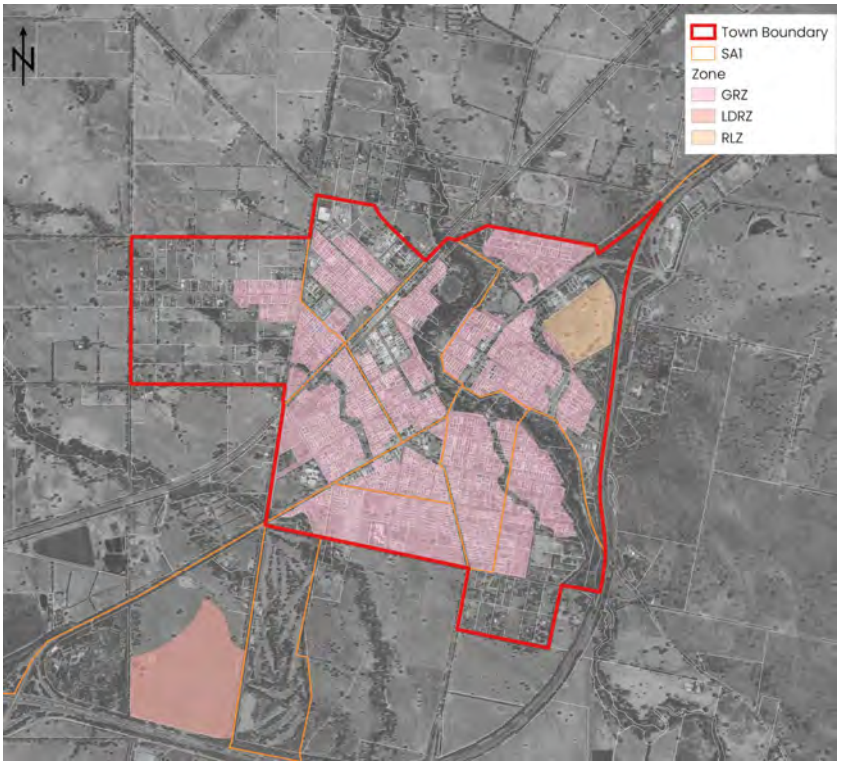
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A DATA AREA BOUNDARIES

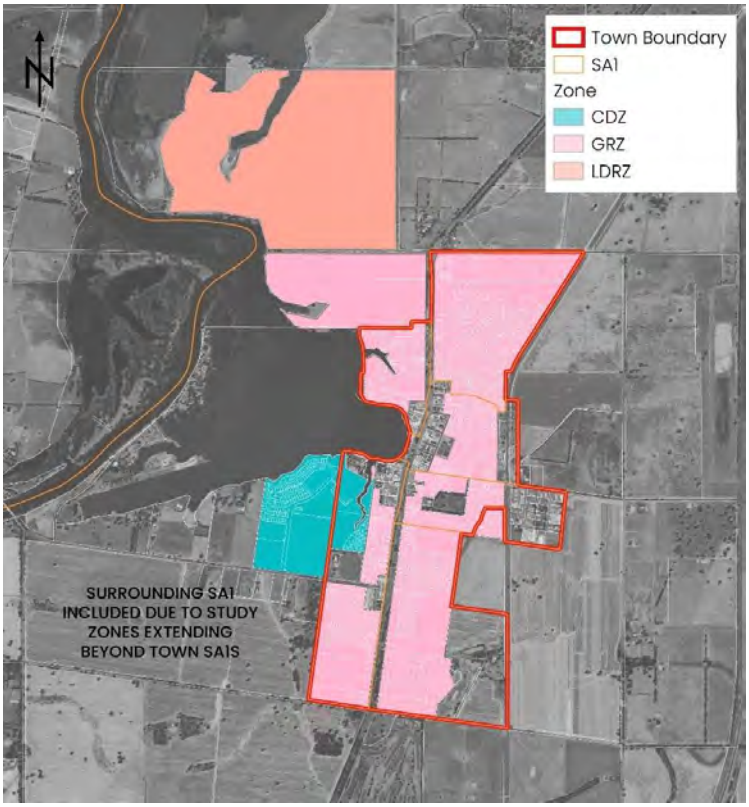
F54. AVENEL TOWNSHIP SA1S



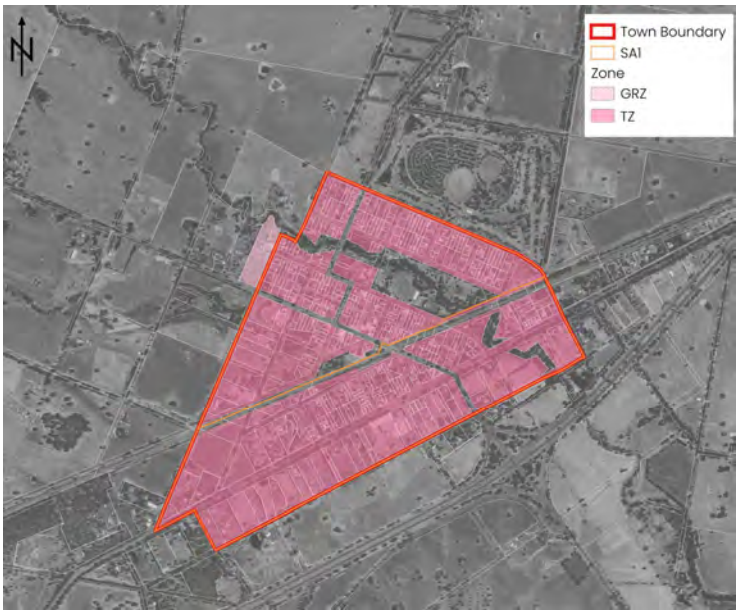
F55. EUROA TOWNSHIP SA1S



F56. NAGAMBIE SA1S

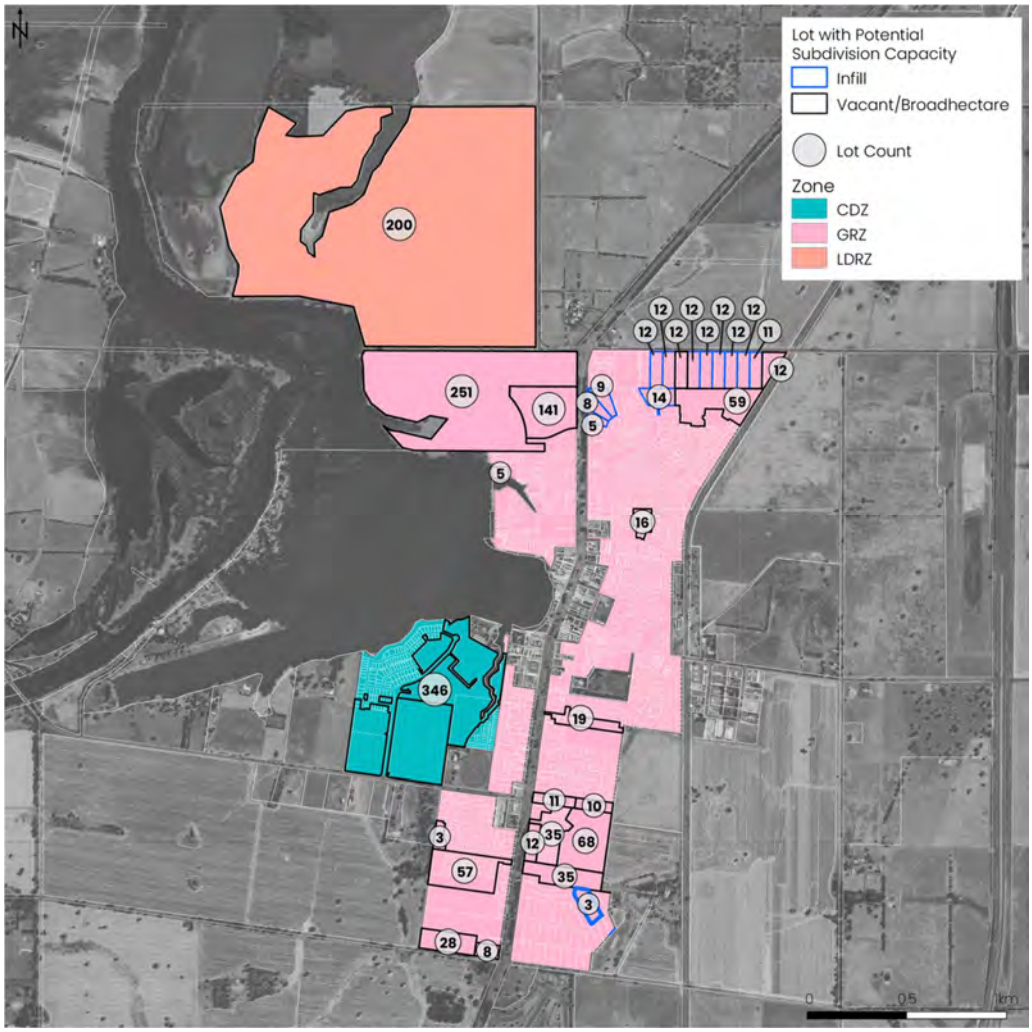


F57. VIOLET TOWN SA1S

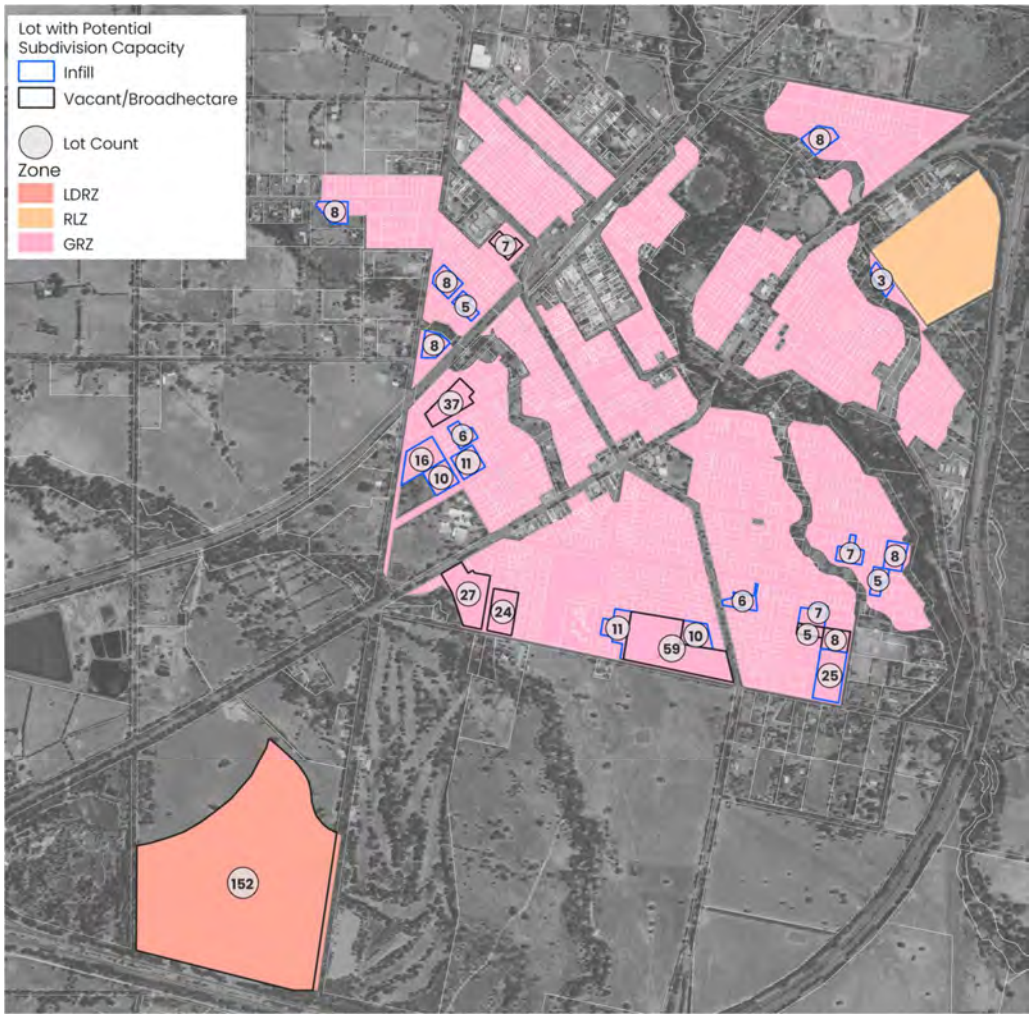


APPENDIX B LAND SUPPLY MAPS

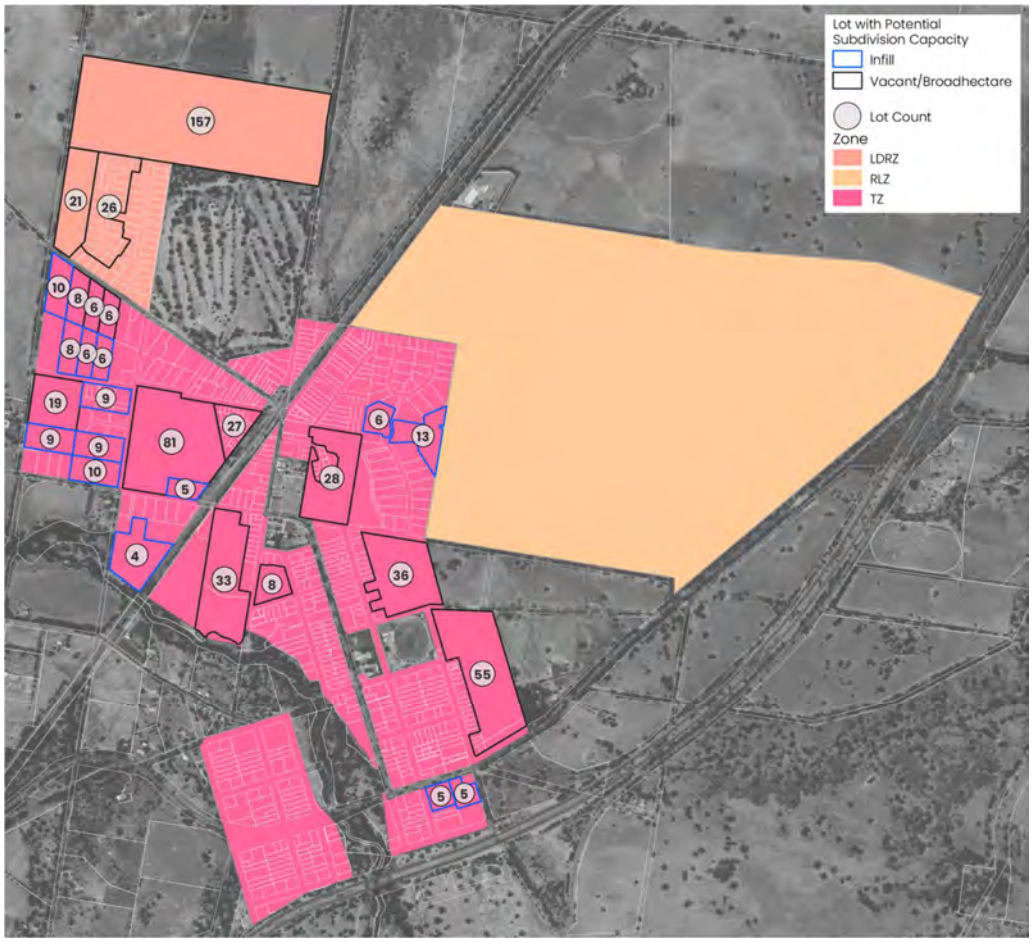
F58. NAGAMBIE LAND SUPPLY MAP



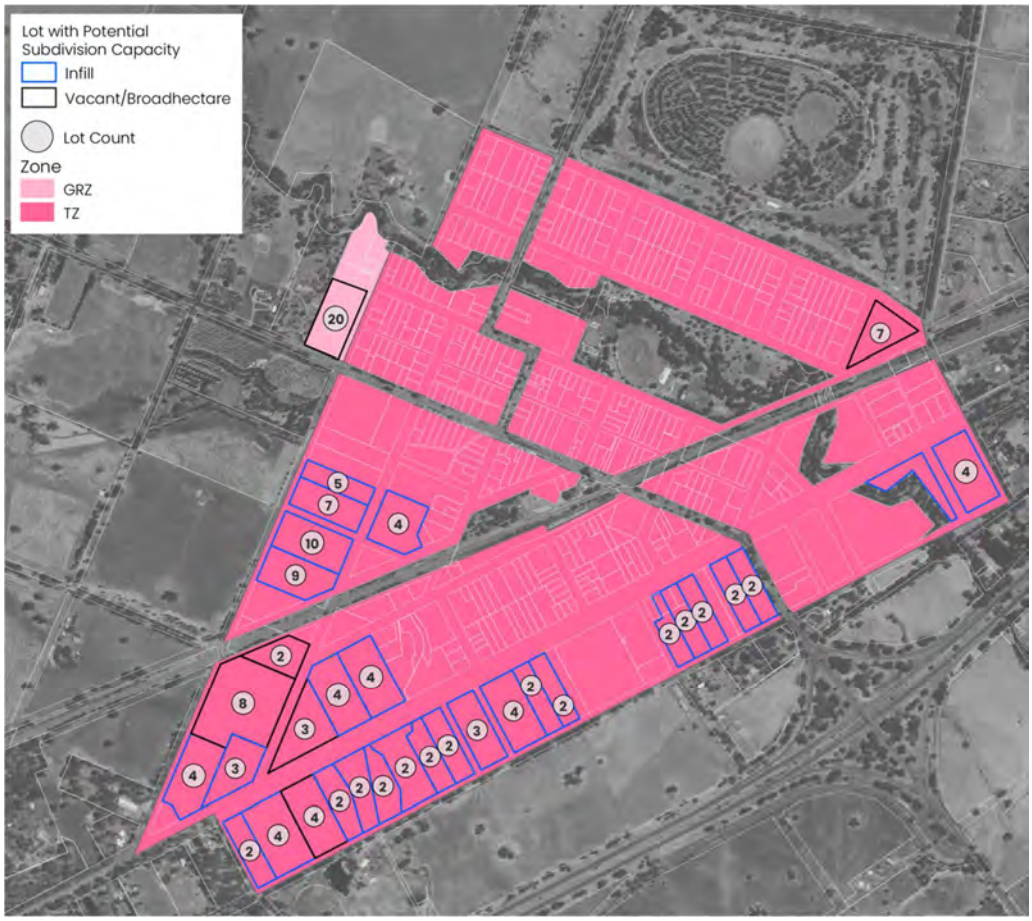
F59. EUROA LAND SUPPLY MAP



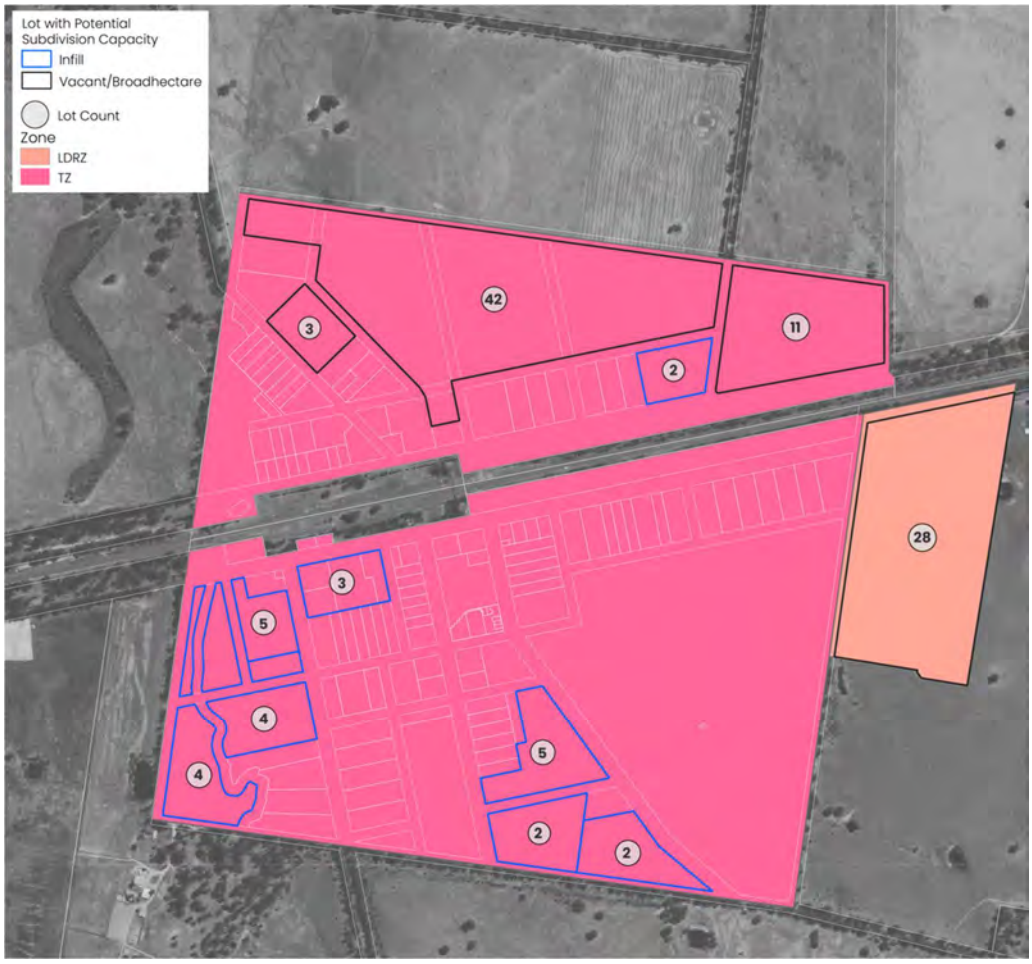
F60. AVENEL LAND SUPPLY MAP



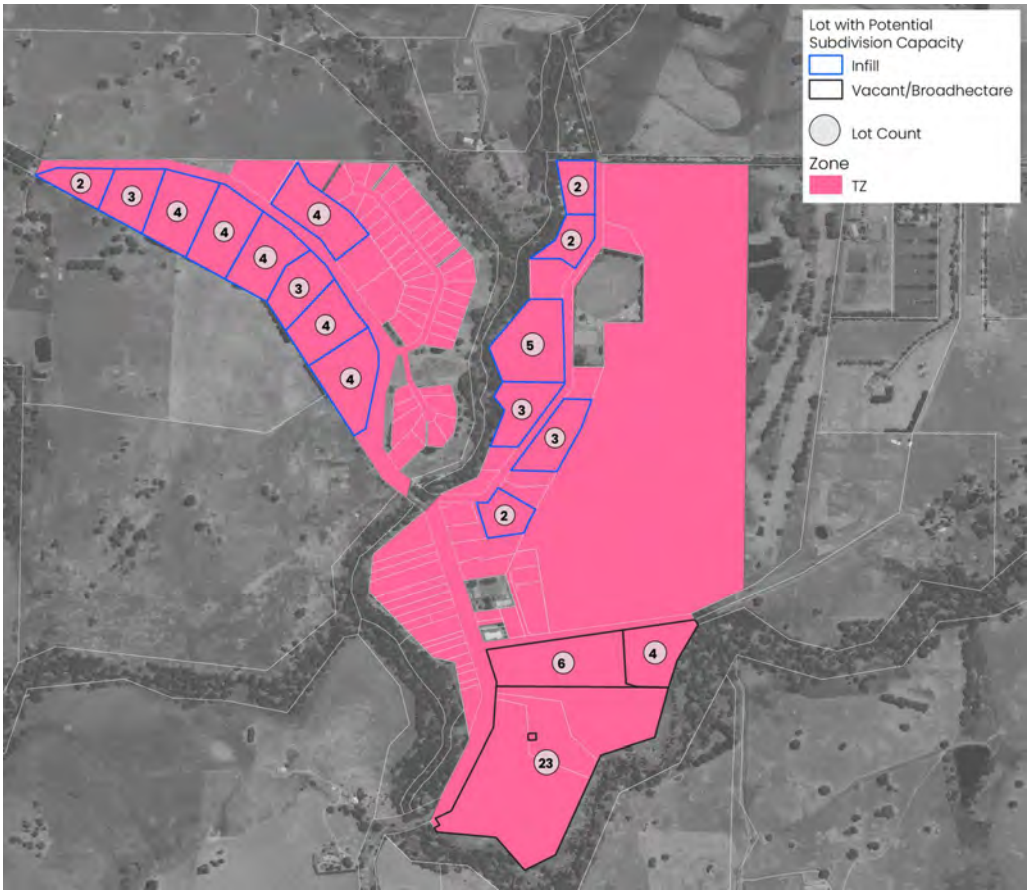
F61. VIOLET TOWN LAND SUPPLY MAP



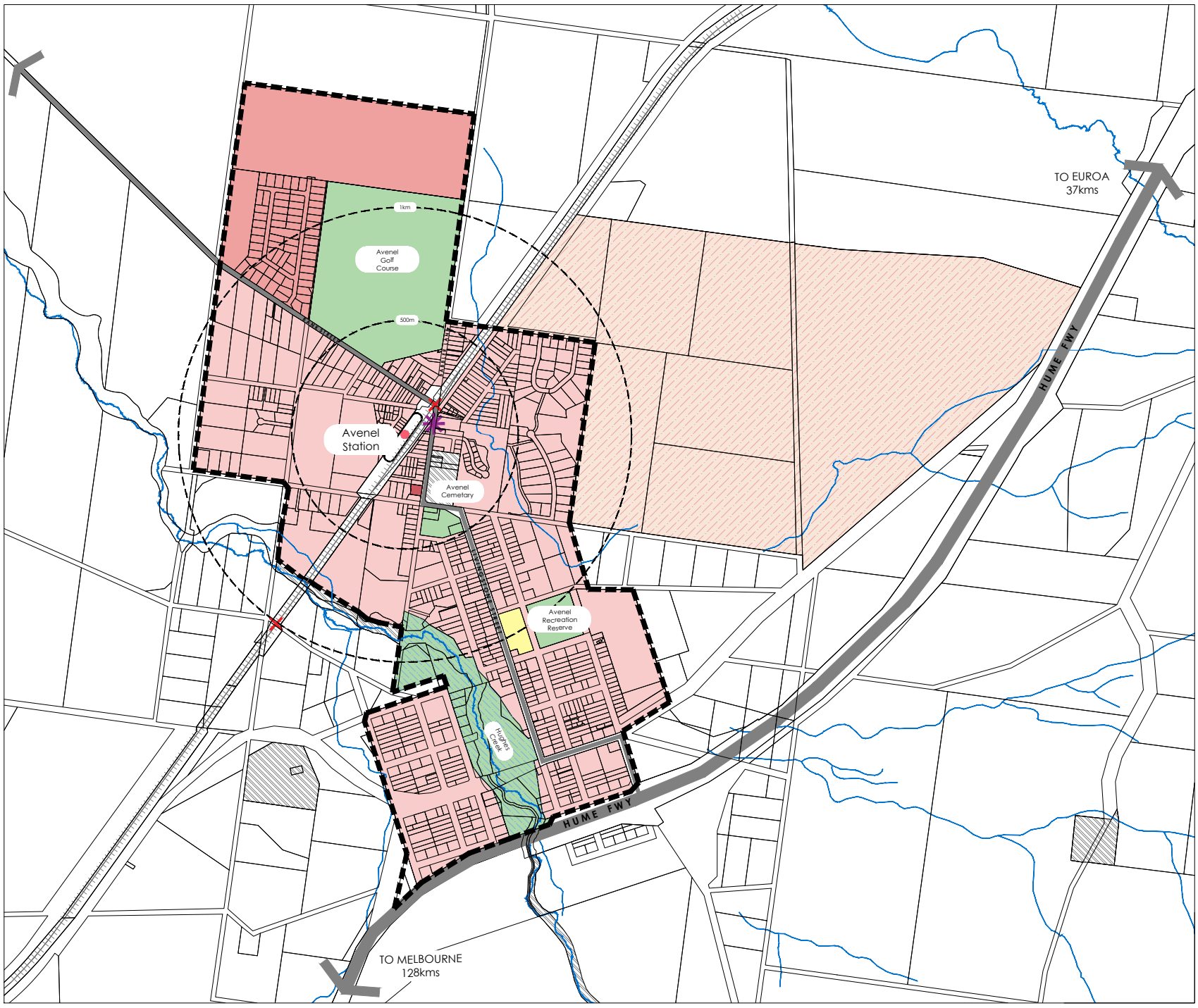
F62. LONGWOOD LAND SUPPLY MAP



F63. STRATHBOGIE TOWNSHIP LAND SUPPLY MAP




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LEGEND

- SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY
- TOWN CENTRE
- RESIDENTIAL
- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- RURAL LIVING
- OPEN SPACE
- URBAN FLOOD ZONE
- WATERWAY
- FARMING
- PUBLIC SERVICE/UTILITY
- EDUCATION
- HEALTH AND EMERGENCY FACILITIES
- TRAIN STATION
- RAILWAY LINE
- RAILWAY CROSSING
- MAIN ROAD

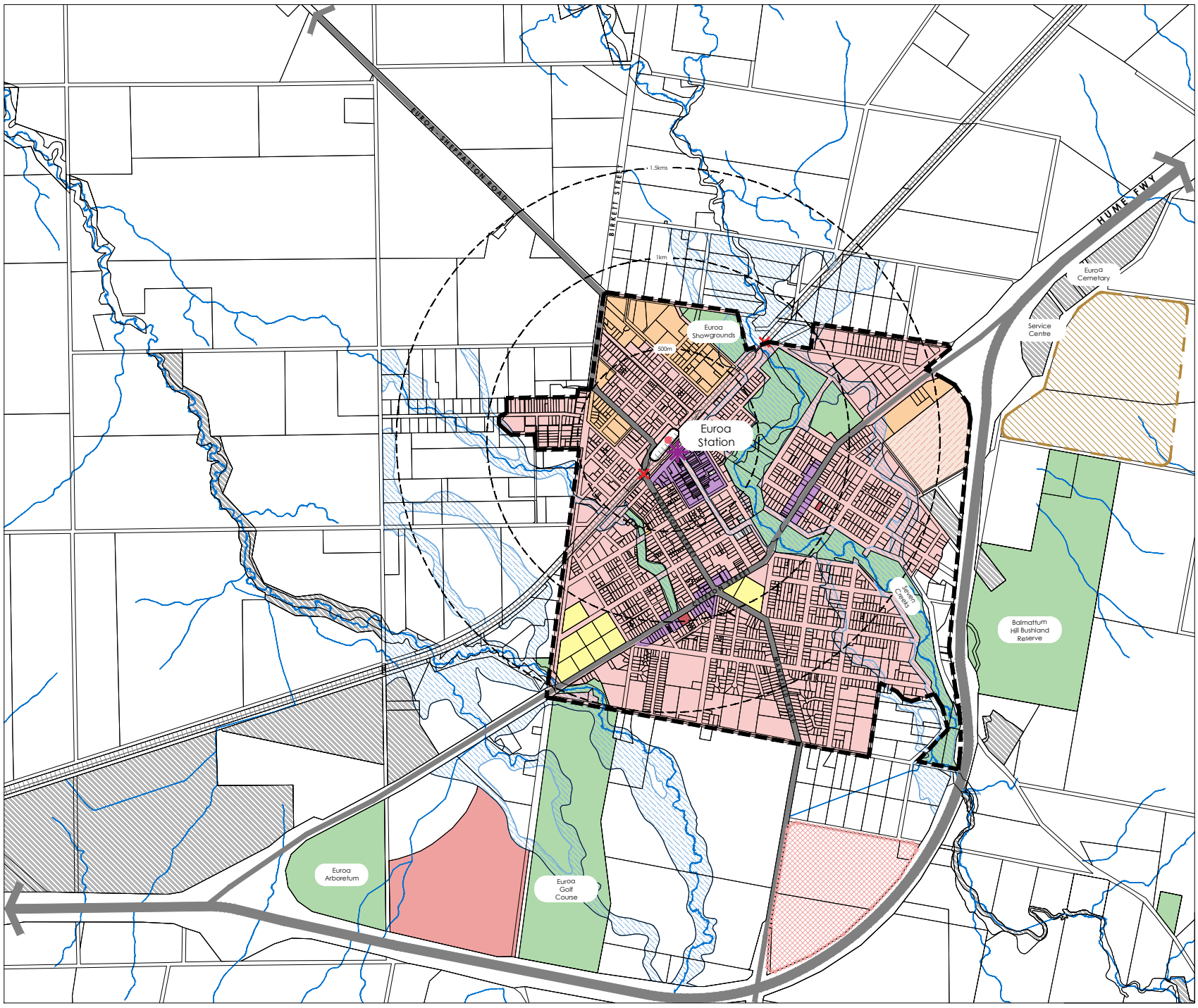
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Version: V4

AVENEL
FRAMEWORK PLAN

Attachment 11.1.4.3 Avenel Framework Plan



LEGEND

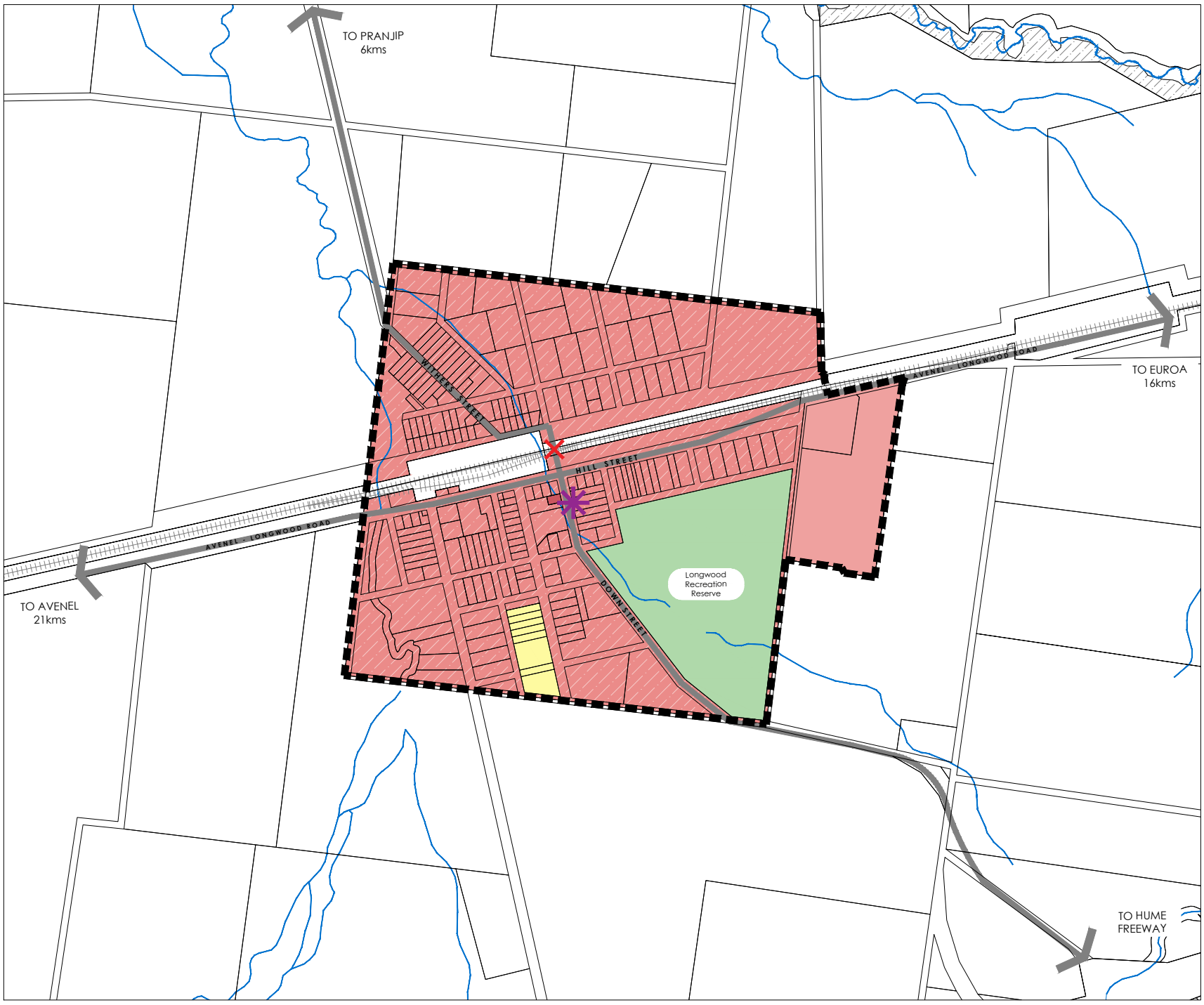
- SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY
- COMMERCIAL/TOWN CENTRE
- RESIDENTIAL
- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- RURAL LIVING
- INVESTIGATE RURAL LIVING ZONE
- OPEN SPACE
- URBAN FLOOD ZONE
- WATERWAY
- INDUSTRIAL
- POTENTIAL FUTURE INDUSTRIAL AREA
- FARMING
- PUBLIC SERVICE/UTILITY
- EDUCATION
- HEALTH AND EMERGENCY FACILITIES
- TRAIN STATION
- RAILWAY LINE
- RAILWAY CROSSING
- MAIN ROAD

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EUROA
FRAMEWORK PLAN



LEGEND

- SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY
- COMMERCIAL/TOWN CENTRE
- TOWNSHIP
- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- OPEN SPACE
- WATERWAY
- FARMING
- PUBLIC SERVICE/UTILITY/USE
- EDUCATION
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- RAILWAY LINE
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- MAIN ROAD

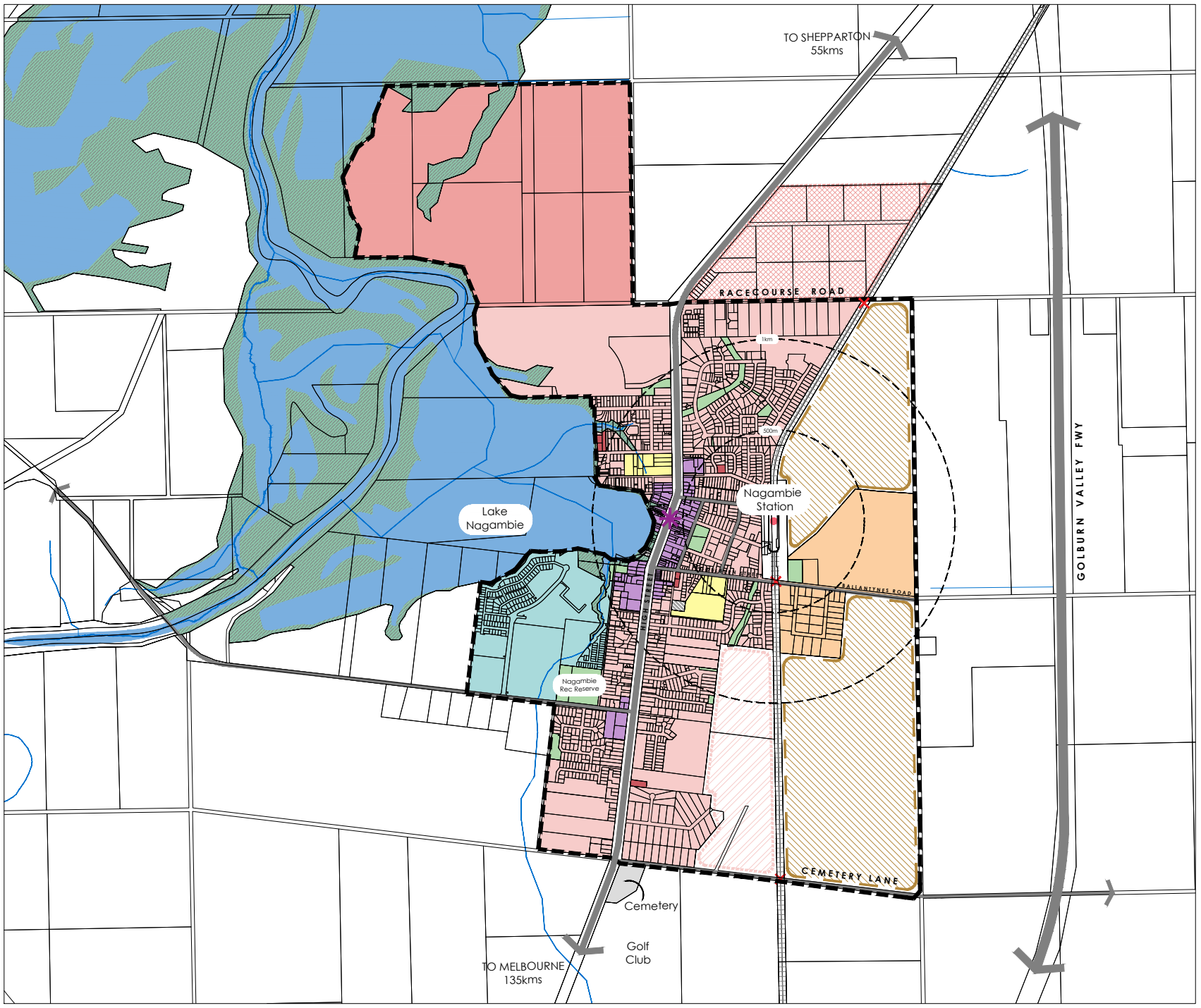
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Version: V4

LONGWOOD
FRAMEWORK PLAN

Attachment 11.1.4.5 Longwood Framework Plan



LEGEND

- SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY
- COMMERCIAL/TOWN CENTRE
- COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT (INCL. RESIDENTIAL)
- RESIDENTIAL
- FUTURE RESIDENTIAL
- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- INVESTIGATE RURAL LIVING ZONE
- OPEN SPACE
- PUBLIC PARK AND RECREATION (ENCUMBERED)
- WATERBODY
- WATERWAY
- INDUSTRIAL
- FARMING
- POTENTIAL EMPLOYMENT INVESTIGATION AREA
- PUBLIC SERVICE/UTILITY
- EDUCATION
- HEALTH AND EMERGENCY FACILITIES
- TRAIN STATION
- RAILWAY LINE
- RAILWAY CROSSING
- MAIN ROAD

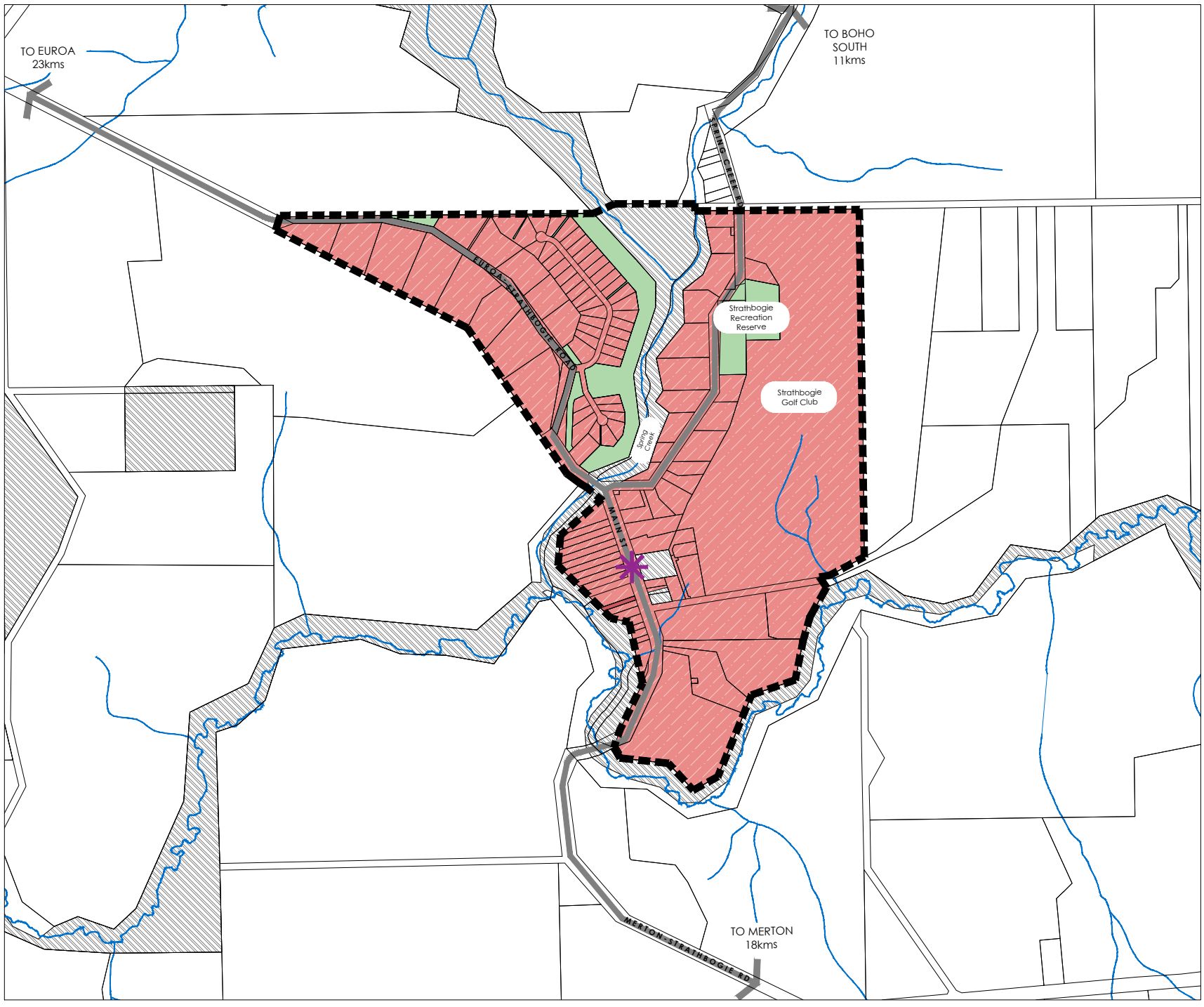
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Version: V4

NAGAMBIE
FRAMEWORK PLAN

Attachment 11.1.4.6 Nagambie Framework Plan



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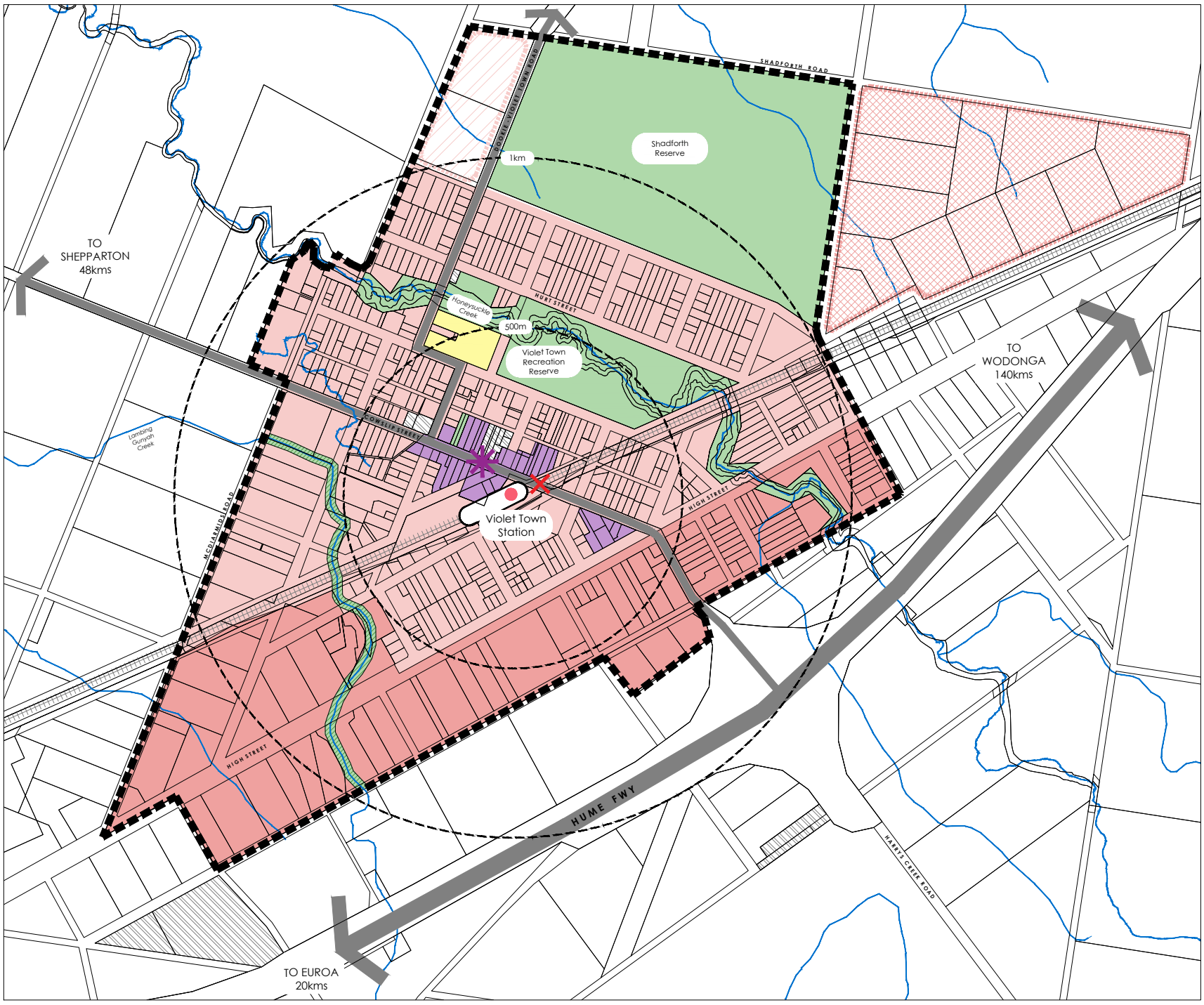
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- COMMERCIAL/TOWN CENTRE
- TOWNSHIP
- OPEN SPACE
- WATERWAY
- FARMING
- PUBLIC SERVICE/UTILITY/USE
- EMERGENCY FACILITIES
- MAIN ROAD

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Scale: 0 250m 500m

Date: .05.04.2025
Version: V4

STRATHBOGIE
FRAMEWORK PLAN



LEGEND

- SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY
- COMMERCIAL/TOWN CENTRE
- RESIDENTIAL
- INVESTIGATE RESIDENTIAL
- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- INVESTIGATE RURAL LIVING ZONE
- OPEN SPACE
- WATERWAY
- PROPOSED OPEN SPACE CORRIDOR
- FARMING
- PUBLIC SERVICE/UTILITY
- EDUCATION
- TRAIN STATION
- RAILWAY LINE
- RAILWAY CROSSING
- MAIN ROAD

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Scale: 0 250m 500m

Date: .05.04.2025
Version: V4

VIOLET TOWN
FRAMEWORK PLAN

Attachment 11.1.4.8 Violet Town Framework Plan

11.1.5 Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy

AUTHOR Manager Planning and Investment

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director Community and Planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council endorsement to release the draft Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy (attachment two) for public consultation. The public consultation will take place for a period of four (4) weeks.

The draft Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy seeks to provide a vision for the future use of rural land within the Shire, which is primarily within the Farming Zone.

Council has previously received formal updates on the progress of the Strategy at the Council meeting on 16 July 2024 to endorse the engagement plan and to authorise the release of the issues and opportunities report to the community for public engagement, and at the Council meeting on 10 December 2024 to seek the endorsement of the Community Panel Deliberative Engagement process.

Feedback received during the consultation period of the draft Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy will help inform and guide the content of the Final Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy that will form the basis of a future Planning Scheme Amendment.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Note and thank the Community Panel members for their contribution to the Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy**
2. **Note the final Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy and Urban Growth Strategy Community Panel Outcomes Report March 2025**
3. **Endorse the draft Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy for public exhibition and consultation for the period 22 September 2025 to 20 October 2025**
4. **Note Officers will provide a report to Council on the Community Consultation feedback and Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy for final adoption.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The Draft Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy provides a vision for the future of rural land within the Shire. Council has previously undertaken reviews of rural land. In 2004, a Rural Residential Strategy, was developed by Council which identified locations for rural residential development, subject to further detailed assessment and implementation measures in accordance with policy and Ministerial Directions. The Strategy was adopted by Council and since then it has led to one planning scheme amendment seeking rezoning of land at Lovers Hill in Avenel from Farming Zone to Rural Living Zone as per the adopted strategy.

Study Area

The study area incorporates all privately owned rural land in Strathbogie Shire, including land in the Farming Zone (FZ) and Rural Living Zone (RLZ). The map below shows the study area.

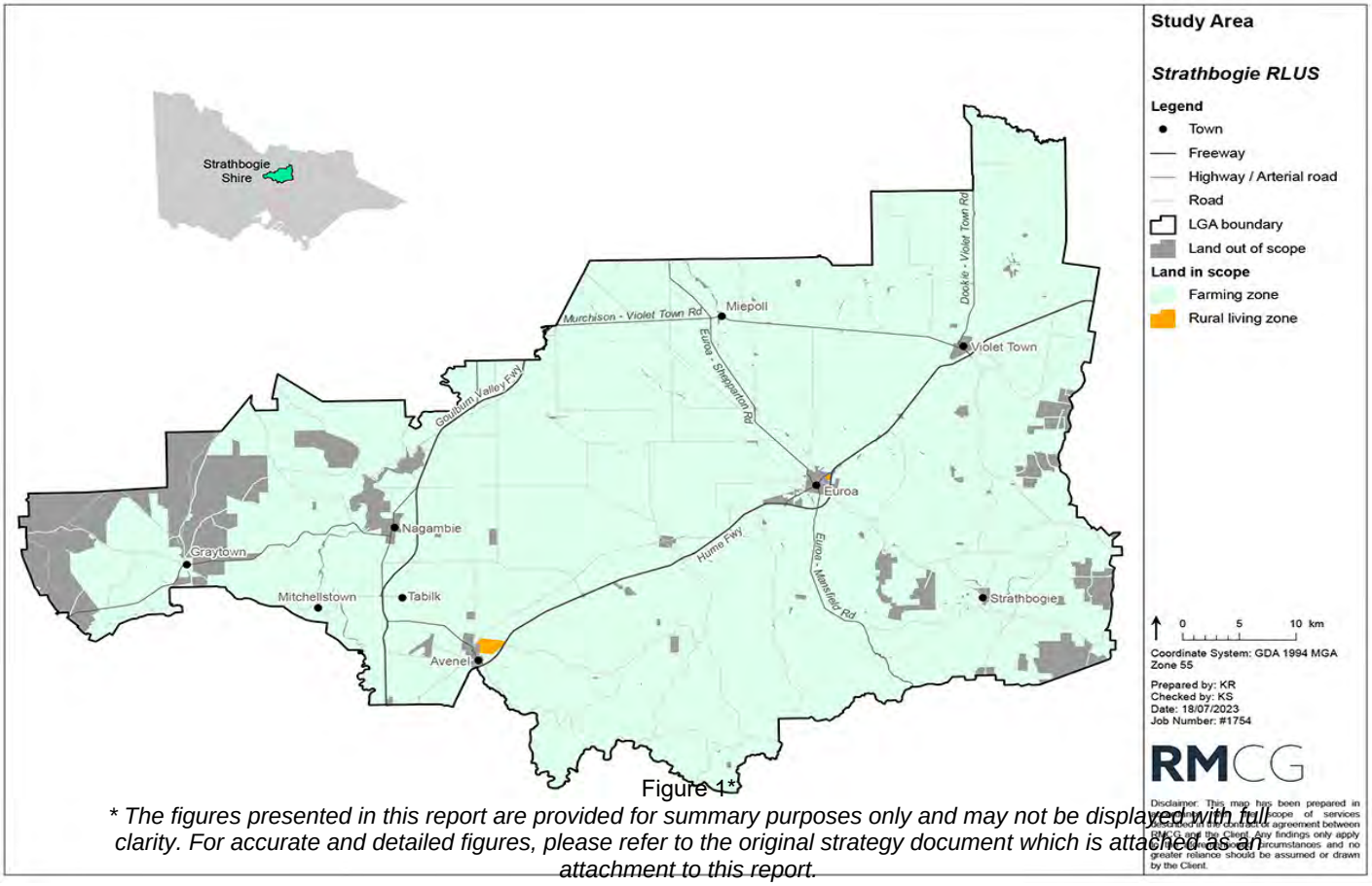


Figure 1*

** The figures presented in this report are provided for summary purposes only and may not be displayed with full clarity. For accurate and detailed figures, please refer to the original strategy document which is attached as an attachment to this report.*

The Issues and Opportunities Paper was placed on community consultation and referred to relevant authorities in November and December 2024. During the consultation period Council sought applications for a Community Panel to provide community input into the project. Council endorsed this engagement approach at its Ordinary Council Meeting held on 10 December 2024.

The Community Panel met three times in February 2025 to deliberate on key elements of the Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy and inform the draft Strategy. A Community Panel Outcomes Report was posted on the Share Strathbogie project page for the Community Panel members.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

The vision for Strathbogie Shire is articulated in the Council Plan 2025–2029 as:

"We will create a thriving place to live, work, and explore – where history and Country are honoured, innovation is welcomed, our collective spirit makes us stronger, and our natural environment is sustained for future generations."

The Draft Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy recommends policy changes to the Strathbogie Planning Scheme which seek to balance the sometimes competing demands generated by rural land use pressures such as retaining productive agricultural land, providing for new development and supporting tourism while also managing the effects on economic productivity, rural character and environmental assets.

Actions have been prioritised into high (next one-two years), medium (three-five years), low (six+ years) and ongoing to be completed over the lifetime of the strategy. Priorities should be periodically reviewed and reassessed in line with available budgets, resources and funding opportunities.

The Draft Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy comprises:

- **Part 1: Context** – Outlines the current strategic and policy context and the major drivers, issues and opportunities that inform the Strategy recommendations.

- **Part 2: Strategic Framework** – Comprises a vision, principles and rural framework plan and defines rural policy areas.

- **Part 3: Strategic directions** – Details planning policy recommendations, including objectives, strategies and implementation measures across the following themes:

    - Building a strong economy
    - Recognising and protecting natural values
    - Preparing for a changing climate
    - Providing housing for the future.

- **Part 4: Implementation** – Details recommended changes to the Strathbogie Planning Scheme to enable implementation of strategic directions.

Introduction

The Draft Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy was created with contributions from the community, rural industries, key stakeholders, and government agencies. It:

- Defines a vision for rural areas, outlining desired land use and development outcomes
- Establishes objectives and strategies for sustainable land use and growth
- Details specific actions to bring the Strategy to life
- Serves as a guiding framework for Council's future decision-making.

Part 1: Context

Strathbogie Shire spans approximately 3,300 km², located 125 km north of Melbourne and near key regional centres like Shepparton and Wangaratta. It benefits from major transport routes such as the Hume and Goulburn Valley Freeways, supporting its economic ties to these hubs.

As part of the Hume region, the Shire contributes significantly to Victoria's food production, especially in livestock. In 2021, it accounted for 37% of the region's gross value of sheep and lamb, and 8% for beef cattle. Farming Zone (FZ) land is primarily used for mixed agriculture mainly livestock, cropping, equine, poultry, eggs, and horticulture where water is available.

Challenges include the rising cost of rural land and the impact of residential dwellings on small lots within farming areas. These developments can lead to land use conflicts, increased service costs for Council, and hinder agricultural expansion. Community feedback during the 2023 Planning Scheme review highlighted tensions between residents and farmers, particularly around farming practices and vehicle impacts on livestock.

Part 2: Strategic Framework

Strathbogie Shire is a rural tourism destination that values its agricultural roots, natural landscapes, and Indigenous heritage. Planning ensures tourism development enhances the

region's character while protecting environmental and cultural assets, including the deep connection of Taungurung and Yorta Yorta peoples to the land.

The Strategy proposes two distinct rural policy areas (figure 2) to tailor policies that support the achievement of desired future outcomes for rural land. These areas reflect differences in agricultural productivity, land demand, and workable boundaries.

Policy Area 1 – Agricultural Engine Area

- Focuses on highly productive, strategically important farmland
- Farming Zone (FZ) retained; minimum subdivision sizes: 40 ha (Area B), 80 ha (Areas C and D), 100 ha (Area E)
- Dwelling construction minimum lot size increased to 80 ha in Area B
- Tourism only supported if directly linked to agriculture; large-scale tourism discouraged
- Subdivision and rural residential development strongly discouraged to protect agricultural viability.

Policy Area 2 – Diversity of Agricultural Activities

- Features fragmented land ownership and varied agricultural potential
- Supports a mix of commercial farms, hobby farms, and environmental stewardship
- FZ retained; minimum subdivision size remains 40 ha (Area A)
- Tourism encouraged where it enhances environmental outcomes and complements agriculture
- New dwellings assessed strictly to ensure alignment with agricultural and environmental goals
- Further subdivision discouraged to maintain land diversity and prevent urbanisation.

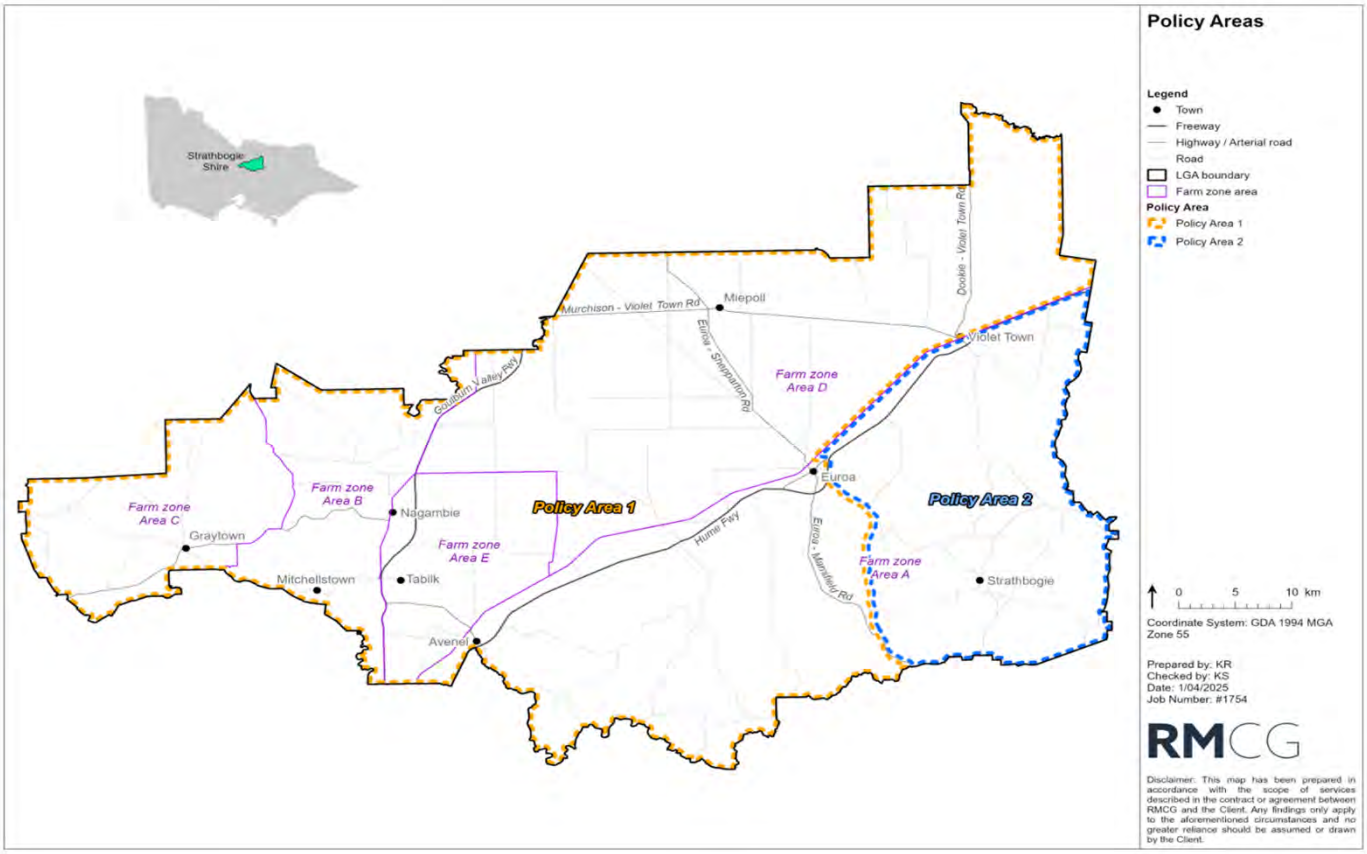


Figure 2

Demand for Rural Living

Strathbogie Shire currently has two Rural Living Zone (RLZ) areas in Avenel and Euroa, with limited development due to site constraints and enabling of dwellings in the Farming Zone (FZ). State planning policy requires councils to plan for 15 years of population growth and clearly distinguish between farming and rural residential areas to protect productive agricultural land.

Recent rural residential growth has occurred in the FZ, conflicting with state policy. To address this, restrictions on residential development in the FZ are needed, and alternative RLZ areas have been identified near Violet Town, Nagambie, and Euroa. These areas were selected based on growth potential, economic opportunities, and environmental and hazard considerations.

Figures below show the identified land for rezoning to Rural Living Zone in the strategy:

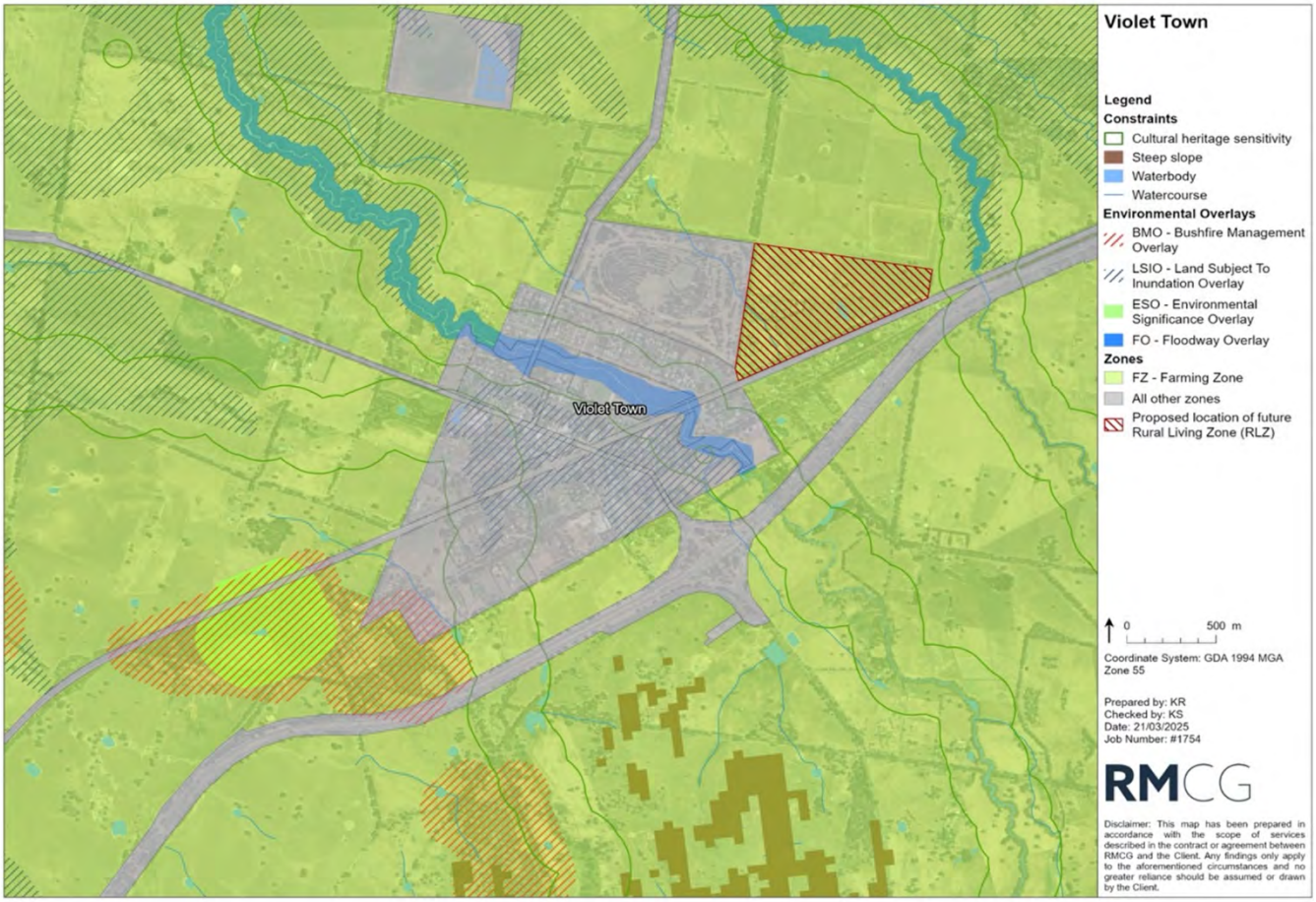


Figure 3

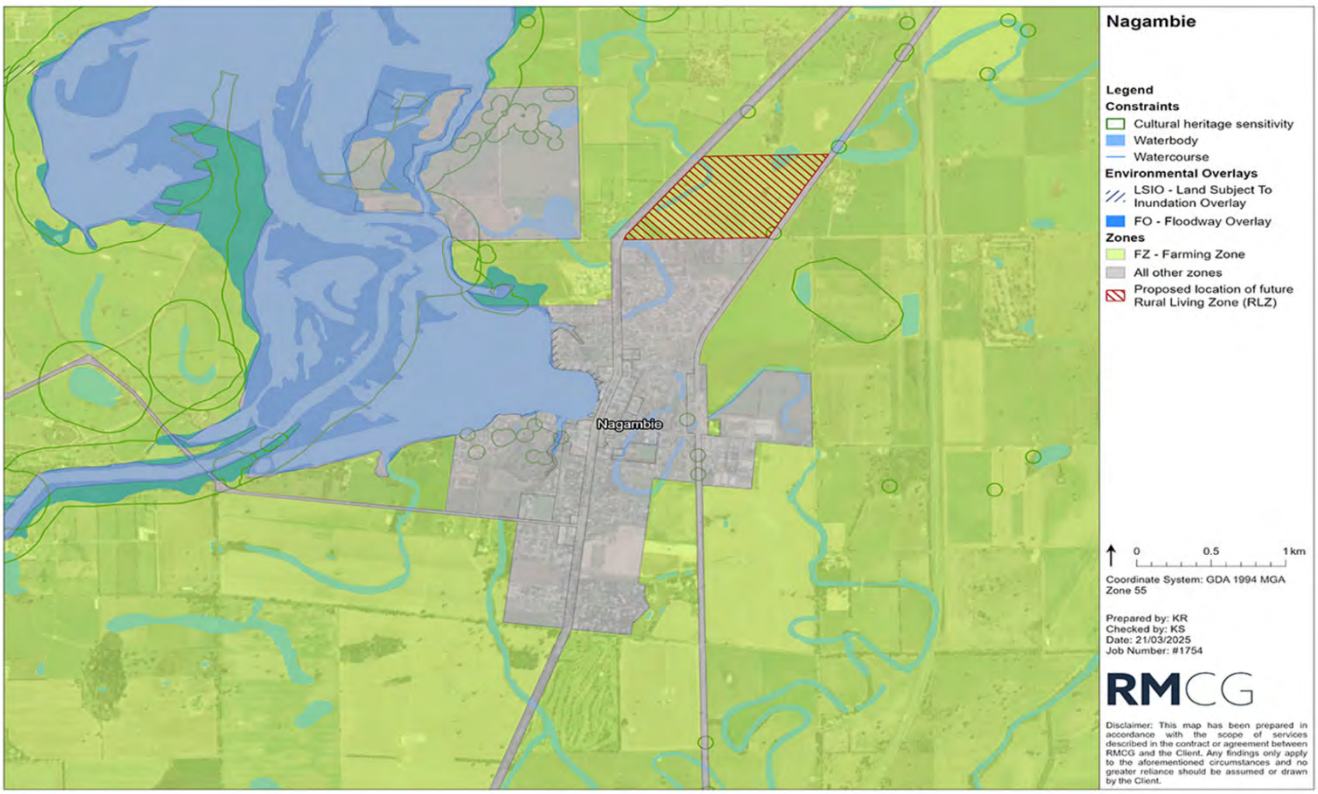


Figure 4

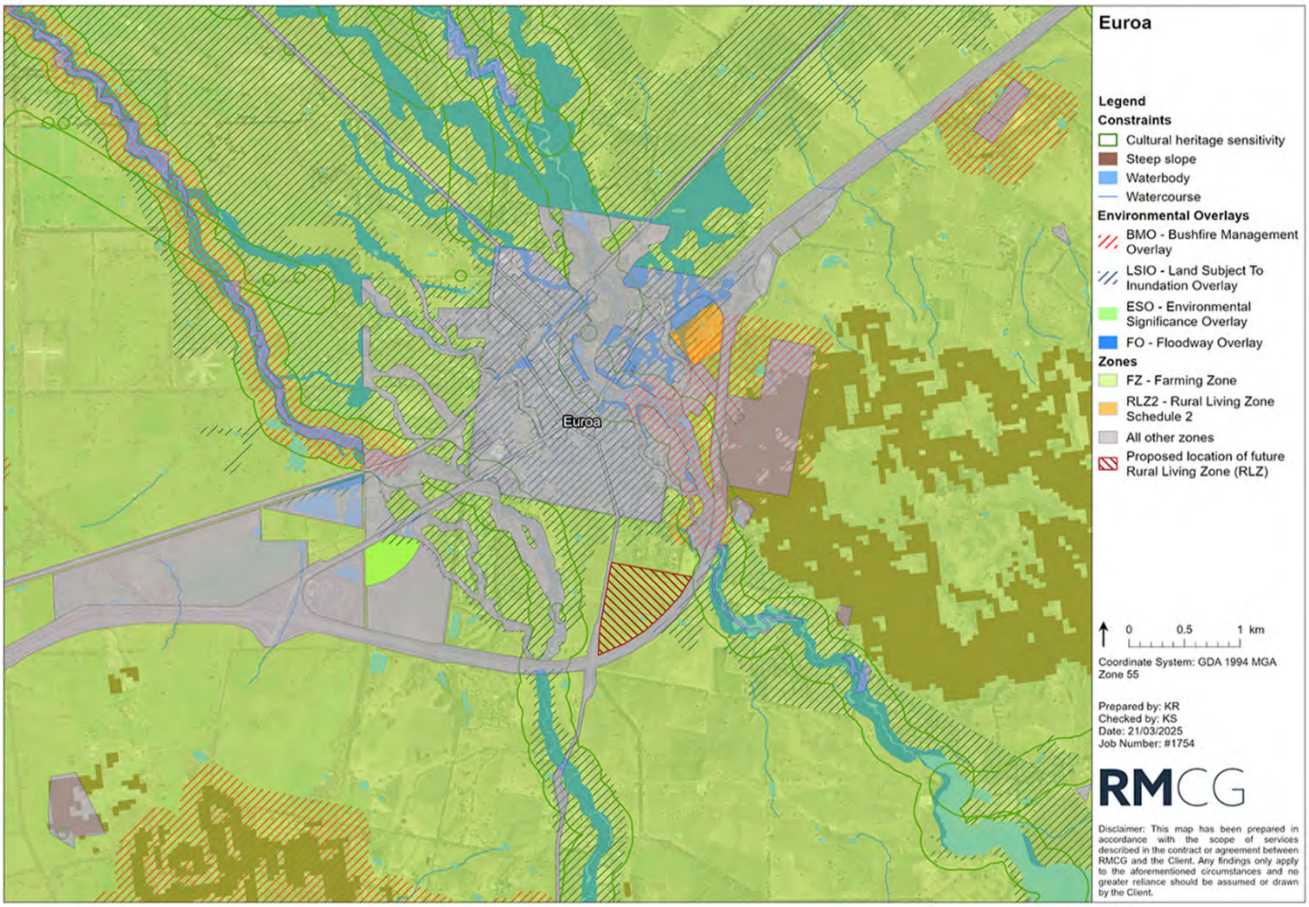


Figure 5

Part 4: Implementation

A consolidated Implementation Plan has been included in the strategy (Page 51-53) showing actions that have been prioritised into high, medium, low and ongoing categories to guide the strategic work program priorities and the development of the future strategic work program.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This draft Strategy considers and was informed by the final Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy and Urban Growth Community Panel Outcomes Report March 2025 (attachment 1).

The Draft Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy will be placed on consultation for a four-week period, opening on 22 September 2025 and closing on 20 October 2025 and will include direct mail out (post cards) to all the properties within the shire, website, social media and newspaper advertising.

Engagement will be set at the 'Consult' level of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation. This is consistent with the Council's adopted Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy and Urban Growth Strategy Engagement Plan.

Online submissions will be received via share Strathbogie, and hard copy submissions can be accepted via mail, email or hand delivered to customer service centres in Euroa and Nagambie. A hard copy draft Strategy will also be available at the Euroa and Nagambie Customer Service Centre's for viewing. Meetings or appointments can also be made to meet with a member of Council's Strategic Planning team to discuss the Strategy during the consultation period.

The planning scheme amendment for the implementation of any future Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy will allow for additional formal consultation on the amendment.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following objectives and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

Objective One: Connect

We are committed to enhancing access for all residents, promoting healthy living, fostering connections, and providing opportunities to thrive and participate in community life.

Objective Two: Sustain

We aim to collaborate with others to foster a sustainable environment, a thriving economy and resilient communities.

Objective Three: Deliver

We are committed to delivering quality services and infrastructure that meets the needs of our community. We aim to strengthen the Council's governance and provide improved, customer-focused experiences.

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

This report is aligned with the following legislation, Council Policies and key strategic documents:

- The Planning Policy Framework
- Council Plan 2025-2029
- Sustainable Strathbogie 2030 Strategy
- Economic Development Strategy 2023-2027
- Hume Regional Growth Plan 2014.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risks:

Risk	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Project timelines not being met	Probable	Moderate	Medium	Regular Project Control and Working Group Meetings have been scheduled. Project Management training and mentoring has been undertaken by officers
Community and stakeholder submissions may require further investigation or major changes to the Draft Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy prior to adoption.	Possible	Major	Medium	Consultation and investigation to resolve submissions.

Additional funding, and or time may be required if significant further work to investigate and resolve submissions is required.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

This is consistent with the objectives of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the Strathbogie Planning Scheme. One of the overarching governance principles under section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Council decisions are to be made, and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law. There are no significant legal considerations associated with this report.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

This report will be presented to Council in a Council meeting, open to the public and live streamed to the public. This is consistent with the Council's Transparency Policy, enabling the community to have oversight regarding the matters being discussed by the Council and the decisions being made.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy, including community consultation, is included within the Council's Strategic Planning operating budget. There will be longer term implications associated with implementing the recommendations of the Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy via a future Planning Scheme Amendment which will require Council funding in future budgets.

Economic

Economic benefits of a Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy:

- **Sustainable Agriculture**: By protecting agricultural land and promoting sustainable farming practices, rural areas can ensure long-term productivity and economic stability in the agricultural sector

- **Tourism and Recreation:** Protecting natural landscapes and promoting eco-tourism can attract visitors, generating income and employment opportunities in rural communities.

Social

The Strategy will improve amenity by ensuring rural residential development is directed away from productive agriculture and by ensuring productive agricultural businesses can expand into the future.

Housing is considered a basic need and a key contributor to the social fabric of creating communities where people can and can't live and the conditions that they live in have a major impact on their health and wellbeing and the creation of community. The strategy will guide people where they can and can't live within the municipality, thereby having a significant social impact.

Environmental

The strategy will work to reduce urban sprawl and greenhouse gas emissions, and protect natural areas, leading to long-term environmental benefits associated with a healthier environment and fewer negative climate change impacts.

Climate Change

The Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy will provide strategic support for the work Strathbogie Shire Council is undertaking through the Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment and the Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance. These projects include Sustainable Subdivisions Framework and Elevating Sustainable Development (Planning Scheme Amendment).

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

One of the overarching governance principles in Section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is the pursuit of innovation and continuous improvement.

COLLABORATION

Council Officers have met with referral authorities and applicable government departments to ensure views of water, agriculture, and fire authorities (among others) have been considered for the preparation of the Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

There are no significant human rights implications arising from this report.

CONCLUSION

The Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy will be a key strategic document that will inform land use planning decisions within the Municipality for the next 15-30 years.

This Strategy, alongside the final Urban Growth Strategy will work together to guide development across the municipality, with the Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy having a major focus to protect productive agricultural land, the key economic driver of the municipality. The Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy will provide much needed strategic support to assist Council Officers in making planning permit and planning scheme amendment decisions and meeting the needs of our current and future community.

Council endorsement for the consultation will ensure a comprehensive engagement approach is undertaken in the forming of the key strategy to reflect the current and future aspirations of the community and provide the strategic justification for future planning decisions.

This report requests Council to endorse the release of the draft Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy for public consultation purposes for the period 22 September 2025 to 20 October 2025**.**

Feedback received during this time will assist in informing the final Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy and a further report will be presented to Council regarding the results of the consultation and a final Strategy for future consideration.

ATTACHMENTS

Please refer to the Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy and Urban Growth Strategy Community Panel Outcomes Report March 2025 attached to item 11.1.4 Attachment 11.1.4.1

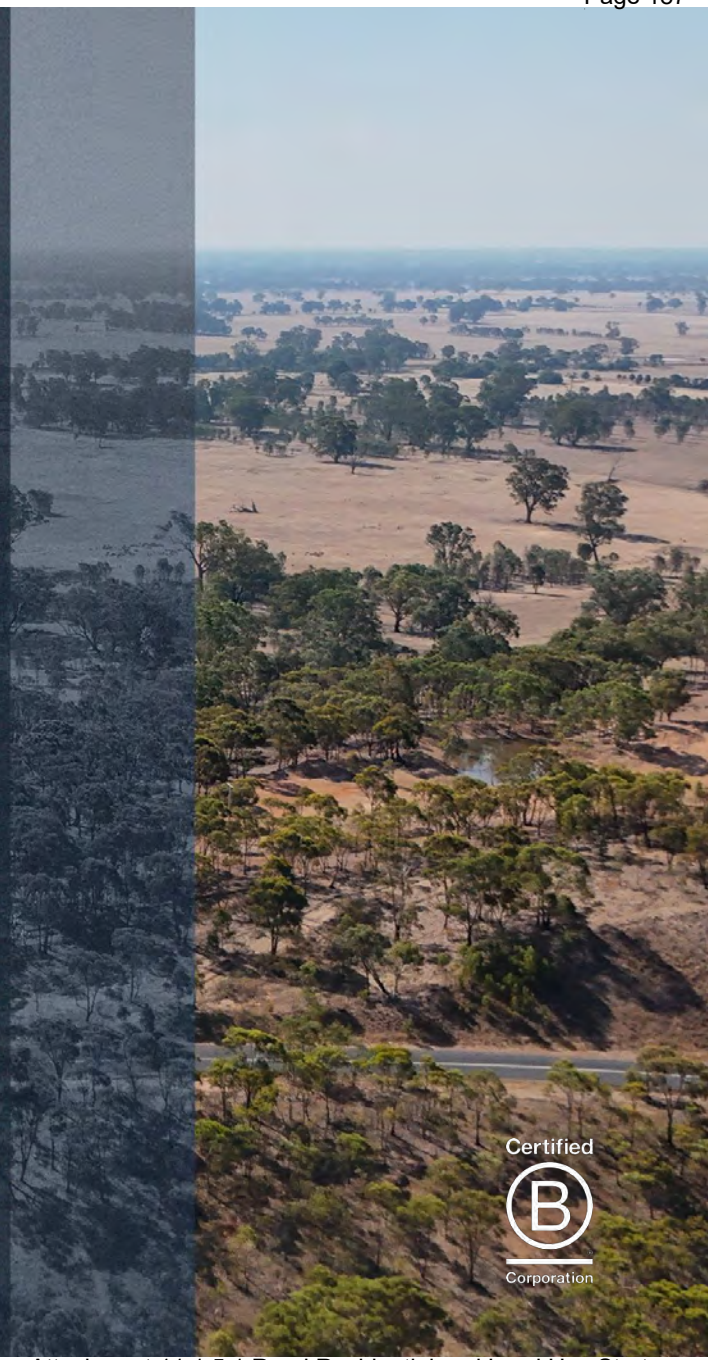
1. Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy
2. Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy - Bushfire Assessment

RMCG

JULY 2025

Strathbogie rural residential and land use strategy

Strathbogie Shire Council



Suite 4, Level 3, 108 Power Street, Hawthorn Victoria 3122
rmcg.com.au — ABN 73 613 135 247 — RM Consulting Group Pty Ltd
Victoria — Tasmania — NSW

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Strathbogie Shire Council acknowledges the Taungurung and Yorta Yorta people as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waterways in the area now known as Strathbogie Shire.

We pay our respect to their rich cultures and to Elders, past and present, as well as other First Nations people who live, work and play in the area.

Introduction

Council is preparing a Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy to safeguard rural values important to the economy and liveability of Strathbogie Shire and provide for rural residential development in appropriate locations. Parrallel with the Urban Growth Strategy (UGS), the two Strategies will guide land use planning decisions within the Strathbogie shire for the next 15 to 30 years. The strategies will work together in directing development across the municipality with the aim of maximising amenities for residential uses while not compromising the ongoing viability of agricultural, industrial and commercial businesses or future opportunities.

The Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy (Strategy) was created with contributions from the community, rural industries, key stakeholders, and government agencies. It:

- Defines a vision for rural areas, outlining desired land use and development outcomes.
- Establishes objectives and strategies for sustainable land use and growth.
- Details specific actions to bring the Strategy to life.
- Serves as a guiding framework for Council's future decision-making.

STUDY AREA

The study area incorporates all privately owned rural land in Strathbogie, including land in the Farming Zone (FZ) and Rural Living Zone (RLZ) (Figure 1).

STRUCTURE

The Strategy comprises:

Part 1: Context – outlines the current strategic and policy context and the major drivers, issues and opportunities that inform the Strategy recommendations.

Part 2: Strategic Framework – comprises a vision, principles and rural framework plan and defines rural policy areas.

Part 3: Strategic directions – details planning policy recommendations, including objectives, strategies and implementation measures across the following themes:

- Building a strong economy
- Recognising and protecting natural values
- Preparing for a changing climate
- Providing housing for the future.

Part 4: Implementation – details recommended changes to the Strathbogie Planning Scheme to enable implementation of strategic directions.

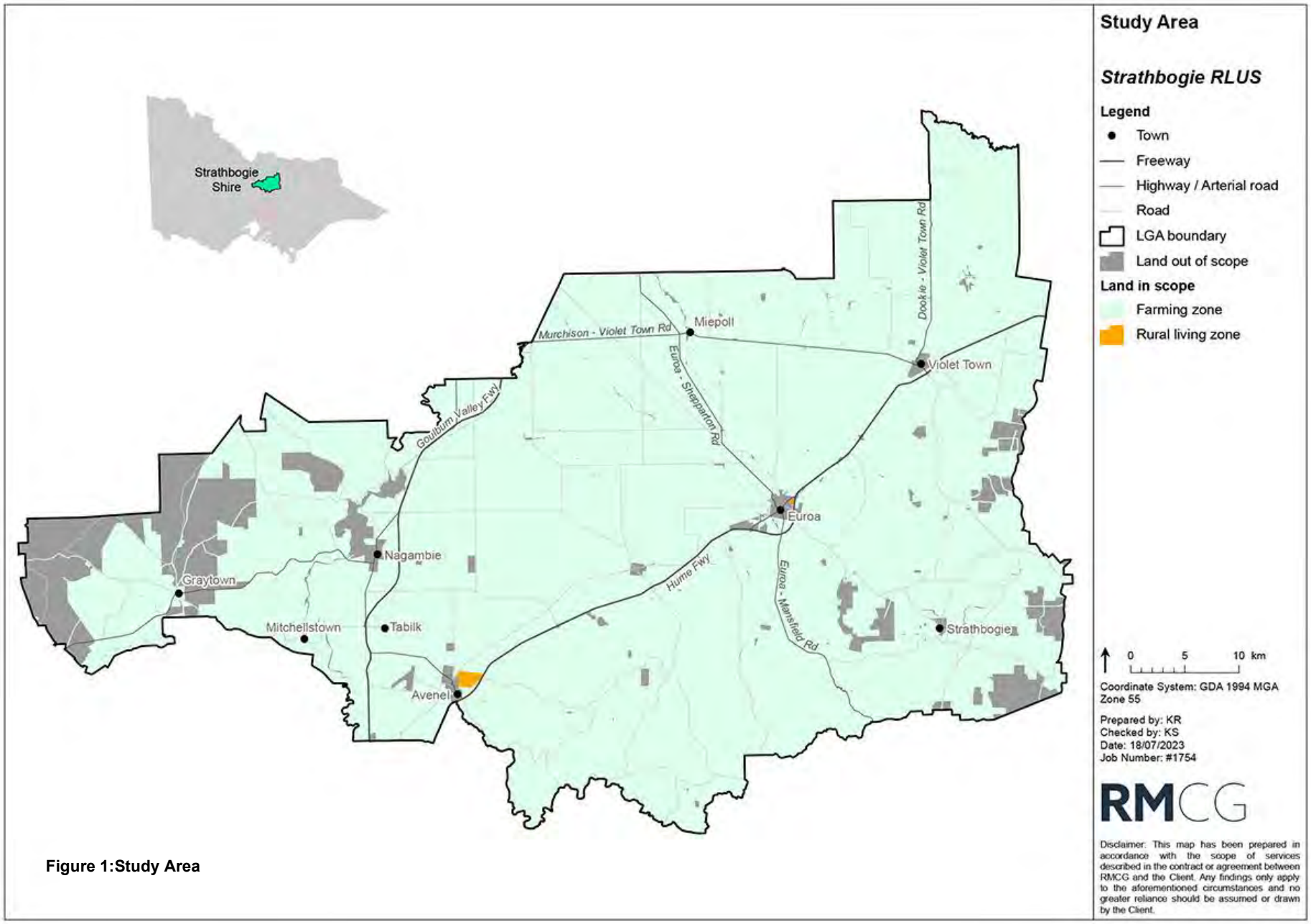


Figure 1:Study Area

APPROACH

The Strategy responds to the findings of:

- Research and analysis of Strathbogie shire's rural land use and development circumstances which are documented in the **Existing Conditions Report**.
- Community and stakeholder consultation which is documented in the **Engagement Report**.

This strategy is to be read in conjunction with the 'Rural and Residential Land Use Strategy Existing Conditions Report' and the 'Rural and Residential Land Use Strategy Issues and Opportunities' report prepared by RMCG.

The Strategy is one of a suite of land use planning documents currently being developed for Strathbogie Shire. As far as possible, the Strategy will align with the UGS, which is also being developed.

IMPLEMENTATION

Following adoption, the policy recommendations endorsed through this Strategy will need to be incorporated into the Strathbogie Planning Scheme (SPS) through a formal amendment process. Details of the proposed changes can be found in the 'Implementation' section of each relevant part of the Strategy.



Strathbogie Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy development and implementation process and timeline

Part 1: Context



Strathbogie Shire

OVERVIEW

Strathbogie Shire covers around 3,300 square kilometres and is located approximately 125 kilometres to the north of Melbourne CBD. It is a diverse geographical region, bordered to the east by the Strathbogie Ranges and to the west by the lakes district, which includes significant natural assets such as the Goulburn River and Lake Nagambie.

Strathbogie Shire is positioned toward the centre of the state and is proximate to the key regional centres of Shepparton and Wangaratta. These centres, as well as Melbourne, are accessible via major transport routes, including the Hume Freeway and Goulburn Valley Freeway and play an important role in the economy of Strathbogie Shire. For example, 34% of Strathbogie Shires working residents work outside the Shire. The role of the shire's towns is, in part, as dormitory towns for larger regional centres, including Shepparton, Seymour and Wangaratta where employment opportunities are concentrated.

The estimated resident population of Strathbogie Shire was 11,500 as of June 2022, with most residents living in Euroa, Nagambie, Violet Town and Avenel. There has been modest population growth over the last five years, with an increase of 971 residents since 2017[1]. Strathbogie shire's accessibility to Melbourne has facilitated population growth in the Shire, including city dwellers seeking a lifestyle change. This trend was evident during 2020 and 2021 when regional Victoria experienced a population growth of 15,700 people in contrast to a decline in Melbourne.

Leveraging the region's natural landscapes and locational context, the Strathbogie Shire economy, in terms of output and employment, is driven by three key sectors:

- Primary industries and trade (agriculture, manufacturing and transport)
- Population growth (property construction and real estate, retail trade, accommodation and food services)
- Knowledge and public sector industries (education and training, health care and social assistance, public administration and safety).

The Gross Regional Product of the Shire was an estimated $583 million in 2021. Agriculture is the primary driver of the local economy, employing nearly 1,055 people in 2021[1]. The large tracts of farming land support cropping and livestock production, as well as localised areas of horticulture and horse breeding. Intensive agriculture includes the production of chicken meat and eggs.

The popularity of the region as an overnight and day-trip destination is increasing. The visitor economy is an important component of the local economy, contributing almost 4.3% of total output and employing around 5% of the local workforce[9]. The Shire's high-quality landscapes, natural environment, and proximity to Melbourne attract weekenders and tourists. Nature and water-based assets include the Heathcote-Graytown National Park, Lake Nagambie and the Goulburn River and Weir.

North of the Hume Highway, the landscape is dominated by extensive areas of farmland and remnant native vegetation on private land along road reserves and watercourses, interspersed with scattered pockets of open grassland in a relatively flat landscape. South of the Hume Highway, the topography is steeper

[1] https://app.remplan.com.au/strathbogie/economy/summary?state=lWPoFNEb7UjWoAac6qVkzETAhPhpy2

and undulating, with scattered and fragmented woodlands as part of the Strathbogie Ranges.

The Taungurung people of the Eastern Kulin Nation and the Yorta Yorta Nation are the Traditional Owners of the land and waters of Strathbogie Shire which is rich in Aboriginal Cultural Heritage places.

PLANNING CONTROLS

This section of the report documents the current policy, zone and overlay controls that apply to rural land throughout Strathbogie Shire, as well as the findings and recommendations arising from a review of the performance of the planning controls.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY

Strathbogie shire's Municipal Planning Statement (MPS) recognises that the shire is supported by an economic rural base of wool, grain, cattle production, and vineyards and identifies a number of specialist rural enterprises, including equine, poultry and cool climate horticulture. The agricultural industries are supported by the four major towns: Euroa, Nagambie, Avenel and Violet Town. The Shire's natural values include parks, forests, and waterways, and endangered species are recognised as important features of the area.

Land use and development directions within the MPS which have guided the development of the Strategy include:

02.03-1 Settlement

This clause sets policy objectives for planning residential settlements in Strathbogie. The clause identifies Strathbogie's principal towns as Euroa, Nagambie, Avenel and Violet Town.

Strategic directions for settlements include:

- Facilitate rural and low density residential zoned land in locations that won't negatively impact productive agricultural land.
- Preserve and protect small settlements from residential development.
- Encourage the expansion of small settlements with reliable water supply and sewerage.

02.03-2 Environmental values and biodiversity

Protecting Strathbogie's environment and biodiversity is guided by Council's strategic directions. Strategic directions include:

- Protect and enhance native vegetation, fauna and waterways, including riparian areas.
- Encourage connectivity between vegetation corridors including roadsides and waterways.
- Protect medium to high-quality roadside vegetation.

02.03-3 Environmental Risk

In relation to environmental risk, Council recognises the increasing threat of extreme weather events, including, flood, bushfire and drought. Strathbogie ranges is recognised as an area particularly at threat from bushfires.

Council's strategic directions for environmental risks are to:

- Support use and development that adapts to the impacts of climate change.
- Encourage development to be responsive to potential environmental risks.
- Protect floodplains and their role in conveying and storing floodwater, to preserve and minimise the deterioration of environmental values.
- Discourage development in areas of bushfire risk.

02.03-4 Natural Resource Management

<u>Agriculture</u>

Land use conflicts between lifestyle properties and rural and industrial is recognised as an issue in Strathbogie. The Shire's predominant agricultural

activities are livestock grazing and broadacre with increases in intensive animal husbandry, horticulture and the equine industry which have emerge due to the Shire's proximity to Melbourne.

Council's strategic directions for agriculture are to:

- Retain areas of high-quality rural land for farming and agricultural purposes.
- Encourage consolidation of small rural lots within the Farming Zone.
- Encourage emerging rural enterprises, such as intensive animal husbandry, horticulture and the equine industry.
- Prioritise productive farming development over residential development.
- Encourage value adding rural industries.
- Protect, maintain and grow environmentally sustainable intensive agriculture.
- To promote the clustering of co-dependant uses.

Water

The Strathbogie Shire has significant water assets including Goulburn River, Lake Nagambie, Seven Creeks and Hughes Creek. The many spring fed waterways start in the Strathbogie Ranges and subsequently flow down into the main creeks and rivers eventually running from the shire into the neighbouring shires and forming a part of the Murray Darling Basin.

Council's strategic direction for water is to:

- Protect proclaimed water supply catchments (and water quality) from development that would compromise water catchments.

02.03-6 Housing

This clause acknowledges that the Shire has experienced increasing demand for low density residential and rural living development, particularly in Strathbogie Ranges, Avenel and Nagambie and recognises the conflicts of urban expansion into agricultural areas.

Council's strategic directions for housing are to:

- Encourage rural residential development that is located and designed to protect existing agricultural uses, the natural environment and townships.
- Encourage rural residential development that can be efficiently serviced by social and physical infrastructure.

PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Planning Policy Framework (PPF) outlines Victorian State Government strategy and policy directions for land use planning. Planning for Strathbogie shire's rural areas needs to be consistent with the relevant state, regional and local policy objectives, which the following section briefly outlines:

Clause 11 – Settlement

Identifies plannings role in settlement planning as anticipating and responding to the needs of existing and future communities through the provision of zoned and serviced land for housing. Whilst this is achieved in the Urban Growth Strategy, provision can be made for the identification of additional Rural Living Zoned land where appropriate.

Clause 11.01-1S Settlement provides key strategies to minimise exposure to natural hazards and ensuring land that may be required for future urban expansion is not compromised and balancing strategic objectives to achieve improved land use and development outcomes at a regional, catchment and local level.

The regional level settlement policy further reinforces the state policy requirement to direct growth to existing settlements. The Nagambie side of Strathbogie Shire is identified as strategic agricultural land in the Hume Regional growth Plan (2014).

Local level planning policy identifies further investigation areas for Rural Living Zone for Avenel, Euroa, Longwood, Nagambie, Strathbogie and Violet Town. The RRLUS will further review these areas identified for further

investigation and whether they are still appropriate for rural residential land uses.

Clause 12 – Environmental and landscape values

Identifies plannings role to protect, restore and enhance the health of ecological systems and the biodiversity they support.

Clause 12.01 Biodiversity provides the key objective of protecting and enhancing Victoria's biodiversity. This is reinforced by strategies that support siting and design measures, identification and protection of important areas of biodiversity and the protection and re-establishment of links between important areas of biodiversity.

Clause 12.03 Water bodies and wetlands has the key objective of protecting and enhancing waterway systems including river and riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands and billabongs. Strategies identified to achieve this objective include the consideration of the siting and designing of development, subdivision and use, protection and promotion of waterways and their enhancement through indigenous revegetation, riparian plantings and focusing on waterway health. Strathbogie Shire has two designated special water supply catchment areas.

Clause 12.05 Significant environments and landscapes provides an objective to protect, conserve and enhance significant and sensitive areas. Strathbogie Shire contains several significant landscapes that require further protection.

Clause 13 – Environmental Risks and Amenity

Identifies hazards and risks that land use planning must address when assessing development.

Clause 13.01 Climate change impacts has the objective to minimise impacts of natural hazards and adapt to the impacts of climate change through risk-based planning when assessing rezoning. Strategies identified to achieve this include the direction of population growth to low risk locations and for strategic land use planning decisions to be made using best available data and climate change science.

Clause 13.02 Bushfire has the objective to strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities to bushfire through risk-based planning that prioritises the protection of human life. Risk-based planning is a key concept in planning for settlements, where growth is to be directed to low risk locations through the identification of bushfire hazards and having strong strategies in place to discourage inappropriate growth. Any future growth identified in the RRLUS is undertaken with consultation with the relevant fire authority and the preparation of appropriate shire wide and/or site specific bushfire and landscape assessments/strategies. The RRLUS identifies areas of the municipality where the Rural Living Zone could be identified, subject additional planning controls and policy.

Clause 13.03 Floodplains provides the objective of assisting with the protection of life, property and community infrastructure from flood hazard. Strathbogie Shire's townships are all impacted to some degree by way of overland or riverine flooding. In planning for the future, it is imperative to do so without further subjecting residents to the threat of flood.

The RRLUS does this by reiterating the importance of the need to introduce updated flood controls for Euroa, Nagambie and Violet Town and a new flood study for Avenel. In addition, land identified for further Rural Living Zone investigation will require consultation with the relevant floodplain manager to ensure that land identified rural residential considers flood risk.

Clause 13.04 Soil degradation has the sole objective of ensuring that contaminated and potentially contaminated land is used and developed safely. Strategies to achieve this objective include ensuring that potentially contaminated land is appropriately investigated, facilitating remediation of contaminated land to ensure that it is suitable for future development.

Clause 14 - Natural resource management

Identifies the need for planning to assist in the conservation and appropriate use of natural resources and ensuring that agricultural land is managed appropriately and given appropriate protection within the planning system to limit encroachment.

Clause 14.01 Agriculture has the overall strategy of protecting the state's agricultural base by preserving productive farmland. State policy has the direction of limiting new housing development in rural areas by:

- Directing housing growth into existing settlements.
- Discouraging development of isolated small lots in the rural zones from use for dwellings or other incompatible uses.
- Encouraging consolidation of existing isolated small lots in rural zones.

The policy seeks to avoid the permanent removal of productive farmland from the state's agricultural base without appropriate considerations.

At a regional level, the Hume Regional Growth Plan 2014 identifies the western side of the municipality as having strategic agricultural land for the northeast area that the plan covers.

Clause 14.02 Water has the objective for planning to assist in the protection and restoration of catchments, waterways, estuaries, bays, water bodies, groundwater, and the marine environment. Strategies to do this include coordinating planning decisions with catchment management authorities to ensure that impacts on entire catchments are considered, retention of vegetated buffer zones, and floodplains are preserved. Strathbogie Shire has two areas that are designated as special water supply catchments.

Clause 15 – Built environment

Identifies that planning has a number of key roles in the delivery of built design and heritage conservation.

Clause 15.01 Built environment has the objective to achieve siting and building design that positively contributes to the local context, enhance the public realm and support environmentally sustainable development. It does this with strategies identifying the need to minimise impacts on the natural environment and public realm.

Acts to ensure that development respects rural character through considerations of siting, scale and appearance of buildings and use of materials that minimse visual impact on the landscape.

Clause 15.03-1S Heritage conservation has the objective to ensure the protection and conservation of places of heritage significance and man made resources. This is achieved through strategies of protecting heritage sites and encouraging development that respects identified heritage values.

Clause 15.03-2S Aboriginal cultural heritage identifies strategies to provide for the protection and conservation of pre-contact and post-contact Aboriginal cultural heritage places. Additionally, strategies identify the need to ensure that permit approvals align with permissions under separate legislation.

Clause 16 Housing

Identifies that planning should provide for diverse and affordable housing.

Clause 16.01 Residential development has the objective of facilitating well located, integrated, diverse housing that is suitable for rural residential and residential development. This is achieved by strategies that aim to manage development in rural areas to protect productive agricultural land. Demonstrate need/benefit to the land for rural residential development, avoid rezonings where it will adversely impact natural resources.

Strategy also seeks to ensure that land is not rezoned to rural residential unless it is located close to existing towns and that can be supplied with electricity, water and good quality road access.

Clause 17 Economic development

Identifies that planning is to provide for a strong and innovative economy through providing land to accommodate economic development.

Clause 17.01 Employment has the objective to strengthen and diversify the economy. Strategies identified to achieve this are to protect and strengthen employment areas to grow and diversify.

Local and regional policy seek to encourage new and developing forms of industry, agriculture, tourism and alternative energy production.

Clause 17.04 Tourism has the objective to encourage tourism development to maximise economic, social and cultural benefits. It provides strategies to achieve this such as promotion of tourism facilities, encouraging investment that supports tourism growth, and ensuring facilities are well designed and sited.

ZONES

A planning scheme identifies zones to designate land for a specific purpose and requirements for land use, development and building. Each zone guides how land can be used, what types of development are permitted, and what must be considered when making decisions about planning permits. Figure 2 shows how the rural zones are applied in Strathbogie shire.

The Farming Zone (FZ) aims to encourage the retention of productive agricultural land and support agricultural activities. The Farming Zone (FZ) currently applies to most rural land in the Shire, with a total area of 295,272 ha. The schedule to Farming Zone (FZ) currently specifies three minimum lot sizes for subdivision and for the use of land for a dwelling being 40 ha, 80 ha or 100 ha, according to Figure 2.

The Rural Living Zone (RLZ) provides for residential use in a rural setting and is designed to offer allotments that are large enough to accommodate a dwelling and an agricultural use. The agricultural use is likely to be carried out for reasons other than the need to provide a significant source of household income. There is approximately 261.4 ha of land zoned Rural Living Zone (RLZ) in the Shire. This land is located around Avenel and Euroa (Figure 1). The state-mandated normal minimum area for subdivisions is 2 ha. The minimum area of a lot where a dwelling can be constructed without a permit is 2 ha. Councils can alter these minimums. Strathbogie Shire has two Rural Living Zone pieces of land.

The two Rural Living Zone (RLZ) pieces of land in Avenel and Euroa that have lot sizes specified in approved plans are:

- 7 titles at Avenel Longwood Rd, Avenal, which is subject to Development Plan Overlay Schedule 2
- Lot TP815794, Racecourse Rd, Euroa. Any future development on this site must be in accordance with a proposed plan of subdivision by Reed Consulting, plan number 21683/PP.

The Rural Activity Zone (RAZ) and the Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ) have not been applied to land in Strathbogie Shire.

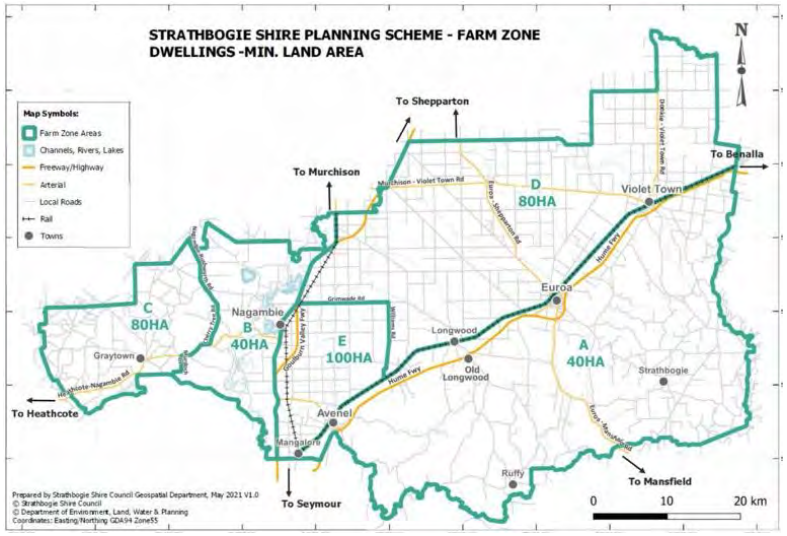


Figure 2: Farm zone areas

OVERLAYS

Overlays controls support the underlying zoning of the land and provide additional levels of controls primarily around built form and site responses to particular characteristics of the land. An Overlay may trigger assessment of a permit application where this may not be required through the zoning of the land. The 2023 Planning Scheme Review[2] recommended that overlays applied in Strathbogie shire should be updated to meet the requirements of the Ministerial Direction on form and content. In particular, it was recommended to:

- Introduce additional exemptions to reduce triggers for permits associated with:
  - Clause 42.01 Environmental Significance Overlay (all schedules)
  - Clause 44.01 Erosion Management Overlay.
- Update policy with respect to applying overlays for buffers around wastewater treatment plants and identifying areas of potable water.
- Review of Development Plan Overlays.

Table 1 summarises the overlays that apply to land within rural areas of the shire as shown in Figure 2.



[2] Strathbogie Planning Scheme Review (2023) SD Planning

Table 1: Overlays that apply to rural areas of Strathbogie Shire

OVERLAY	PURPOSE
Environmental Significance Overlay	
Schedule 1 – Buffer area for rural activities	Discourage development of dwellings that may conflict with rural industrial activities. Encourage the development of rural industrial activities that require large buffer distances.
Schedule 2 – Euroa Wastewater Management Facility buffer area	Discourage development of dwellings that may be impacted by odour emission.
Vegetation Protection Overlay	
Schedule 1 – Lovers Hill, Avenel	Protect remnant native vegetation in the Lovers Hill area of Avenel. Native vegetation includes two grass threatened communities that area listed under the EPBC Act.
Schedule 2 – Significant remnant Indigenous vegetation	Conserve and ensure development minimise the removal of indigenous vegetation. Maintain and enhance a linear network of vibrant indigenous vegetation connecting remnant patches of indigenous vegetation.
Development Plans	
Schedule 2 – Lovers Hill, Avenel	A development plan must be prepared to guide future subdivision of land within the RLZ.
Schedule 4 – Eastern Gateway, Euroa	Before any new use, development or subdivision commences a development plan must be prepared. Part of this area is in the FZ.
Specific Control Overlay	
Schedule 2 – Costa Exchange Mushroom Farm and Composting Facility, Nagambie 2012 Incorporated document	Specifies the exemptions from certain controls on the site of the Costa Exchange Mushroom Farm and Composing Facility.
Land Management Overlays	
Erosion Management Overlay	No objectives specified.
Floodway Overlay	Identifies high hazard areas with greatest frisk and frequency of being affected by flooding and minimise risk to development from flooding.
Land Subject to Inundation Overlay	Identifies areas affected by the 1 in 100-year flood and minimise risk to development.
Bushfire Management Overlay	Identifies areas of the highest level of bushfire threat which warrant bushfire protection measures to be implemented to reduce the risk of bushfire to people, property and buildings.

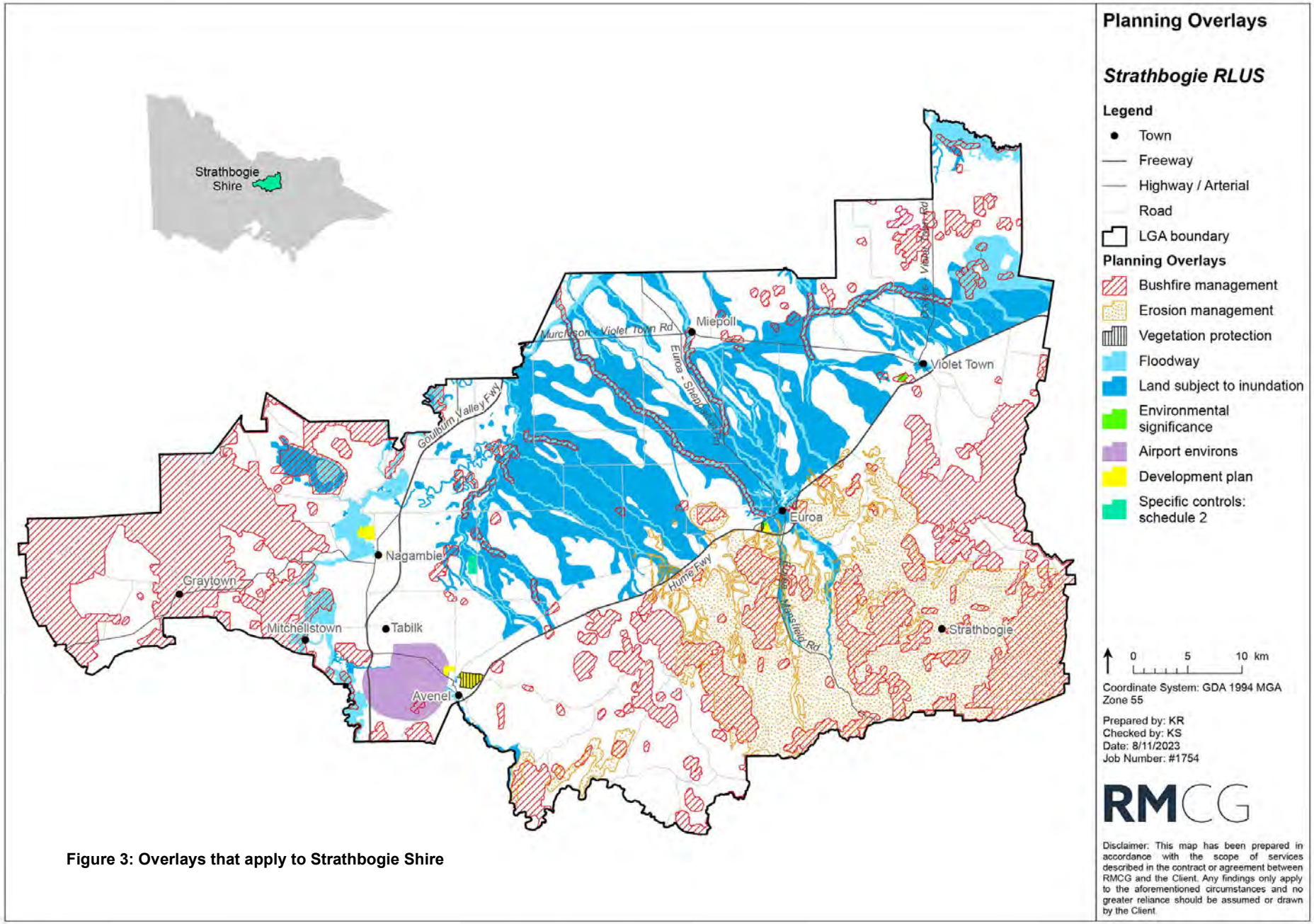


Figure 3: Overlays that apply to Strathbogie Shire

Major Drivers

This section highlights the key issues and opportunities influencing the use and development of Strathbogie shire's rural land based on background research and community consultation. The Strategy aims to address these factors of change, offering both planning recommendations and suggestions for other actions that Council can take.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

State and local government strategies that influence land use and development in the shire's rural areas include:

- Strathbogie Shire Council Plan 2025-2029
- Sustainable Strathbogie 2030 Strategy
- Economic Development Strategy 2023-2027
- Hume Regional Growth Plan 2014.

Economic development, a focus on sustainability, and supporting population growth are central themes to these strategies. The Strategy should align with and support these objectives, including:

- Stimulating investment across the Shire and promoting efficient use of land to foster local economic growth.
- Mitigating and adapting to a changing climate through strategy development, revised mapping and urban design, community knowledge-sharing, and incentives to manage climate risk in agriculture.
- Establishing Strathbogie Shire as a desirable and high-value visitor destination that drives year-round visitation and generates economic benefits for the region.
- Aligning townships and economic development opportunities to maximise efficient use of infrastructure and population growth potential.

PRINCIPLES

Land use planning principles relevant to rural Strathbogie shire include:

- Align with state and regional policies and strategies.
- Ensure rural land use planning balances economic growth and protection of environmental, landscape and cultural heritage values.
- Support rural industries in adapting to changing climate and economic drivers and adopting new technology.
- Protect life and property from natural hazards, including flood and bushfire.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND DIRECTIONS

Land use planning directions relevant to rural Strathbogie shire include:

Agriculture

- Protect high-quality agricultural land.
- Consider the impacts of climate change and support adaptation to climate change.
- Discourage dwellings not required for agriculture or rural uses that are not compatible with rural industries.
- Reinforce urban settlement boundaries.

Rural tourism

- Support rural tourism that leverages the region's iconic attractions.

Environment and landscape

- Protect waterways and other significant environmental assets from rural land use change and development.
- Ensure sensitive landscape are protected and new development does not detract from their natural quality.
- Ensure growth and development is directed to locations with a low risk of natural hazards and will not increase the risk of natural hazards.

Rural industries

- Support rural industries that diversify the rural economy, including timber, tourism and renewable industries that leverage existing infrastructure and do not compromise the region's agricultural, environmental and cultural heritage values.
- Support for rural industries should leverage existing infrastructure and not compromise the region's agricultural, environmental and cultural heritage values.

PLANNING SCHEME PERFORMANCE

The 2023 review of the Strathbogie Planning Scheme (SPS) identified that, overall, the SPS is operating effectively with a clear settlement narrative. The review also identified strategic gaps in the planning scheme including the need to better understand and identify the strategic direction for use of rural land within Strathbogie Shire.

Council has previously undertaken reviews of rural land. In 2004, a Rural Residential Strategy, was developed by Council which identified locations for rural residential development, subject to further detailed assessment and implementation measures in accordance with policy and Ministerial Directions. The Strategy was adopted by Council, and since then only one rezoning to rural living zone has occurred.

Rural policy in Strathbogie is currently underpinned by the Strathbogie Sustainable Land Use Strategy (2011). The overarching objectives of the Strategy: protection of agricultural land and environmental values and support for rural industries; remains relevant today, as are the issues the Strategy sought to address: particularly demand for rural lifestyle and residential development of rural land. However, there has been significant change in the rural policy framework in the last 15 years, including, but not limited to:

- New form and content of the VPP (2018)
- Reform of land use definitions for animal industries (2017)
- Reform of bushfire planning provisions (2017)
- Plan for Victoria (2025)
- Hume Regional Growth Plan (2014)
- Reform of the suite of rural zones (2013).

Added to this is the changing nature of agriculture, emerging opportunities in rural tourism and the impacts of climate change.

Council is concurrently preparing the UGS which will establish township boundaries to provide for urban residential growth. It is timely therefore for Council to review its rural strategy and test whether the current suite of planning tools are fit-for-purpose and ensure alignment with the UGS. The need for a rural and rural residential strategy was a key recommendations of the 2023 planning scheme review.

POPULATION GROWTH

Through the Covid-19 pandemic, the Strathbogie Shire Council received a significant increase in planning permit applications for dwellings on small lots in the FZ resulting in development that is inconsistent with the objectives of supporting agriculture and protecting environmental and landscape values, and inefficient development of land identified for rural residential development.

The 2023 review of the SPS highlighted the need to define and deliver on a strategic vision for rural land use and residential development so that Council's position on small lot development is clear, and rural areas are protected from inappropriate uses and development.

Planning policy should support long-term investment in agricultural businesses, ensuring that food and fibre production remains sustainable and that farm operations are protected from conflicts with amenity concerns. New residential development should be directed towards infill within existing townships and areas zoned for rural living.

Bushfire risk poses a significant threat, especially in and around the Strathbogie Ranges, where there is growing demand for rural living and tourism. Mitigation strategies for bushfire risk may sometimes conflict with efforts to protect ecological values. Therefore, planning for rural residential development will avoid high-risk areas and prioritize both human safety and the protection of ecological assets.

AGRICULTURE

The Shire's location, accessibility and agricultural infrastructure are significant competitive advantages for food and fibre producers.

Strathbogie Shire, as part of the Hume region takes in the Goulburn Valley, one of the major food producing regions in the state. The shire's agricultural industry is a significant contributor to regional food production, particularly meat production. In 2021, it contributed 37% of the regions gross value of sheep and lamb and 8% of the gross value of beef cattle. Livestock are processed in the region as well as at abattoirs in Melbourne.

Land within the FZ is being used appropriately for mixed farming agriculture focused on livestock production and cropping, with smaller volumes of intensive poultry meat production and eggs, and horticultural production where there is access to water.

Key to maintaining mixed farming systems is availability of appropriately priced unencumbered land to enable farm businesses to increase scale of operations to offset declining terms of trade. As outlined in the Existing Conditions Report farm businesses in Strathbogie shire are increasing in business scale and holding size indicating a willingness and ability to invest in business growth and expansion. Analysis of property ownership within the FZ identifies that farms have been able to amalgamate lots to create farms of sufficient size to run viable mixed farming enterprises (as shown in Figure A-1 in Appendix 1).

Planning policy can foster flexibility and growth in the agricultural industry by:

- Clearly designating areas where commercial agriculture will be the primary land use and implementing policies to prevent land fragmentation.
- Ensuring parcel sizes are suitable for modern agricultural practices, free from unnecessary infrastructure, particularly residential developments.
- Maintaining a clear separation between commercial agriculture and sensitive land uses, such as urban and rural residential areas, to reduce offsite impacts and support efficient agricultural operations.
- Supporting on-farm infrastructure for vertical integration and value-adding, including facilities like cool stores, sorting sheds, and worker accommodation.

LAND USE CONFLICT

The development of dwellings on small rural lots introduces residential uses into areas where farming is the main activity, and with the residential use, new amenities and service expectations. When not properly managed or located, the introduction of dwellings can bring land use conflicts and detrimentally impact both the nearby agricultural activity and the dwelling itself. Dispersed rural dwellings can also be an unnecessary burden on Council resources due to the increased cost of servicing them. This also inflates the value of rural land,

making it more difficult for agricultural activities to expand or remain[3].

During the 2023 review of the SPS, consultation with community members identified ongoing conflict between residents and farmers in the FZ, the impact of motorbikes and cars on livestock, and the complaints by residents about farming practices[2].

Analysis of building and planning permits (from 2015 to 2022) conducted for the Existing Conditions Report identified that on average, 20 new dwellings are constructed in the FZ each year with just over half issued to landholders who are not residents in Strathbogie shire. This suggests that many dwellings in the FZ are being constructed as weekenders or rural lifestyle purposes.

Dwellings in the FZ that are used for lifestyle purposes and are largely unoccupied have implications for local housing markets, the community and economy. Research in South Gippsland Shire and Mansfield Shire[4], which both have high numbers of dwellings owned by people who live outside the municipality found that there are some benefits, but also significant issues:

- Research regarding holiday homes (in South Gippsland) found that this type of housing tended to be larger and not meeting the housing needs of permanent residents.
- Tensions are also apparent between the use of residential housing stock as holiday accommodation and the importance of holiday letting to the tourism industry. Offering choice in holiday accommodation is important for attracting tourists to the municipality. However, the higher rates obtained from holiday letting can result in more landlords removing housing from the longer-term rental market in favour of short-term holiday accommodation. Short supply of long-term rentals can place upwards pressure on rental prices with implications for housing affordability in the Shire.
- A fundamental issue in relation to the maintenance of sustainable communities in rural areas is the extent to which the stock of residential dwellings in any community is fully occupied. Dwellings may be empty or irregularly unoccupied for a variety of reasons, impacting the overall sense of community and other social factors.
- Holiday homes let by owners who live elsewhere results in money earned from accommodation fees and rents not being retained in the local community.

Land use conflict between rural residential landholders and farm business owners arise because there is a divergence in what rural landholders anticipate they will experience in a rural environment. These conflicts can also arise from a lack of understanding about agricultural practices or the legal and regulatory framework that governs them.

Landholders may hesitate to report issues to maintain good relations with their neighbours and there may not be formal records of conflict. Common examples of land use conflicts, both at the property level and along the urban-rural interface, include:

- Amenity impacts (such as odour, noise, and visual disturbances) from everyday agricultural activities, which lead to complaints from rural residential neighbours.
- Restrictions on agricultural practices, like aerial spraying or irrigation, due to residential encroachment, which can increase costs and reduce farm efficiency.
- Rural lifestyle neighbours affecting agricultural operations, such as removing lambs from paddocks mistakenly thinking they've been abandoned, livestock attacks by domestic dogs, weed and disease spread from gardens, or trespassing.

To reduce the risk of land use conflict, the following measures can be implemented:

[3] Strathbogie Planning Scheme Review (2023) SD Planning

[4] SGS Economics and Planning (2021) Mansfield 2040: Background and Discussion Paper

- Designating specific areas where agriculture will be the primary land use.
- Offering clearer guidelines on what types of non-agricultural uses may be considered in rural areas and under what conditions they'll be supported.
- Council advocacy on behalf of the agricultural industry, educating rural landholders about "normal" agricultural practices and promoting good neighbour principles.
- Introducing attenuation measures, like buffers and setbacks, between agricultural and non-agricultural developments, with the responsibility for these measures resting with the agent of change.
- Careful consideration of approving dwellings on small FZ lots.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Based on CSIRO and Deakin University modelling, the climate of the Goulburn Broken region is expected to change in the future due to the effects of climate change, including:

- An increase in average temperature and extreme heat events into the future.
- A reduction in average rainfall into the future.
- A change in rainfall patterns (e.g. declining spring rainfall).
- An increase in extreme weather events (e.g. storms, flooding, bushfires and heatwaves)[5].

While climate change will bring some changes to the mix and distribution of agricultural commodities in Strathbogie Shire, the industry will continue to be dominated by mixed farming systems that focus on livestock and fodder production.

In the southern parts of Strathbogie Shire, the future climate will increase productivity and land suitability with milder winters and less waterlogging, which may facilitate expansion of grain production. Northern parts of the Shire are forecast to experience more frequent seasons of reduced rainfall which may result in insufficient water held on farm and reducing the grazing capacity. For intensive horticulture, high-value crops will require protection from sun and extreme weather events through the use of protected cropping structures. Intensive animal production will need to consider increased risk for animal welfare issues associated with higher average temperatures and extreme heat events.

All of Strathbogie Shire is designated a Bushfire Prone Area with extensive areas of high bushfire hazard across the Strathbogie Ranges. Future planning for rural tourism and rural residential development will need to consider how and where this development occurs to best manage risk to human life. Consultation during the 2023 SPS review highlighted concern by the community on how future planning for settlements was considering flooding and other risks that may increase due to climate change[2].

NATURAL AND CULTURAL VALUES

The Strathbogie Shire contains significant aquatic and terrestrial habitat and biodiversity values. These values are ecologically important for maintaining ecosystem services (such as water quality), their intrinsic value and socially important for cultural heritage and recreational use including tourism.

During the 2023 review of the SPS consultation with stakeholders highlighted concern regarding the lack of commentary within the Scheme on recognition and protection of biodiversity assets within the Shire. It was suggested that local policies should recognise the importance of` promoting land use and development that encourages and protects native vegetation (particularly in areas of important biodiversity) through, for example, encouraging design solutions that minimise the removal of native vegetation. Stakeholders also

[5] https://gbcma.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=50b1ec366f9a4c79850e29c0c105c9fc#

suggested a range of changes to the planning scheme, including a review of the application of Environmental Significance Overlays (ESOs) and Vegetation Protection Overlays (VPOs) across the municipality[2].

In planning for growth and future land use change, cultural heritage is considered to be a community, economic and social asset[6]. The Strathbogie Shire's cultural heritage assets, both Aboriginal and historic, are important to contemporary communities and heritage is integral to creating a sense of place. Ongoing consultation with the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation and the Taungurung Land and Waters Council to inform land use planning policy is important to ensure the protection and management of significant Aboriginal cultural heritage places within Strathbogie shire.

STRATHBOGIE SHIRE COMMUNITY

Extensive engagement with the Strathbogie community was undertaken as part of the 2023 review of the Strathbogie Planning Scheme, and included consultation with Council, government agencies and the general public. The topics discussed included rural housing and rural land use and therefore the outcomes and key themes of this consultation have been used to inform this Strategy.

Consultation with the general public and relevant government agencies on this Strategy occurred during late 2024 and 2025 with a range of drop-in sessions and the formation of a Community Panel. This consultation sought feedback on the principles used to guide development of this Strategy and the UGS, and the potential for new rural residential zones within Strathbogie Shire. The key messages from this consultation were that this Strategy should aim to:

- Discourage new, additional and increased housing supply in locations with bushfire and flooding hazards, to avoid risk to life, property and environmental systems.
- Protect visual, environmental, economic, and infrastructure qualities by minimising impacts of residential development on rural areas with consideration of township character and heritage values.
- Sustainably use existing natural resources, including productive agricultural land and water.

The Panel had a diversity of views on the need to protect farmland and farming industries of significance, and the need to avoid conflicts between farming and other land uses. This was largely due to a desire to see greater flexibility in planning for residential development in the FZ.

The Panel identified that new RLZ areas could be considered near Strathbogie town, Violet Town, Euroa, and Nagambie, with due consideration to natural hazards and protection of biodiversity.

[6] Hume Regional Growth Plan (2014) Victorian State Government

Part 2: Strategic Framework



Strathbogie Rural and Residential Land Use Strategy

STRUCTURE

The Strathbogie Shire RRLUS comprises:

- Vision and Principles
- Rural framework plan
- Objectives, strategies and actions for:
  - Building a strong economy
  - Recognising and protecting natural values
  - Preparing for a changing climate
  - Providing housing for the future.
- Implementation.

VISION

A vision statement has been developed articulating how Strathbogie shire's rural areas will look and function in 2035. The vision for Strathbogie shire's rural areas is underpinned by the Strathbogie community vision 2035 (as articulated in the Council Plan 2025–2029):

> *We will create a thriving place to live, work, and explore – where history and Country are honoured, innovation is welcomed, our collective spirit makes us stronger, and our natural environment is sustained for future generations.*

Strathbogie Shire is a rural shire with a thriving agricultural sector that underpins the local economy. Innovation and sustainable management enable the sector to adapt to changing market and climate conditions. Protection of agricultural land facilitates investment and growth in commercial-scale agricultural enterprises and agribusiness.

Strathbogie Shire is a rural tourism destination that embraces its rich history, agriculture, and natural and cultural heritage. Considered planning has guided the growth of rural tourism, ensuring developments respect and enhance the area's unique character.

The region's significant environmental and landscape values are carefully identified and safeguarded. Rural development prioritizes high-quality environmental outcomes while balancing bushfire risk and contributing to improved habitats.

The deep and ongoing connection of the Taungurung and Yorta Yorta people to their land is acknowledged, celebrated, and protected. Important cultural landscapes and heritage sites are preserved, ensuring their significance endures.

The RLZ provides opportunities for those seeking a rural lifestyle, small-scale farming, and artisan agriculture. Planning ensures that rural towns and rural living complement the surrounding landscape while minimizing conflicts with nearby agricultural activities.

A clear and consistent approach to planning has helped to balance competing demands for land use and development, fostering harmony between rural industries, communities, and the environment.

PRINCIPLES

Decision-making prioritizes the protection of human life, productive agricultural land, significant landscapes, biodiversity, and water catchments above all else.

A precautionary approach is taken when considering bushfire and flooding risks. Development will be steered towards low-risk areas, while high-risk

locations will be avoided to ensure community safety and the protection of human life.

Housing and employment growth will be contained within established towns, maintaining clear settlement boundaries to prevent unchecked expansion.

Planning policies will remain focused on land use and development and will not be used to address matters best managed through business planning, such as farm succession and financial viability.

Past planning decisions will not serve as justification for maintaining outdated or unsuitable policies, nor will they set a precedent for future planning directions.

RURAL POLICY AREAS

Strathbogie shire's rural landscape is varied, with differences in topography, agricultural land use, fragmentation, natural values, hazards, and associated issues and opportunities. The rural strategic framework must address these variations and offer a foundation for balancing competing land use and development interests.

The Strategy proposes two distinct rural policy areas (Figure 4) to tailor policies that support the achievement of desired future outcomes for rural land. These areas reflect differences in agricultural productivity, land demand, and workable boundaries, based on the following criteria:

- Land capability
- Strategic significance of farmland
- Land fragmentation – considering lot size and ownership patterns
- Current land use
- Development pressures, both existing and anticipated
- Future growth potential
- Logical boundaries.

Identification of the policy areas was informed by the mapping of technical inputs including land fragmentation and land capability (as shown in Appendix 1). Further information on the agricultural capability of land within Strathbogie Shire and the factors influencing this is provided in the Existing Conditions Report.

POLICY AREA 1 – AGRICULTURAL ENGINE AREA

Policy Area 1 (as shown in Figure 4) encompasses the most productive and least fragmented agricultural land in the Shire, including farmland of strategic importance[7]. Agricultural activities such as livestock grazing, fodder production, horticulture, and poultry farming dominate this area. Surface and groundwater resources are used to irrigate fruit, vine, and grain crops. In alignment with the Hume Regional Growth Plan, the Strategy prioritises the ongoing operation and viability of commercial-scale agricultural enterprises.

The FZ will remain in place where it is currently applied aside from possible RLZ investigations. Development of a new schedule and local policy will ensure that new dwellings and subdivisions are only permitted where they provide a direct and genuine benefit to agricultural operations. Non-agricultural uses, including tourism, that conflict with the objectives of Policy Area 1 will be strongly discouraged.

POLICY AREA 2 – DIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Policy Area 2 (as shown in Figure 4) is characterised by diverse land types and a fragmented land ownership pattern. The agricultural potential here varies, supporting a mix of commercial-scale enterprises and hobby farms. Extensive

[7] Hume Regional Growth Plan (2014) Victorian Government

areas of native vegetation add to the bushfire risk in the region. This area has also seen significant development of rural dwellings and rural tourism.

Agriculture will remain the primary land use, encompassing a broad range of agricultural activities, including small-scale artisan and innovative operations. Rural tourism that capitalizes on the area's agricultural strengths and environmental features will be encouraged. The area is also ideal for landholders interested in conserving and enhancing environmental values, or those looking to actively manage land for environmental markets like carbon capture and native vegetation offsets.

The FZ will remain in place where it is currently applied aside from possible RLZ investigations. Development of new local policy will ensure that new dwellings and subdivisions are only approved if they provide a clear and legitimate benefit to agriculture. The needs of existing agricultural enterprises will remain a key consideration in planning decisions. Any new rural uses will need to demonstrate a connection to agriculture or offer a signficant environmental benefit.



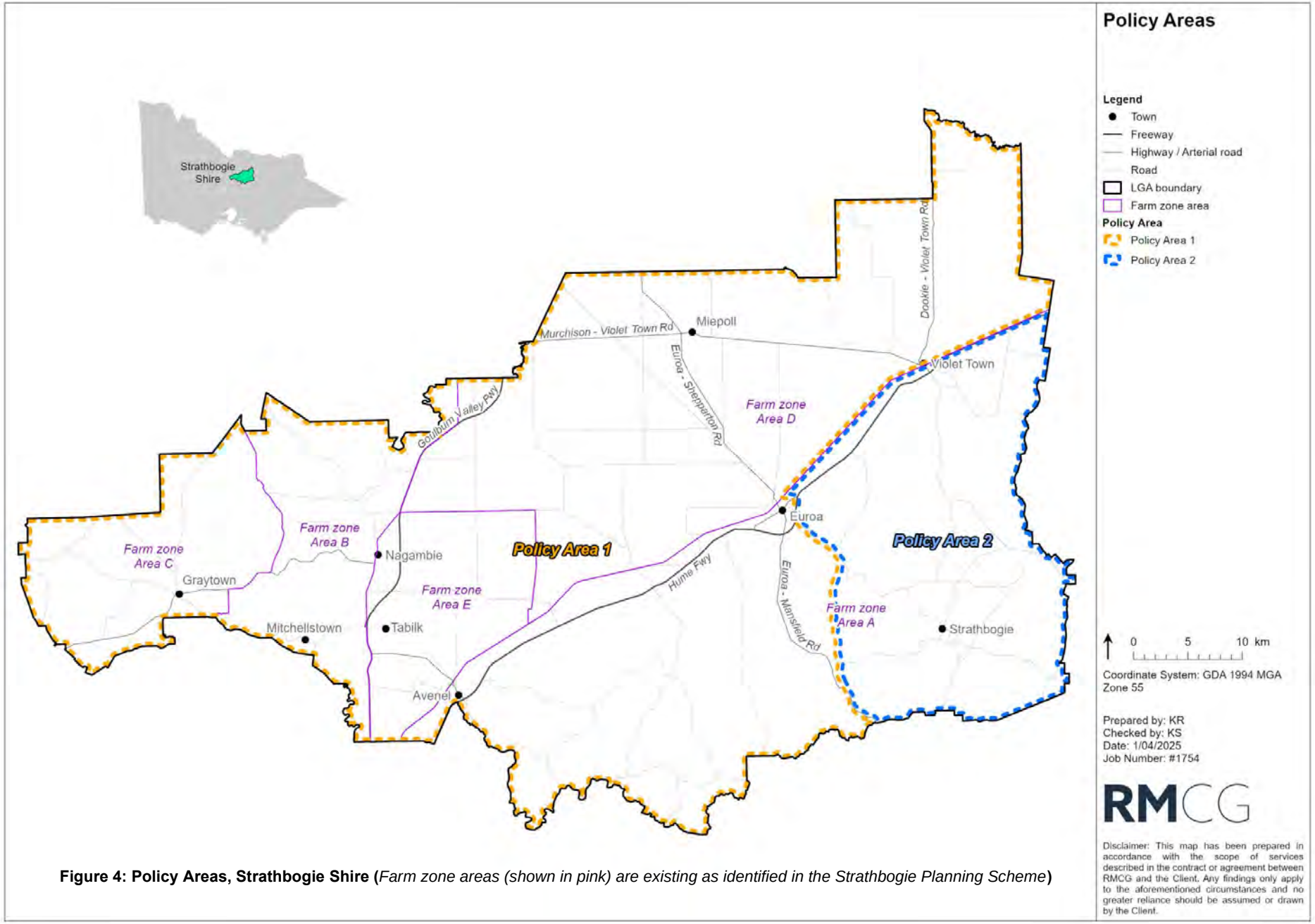


Figure 4: Policy Areas, Strathbogie Shire (*Farm zone areas (shown in pink) are existing as identified in the Strathbogie Planning Scheme***)**

Part 3: Directions



Build a strong economy

Key to building Strathbogie Shire's economy is leveraging its natural landscapes and locational advantages. Primary production (including agriculture, forestry and equine) is the Shire's number one economic driver. Building the capacity of this sector is critical to sustaining the economic future of the Shire. A number of the Shire's tourism offerings are also based on this sector (such as food and wine experiences). Protecting farmland within Strathbogie Shire will ensure the future of the agriculture sector, and strengthen the existing tourism offer.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is the primary driver of the local economy employing nearly 1,055 people and generating $184 million in Gross Value of Agricultural Production (GVAP) in 2021 (Table 2).

Food and fibre production in Strathbogie Shire is predominately focused on mixed farming systems for livestock production, with smaller amounts of intensive poultry meat production and eggs and a number of horticultural commodities (Table 3). The gross value of agriculture in Strathbogie Shire has risen consistently over the last 20 years associated with improved prices for meat and wool (Figure 6). The market outlook for meat, wool and grains is strong. Further detail on the performance of the agriculture sector in Strathbogie Shire is provided in the Existing Conditions Report.

Strathbogie Shire, as part of the Goulburn Valley, is a key region for horse breeding in Victoria and home to high-quality stud farms. Climate, access to Melbourne and important local infrastructure, such as veterinary services, are key drivers of this industry. The development of a number of breeding enterprises over time has established the core of a local industry that in turn, has supported new breeding businesses and associated businesses that support the equine industry. Within Victoria, the broader thoroughbred racing industry, which encompasses breeding, racing, and associated activities, contributes more than $3.1 billion to the state's economy[8].

Farm businesses in Strathbogie Shire have increased in business scale and in holding size indicating that businesses are investing in business growth and expansion (Figure 5 and Figure 6). Key to maintaining the viability of mixed farming systems (businesses focussed on production of livestock and cropping) is maintaining and increasing the scale of operations. This is in response to declining terms of trade where increasing costs of inputs need to be offset by increasing the level of outputs. In areas with land considered to be of lower agricultural capability larger farms sizes are required to maintain stocking rates (number of livestock that can be supported per hectare).

Future climate will bring some changes to agriculture in Strathbogie Shire, but mixed farming systems for livestock production will continue to dominate. In the southern parts of the Shire, the future climate will increase productivity and land suitability with milder winters and less waterlogging which may facilitate expansion of grain production. Northern parts of the Shire are forecast to experience more frequent seasons of reduced rainfall with insufficient water held on farm, restricting the grazing capacity. For intensive horticulture, high-value crops will require protection from sun and extreme weather events through the use of protected cropping structures. Intensive animal production will need to consider the increased risk for animal welfare issues associated with higher average temperatures and extreme heat events.

Strathbogie Shire contains a number of intensive agricultural businesses focussed on poultry meat and egg production. These businesses are significant contributers to the Shire's GVAP (Table 3) however upset conditions in intensive agricultural operations has the potential to impact on residents of

[8] https://ier-study.racingaustralia.horse/state-and-territory-impacts/victoria/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

surrounding properties. Clause 35.07-6 Decision guidelines for assessing planning permits for new dwellings in the FZ includes the following tests:

- Whether the site is suitable for the use or development and whether the proposal is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.
- The potential for the use or development to limit the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.
- Whether the dwelling will be adversely affected by agricultural activities on adjacent and nearby land due to dust, noise, odour, use of chemicals and farm machinery, traffic and hours of operation.
- Whether the dwelling will adversely affect the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.

ESO1 – Buffer Area for Rural Industrial Activities has been applied to some, but not all intensive agricultural operations in the Shire. The overlay seeks to discourage the development of dwellings that may conflict with rural industrial activities and references guidelines and codes associated with intensive animal husbandry, amenity and buffers. The Buffer Area Overlay (BAO) is a newly designed planning tool that's primary purpose is to manage buffers through the planning system and replaces the use of the ESO's for buffer purposes. Any investigation of future buffers should focus on the use of the BAO as the primary tool. Council may also consider the replacement of the current ESO1 with an equivalent BAO as this is the most appropriate tool to avoid encroachment by sensitive receptors and protect the continuing operation of this important agricultural operations.

Rural living is in high demand, and the community has expressed interest in housing that supports small-scale farming, rural tourism, and environmental initiatives. However, an increase in dwellings and non-agricultural activities can lead to land use conflicts, reduced amenity, and challenges for legitimate farming operations. Ensuring access to affordable, unencumbered land is crucial for commercial agriculture to expand, intensify, and remain viable by achieving economies of scale. Once a dwelling is built, the likelihood of the land being taken out of productive agricultural use increases.

Designating policy areas enables a differentiated and graduated policy framework to assist in balancing competing demands for rural land. Unlocking existing RLZ and identifying additional RLZ will help to provide for rural housing needs.

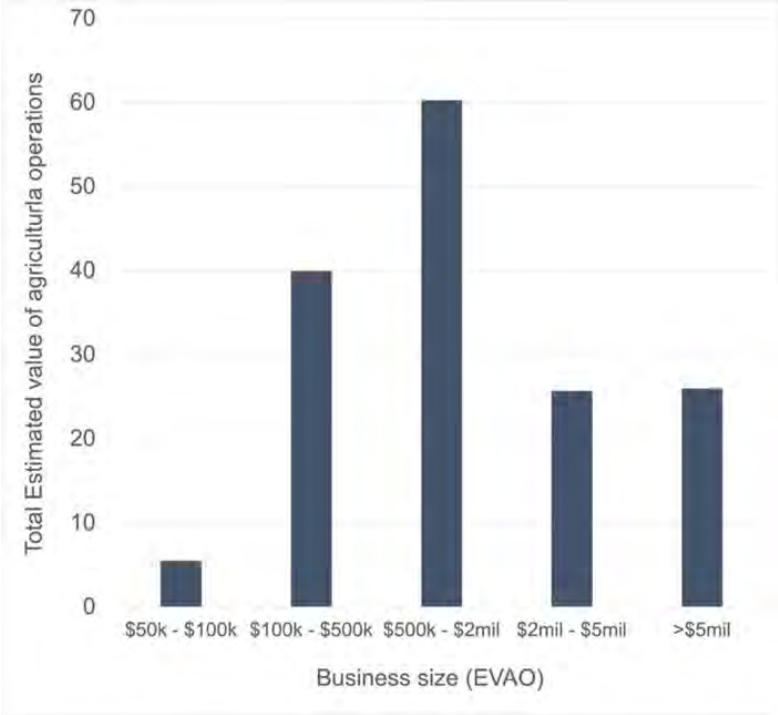


Figure 5: Value of agricultural operations by business size 2021, Strathbogie Shire

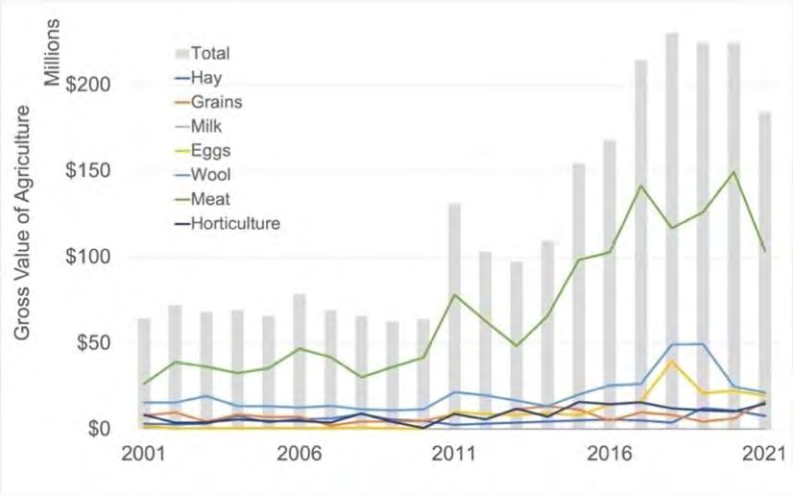


Figure 6: Gross value of agriculture 2001–2021, Strathbogie Shire[9]

Table 2: Industry output and jobs 2021, Strathbogie Shire

INDUSTRY SPECIALISATION	ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION		
	Output	Exports	Local Jobs
Primary industries and trade	48%	83%	26%
Population driven industries	28%	6%	22%
Knowledge and public sector	12%	3%	22%

Table 3: Gross Value of Agricultural Production 2021

COMMODITY	GROSS VALUE ($M)
Sheep and Lambs	$55.5
Poultry - meat	$24.2
Cattle	$24.1
Wool	$21.3
Eggs	$19.7
Wheat	$8.5
Cherries	$8.2
Hay	$7.9
Canola	$6.2
Grapes	$5.2
Nurseries	$1.2
Barley	$1.0
Oats, Milk, Cut Flowers, Olives	Each less than $1 million
Lupins, Pigs, Peaches, Apples	Each less than $50,000

[9] Australian Bureau of Statistics, Agricultural Census data provided by Kynetec

POLICY AREA 1

Policy Area 1 encompasses the most productive and least fragmented agricultural land in the Shire, including farmland of strategic importance[10]. Agricultural activities such as livestock grazing, fodder production, horticulture, and poultry farming dominate this area. Surface and groundwater resources are used to irrigate fruit, vine, and grain crops. In alignment with the Hume Regional Growth Plan, Policy Area 1 prioritises the ongoing operation and viability of commercial-scale agricultural enterprises.

OBJECTIVE

Support the production of food and fibre, and add value to industries.

STRATEGIES

- Support large-scale agriculture, including livestock grazing, cropping, and soil-based horticulture.
- Protect and preserve productive agricultural land to maintain its long-term value for farming.
- Protect intensive agricultural areas from encroachment by incompatible uses.
- Maintain large land holdings to prevent fragmentation and limit the spread of dwellings that could impact agricultural productivity.
- Encourage innovation by supporting new technologies and sustainable practices that help agriculture adapt to climate change.
- Strengthen settlement boundaries by focusing on population growth and housing development within existing towns and designated rural residential areas.
- Allow new dwellings only when directly linked to a legitimate agricultural enterprise.
- Discourage non-agricultural activities that are not related to farming.
- Support complementary uses like tourism ventures—such as farm gate sales, farm stays, and agri-tourism—that enhance and align with agricultural operations.

IMPLEMENTATION

In Policy Area 1, retain:

- Land in the FZ where it currently applies.
- Minimum subdivision size of 40 ha (Area B), 80 ha (Area C and D) and 100 ha (Area E).

Revise the Schedule to the FZ to a minimum lot size to construct a dwelling without a permit to 80 ha in Area B.

Investigate and apply as required BAO – Buffer Area for Rural Industrial Activities to all intensive agricultural operations.

Update local policy to reflect the land use and development outcomes of Policy Area 1.

Dwellings in Policy Area 1

The minimum lot size required to construct a dwelling in the FZ in Areas C and D is currently 80 ha and 100 ha in Area E. Increasing the minimum lot size to construct a dwelling in Area B will provide a consistent approach. The basis for this increase has taken into consideration:

- The needs of Strathbogie shire's agricultural industries
- The range of lot sizes in the FZ
- A need to break the nexus between subdivision and dwelling
- Demand for rural lifestyle opportunities on small and large lots in Strathbogie shire.

[10] Hume Regional Growth Plan (2014) Victorian Government

For the agricultural sector to expand and adapt to evolving industry trends—such as increasing scale and technological advancements—it requires access to land free from unnecessary infrastructure, particularly dwellings.

To prevent the fragmentation of productive farmland, a shift in mindset is needed regarding the expectation that every rural lot should accommodate a dwelling. The minimum lot size provisions will help decouple subdivision from residential development, allowing the Council to assess whether new dwellings in the FZ are genuinely necessary for agricultural purposes.

Although there is currently limited demand for housing in Policy Area 1, this pressure may grow in the future due to its proximity to Shepperton, key transport routes, and the expanding influence of peri-urban Melbourne. Implementing planning controls now will help safeguard productive agricultural land for the long term.

An example of a local policy addressing dwellings in the FZ is provided in Appendix 2. This example illustrates how new local policy could be structured to align with and support the intent of a multi-policy area rural strategic framework.

Subdivision in Policy Area 1

There is currently a sufficient diversity of lot sizes, with a significant number of small lots, to rarely warrant the further subdivision of land (Table 4).

Land in Policy Area 1 is relatively unfragmented and is held in relatively large ownerships, with many larger than 100 ha in size. It will be important that this position is maintained to protect agricultural land and encourage investment in agriculture into the future.

Therefore, it is recommended that within Policy Area 1, the minimum subdivision areas of 40 ha (Area B), 80 ha (Area C and D) and 100 ha (Area E) are retained.

Re-subdivision that results in creation of rural residential size lots and house lot excisions will be strongly discouraged.

An example of a local policy addressing subdivision in the FZ is provided in Appendix 2. This example illustrates how new local policy could be structured to align with and support the intent of a multi-policy area rural strategic framework.

Table 4: Number of lots and farms (multiple lots held by one owner) by size range in the farming zone*

SIZE RANGE (ha)	POLICY AREA 1		POLICY AREA 2	
	LOTS	FARMS	LOTS	FARMS
0 – 10	2,770	1,204	602	198
10 – 20	771	255	226	64
20 – 40	1,237	335	399	172
40 – 100	1,626	419	433	187
> 100	556	609	101	162
Total	**6,960**	**2,822**	**1,761**	**783**

* Table 4 shows the relative number of individual lots and farms (multiple lots held by one owner) at each size range. At the smaller size range (<10 ha) significantly more individual lots (than farms) can be found in both policy areas. At the larger size range (>100 ha) significantly more farms are present in Policy Area 1 than Policy Area 2.

POLICY AREA 2

Policy Area 2 includes land of mixed agricultural capability. There are areas of higher agricultural capability around the town of Strathbogie and areas of lower agricultural capability due to the topography and soil types found in this area (Figure 13 – Appendix 1). Native vegetation consists of scattered and fragmented woodlands as part of the Strathbogie Ranges and significant sections of this area are covered by an Erosion Management Overlay. This area has also seen significant development of rural dwellings and rural tourism.

Livestock grazing occurs across most of this area and continues to be an appropriate use of land (even on land of lower agricultural quality). Given the diversity of quality of agricultural land, and the natural value of the Strathbogie ranges, there is an opportunity to use land in this area to:

- Conserve and enhance environmental values or actively manage environmental markets such as carbon capture and native vegetation offsets subject to meeting requirements for development in areas of high bushfire hazard.
- Encourage a more diverse mix of agricultural activities, including commercial-scale broadacre agriculture through to small-scale artisan agricultural enterprises.
- Rural tourism is also a significant land use encompassing accommodation and on-farm activities in conjunction with agriculture and the environment.
- Facilitate rural tourism opportunities that leverage the area's agricultural sector and environmental values.

OBJECTIVE

Support a mix of rural uses, including agriculture, rural tourism and the green economy.

STRATEGIES

- Encourage a diverse range of agricultural enterprises that thrive on smaller landholdings, such as market gardens, wineries, and on-site processing of farm produce—while carefully considering environmental and amenity impacts.
- Support land use for environmental benefits, including carbon storage, native vegetation offsets, and enhancing ecological connectivity.
- Consider legitimate environmental benefits in areas with significant environmental values that may be proposed as part of the construction of a dwelling within Policy Area 2.
- Recognise legitimate environmental gains when assessing proposals for new dwellings in areas with significant environmental value within Policy Area 2.
- Foster tourism development that complements both agricultural operations and the natural landscape.
- Discourage land uses that create urban-style activity levels or infrastructure demands.
- Strengthen settlement boundaries by guiding population growth and housing development into existing town areas.
- Limit new dwellings to those directly linked to a legitimate agricultural purpose or where they deliver clear environmental benefits.
- Safeguard declared water supply catchments to ensure long-term resource protection.

IMPLEMENTATION

In Policy Area 2 retain:

- Land in the FZ where it currently applies
- Minimum subdivision size of 40 ha (Area A).

Review and update local policy as required to reflect the land use and development outcomes of Policy Area 2.

Subdivision in Policy Area 2

The minimum lot size of 40 ha applies to land in Policy Area 2. There is currently a sufficient diversity of lot sizes, with a significant number of small lots, that supports the mix of uses envisaged for Policy Area 2. Further subdivision will, therefore, be strongly discouraged.

An example of a local policy addressing subdivision in the FZ is provided in Appendix 2. This example illustrates how new local policy could be structured to align with and support the intent of a multi-policy area rural strategic framework.

Dwellings in Policy Area 2

In Policy Area 2, there are broader circumstances under which new dwellings may be considered, aligning with objectives to support diverse agricultural activities, rural tourism, and environmental benefits. However, this does not imply that the Farming Zone functions as a rural residential area.

The use of the land for a dwelling within the Farming Zone on allotments less than 40 hectares in this area requires a planning permit, with strict assessment criteria that consider agricultural fragmentation and land-use compatibility. This approach ensures that new dwellings align with the purpose of the zone while minimizing or mitigating impacts on agriculturally and environmentally significant areas.

An example of a local policy addressing dwellings in the FZ is provided in Appendix 2. This example illustrates how new local policy could be structured to align with and support the intent of a multi-policy area rural strategic framework

DWELLINGS IN RURAL AREAS

New dwellings in rural areas have a significant impact on agricultural productivity, environmental sustainability, and the overall landscape character. An increasing number of dwellings can limit economies of scale in farming, create land-use conflicts, and discourage investment in agriculture by fuelling speculation that land will transition to residential use. Unnecessary dwellings pose one of the most significant threats to agriculture that planning regulations can address.

This strategy introduces several measures to balance the needs of the agricultural sector with the growing demand for rural living.

POLICY APPROACH

Establishing designated policy areas allows for a structured, tiered framework that helps manage competing demands for rural land while maintaining agricultural viability.

PLANNING PERMIT ASSESSMENT

Assessing whether a dwelling is genuinely linked to agricultural use is one of the most challenging aspects of rural planning. Council planners often struggle to evaluate the legitimacy of proposed agricultural activities, and in cases where an application appears unjustified, they may lack sufficient backing to refuse it. To address these challenges, the following measures are proposed:

- **Agriculture Victoria Planning and Advisory Service:** This service offers independent advice to councils and landowners on planning rules for new and expanding agricultural enterprises. It provides technical reviews of agricultural land-use applications under Section 52 Notices and delivers written recommendations to councils.
- **Farm Plan Requirement:** Applicants seeking approval for new dwellings or non-agricultural uses within the Farming Zone must submit a Farm Plan using a standardised template. This plan should include a physical description of the property, financial projections, and details on how the proposed activity will support agricultural operations (see Appendix 3 for an example plan).
- **Independent Expert Panel:** A panel of agricultural experts will assist in evaluating the legitimacy of proposed farming enterprises, ensuring that applications align with genuine agricultural purposes.

- **Environmental Plan Requirement:** Applications for new dwellings or non-agricultural uses associated with green economy initiatives or environmental benefits must include an Environmental Plan. Using a standardised template, this plan should describe the land, outline the expected environmental benefits, and demonstrate how the proposed use contributes to ecological sustainability.

TOURISM

The popularity of Strathbogie Shire as an overnight and daytrip destination is increasing and is driven by water and nature-based assets that attract visitors and contribute to the visitor economy. There is also a growing wine industry providing specialty food and wine experiences. Key tourism nodes and offerings include:

- The Goulburn River and Lake Nagambie region for water sports, wineries and horse breeding
- Euroa for historic buildings, Euroa show and agricultural events
- Strathbogie Ranges for camping, hiking and birdwatching.

Agricultural tourism and value adding to agricultural produce is already established in Strathbogie Shire and includes selling primary produce or processed products through road-side sale and cellar doors, pick your own and online direct sales. Accommodation in conjunction with an agricultural business such as farm stays and farm to table dining are also opportunities to value add to primary production.

Tourism uses that are permitted in the FZ include bed and breakfast (for less than ten people), primary produce sales and rural stores. Other uses that can be considered, subject to a planning permit, include camping and caravan park, group accommodation, host farm, residential hotel, restaurant and winery. Some of these uses e.g. camping and caravan park, residential hotel may be better suited to a township which have the infrastructure services to support developments of this scale. Large scale tourism developments in rural areas also have the potential to impact the operation of surrounding agricultural businesses, landscape and biodiversity values.

A review of planning permits for tourism uses in the Existing Conditions Report found that most permits were for accommodation (Table 5), followed by festivals, rural stores and wineries.

Table 5: Farm zone planning permits (2015–2022)

USE	NUMBER OF PERMITS
Group accommodation	6
Festivals	4
Dwelling/house lot excisions	6
Rural store	3
Winery	2

Examples of farm-related tourism uses considered appropriate in Policy Area 1 include:

- Pick-your-own and farmgate sales.
- Repurposing of established agricultural buildings, e.g. redundant shearing sheds, dwellings for short-stay accommodation.
- Accommodation within the primary farm residence (e.g. bed and breakfast).

Examples of tourism uses considered appropriate in Policy Area 2 include:

- Pick-your-own and farmgate sales.
- Farm stays, bed and breakfast.
- Accommodation including cabins, glamping, and tiny houses in conjunction with an agricultural activity or natural values.
- Wedding venue in conjunction with an agricultural activity such as a winery of natural values.
- Adding value to agricultural experiences such as cookery schools and farm management education.

Examples of tourism uses considered inappropriate in rural areas include:

- Camping, caravan parks
- Group accommodation
- Markets
- Residential hotels.

These uses are more appropriately located in or adjacent to towns where there are relevant services and infrastructure.

OBJECTIVE

- Encourage tourism use and development that builds on the existing assets within the shire.
- Encourage rural tourism that leverages the Shire's agricultural strengths and environmental, landscape and cultural values.
- Ensure tourism uses are consistent with Policy Area Objectives.

STRATEGIES

- Ensure tourism use and development is at an appropriate scale and sited to:
  - Avoid the operation of surrounding agricultural enterprises
  - Appropriately consider impacts on environment and landscape values.
- Focus on tourism development along key tourist routes and near tourism assets.
- Locate large-scale tourism development within existing settlements.
- Avoid tourism development in areas of bushfire hazard unless the risk can be mitigated to an acceptable level.
- Provide support for appropriately located nature-based tourism close to natural assets.

In Policy Area 1:

- Only support tourism uses and development where it is associated with, and will remain subordinate to, an existing agricultural enterprise.
- Strongly discourage large-scale tourism development outside of townships.

In Policy Area 2:

- Encourage tourism buildings and ancillary infrastructure to be clustered together on the property and screened from view from neighbouring dwellings.
- Support the use and development of land for tourism if it will result in net environmental benefit or rehabilitation of degraded land.
- Support large-scale tourism developments only where:
  - The tourism enterprise requires a rural location.
  - The development will not contribute to the urbanisation of the area.
  - The land use is compatible with the use of adjoining and surrounding land for agriculture or forestry and is complimentary to the rural setting.
  - The facility will significantly contribute to the local and regional tourism economy.

IMPLEMENTATION

Review and update local policy as required to reflect the land use and development outcomes specified for Policy Area 1 and Policy Area 2.

Recognise and protect our natural values

The Strathbogie Shire contains significant aquatic and terrestrial habitats and biodiversity values. These values are ecologically important for maintaining ecosystem services (such as water quality), their intrinsic value and socially important for cultural heritage and recreational use including tourism. Ongoing dialogue with the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation and the Taungurung Land and Waters Council, and improved recognition of biodiversity assets is required to ensure the protection of the landscape and character of the region.

BIODIVERSITY

Aquatic assets include the Goulburn River, the Lower Goulburn River Floodplain and the Lower Broken River Floodplain. These waterways and wetlands provide high quality habitat for fish and support significant stands of River Red Gums. The River Red Gums provide important habitat such as large hollows for many species (small mammals such as the squirrel glider, migratory birds) and contribute to riverine food webs (carbon, leaves and debris).

The Goulburn Broken Catchment Biodiversity Strategy 2016–2021 has identified the Strathbogie Tablelands and Longwood Violet Town Plains as areas with high biodiversity value. The Strathbogie Tablelands includes the Strathbogie State Forest, a large contiguous area of high-quality core habitat for many significant species of flora and fauna in the region such as the Southern Great Glider, the Brush-tailed Phascogale and the Euroa Guinea-flower. The Longwood Violet Town Plains has grassy landscape with scattered trees that contains high quality habitat to support a range of significant species. There are fragmented remnants of the nationally threatened ecological community, Box-Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Grasslands within this area.

Mapping of the conservation status of vegetation shows that there are extensive areas of endangered vegetation across the Strathbogie Shire (Figure **7**). Particularly along roadsides and fence lines and on the less fertile foot slopes. There are larger contiguous patches of endangered vegetation on both public and private land in the northern parts of the shire. Approximately 35 per cent of all private land in the shire has remnant vegetation considered high value, having a strategic biodiversity value score of between 60–100 based on NaturePrint[11].

The recognition and protection of biodiversity values in the Strathbogie Planning Scheme is limited. There are two discrete areas where a vegetation overlay has been applied (Figure 3) to protect EPBC listed remnant native vegetation and remnant indigenous vegetation. Within the Farm Zone much of the vegetation has been historically cleared for agriculture and timber supply resulting in a patchy, fragmented distribution of native vegetation. Some of the most ecologically valuable vegetation in Victoria occurs along roadsides in the shire.

During the 2023 review of the SPS consultation with stakeholders highlighted concern regarding the lack of commentary within the Scheme on recognition and protection of biodiversity assets within the Shire. It was suggested that local policies should recognise the importance of promoting land use and development that encourages and protects native vegetation (particularly in areas of important biodiversity) through, for example, encouraging design solutions that minimise the removal of native vegetation. Stakeholders also suggested a range of changes to the planning scheme, including a review of the application of Environmental Significance Overlays (ESOs) and Vegetation Protection Overlays (VPOs) across the municipality[2].

[11] https://discover.data.vic.gov.au/dataset/natureprint-v4-0-strategic-biodiversity-values

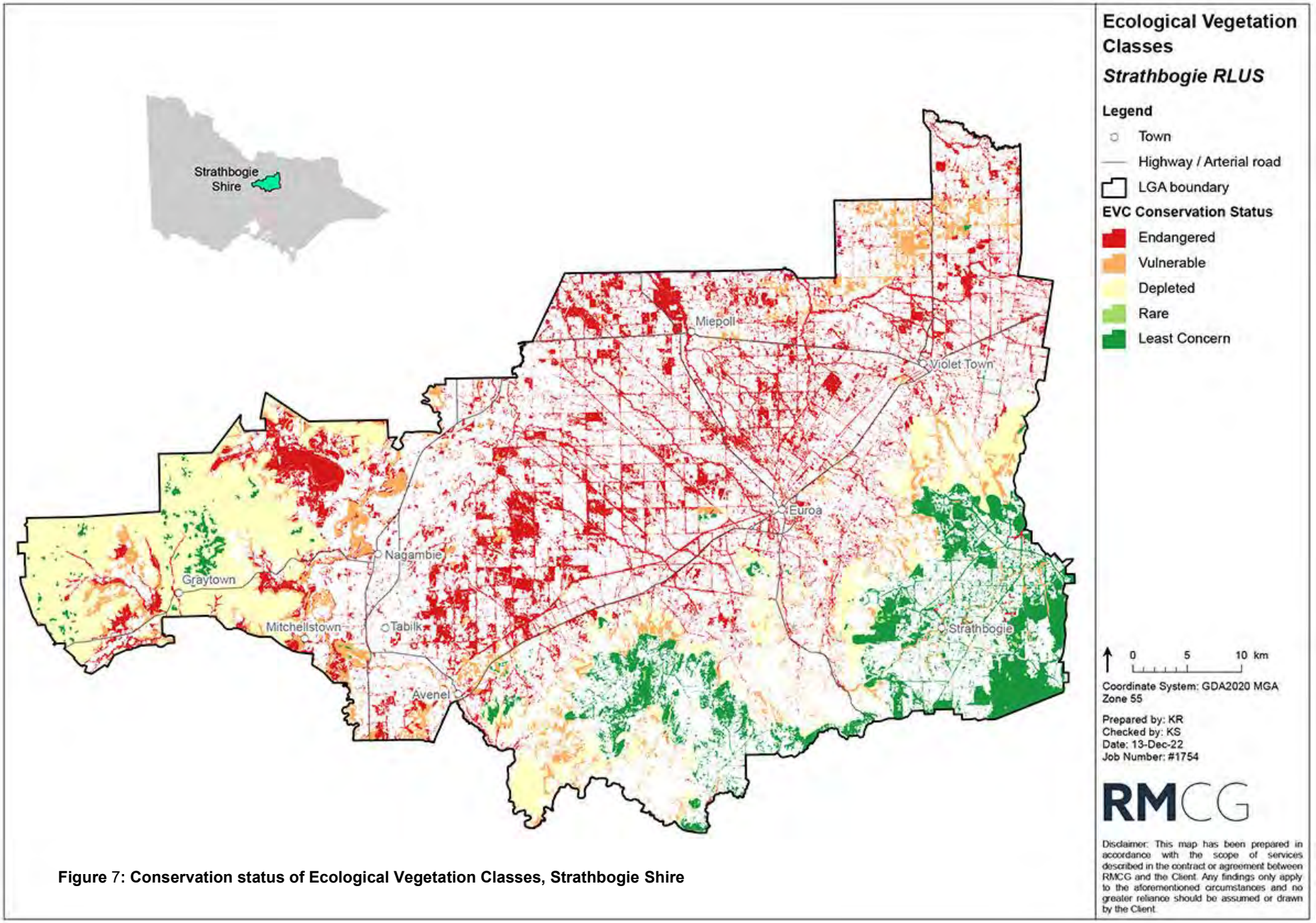


Figure 7: Conservation status of Ecological Vegetation Classes, Strathbogie Shire

WATER

Strathbogie Shire has two declared potable water supply catchments (Figure 8); Honeysuckle Creek and Seven Creeks. These catchments provide water for Violet Town and Euroa. Seven Creeks was identified in the Strathbogie Domestic Wastewater Management Plan (SDWMP) as being at risk of cumulative impacts from domestic wastewater.

Development, if not carefully managed, poses a threat to the sustainability of water resources and the quality of waterways and wetlands. The Environmental Significance Overlay is commonly applied to declared water supply catchments in Victoria but has not been applied to these two water supply catchments.

Key recommendations from the 2023 SPS review and the SDWMP which have not yet commenced included:

- Preparation and exhibition of an amendment to the Strathbogie Planning Scheme for the application of an Environmental Significance Overlay over declared water supply catchments and around potable water offtake points, with amendments made to the Municipal Strategic Statement to reference the adopted DWMP and reinforce its key objectives
- Preparation of a new Memorandum of Understanding with Goulburn Murray Water to identify referral requirements for development in declared water supply catchments and high-risk areas.



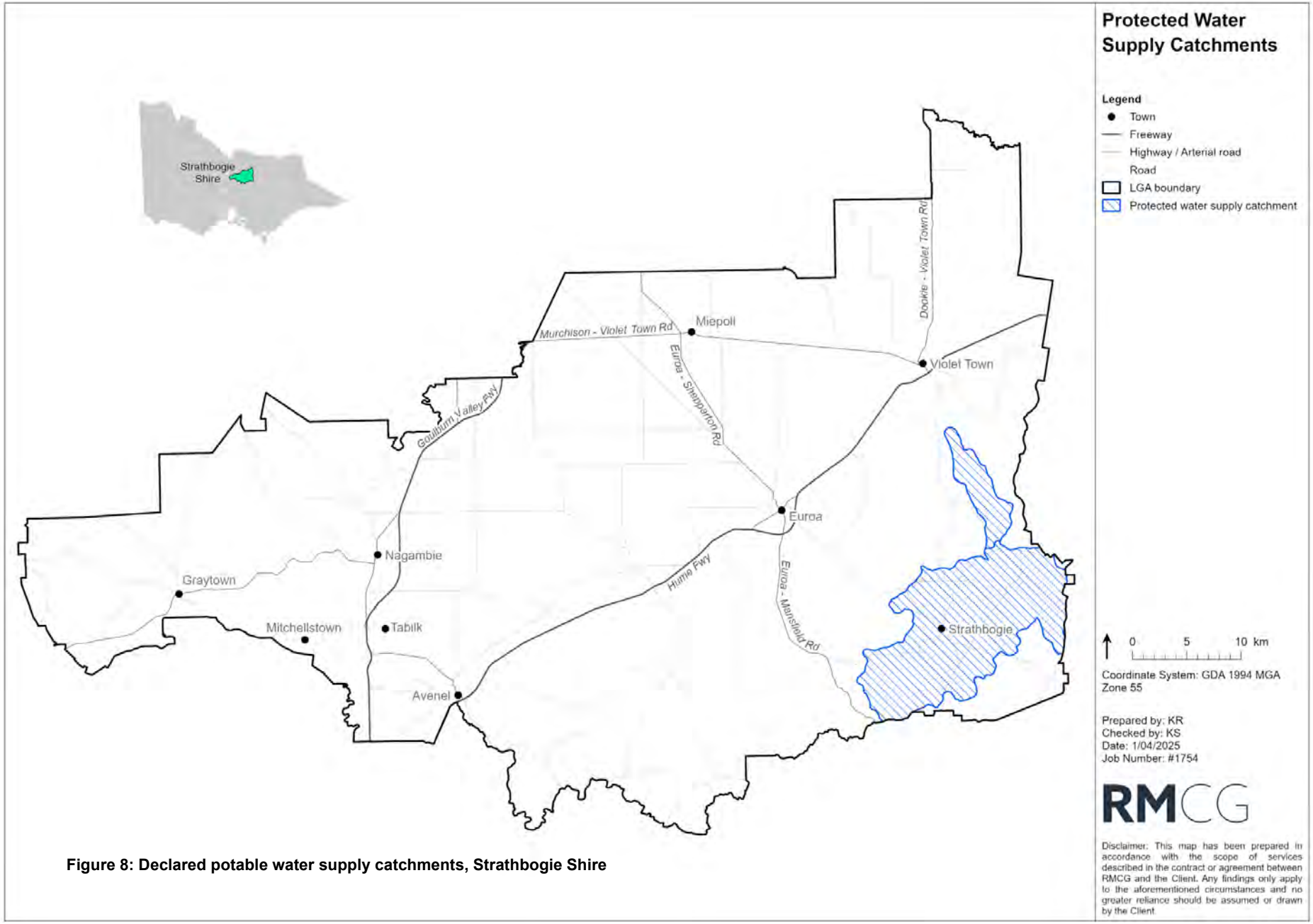


Figure 8: Declared potable water supply catchments, Strathbogie Shire

CULTURAL HERITAGE

Strathbogie Shire lies on the lands of the Taungurung peoples and Yorta Yorta people. The Shire is rich in Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Places and contains many important, secret, and sacred Aboriginal Places. Within the Shire boundary there are 495 previously identified Aboriginal Places, consisting of 821 components, with countless Aboriginal Places as yet undiscovered. Of these known sites 367 Places consisting of 680 components are located in Taungurung Country, and 128 Places consisting of 141 components are located in Yorta Yorta Country. The spatial distribution of these sites is focused on waterways and areas where intensive works, such as road and rail upgrades, which have been accompanied by Cultural Heritage Management Plans have been undertaken.

The early history of post-contact Australia is preserved in the buildings and archaeological remains that can be identified throughout the State of Victoria. There are 17 known places on the Heritage Register within Strathbogie Shire that are significant to the history and development of Victoria. Towns within the shire have monuments and sites commemorating the military history of Victoria, with war memorials offering insight into local history and heroism. The Shire also falls in the Official Ned Kelly Touring Route telling the story of Ned Kelly and his Gang.

In planning for growth and future land use change, cultural heritage is considered to be a community, economic and social asset[12]. The Strathbogie Shire's cultural heritage assets, both Aboriginal and historic, are important to contemporary communities and heritage is integral to creating a sense of place.

Many tourists seek heritage tourism experiences. Aboriginal cultural heritage and historic heritage attractions and services contribute to the regional economy and employment. Building a comprehensive sense of place around heritage sites is important to help develop resilient and sustainable communities.

Cultural heritage within the State of Victoria is protected by the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006, the Heritage Act 2017 and the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. Activities that may impact on heritage places will require the development of a CHMP, permit or referral to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

Identified Aboriginal Places and Heritage Register sites within Strathbogie Shire are mapped within the Existing Conditions Report. Continuing dialogue with the Taungurung Land and Waters Council and the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation is required to ensure the ongoing protection and management of significant Aboriginal cultural heritage places within Strathbogie Shire.

OBJECTIVE

- Recognise, protect and enhance Strathbogie shire's native vegetation, habitat and waterways.
- Identify and protect cultural heritage.

STRATEGIES

- Explore opportunities to better protect roadside vegetation through Vegetation Protection Overlays.
- Review the application and mapping of Environmental Significance Overlays and Vegetation Protection Overlays to better protect native vegetation and biodiversity assets across the shire.
- Use the Municipal Planning Strategy as a vehicle to encourage design solutions that minimise the removal of native vegetation (especially in areas of high biodiversity value).
- Prepare and exhibit an amendment to the Strathbogie Planning Scheme for the application of an Environmental Significance Overlay over declared water supply catchments and around potable water offtake points, with amendments made to the Municipal Planning Strategy to reference the adopted DWMP and reinforce its key objectives.

[12] Hume Regional Growth Plan (2014) Victorian State Government

- Preparation of a Memorandum of Understanding with Goulburn Murray Water to identify referral requirements for development in declared water supply catchments and high-risk areas.
- Ensuring appropriate investigation is undertaken prior to consideration of any development of land identified with cultural heritage significance.
- Support the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation and the Taungurung Land and Waters Council to identify and protect significant cultural heritage sites and artefacts.
- Support the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation, the Taungurung Land and Waters Council and the Office of Aboriginal Affairs Victoria to raise cultural awareness amongst the Strathbogie Shire community.

FURTHER WORK

- A detailed review of the shire's biodiversity is required particularly mapping and prioritisation of native vegetation with a focus along roadsides and on the flatter fertile plains to provide the necessary information and data at an appropriate scale to justify the application of planning control where required.
- Partner with the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation, the Taungurung Land and Waters Council and the Office of Aboriginal Affairs Victoria to identify key areas and sites and recommendations for their protection to augment cultural heritage assessment of land around key townships.



Prepared for a changing climate

Strathbogie Shire is at risk of riverine flooding, erosion, and bushfires. Changes in patterns of rainfall and temperature have the potential to exacerbate these risks. Future planning for residential and land use development needs to consider how to best manage these risks and prevent harm to human health, agriculture and the environment.

FLOOD

Runoff from the Strathbogie Ranges drains to the Goulburn River via a network of seasonal and permanent creeks. This topography has contributed to a history of flooding, including a significant flood event in 1993, which impacted the townships of Violet Town, Euroa, Avenel and vast extents of rural areas, resulting in extensive damage. In 2022, flooding affected many parts of Strathbogie Shire and, in some areas, peaked above major flood levels. Homes and businesses were inundated, crops and infrastructure were damaged, and stock lost, resulting in significant cost and disruption.

The Flood Overlay (FO) and Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) identify areas that are susceptible to flood risk and triggers planning permit requirements for buildings and works.

Climate change will increase the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events such as flood and increase the risk to homes, farms and should be a consideration in planning for rural residential development and rural areas.

The 2023 Planning Scheme Review noted that the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (GBCMA) have completed new flood mapping for the municipality and that once flood mapping is available to Council, it is important that the information is translated into a meaningful planning control and applied in a transparent manner so that the risks can be avoided or mitigated.

BUSHFIRE

Strathbogie Shire is a municipality that, like it's abutting neighbours, has a history of being impacted by bushfires. The majority of the municipality is designated by the Bushfire Prone Area, aside from small parts of the Shire's major townships.

Bushfire in the Strathbogie Planning Scheme is the most important consideration for decision making. Bushfire is considered in a number of ways within planning, based on what is impacted directly by the Bushfire Management Overlay (as shown in Figure 3) or is designated as a Bushfire Prone Area. Within these identified areas, Council is required to consider the state policy in Clause 13.02-1S bushfire planning which has an overall objective:

"To strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities to bushfire through risk-based planning that prioritises the protection of human life."

The policy also gives priority to the protection of human life by:

- Prioritising the protection of human life over all other policy considerations.
- Directing population growth and development to low risk locations and ensuring the availability of, and safe access to, areas where human life can be better protected from the effects of bushfire.
- Reducing the vulnerability of communities to bushfire through the consideration of bushfire risk in decision making at all stages of the planning process.

The policy is considered directly in this document, where consideration of bushfire hazard has been undertaken at the municipal wide level, to inform the

designation of areas for the investigation of future Rural Living Zone. Appendix 4 goes into further detail and assessment of the municipality and the policy direction in Clause 13.02-1S to determine areas that are suitable for the introduction of the Rural Living Zone. This is done by identifying bushfire hazard, undertaking appropriate risk assessment and applying the best available science to identify vegetation, topographic and climatic conditions that create a bushfire hazard.

Based on the assessment at Appendix 4 it is recommended that there are sections of the townships of Euroa, Nagambie and Violet Town that could accommodate additional Rural Living Zone based on achieving a low risk rating and additional policy settings. The assessment has also identified the need to introduce additional planning tools to guide both applicants and Council decision-making around subdivision, use and development in future and existing Rural Living Zone areas.

The assessment (Appendix 4) has been undertaken at a strategic level and it is acknowledged that further detailed assessment will be undertaken at the planning scheme amendment stage that will utilise design standards that seek to achieve a low risk environment. Future planning scheme amendments should look to incorporate additional planning controls (local planning policy or other planning tools).

EROSION

The Erosion Management Overlay (EMO) has been applied to northern slopes of the Strathbogie Ranges. The purpose of the overlay is to protect areas prone to erosion, landslip, and other land degradation by minimising land disturbance and inappropriate development. The 2023 SPS Review noted that the schedule for the EMO is currently blank resulting in any vegetation removal requiring planning permission. The schedule needs to be reviewed to provide content, statement of risk, and objectives to be achieved.

OBJECTIVE

- Manage natural hazards in rural areas and prioritise the protection of human life in relation to the use and development of rural land.

STRATEGIES

- Avoid future residential development in areas with a risk of flooding or inundation.
- Residential development is directed to areas of low bushfire risk consistent with State Planning Policy.
- Consider the negative impacts of residential bushfire risk management to biodiversity values.
- Strongly discourage development that increases exposure to bushfire hazards in areas where risk to life cannot be reduced to an acceptable level.
- Ensure all future development is sited and designed to:
  - Achieve compliance with Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) construction standards;
  - Provide for adequate defendable space;
  - Maintain safe and reliable vehicle access and egress for emergency services and residents.

FURTHER WORK

- Translate the most recent flood mapping conducted by Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority into meaningful planning control.
- Review the EMO to provide content, statement of risk, application requirements and objectives to be achieved.
- Consider more detailed biodiversity mapping across the Shire to understand where areas of high biodiversity value are located.
- Encourage ongoing landholder education and proactive land management to reduce fuel loads, maintain access, and enhance landscape resilience to bushfire events.

Provide housing for the future

The intent of this chapter is to recommend the extent of rural residential development that could be accommodated in the Strathbogie Shire in the future.

Rural residential development refers to land in a rural setting used and developed for dwellings that are not primarily associated with agriculture. The primary document guiding residential development within townships is the Urban Growth Strategy. However, the focus of the RRLUS is to address housing in rural areas (outside of established townships).

DEMAND FOR RURAL LIVING

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Strathbogie Shire Council experienced a notable increase in planning permit applications for dwellings on small lots within the Farming Zone. This led to development that conflicts with the objectives of supporting agriculture, preserving environmental and landscape values, and ensuring the efficient use of land designated for rural residential development.

Historically, a considerable proportion of Strathbogie shire's dwelling growth has occurred in the municipality's rural areas, outside urban zones (between 25–50 per cent). At certain times, population growth in non-township and rural areas has outpaced that of urban centres, driven by factors such as the appeal of rural living. Between 2016 and 2021, the Strathbogie Shire Council experienced a notable increase in planning permit applications for dwellings on small lots within the FZ. This trend intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The proliferation of housing in Farming Zones can conflict with the objectives of supporting agriculture, preserving environmental and landscape values, and ensuring the efficient use of land designated for rural residential development. Development activity has been especially strong in rural areas near Nagambie and Avenel, where more dwellings have been built in surrounding rural zones rather than within the towns themselves. Notably, all recent residential growth in the rural areas of the municipality has occurred solely within the FZ.

EXISTING RURAL LIVING AREAS

There are currently only two areas of Rural Living Zone land within Strathbogie Shire, in Avenel and Euroa. Neither of these has seen development or subdivision occur. While both areas have site constraints that are likely to have limited development, the enabling of development within the FZ may also have contributed to this outcome.

State planning policy requires local councils to accommodate a projected population of at least a 15-year period and provides clear direction on where growth should occur.

The Urban Growth Strategy identifies that existing townships have sufficient capacity to accommodate future demand, with an estimated land supply of between 31 and 41 years in vacant and developable areas of Avenel, Euroa, Nagambie, Longwood, Strathbogie and Violet Town.

Further residential development should prioritise the uptake of existing land supply within the township areas, where there is significant capacity and where jobs and services are located.

While the State Government does not specify the type of residential supply that should be provided (i.e. the quantum of rural residential), we know that there is community preference to provide for some rural living development.

Within the existing RLZ areas, there is an estimated capacity for 43 lots, approximating to 2 years of supply. However, there are a number of issues that to date have resulted in there being no Rural Living Zoned allotments on the market for sale.

AVENEL

The existing Rural Living Zone in Avenel (Lovers Hill) is constrained by bushfire risk and significant native vegetation. The existing planning controls, including the Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO) and Development Plan Overlay (DPO), require further information and resolution to justify development in these areas. While these challenges may be addressed through detailed planning, their resolution remains uncertain. Feedback from the CFA, suggests that there will be parts of Lovers Hill that will not be developable.

It is understood that there is an application currently with Council to develop Stage 1 of this RLZ. This will provide a useful case to test the capacity of the site for development.

Ongoing monitoring is recommended to assess whether rezoning is warranted. Should the constraints on the land prove insurmountable, there may be sufficient strategic justification to rezone the land or use alternative planning tools to reflect current risks.

EUROA

A Floodway Overlay and Land Subjection to Inundation Overlay currently applies to the existing Rural Living Zone land in Euroa. There are also more extensive flood controls proposed over the land. Given these locational constraints, justification may exist to rezone this land.

If current Rural Living Zoned land is to be rezoned or is constrained to the point of being undevelopable, it is logical to explore new Rural Living Zoned land that can be created in a manner that avoids a net loss of rural lifestyle opportunities and productive agricultural land.

PROPOSED FUTURE RURAL LIVING AREAS

Further residential development in the municipality needs to prioritise the uptake of existing land supply within the township's areas, where there is significant capacity and where jobs and services are located. However, it is clear that there is some demand for the community to continue to live in rural areas, for a range of social, environmental and economic reasons.

Given that all recent rural residential development has occurred within the FZ, further restrictions are required to limit further residential development in these locations.

State planning direction requires that a clear distinction be made between rural residential areas and farming areas to ensure that productive agricultural land is protected and that non-agricultural uses, including dwellings, do not adversely affect farming.

There is a clear need to provide an alternative to small Farming Zoned allotments where, historically, dwellings have been supported. This historic approach is in conflict with state policy that seeks to direct growth into existing settlements and to preserve productive farmland.

The identification of any future rural residential development areas needs to ensure the protection of human life and productive agricultural land, as well as addressing other environmental, natural hazard and landscape considerations.

Earlier analysis identified towns with potential to accommodate rural living based on alignment with their proposed growth status (as identified in the UGS Issues and Opportunities Paper) and potential economic development opportunities[13] (as identified in the Strathbogie RRLUS Issues and Opportunities Paper). The analysis also identified areas considered unsuitable for further residential development. This considered avoiding rural areas of high biodiversity and vegetation value and limiting development in areas where there is a potential risk to human life and property from natural hazards (i.e.

[13] Issues and Opportunities Paper (2024) RMCG and SGS https://hdp-au-prod-app-strath-share-files.s3.ap-southeast2.amazonaws.com/7217/3095/3512/Strathbogie_RRLUS_Issues_and_Opportunities_7.11.24_short.pdf

bushfire and flooding). Based on this analysis additional RLZ areas have been identified near Violet Town, Nagambie and Euroa.

VIOLET TOWN

The proposed area for RLZ (Figure 9a) was identified as an area suitable for future rural residential development which has manageable bushfire and flood risk and avoids areas of cultural heritage sensitivity and vulnerable flora and fauna (Figure 9b).

NAGAMABIE

The proposed area for RLZ (Figure 10a) was identified as an area suitable for future rural residential development which has manageable bushfire and flood risk and avoids areas of cultural heritage sensitivity and protects biodiversity values (Figure 10b).

EUROA

The proposed area for RLZ (Figure 11a) was identified as an area suitable for future rural residential development which has manageable bushfire and flood risk and avoids areas of cultural heritage sensitivity and vulnerable flora and fauna (Figure 11b).

The proposed future RLZ areas were endorsed by the Community Panel during consultation.

Additional RLZ areas are not proposed for:

- Strathbogie township due to:
  - The bushfire risk posed to human life
  - The bushfire risk posed to property due to limited access roads
  - Issues around biodiversity and proximity to Seven Creeks
  - Its inclusion within a protected water supply catchment.
- Avenel due to the volume of existing RLZ.
- Longwood due to existing Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ) land that has not been developed.

POTENTIAL CAPACITY OF RURAL LIVING AREAS

In terms of capacity, if the existing Avenel RLZ (36 lots) is retained, and the proposed RLZ areas in Nagambie, Violet Town and Euroa are implemented, in theory, the total capacity would increase to 87 lots. Refer to Table 6 below. This represents 4 to 6% of the total housing demand to 2041 identified in the Urban Growth Strategy.

Table 6: Rural Residential Capacity Assessment

	AREA (ha)	YIELD (LOTS)
Existing RLZ		
Avenel	244	36
Proposed RLZ		
Nagambie	59	20
Violet Town	49	17
Euroa	40	14
Total	**251**	**87**

Source: SGS Economics and Planning, 2025

Note: This assumes the approximate land required for the RLZ uses the minimum RLZ subdivision size (2 ha) plus 30 per cent allowance for infrastructure areas.

In addition, the existing and proposed Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ) identified in the Urban Growth Strategy provides a complementary lifestyle option for residents seeking a more rural feel and setting than traditional urban land.

OBJECTIVE

To guide future residential growth to existing townships close to services.

Provide rural residential opportunities in appropriate locations with consideration of the:

- Agricultural value of the land
- Environmental and landscape characteristics of the land.

STRATEGY

Support housing growth in existing settlements in line with the Urban Growth Strategy.

Ensure existing RLZ areas and the identification of any future areas for future rural residential development are in locations that:

- Are not productive agricultural land;
- Provide reasonable access to existing settlements and infrastructure;
- Avoid areas of high scenic or landscape value;
- Have a low risk of natural hazards, such as bushfire or flooding; and
- Are protected from incompatible uses.

Further RLZ policy is included in Attachment 4.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Monitor the uptake of Avenel RLZ, specifically around native vegetation and bushfire, to determine whether there is sufficient strategic justification to rezone.
- Consider rezoning existing Euroa RLZ with regard to current and recently updated flood mapping data.
- Consider rezoning additional RLZ areas subject to the identified locational criteria in Violet Town, Nagambie and Euroa (as shown in Figure 9a, Figure 10a and Figure 11a).



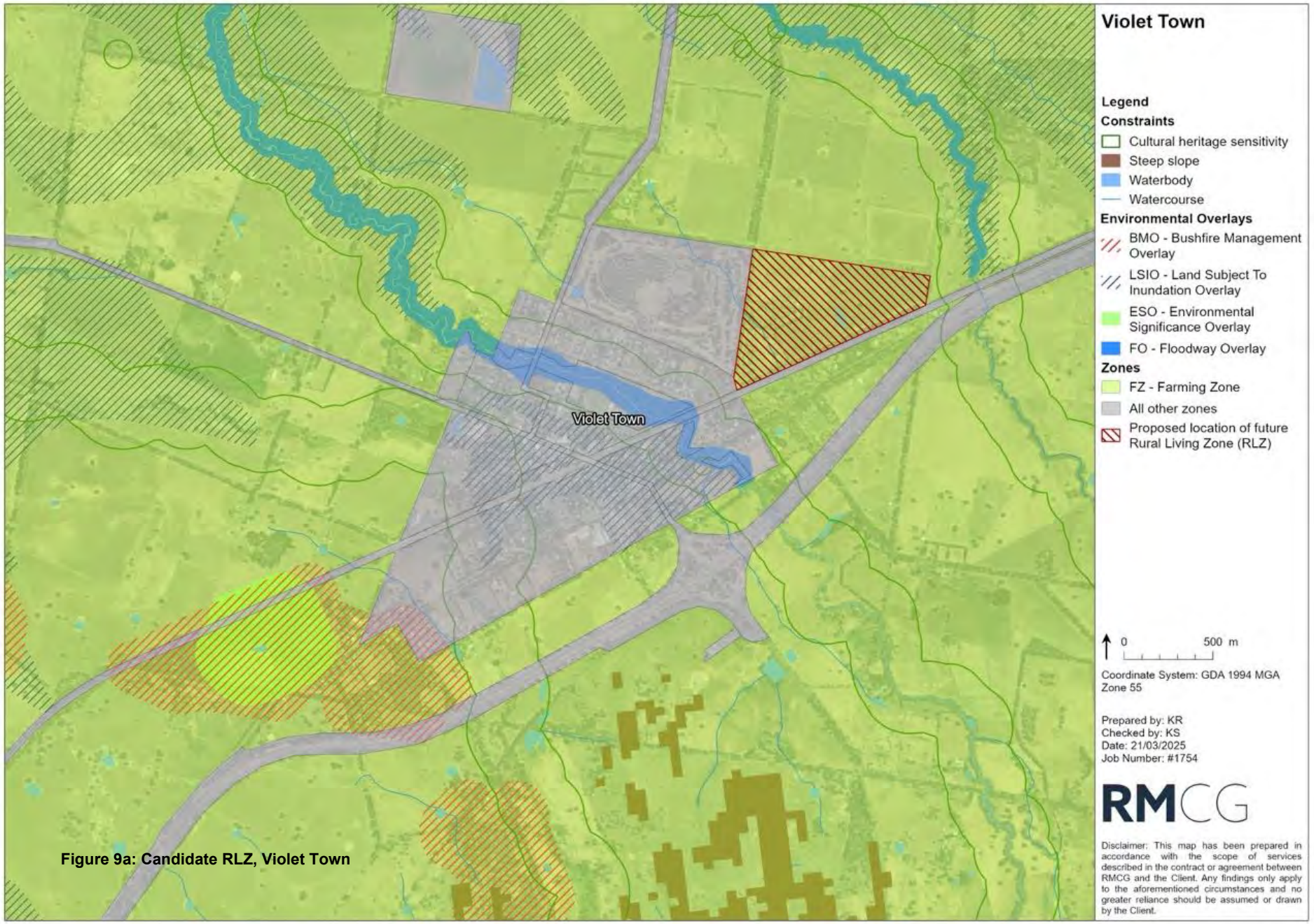


Figure 9a: Candidate RLZ, Violet Town

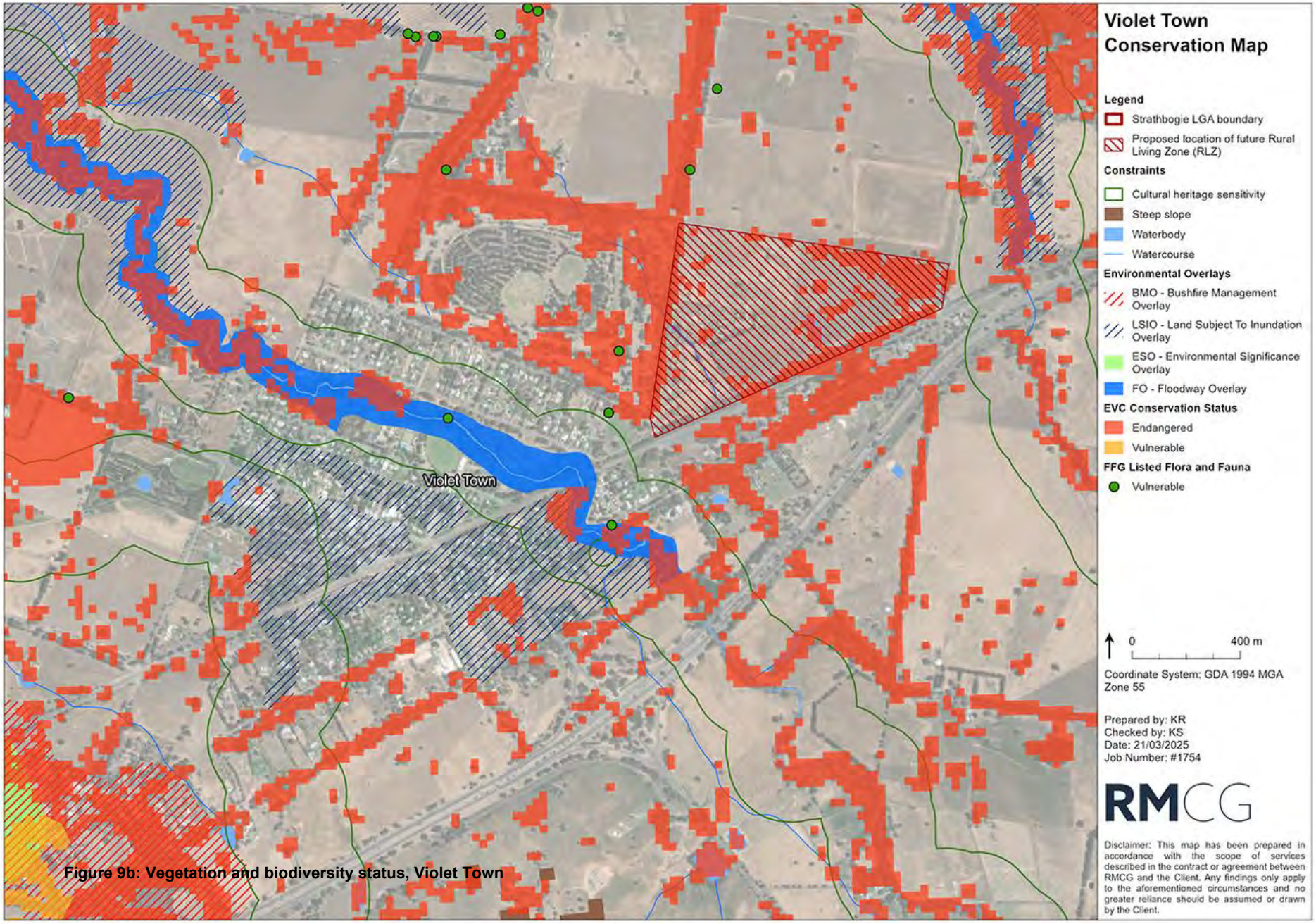


Figure 9b: Vegetation and biodiversity status, Violet Town

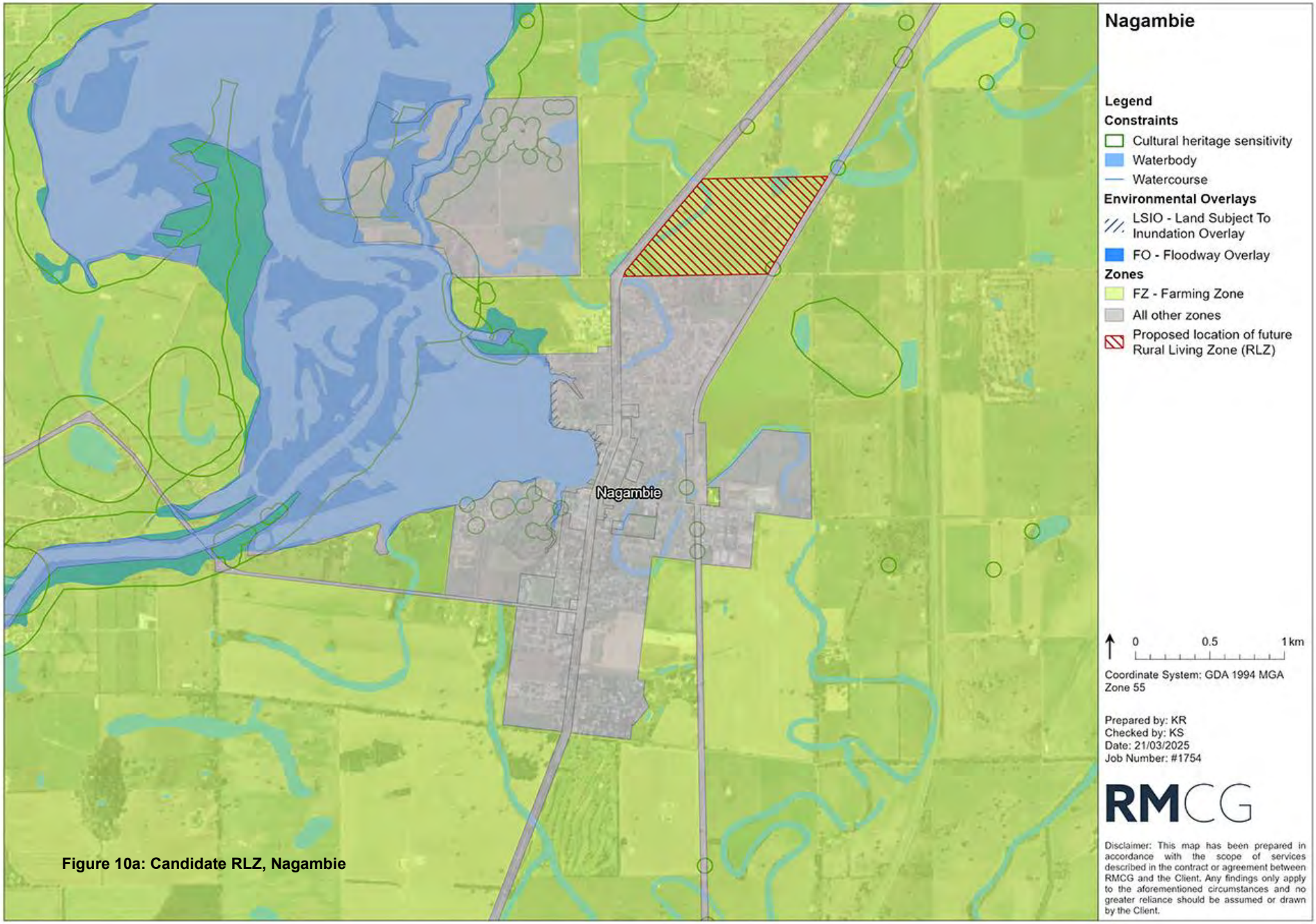


Figure 10a: Candidate RLZ, Nagambie

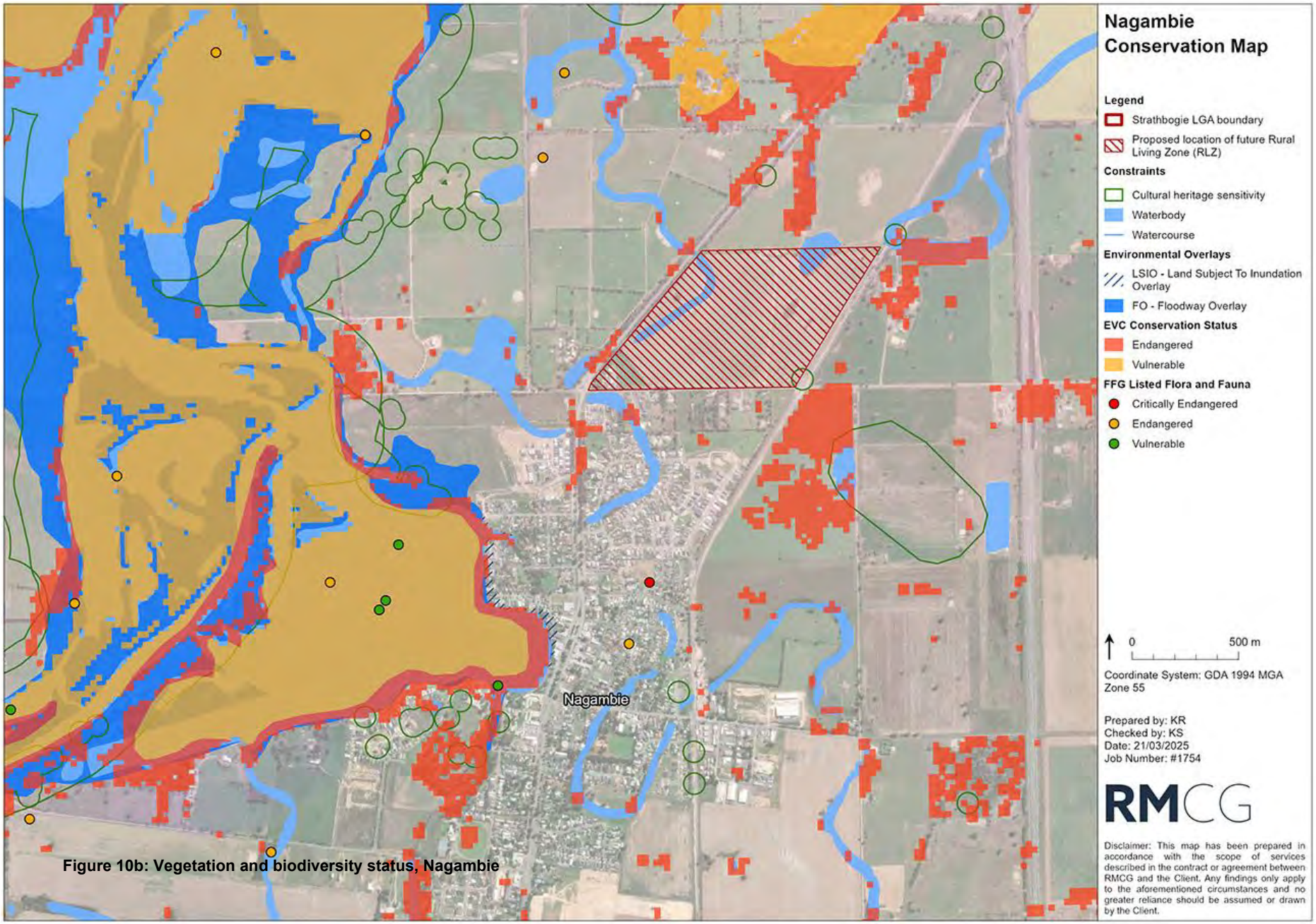


Figure 10b: Vegetation and biodiversity status, Nagambie

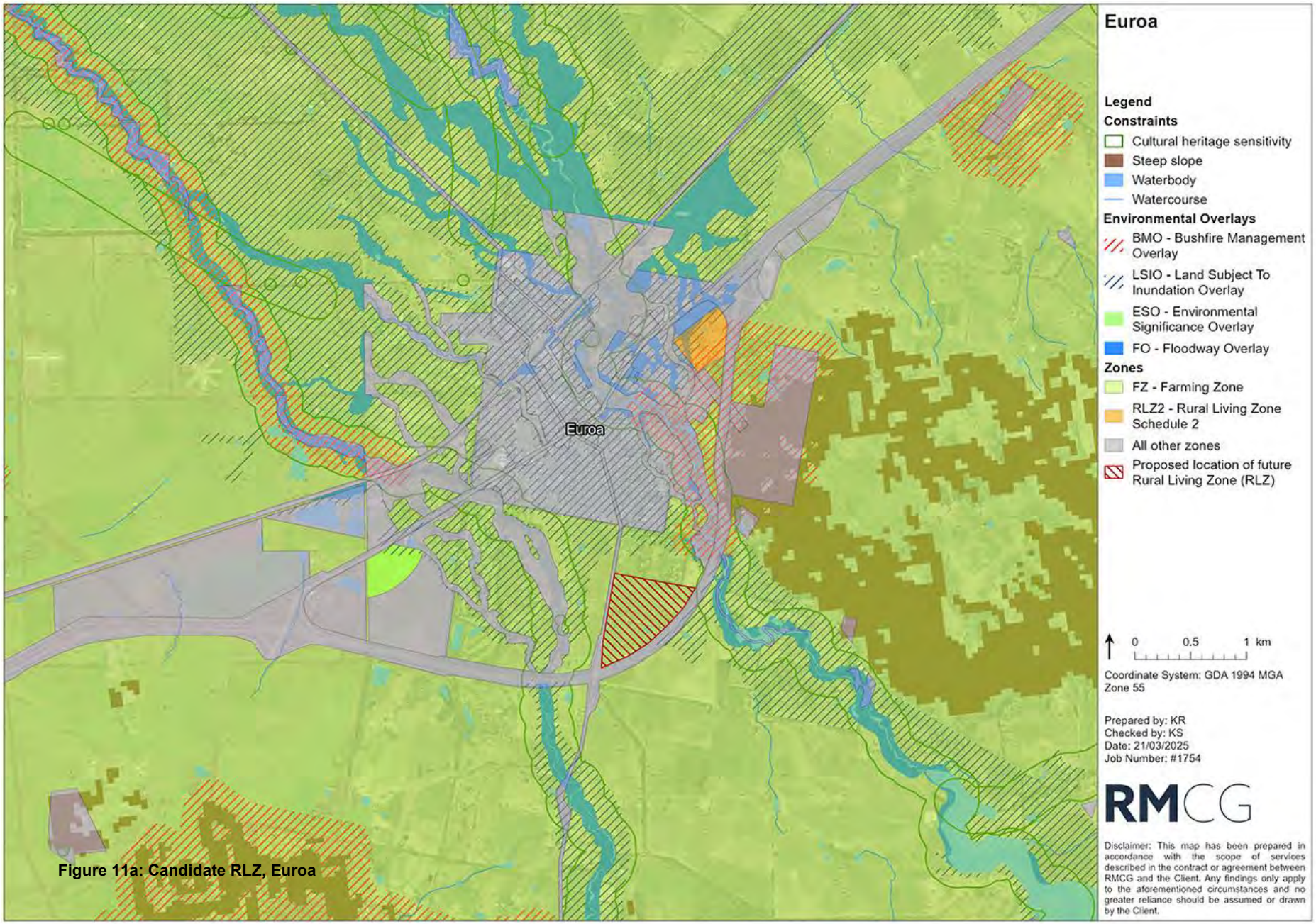


Figure 11a: Candidate RLZ, Euroa

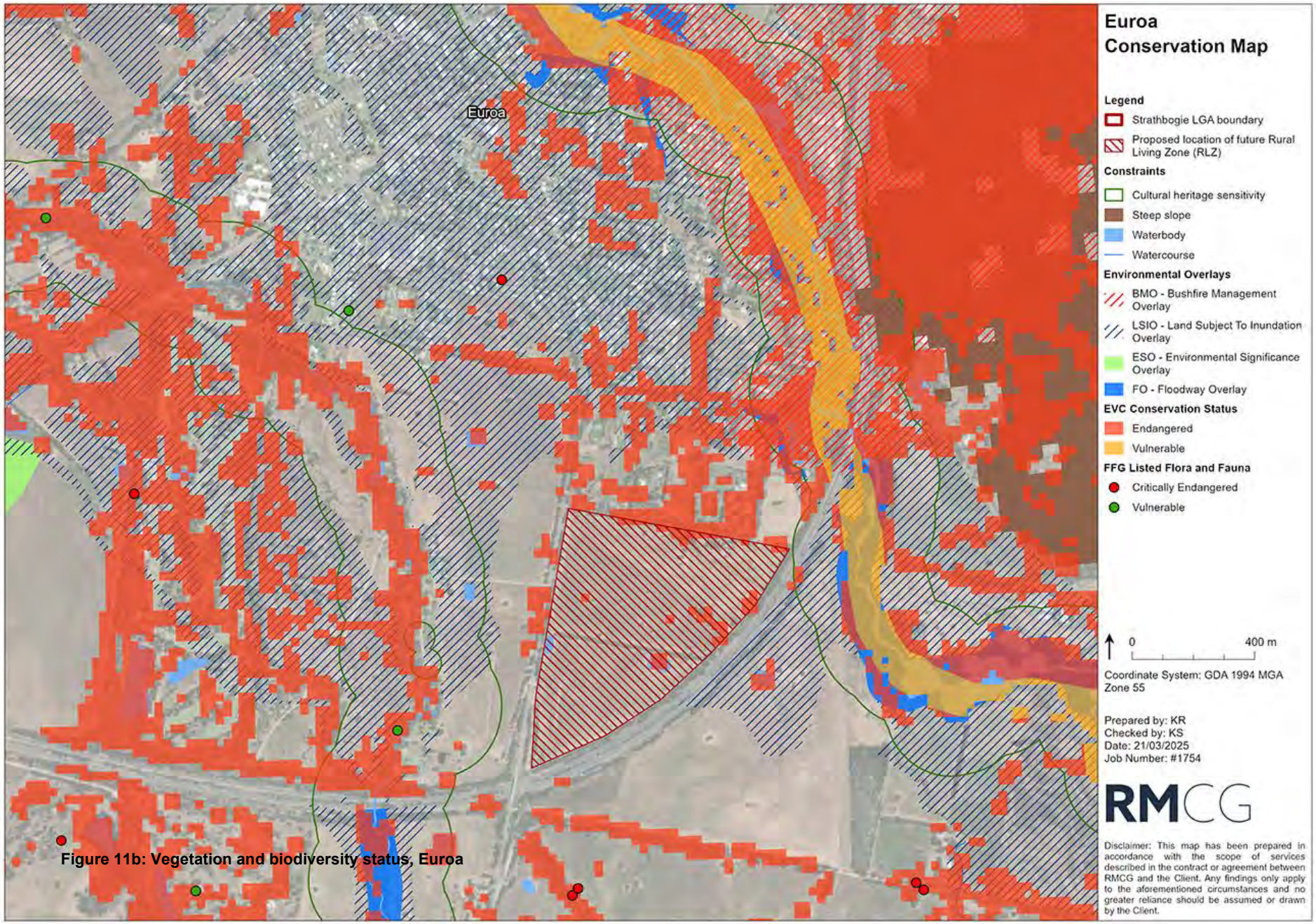


Figure 11b: Vegetation and biodiversity status, Euroa

Part 4: Implementation



This section presents a consolidated Implementation Plan to realise the vision and objectives for the Strathbogie RRLUS. For each action the Implementation Plan indicates Council's role and the priority of the action.

COUNCIL'S ROLE

Strathbogie Shire Council will play different roles in the implementation of this Strategy. These will vary between the roles of Planner, Provider, Advocate, Partner, Educator and Regulator. A description of these various roles is provided below.

Deliver – Council to lead

Advocate – representing community needs and interests to Commonwealth and State Governments and the private sector

Partner – working closely with developers, investors, government departments and agencies and peak bodies

Regulator – ensuring that rural land uses meet town planning, building and public health regulations and expectations

PRIORITY

Actions have been prioritised into high, medium, low and ongoing to be completed over the lifetime of the strategy. Priorities should be periodically reviewed and reassessed in line with available budgets, resources and funding opportunities. The timeframe for completing prioritised actions is:

- High – Action to occur over the next 1–2 years
- Medium – Action to occur over the next 3–5years
- Low – Action to occur over the next 6+ years
- Ongoing – Action to be undertaken on an ongoing basis.

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

This Rural Land Use Strategy identifies a number of actions which involve participation and collaboration with State, regional and local organisations to enable their realisation. These include, but are not limited to the agencies listed below.

- Agriculture Victoria
- Department of Transport and Planning (DTP)
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA)
- Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR)
- Regional Development Victoria (RDV)
- Environmental Protection Authority Victoria (EPA VIC)
- Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (GBCMA)
- Goulburn Murray Water (GMW)
- Country Fire Authority (CFA)
- Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation
- Taungurung Land and Waters Council
- Office of Aboriginal Affairs Victoria
- Various Strathbogie Shire Council departments.

ACTION		ROLE OF COUNCIL	PARTNER ORGANISATION	PRIORITY
Planning Scheme Implementation and Future Strategic Work				
1.0	Following Councils adoption of the Strategy a Planning Scheme Amendment should be prepared to embed the recommendations and actions into the Strathbogie Planning Scheme. The following provides a general guide to the statutory implementation: **Policy Changes:** Embed the overall vision and strategic directions of the Strategy within the Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework. Review and update local policy within the Scheme to reflect the land use and development directions outlined within the Strategy, to guide decision making in particular for: ▪ Dwellings and subdivision within the Farming and Rural Living Zones. ▪ Non-agricultural uses including tourism development within the Farming Zone and Rural Areas. ▪ Bushfire risk. ▪ Native Vegetation and Biodiversity. **Zoning Changes** Revise the Schedule to the Clause 35.07 (Farming Zone) to a minimum lot size to construct a dwelling without a permit to 80 ha in Area B. **Background Documents:** Reference the Rural Residential and Land use strategy as a background document. **Further Strategic Work:** Reference all future strategic work outlined in action item 2.0.	Deliver	DTP	High
Further Strategic Work				
2.0	The following future strategic work should be referenced at Clause 74.02 of the Strathbogie Planning Scheme, undertaken as scheduled and subsequently drafted into future planning scheme amendments.	Deliver	DTP	High
2.1	Buffer Area Overlays – Intensive Agriculture Investigate and apply Buffer Area Overlays around all intensive agricultural operations as required. Consider also the translation of the existing ESO1 (Rural Industrial Activities) to a BAO.	Deliver	DTP EPA VIC	Low
2.2	Erosion Management Overlay Review the Erosion Management Overlay to provide content, statement of risk, application requirements and objectives to be achieved.	Deliver	DTP	Medium - Low
2.3	Flood related Planning Controls	Deliver	GBCMA	High

ACTION		ROLE OF COUNCIL	PARTNER ORGANISATION	PRIORITY
	Prepare and undertake a planning scheme amendment to update flood related planning controls (overlays) to reflect the most up to date flood mapping undertaken by Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority, to ensure its visibility within the planning scheme.			
2.4	Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Investigate, map and prioritise native vegetation and biodiversity assets in the Shire to inform the application of appropriate planning tools like the Environmental Significance Overlay and Vegetation Protection Overlay where required.	Deliver	DEECA	Medium-Low
2.5	Declared Special Water Supply Catchments Prepare and exhibit an amendment to the Strathbogie Planning Scheme for the application of an Environmental Significance Overlay and other policy settings to spatially recognise the declared water supply catchments, and around potable water offtake points and also reference Councils adopted Domestic Wastewater Management Plan.	Deliver	GMW	Medium - Low
Existing Rural Living and Future Supply				
3.0	Monitor the land take up within Rural Living Zoned land to ensure adequacy of supply.	Deliver		On-going
3.1	Further investigate the rezoning of additional Rural Living zoned land as identified within this Strategy surrounding the towns of Violet Town, Nagambie and Euroa subject to the identified criteria and progress to rezoning once demand requires.	Deliver	DTP	Medium
3.2	Consider rezoning or the application of other suitable planning tools to the existing Euroa Rural Living Zoned land in recognition of the riverine flood risk.	Deliver	GBMCA DTP	Medium - Low
Monitoring and Review				
4.0	Following implementation of the Strategy into the Strathbogie Planning Scheme, the plan will require monitoring and review either through a dedicated review or as part of Councils regular planning scheme review program.	Deliver	DTP	On-going
Cultural Heritage				
5.0	Continue to partner with the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation, the Taungurung Land and Waters Council and the Office of Aboriginal Affairs to ensure that key areas of cultural heritage are identified and recognised as areas of significance to inform decision making on land use applications.	Partner	Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation Taungurung Land and Waters Council Office of Aboriginal Affairs Victoria	On-going
Operational				
6.1	Prepare a new Memorandum of Understanding with Goulburn-Murray Water to identify referral requirements for development in declared water supply catchments and high-risk areas.	Regulator / Partner	GMW	High-Medium

ACTION		ROLE OF COUNCIL	PARTNER ORGANISATION	PRIORITY
6.2	Continue to advocate for the role that Agriculture Victoria plays in assisting Council's planning department for specialty advice.	Advocate	Agriculture Victoria	Ongoing

PLANNING SCHEME CHANGES

In addition to the inclusion of relevant text from the Strategy to update the MPS, the following updates to the Strathbogie Planning Scheme are recommended:

FARMING ZONE

Revise the Schedule to the Farming Zone to land in Policy Area 1, specifying a minimum lot size above which a planning permit for a dwelling is not required of 80 ha for Area B.

Introduce local policies or MPS to provide further guidance on the assessment of planning permit applications with regard to:

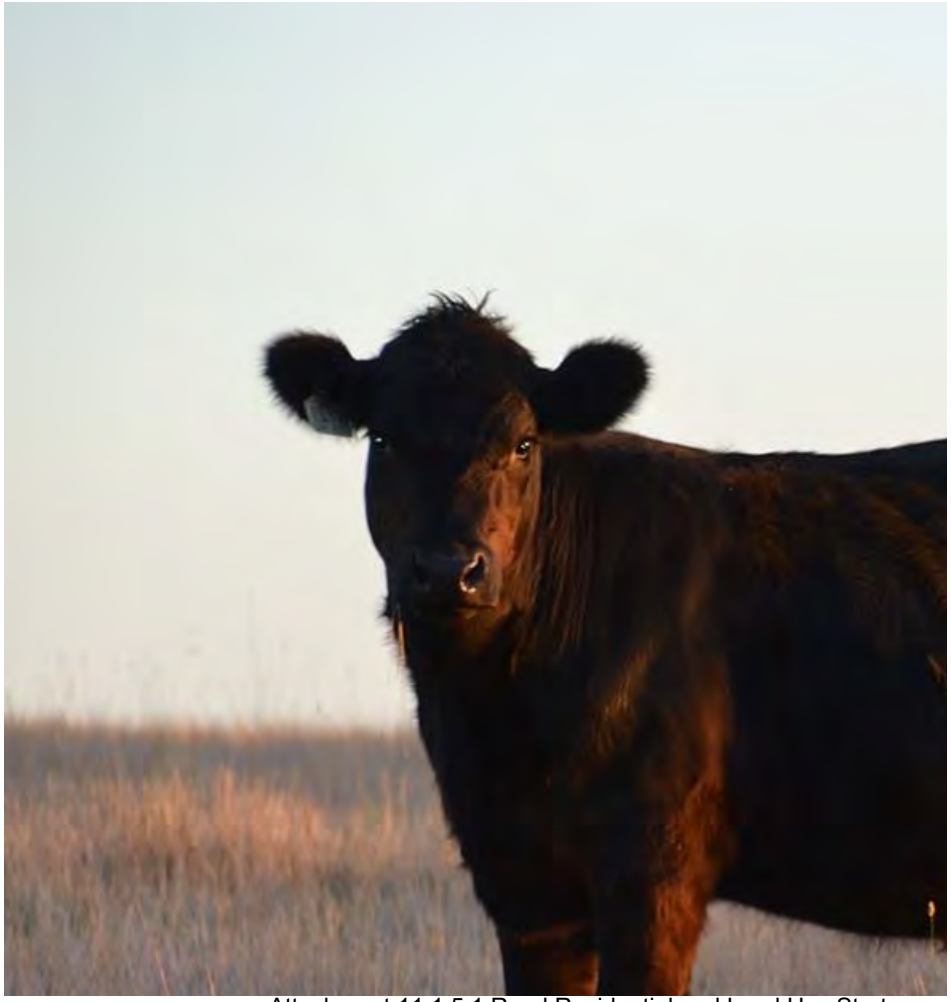
- Subdivision, including dwelling excisions and small lot subdivision, dwellings and rural workers accommodation in the Farming Zone.
- Non-agricultural uses including tourism uses, in the Farming Zone.Rural Living ZoneConsider rezoning existing Euroa RLZ having regard to current and recently updated flood mapping data.

Consider rezoning additional RLZ areas subject to the identified locational criteria in Violet Town, Nagambie and Euroa (as shown in Figure 9a, Figure 10a, and Figure 11a).

LOCAL POLICY / MPS

Local policies or MPS should be prepared to provide further guidance on:

- The assessment of planning permit applications within the Farming Zone
- Consideration of landscape protection within the Farming Zone and Rural Living Zone
- Bushfire risk and design requirements for the Rural Living Zone.
- Subdivision and dwellings within the Rural Living Zone that addresses and seeks to create rural living communities that are attractive, safe, accessible, diverse and sustainable.
- Specific areas for the policy to cover, lot design and layout, vegetation, landscaping, bushfire design response and infrastructure. Specific requirements to inform this future policy are located at Appendix 4.



Appendix 1: Policy Area Input Mapping

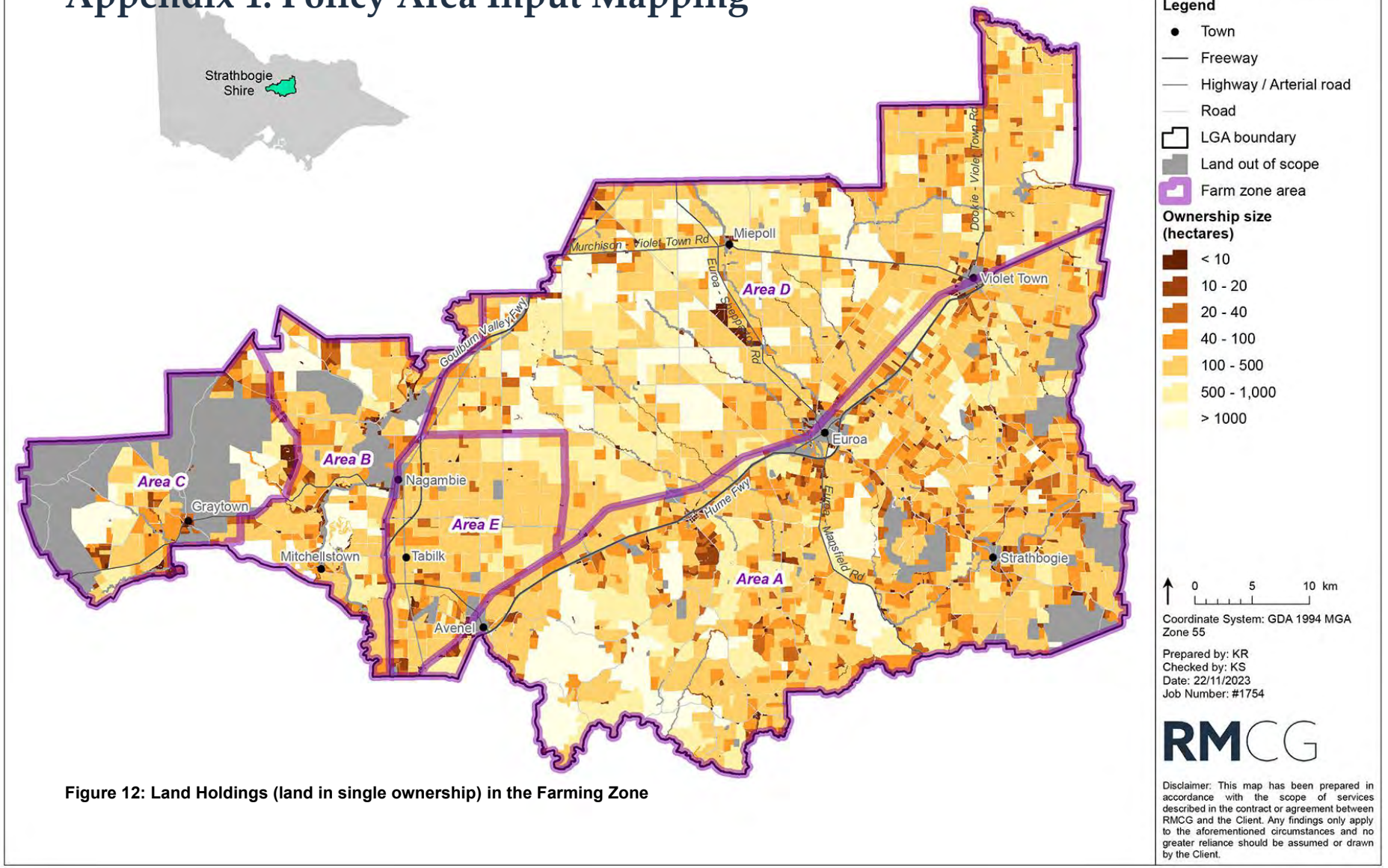


Figure 12: Land Holdings (land in single ownership) in the Farming Zone

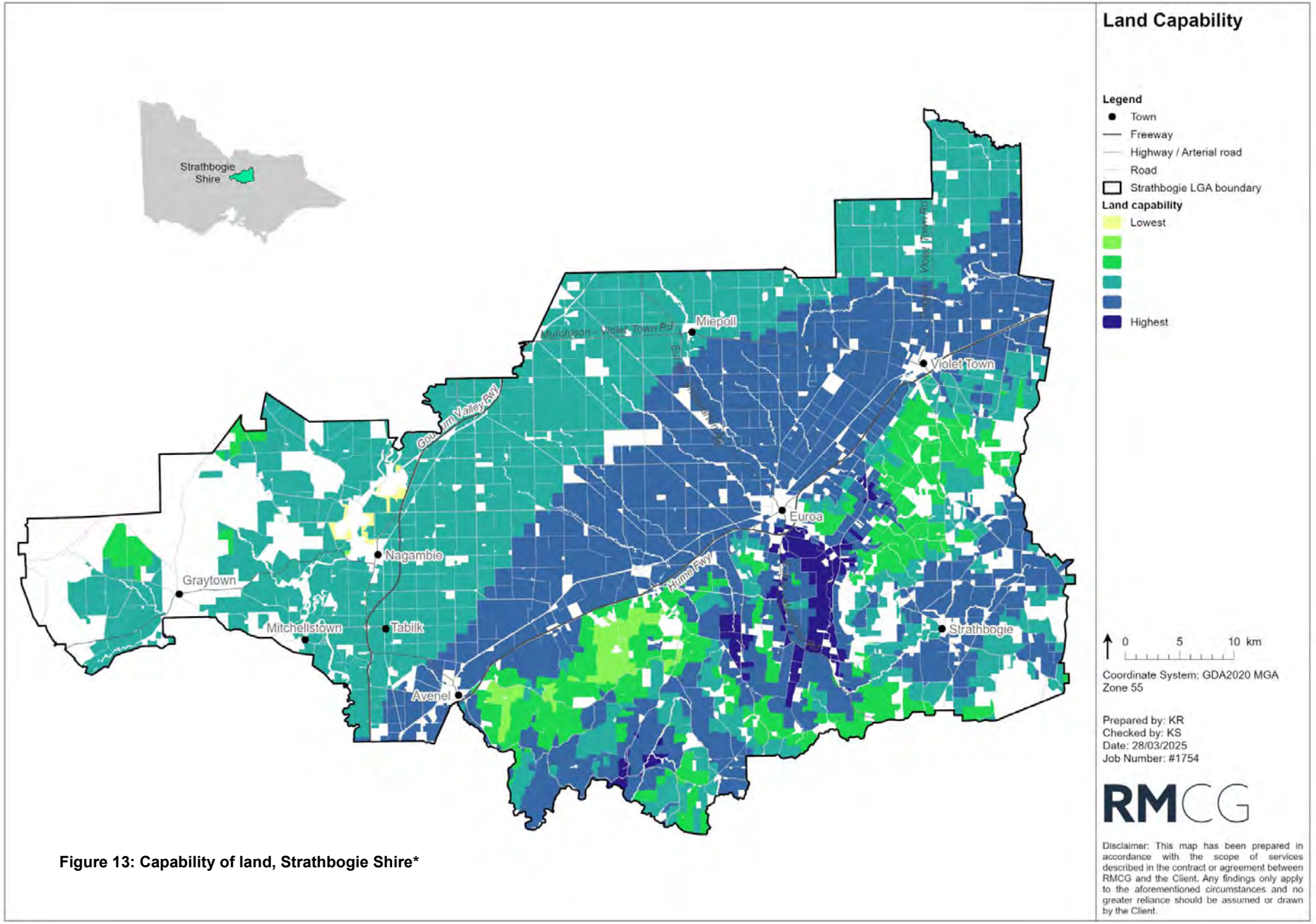


Figure 13: Capability of land, Strathbogie Shire*

* Mapping of the capability of land within Strathbogie Shire has utilised the Land Systems of Victoria data set, which covers a broad range of land resource information drawn from many field-based studies using varying methodologies over various decades (Figure 13).

A land system is a mapping unit containing a pattern of land components accounting for climate, lithology (geology type), landform, soils and native vegetation. The mapping covers the nature of the land or landform, its capabilities and its condition. The original regional land systems have been reproduced to a common scale of 1:250000 by combining the data and observations from detailed regional studies, including field surveys, with additional mapping to cover those areas not previously described. Despite the dataset being 24 years old, it is the dataset that most accurately represents biophysical factors at a consistent statewide level. Factors include soils, terrain, landform, rainfall and susceptibility to degradation.

Land capability provides the biophysical foundation for long-term sustainable agricultural production. Timely growing season rainfall and soils with good structure and moisture-holding ability help sustain agricultural production in different ways in different parts of Victoria. These biophysical characteristics influence crop yields and livestock stocking rates, particularly in broadacre dryland production systems.



Appendix 2: Draft Policy

This example of draft policy addressing new dwellings and subdivision in the Farming Zone is intended to guide council officers in drafting new local policies that align with and implement the objectives of a multi-policy area rural strategic framework.

SUBDIVISION – FARMING ZONE

This policy will apply to all land in the Farming Zone in Policy Area 1 and Policy Area 2.

Objectives

- Limit the fragmentation of rural land by subdivision.
- Ensure that lots created by subdivision are of a sufficient size to be used for agriculture.
- Encourage the consolidation of parcels.
- Discourage the creation of lots that have the potential to interfere with surrounding agricultural activities
- Ensure that lots have access to adequate infrastructure including access to all weather roads.
- Prevent small lot subdivision to meet personal and financial circumstances or to create lots for 'rural lifestyle' purposes.

Any proposal for the subdivision of land to excise an existing dwelling must demonstrate that:

- The existing dwelling is no longer reasonably required for the carrying out of agricultural activities in the long term.
- The dwelling must have established existing use rights or a planning permit under the planning scheme.
- There are beneficial agricultural outcomes by excising the dwelling.
- The balance lot is at least the minimum specified in the schedule to the Farming Zone.
- The excised lot does not include significant farm infrastructure

DWELLINGS

POLICY AREA 1

This policy will apply to all land in the Farming Zone in Policy Area 1.

Objectives

- Discourage the new dwellings not associated with agriculture.
- Ensure that the development does not prejudice existing and future agricultural activities on surrounding land.

When considering an application to construct a new dwelling, the following requirements must be met:

- Discourage new dwellings not associated with or required for the agricultural use of the land.
- Demonstrate that the agricultural use has been established on the land prior to the construction of a dwelling.
- The dwelling is necessary to support the ongoing or planned farming activity on the land and any adjacent land.
- The dwelling is necessary for the operation of and secondary to the use of the land for agriculture.

POLICY AREA 2

This policy will apply to all land in the Farming Zone in Policy Area 2.

Objectives

- Support a mix of rural uses, including agriculture, rural tourism and the green economy.
- Consider legitimate environmental benefits in areas with significant environmental values that may be proposed as part of the construction of a dwelling within Policy Area 2.
- Recognise legitimate environmental gains when assessing proposals for new dwellings in areas with significant environmental value within Policy Area 2.
- Foster tourism development that complements both agricultural operations and the natural landscape.

When considering a planning permit application to construct a dwelling in Policy Area 2 under the Farming Zone, the following requirements should be met:

- Discourage a dwelling not associated with or required for the agricultural or environmental use of the land.
- The dwelling is necessary for the operation of and secondary to the use of the land.

ALL OTHER DEVELOPMENT IN FARMING ZONE

Discourage residential, commercial, industrial and other land uses that do not demonstrate a direct link with agricultural land use or rural dependent tourism enterprises.

Discourage use ad development not directly required to support the agricultural use of the land.

Protect the continued operation of existing farms, rural enterprises/activities from adverse residential amenity impacts.

Consider reverse buffers to intensive agricultural operations for any new uses.

Support intensive agricultural practices where:

- Separation distances can be contained within the property boundaries.
- Appropriate stormwater management to demonstrate minimal impact on waterways.

Application requirements

- An application to use or subdivide the land to support an agricultural use must be accompanied by an Integrated Land Management Plan, which details the proposed enterprise and explains how the proposal responds to the policy framework and the relevant decision guidelines under the Farming Zone.
- An application to use or subdivide the land to support an environmental outcome must be accompanied by an Environmental Management Plan, which details the proposal and demonstrates how the proposal enhances or contributes to the environmental decision guidelines under the Farming Zone.

Appendix 3: Integrated Land Management Plan

INTEGRATED LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN EXAMPLE

A description of the current or proposed farm business, including:

- business goals
- the enterprise (livestock, cropping, haymaking, horticulture, etc) including the scale of the enterprise (land area, number of livestock range)
- farm labour, including owner/manager(s), full-time and part-time employees and seasonal labour
- Ten-year financial projections.

Property description including:

- Proposed and existing structures (dwellings, sheds for shearing, machinery, etc, livestock yards,
- Waterways
- Native vegetation
- Local road network
- Dwellings and other development on adjoining land.
- Location of wind energy or extractive industry facilities within 1 km of the property boundary
- Location of intensive animal husbandry within 1 km of the property boundary
- Land capability Assessment
- Water supply for stock, cropping or horticulture.

Risk assessment - Undertake a land use conflict risk assessment to assess:

- The risk that the development will be impacted by surrounding land uses
- The risk is that the development will impact the operation of surrounding land uses.

Provide details on why a dwelling/rural farm worker accommodation is required, including:

- Why a 24-hour presence is required
- Why rural workers accommodation is required
- The duration of the use of the land for rural worker accommodation.

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Document review and authorisation

Project Number:1754

Doc Version	Final/Draft	Date	Author	PD Review	BST Review	Release approved by	Issued to
1.0	Draft	04/04/2025	K. Stirling	S. McGuinness	E. Kelly	K. Stirling	Strathbogie Council
2.0	Final	26/05/2025	K. Stirling S. McGuinness	S. McGuinness	E. Kelly	K. Stirling	Strathbogie Council
3.0	Final	03/07/2025	K. Stirling S. McGuinness	K. Stirling	-	K. Stirling	Strathbogie Council

Rural Residential Land Use Strategy
Bushfire Response
Strathbogie Shire Council



Prepared for Strathbogie Shire Council – Bushfire Response 2025

Acknowledgements

Strathbogie Shire Council acknowledges the Taungurung and Yorta Yorta people as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waterways in the area now known as Strathbogie Shire.

We pay our respect to their rich cultures and to Elders, past and present, as well as other First Nations people who live, work and play in the area.



Disclaimer

The views expressed in the final localised report reflect the author's professional opinion at the time of writing. Information should be current at publication, but users must verify data sources (e.g. mapping, policy clauses). No liability is accepted for loss or damage arising from reliance on the report without independent verification.

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Version	Status	Date	Author	Issued to
V.1	Final Draft	5 Sep 2025	J Francis/ D Moloney	A Sadiq / R Frampton

1 Executive Summary

Bushfire is a defining risk for Strathbogie Shire, shaping communities, landscapes, and the direction of future settlement. As Council advances its Rural Residential Land Use Strategy (RRLUS) and Urban Growth Strategy (UGS), it is essential that bushfire risk is embedded at the heart of decision-making. This Bushfire Response provides a strategic framework to ensure that community safety, resilience, and sustainable growth are planned in tandem.

The assessment examines bushfire risk across the Shire, focusing on existing townships and areas earmarked for growth. It considers historical fire events, local topography, vegetation patterns, and fire weather conditions, and identifies lower-risk sites for potential Rural Living Zone (RLZ) rezoning. In doing so, it directs growth to locations that can be defended, accessed safely, and supported by appropriate bushfire design measures.

A risk-based methodology has been applied, comparing settlement-edge rural living opportunities with isolated development in the Farming Zone. The assessment clearly finds that RLZ should only be directed to the edges of existing townships Euroa, Nagambie, Avenel, and Violet Town where infrastructure, services, and emergency response capacity already exist. This avoids fragmented, high-risk development and supports compact, sustainable settlement patterns.

Key benefits of this approach include:

- Enhanced community safety – locating growth where defendable space, access and egress, and CFA response can be supported.
- Agricultural protection – reducing pressure on small Farming Zone lots and safeguarding high-value farmland.
- Resilient growth – ensuring new rural living areas are strategically aligned with township boundaries, environmental constraints, and long-term infrastructure planning.
- Policy alignment – embedding Clause 13.02 (Bushfire) into strategic land use planning, consistent with the Hume Regional Growth Plan and the Regional Bushfire Planning Assessment.

Ultimately, this Bushfire Response ensures bushfire is not an afterthought but a central determinant of settlement planning. By integrating risk management with housing demand, agricultural protection, and environmental values, Strathbogie Shire can guide growth to safer, more resilient locations that provide lifestyle opportunities without compromising community safety.

2 Introduction

Bushfire is a defining risk for Strathbogie Shire, with the potential to significantly impact communities, landscapes, and future settlement patterns. As the Shire continues to plan for sustainable rural residential development and urban growth, it is essential that bushfire risk is assessed and embedded within strategic land use decisions.

This Bushfire Response has been prepared to provide a clear framework for integrating Urban Growth Strategy (UGS), with the focus of this report analysing Rural Residential Zone locations/ future development. The scope of this work requires a comprehensive assessment that:

- Examines the level of bushfire risk across the Shire, with a particular focus on existing urban areas and those earmarked for growth under recent settlement planning.

- Considers historical bushfire events, fire weather conditions, topography, and vegetation patterns that shape risk profiles within Strathbogie Shire.
- Identifies lower risk sites that could be investigated for future rezoning to Rural Living Zone.
- Identifies and applies planning strategies and bushfire protection measures to enhance the resilience of settlements, infrastructure, and communities.

By drawing together these elements, the assessment ensures that bushfire risk is not an afterthought but a central determinant of future land use planning. This approach aligns with state planning policy (Clause 13.02 – Bushfire) and regional frameworks such as the Hume Regional Growth Plan and the Regional Bushfire Planning Assessment.

The outcome will guide growth to safer, more resilient locations, balancing community safety with lifestyle opportunities, environmental values, and the protection of productive agricultural land.

3 Background

Strathbogie Shire Council is developing its key urban and rural land use strategies to guide settlement planning for the next several decades. The Urban Growth Strategy (UGS) and the Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy (RRLUS) have been prepared in unison to provide Council, referral agencies, and the community with long-term certainty about the location, form and scale of future growth across the municipality.

A central element of this strategic work is the identification of land for potential rezoning to Rural Living Zone to help meet projected housing needs. The UGS responds to updated population projections by refining the extent of land identified for future rural residential investigation in Euroa, Avenel, Violet Town and Nagambie. Compared to earlier township strategies, these areas have been reduced to ensure future residential land supply aligns with realistic demand and avoids oversupply or premature rezoning.

In parallel, the RRLUS recognises the ongoing demand for Rural Living Zoned (RLZ) land across the Shire. Strathbogie Shire currently has two areas subject to the Rural Living Zone. However, these two areas have not been developed since they were rezoned to RLZ as these areas have other issues such as flooding or vegetation.

The RRLUS is seeking to identify additional, perhaps less constrained, areas for identification for rezoning to RLZ.

By identifying new areas for RLZ investigation, the strategy seeks to:

- Divert housing pressure away from small Farming Zone lots, thereby supporting the long-term protection of productive agricultural land.
- Provide appropriately located and sized rural lifestyle opportunities that respect township boundaries, infrastructure capacity and environmental constraints.
- Reduce the risks associated with ad-hoc or fragmented rezoning proposals that could otherwise emerge in the absence of clear strategic direction.

Bushfire Response Context

Given Strathbogie Shire's designation as a Bushfire Prone Area, with extensive Bushfire Management Overlays applying to many rural and peri-urban areas, bushfire risk is a critical consideration in both the UGS and RRLUS. The strategic identification of residential and rural residential land provides an opportunity to ensure that Clause 13.02 Bushfire Planning policy is integrated at the earliest stages of land use planning.

This means directing growth to locations where:

- Bushfire risk can be mitigated to an acceptable level through siting, design and defendable space.
- Access and egress networks support emergency response and community evacuation.
- Future development can occur in line with best-practice bushfire design principles, reducing long-term risk to life, property and infrastructure.

By consolidating residential growth and carefully selecting new RLZ investigation areas, the UGS and RRLUS provide a strategic bushfire-resilient framework that balances housing needs, agricultural protection, and community safety for the decades ahead.

4 Methodology

Risk-Based Approach

Strathbogie Shire Council has undertaken a risk-based approach to determine where new RLZ growth should be directed in the municipality. This ensures that future rezoning decisions respond to both CFA advice, community demand and State policy, while prioritising community safety, agricultural protection, and bushfire resilience.

Approaches Considered

Stage 1:

In determining appropriate RLZ locations, two primary approaches were assessed:

1. **Settlement-Edge RLZ** – locating rural living land on the peripheries of existing townships or hamlets.

2. **Isolated RLZ** – locating rural living land in isolation within the Farming Zone.

Each approach carries distinct implications for land use planning, infrastructure provision, and long-term sustainability.

Comparative Assessment

- Settlement-Edge RLZ supports coordinated and efficient use of existing infrastructure, such as roads, water, power (where available), and access to community services including schools, healthcare, and retail.
- From a bushfire perspective, it provides safer and faster access to township centres and Neighbourhood Safer Places, enhancing emergency response and evacuation.

- Isolated RLZ often results in fragmented and inefficient land use patterns, increased pressure on productive agricultural land, and demand for infrastructure in areas not designed to support residential populations.
- Such dispersed development undermines bushfire resilience by increasing travel times, fostering car dependency, and complicating emergency service delivery.

Given these outcomes, the strategy recommends that RLZ expansion be directed only to the peripheries of existing townships, consistent with State planning policy and bushfire risk management principles.

Stage 1 has removed a number of locations, settlements and hamlets from consideration of where RLZ should be targeted. The locations remaining for consideration are Euroa, Nagambie, Avenel and Violet Town.

Stage 2:

Assessment Criteria

Potential RLZ locations were evaluated against the following components:

- **Efficient settlement patterns** – supports compact urban form, efficient use of infrastructure, and avoids leapfrog or ad hoc development.
- **Protection of agricultural land** – restricts RLZ expansion from high-value farming areas to safeguard productive resources and Victoria's food security.
- **Reduced environmental impact** – consolidates rural living in appropriate, less constrained peri-urban areas, reducing pressure on sensitive landscapes.
- **Access to services and facilities** – ensures rural living residents can access township services (schools, health, retail, community hubs) without creating excessive car dependency.
- **Consistency with settlement hierarchy** – aligns RLZ with township growth boundaries, maintains town centre viability, and supports the Urban Growth Strategy (UGS).
- **Improved bushfire safety and CFA response** – proximity to established road networks, water supplies, and fire services reduces CFA response times and enhances resident safety.
- **Supports bushfire risk management** – prioritises lower-risk areas, avoiding isolated high-risk environments, in line with Clause 13.02 – Bushfire of the Planning Policy Framework.
- **Enables community preparedness** – strengthens resilience by concentrating rural living near towns, keeping residents engaged with CFA education and township emergency planning initiatives.

Policy Alignment

This methodology aligns with State planning policy by emphasising strategically located and sustainable rural living opportunities. It reflects the intent of the Hume Regional Growth Plan, integrates findings from the Regional Bushfire Planning Assessment, and implements the Planning Policy Framework by directing rural living growth to locations that are safe, sustainable, and supportive of long-term settlement patterns.

5 Study Area

The study area for this report is the local government area of Strathbogie Shire. Neighbouring municipalities of Benalla Rural City, City of Greater Shepparton, City of Greater Bendigo, Murrindindi Shire, Mitchell Shire and Mansfield Shire are included in the broader study area for this report.

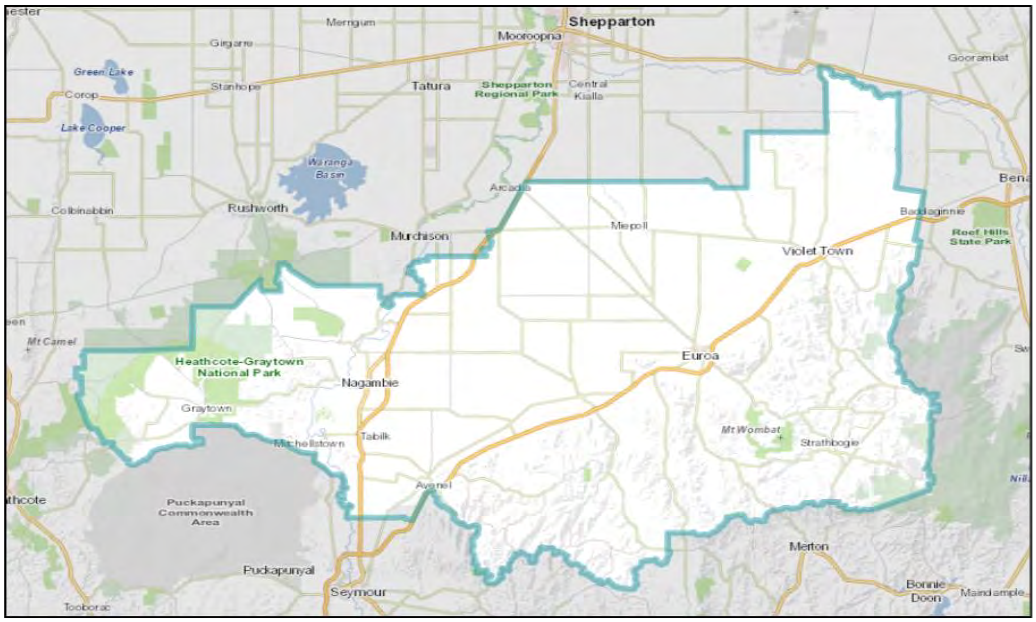


Figure 1: Strathbogie Shire map.

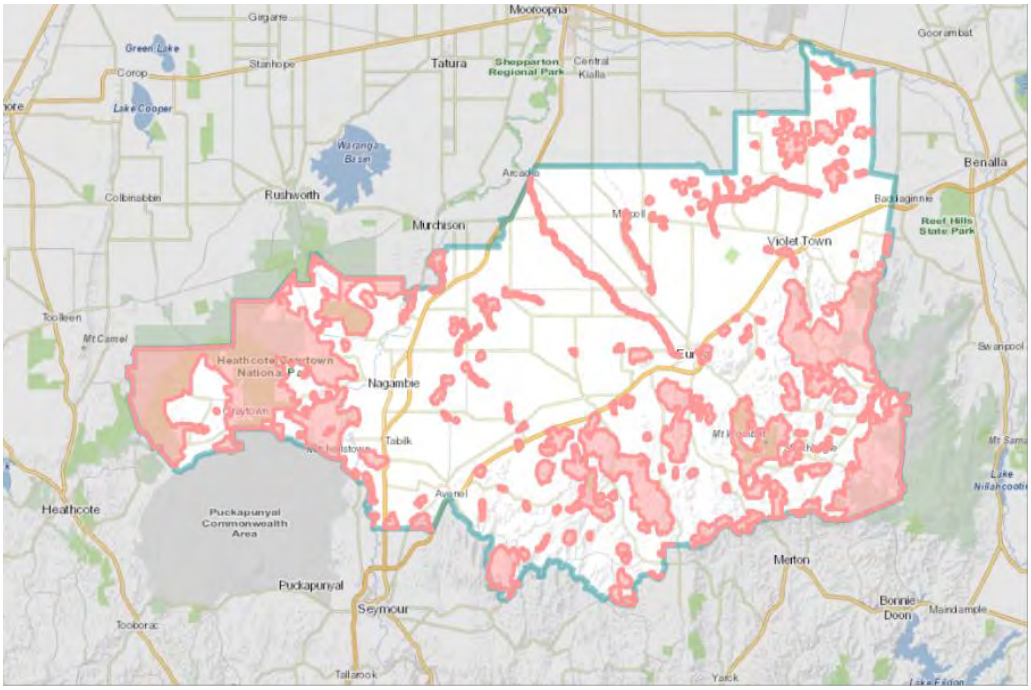


Figure 2: Bushfire Management Overlay mapping in Strathbogie municipality.

6 Strategic land use context

6.1 Plan for Victoria

Plan for Victoria housing targets. The Victorian Government has set a net new dwelling target of 2,400 homes for Strathbogie Shire by 2051. These local government targets are part of the statewide program to distribute 2.24 million additional homes and will be translated into planning schemes so it's clear where more homes will be built and where less change is expected over time. On a straight-line basis to 2051, Strathbogie's target equates to 92 dwellings per year.

Plan for Victoria explicitly says targets must be set and delivered while understanding and managing environmental risks such as bushfire. In Victoria's Planning Policy Framework, Clause 13.02-1S (Bushfire planning) and Clause 71.02-3 (Integrated decision-making) require that decisions prioritise the protection of human life above all other considerations. Growth will therefore be directed to low-risk locations that can demonstrate safe access/egress, defendable space, appropriate construction outcomes and feasible ongoing management particularly at township and settlement edges where risk can be reduced to an acceptable level. Human life is not a trade-off objective.

Strathbogie Shire could meet its housing target by focusing additional capacity in zoned, serviced settlements and townships in lower-risk bushfire parts of the municipality, avoiding isolated or highly exposed interfaces identified through bushfire hazard landscape and site assessments. Structure planning, rezoning and planning permits will apply bushfire management measures when required to secure water and access standards and use agreements and planning permit conditions where needed to lock in ongoing site management ensuring no net increase in bushfire risk while contributing to the housing target.

Whilst Strathbogie residentially zoned townships could accommodate the municipalities 2051 housing target, it is important to provide opportunities for rural living.

6.2 Hume Regional Growth Plan (2014)

The Hume Regional Growth Plan provides the overarching long-term strategic land-use direction for the Hume Region, including Strathbogie Shire, and is given statutory weight in the Strathbogie Planning Scheme.

The plan articulates a regional vision for settlement and infrastructure planning that balances residential growth with environmental, social, agricultural, and heritage values.

For Strathbogie Shire, the plan is particularly relevant in settlement planning:

- It identifies Nagambie as a key township suitable for residential growth, with a focus on logical settlement boundaries that reinforce township structure.
- It supports the consolidation of growth in designated areas to avoid urban sprawl, safeguard rural and environmental values, and ensure efficient infrastructure delivery.
- It underpins planning strategies that manage bushfire risk by directing growth towards locations where hazards can be more appropriately mitigated.

6.3 Hume Bushfire Management Strategy (2020)

Strathbogie Shire is part of the Hume region, which is one of the most bushfire-prone landscapes in Victoria. The Shire features vegetated rising hills and forested areas in the south (Strathbogie Ranges), which are long unburnt and environmentally significant.

- Bushfire history in the wider Hume region shows repeated large-scale events (2003 Alpine Fires, 2009 Black Saturday, 2019–20 Black Summer).
- Within the Strathbogie Municipal area, the mix of heavily vegetated ridges and growing peri-urban settlements creates a dual risk:
    - **Forest fires**: Intense, slower-moving but harder to suppress, impacting the Strathbogie Ranges.
    - **Grassfires**: Fast-moving, wind-driven fires across cleared agricultural and grazing land.

The Hume Bushfire Management Strategy identifies the following.

Settlement Planning:

- Rural residential growth should be directed to lower-risk areas on township edges with good access to services and evacuation routes.
- Avoid expansion into heavily forested ridgelines or long-unburnt bushland in the Strathbogie Ranges.

Bushfire Safety Measures:

- Enforce defendable space, building standards (BAL ratings), and access/egress requirements.
- Strengthen road networks and fuel breaks around rural residential clusters.
- **Agricultural Interface**: Protect high-value farmland from fragmentation while ensuring fuel management at the bush–farming interface.
- **Community Resilience**: Embed bushfire preparedness into local planning policy, recognising the reliance on volunteer brigades and the need for property-level responsibility.

6.4 Urban Growth Strategy (UGS)

The Strathbogie Shire Urban Growth Strategy (UGS) Provides a coordinated framework for managing settlement and strategic planning across the municipality to 2051. It responds to population pressures, housing demand, and infrastructure challenges while protecting the Shire's agricultural land, rural character, and environmental values. The UGS establishes a township hierarchy, identifying Nagambie as the major growth town, Euroa, Avenel, and Violet Town as moderate growth centres, and smaller rural localities such as Strathbogie and Longwood as areas limited to infill development.

Growth is contained within defined township boundaries, guided by infrastructure capacity, environmental risk, and cultural heritage considerations. The UGS has found the municipality currently has sufficient zoned land already available to meet the State's housing targets, the emphasis is on unlocking existing supply, promoting diverse housing types, and staging

development in line with infrastructure delivery. The strategy integrates with state, regional, and local policies, ensuring urban growth supports liveability, economic resilience, and climate adaptation while safeguarding the Shire's distinctive landscapes and cultural heritage.

6.5 Rural Residential and Land Use strategy

The Strathbogie RRLUS provides the strategic framework for guiding rural and settlement planning across the Shire in parallel with the Urban Growth Strategy. It recognises Strathbogie's diverse landscape, strong agricultural base, and growing demand for rural living, while balancing protection of farmland, natural assets, and rural character.

The strategy identifies two broad rural policy areas: an Agricultural Engine Area focused on protecting high-quality farmland and supporting large-scale agriculture, and a Diverse Agricultural Area that accommodates mixed farming, rural living, tourism, and environmental values. Key directions include reinforcing township boundaries, discouraging ad hoc small-lot housing in farming zones, supporting sustainable rural industries, and directing rural residential growth to appropriate low-risk locations near towns. The Strategy also embeds responses to bushfire and flood risks, climate change, and land use conflict, ensuring that future settlement patterns sustain agricultural productivity, rural character, and community safety while providing for housing diversity and economic growth.

Township Strategies

6.6 Avenel

The draft Avenel Township Strategy provides important context for strategic and settlement planning across Strathbogie Shire, positioning Avenel as a key lifestyle town within the regional network. Building on the earlier *Avenel 2030* framework, the Strategy responds to demographic change, population growth, housing pressures, and evolving community aspirations. It establishes a clear township boundary to manage growth sustainably, consolidates development within existing urban areas, and promotes diverse housing to support both younger families and an ageing population.

The strategy strengthens Avenel's identity through protection of its rural character, heritage, and landscapes, while enhancing the town centre as a community hub and tourism destination. It also prioritises improved community facilities, open space connectivity, movement networks, and infrastructure upgrades to support liveability. Overall, the Strategy reflects broader Shire-wide planning principles: protecting farmland and rural character, focusing growth within defined townships, and ensuring settlements remain resilient, connected, and attractive places to live and visit.

6.7 Euroa

The draft Euroa Township Strategy provides a long-term framework for guiding Euroa's growth and role within Strathbogie Shire, aligning with broader strategic and settlement planning across the municipality. It establishes a vision for Euroa as a compact, contained rural township that retains its landscape setting, heritage character, and community identity while accommodating modest, sustainable growth to 2050.

The Strategy prioritises infill development within existing residential areas over new rezoning, ensuring land supply matches projected low population growth and avoiding urban sprawl. It also strengthens Euroa's role as a key service and community hub, with strategies to enhance the Binney Street retail core, expand housing diversity to support an ageing population, and

encourage appropriate rural lifestyle development nearby. Key themes include improving connectivity and transport links, upgrading streetscapes, protecting natural and heritage assets, and planning for resilience to environmental risks such as flood and bushfire. Collectively, the Strategy reinforces Strathbogie's broader settlement approach of focusing growth within defined township boundaries while protecting rural land and maintaining liveability.

6.8 Nagambie

The draft Nagambie Township Strategy forms a key part of Strathbogie Shire's broader strategic and settlement planning framework. It updates the 2008 strategy in response to recent population growth, policy shifts, and infrastructure demands, setting out a vision for Nagambie to evolve as both an agricultural service hub and a visitor/lifestyle/retirement centre.

The strategy plans for growth to 4,000 residents by 2050, directing new housing, industrial, and tourism development to appropriate, serviced locations while protecting the town's lakeside character, environmental assets, and surrounding farmland. It is structured around five sustainability themes settlement, economic growth, environment, community services, and transport and provides a staged infrastructure plan to ensure development aligns with service capacity. In doing so, it integrates state and regional policy directions while reinforcing the Shire's settlement strategy of containing growth within defined township boundaries and safeguarding rural landscapes.

6.9 Violet Town

The draft Violet Town Plan provides a framework for guiding land use and settlement in Violet Town within the broader Strathbogie Shire planning context. Developed through extensive community input, the Plan establishes a vision for Violet Town as a sustainable, compact, and vibrant rural township that protects its country character, heritage, and landscape while supporting modest growth. It recommends replacing the broad Township Zone with more specific zoning for residential, industrial, business, open space, and public uses, to better manage land use conflicts and provide greater certainty for residents and investors.

The Plan directs residential growth towards infill and well-located lots near the town centre, supports medium-density and diverse housing options, and identifies a potential rural residential area for long-term investigation. It also consolidates the Cowslip Street town centre as the retail and community hub, establishes a defined industrial precinct to encourage employment, and protects open space along Honeysuckle Creek. Importantly, the Plan addresses flooding constraints and integrates resilience into future growth, ensuring Violet Town contributes to Shire-wide goals of compact, sustainable, and well-serviced settlement patterns.

6.10 Strathbogie Shire Municipal Fire Management Plan

The Strathbogie Shire Municipal Fire Management Plan (2023–2026) sets a coordinated framework for reducing bushfire risk across the municipality, with direct relevance to the planning and management of rural residential development.

Vision and Purpose

- **Vision**: A fire-prepared community across Strathbogie Shire.

- **Purpose**: To collaboratively identify fire risks and implement actions that reduce the likelihood, severity and impacts of bushfire on people, property, economy, and environment

Strategic Themes and Actions

The Plan is structured around five themes that inform bushfire response planning for rural residential growth:

1. **Community Resilience** – education, inclusion of bushfire awareness in new resident kits, and delivery of Local Emergency Action Plans (LEAPs) in townships such as Avenel, Euroa, Nagambie, Strathbogie, and Violet Town.
2. **Fuel Management** – roadside vegetation management, township fire prevention programs, joint fuel reduction burns, and improved roadside fuel load controls.
3. **Access and Egress** – maintenance of Priority Access Roads, Fuel Reduced Corridors, and Emergency Services Safer Areas (ESSAs) to ensure safe travel routes and emergency response capacity.
4. **Suppression** – ensuring water access (tanks, hydrants, dams), CFA pre-incident planning, and coordinated strike team deployment.
5. **Capability** – attracting and supporting CFA volunteers, strengthening local capacity, and regular review of planning frameworks.

Relevance to Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy

- **Siting and Growth Management**: Expansion of rural living areas must account for BMO controls, access/egress limitations, and the heightened risk in isolated landscapes.
- **Settlement Planning**: Directing rural residential growth to the edges of townships supports compact settlement patterns, better access to services, and improved bushfire response.
- **Community Preparedness**: New rural residential populations must be supported with fire awareness education, CFA engagement programs, and localised fire action planning.
- **Infrastructure Protection**: Roads, utilities, and critical agricultural assets must be integrated into bushfire planning, especially in high-risk areas such as the Strathbogie Ranges.

7 Planning Scheme

Bushfire policy and direction in the Strathbogie Planning Scheme

State Planning Policy Framework (13.02- Bushfire)

The objective of Clause 13.02 is to strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities to bushfire through risk-based planning that prioritises the protection of human life.

Bushfire risk is given priority consideration in planning decisions, above all other land use and development objectives.

Key directions include:

- Directing population growth and development to low bushfire risk locations
- Avoiding development in areas where bushfire risk is extreme and cannot be effectively reduced.
- Ensuring new development (particularly subdivisions and dwelling applications) meet appropriate siting design and defendable space requirements.
- Supporting the role of the CFA in bushfire response, prevention and community education.
- Avoiding the creation of isolated rural residential lots that increase exposure to bushfire risk and limit emergency service access.

A more detailed response to Clause 13.02 for specific sites identified is provided below.

Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) - Localised Direction

The Strathbogie Planning Scheme has specific local strategies that reinforce state policy at the local level:

- Encourage development to be responsive to potential environmental risks.
- Discourage development in areas of bushfire risk.
- Retain areas of high-quality rural land for farming and agricultural purposes.
- Encourage consolidation of small rural lots within the Farming Zone.
- Prioritise productive farming development over residential development.
- Encourage rural residential development that is located and designed to protect existing agricultural uses, the natural environment and townships.
- Encourage rural residential development that can be efficiently serviced by social and physical infrastructure.

Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) Clause 44.06

Large parts of Strathbogie Shire are covered by the Bushfire Management Overlay.

Development within the BMO must meet stringent application requirements, including:

- **Bushfire hazard site assessment**
- **Bushfire hazard landscape assessment**
- **Bushfire management statement**

Clause 53.02 – Bushfire Planning

Clause 53.02 applies to new development in areas covered by the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) and sets mandatory requirements to ensure bushfire risk is reduced to an acceptable level. For the Rural Residential and Rural Land Use Strategy, the clause provides the key statutory framework for assessing the suitability of future Rural Living Zone (RLZ) land.

Key Provisions

Purpose: To ensure that planning decisions prioritise the protection of human life over all other policy considerations in bushfire-prone areas.

Application: Applies to subdivision, use, and development of land within the BMO, including rural residential growth areas.

Bushfire Protection Objectives:

- Ensure siting and design of new dwellings achieves defendable space standards.
- Require development to be located in areas where bushfire risk can be mitigated to an acceptable level.
- Ensure safe access and egress for residents, emergency services and fire appliances.
- Require development to have a reliable water supply for firefighting purposes.

Core Standards

- **Defendable space** must be provided around all new dwellings in accordance with specified Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) ratings.
- **Vegetation management** requirements apply to ensure defendable space is maintained.
- **Access** requirements mandate all-weather roads with sufficient width, gradient, and turning areas for CFA appliances.
- **Water supply** must meet minimum storage and access standards for firefighting.
- **Subdivision design** must minimise bushfire risk by locating lots and roads to support safe evacuation and CFA response.

Implications for the RRLUS

- New areas for RLZ investigation must be selected where compliance with Clause 53.02 can be reasonably achieved, avoiding isolated high-risk sites.
- Directing RLZ growth to township edges supports Clause 53.02 outcomes by:
- Allowing efficient CFA response times and access to water supply networks.
- Reducing exposure to extreme fire behaviour in remote or heavily vegetated landscapes.
- The clause reinforces the importance of strategic settlement planning that integrates bushfire risk at the rezoning stage, not just at development assessment.
- Ensuring safer access to township services and Neighbourhood Safer Places.

Clause 71.02-3

Key Local Implications for Policy Directions

Settlement Planning – New growth should be directed to low-risk township edges, consistent with Rural Residential and Rural Living planning directions.

Infrastructure Support – Locating development near towns ensures access to CFA brigades, hydrants, and road networks.

Risk Avoidance – Avoid rezoning or development in forested areas or remote areas where bushfire risk is unmanaged.

Resilience and Preparedness – Encourage subdivision layouts and building design that enhance defendable space, landscaping management, and emergency access.

8 Criteria of Assessment

As a result, this report and the Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy (RRLUS) recommend that future Rural Living Zone (RLZ) land be directed to the peripheries of existing townships, rather than isolated locations within the Farming Zone. This approach is supported by the following assessment criteria:

- **Efficient settlement patterns** – Locating RLZ on township edges supports compact urban form, promotes the efficient use of existing infrastructure and services, and avoids leapfrog or ad hoc development in remote areas.
- **Protection of agricultural land** – Restricting RLZ expansion away from high-value farming areas safeguards productive agricultural resources for ongoing use, consistent with State policy to protect Victoria's food security and rural economy.
- **Reduced environmental impact** – Consolidating rural living opportunities in peri-urban areas reduces pressure on sensitive landscapes and biodiversity values by directing growth to less constrained locations.
- **Access to services and community facilities** – Residents in RLZ areas near townships benefit from easier access to schools, healthcare, retail, and community hubs, reducing car dependency and improving equity of access.
- **Consistency with settlement hierarchy** – Aligning RLZ with township growth boundaries supports the Urban Growth Strategy framework, strengthens the viability of town centres, and directs growth to locations where it can be appropriately managed.
- **Improved bushfire safety and CFA response** – Proximity to townships ensures better access to established road networks, water supplies, and fire services, thereby reducing CFA response times and improving resident safety.
- **Supports bushfire risk management** – Prioritising RLZ in lower-risk peri-urban areas avoids the siting of dwellings in isolated, high-risk bushfire environments, consistent with Clause 13.02 – Bushfire of the Planning Policy Framework.
- **Enables community preparedness** – Concentrating rural living near townships fosters stronger community resilience and supports CFA education and engagement programs, keeping residents connected to local brigades and township emergency planning initiatives.

8.1 Avenel

Council is not seeking to direct any further RLZ development to Avenel until a time that:

- The current RLZ development in Avenel has been completed.
- The new proposed strategic sites identified have been developed.

8.2 Euroa

Criteria	Response
Efficient Settlement Patterns	Support RLZ only where it directly adjoins Euroa's settlement edge to maintain a compact form and avoid ad-hoc "leapfrog" lots. Prefer rezoning of already fragmented or partially serviced land; stage outward from the township to minimise exposure time for new residents during emergencies.

	Use perimeter roads and managed open space along the rural/bush interface to create a clear, defendable edge.
Protection of Agricultural Land	Focus RLZ on lower-productivity, already fragmented paddocks at the urban interface; avoid encroachment into high-value farming areas to reduce land-use conflict during Total Fire Ban/harvest periods. Provide vegetated or open-space buffers (fuel-managed) between rural living lots and adjacent farming to limit cross-boundary ignition and smoke impacts. Hume Freeway acts as barrier to prevent sprawl into productive agricultural land.
Reduced Environmental Impact	Prefer siting on cleared/modified land; avoid remnant native vegetation and waterway corridors that elevate ember and crown fire risk. Require landscaping with low-flammability species and ongoing fuel-load management via planning scheme schedules and planning permit conditions. Ensure sites avoid known flooding risks.
Access to Services and Community Facilities	Leverage proximity to Euroa for shorter response times and resident access to services; ensure two independent, all-weather egress points connecting to Euroa–Mansfield Road/Hill View Road (no long dead-ends) to the Infrastructure Design Manual (IDM) standard. Design a looped internal road network with perimeter roads on bush-facing edges; provide compliant passing widths, turning heads and CFA access clearances. Where reticulated water exists, deliver hydrants to standard; otherwise require dedicated static water supply for firefighting at subdivision and dwelling stages.
Consistency with Settlement Hierarchy	The Urban Growth Strategy and township boundary identifies Euroa as a township to support. Sequence development so no net risk increases are incremental and matched by infrastructure, community education and emergency response capacity.
Improved Bushfire Safety	Locate building envelopes away from vegetated edges and slope; design lots deep enough to contain defendable space to achieve BAL 12.5 without relying on neighbours/public land. Use the Hume Freeway and interface roads as part of a broader evacuation and containment strategy (noting no new direct freeway access).
Supports Bushfire Risk Management	Require a precinct-level Bushfire Hazard Assessment and Bushfire Management Plan to support any rezoning, demonstrating compliance with Clause 13.02 and Clause 53.02 at rezoning, subdivision and dwelling stages.
Enables Community Preparedness	Keep rural living residents connected to Euroa CFA for faster turn-out, education and engagement (including local preparedness programs and seasonal briefings).

Bushfire hazard identification

Considering and assessing the bushfire hazard on the basis of the following:

Policy	Response
Landscape conditions - meaning conditions in the landscape within 20	Landscape conditions within 20 kilometres are characterised as flat and sparsely vegetated to the north and west. To the

kilometres (and potentially up to 75 kilometres) of a site	south and east of Euroa is undulating topography with state park and plantations. To the north and west of Euroa is Strathbogie Shire's larger farming areas, classified with larger than normal minimum lot sizes in the Farming Zone. The land is primarily cleared farmland, albeit with vegetated road reserves and creek lines. The land is predominantly flat with a few smaller hills throughout the assessment area. East across the Hume Highway and towards Boho the land begins to rise dramatically in elevation with several hills back south to Strathbogie and the Strathbogie State Forest just within the 20 kilometre assessment area. South and west are similar where the landscape is primarily vegetated with undulating hills. Figure 3 shows a 20 kilometre radius around the subject land.
Local conditions - meaning conditions in the area within approximately 1 kilometre of a site	Within one kilometre of the subject land is a mix of farming properties and residential properties in the Euroa township. One kilometre north of the assessment area is the southern residential section of Euroa. The residential section is located approximately 540 metres north of the assessment area. This section of the assessment area is flat and categorised with a mixture of planted road reserve and manicured gardens. Further north-east is the Hume Highway where Sevens Creek intersects the assessment area. The land slopes down to the creek which contains significant canopy vegetation. East of the assessment area is predominantly farmland, Sevens Creek and the start of Balmattum Hill. The Hume Highway makes up the assessment areas eastern and southern boundary. South of the assessment area is the continuation of Castle Creek which contains significant riparian vegetation. The landscape is predominantly flat aside from the overpass that was constructed for the

	Hume Highway. South of the Hume is larger farmland. West of the assessment area is Castle Creek, farmland and the eastern edge of Euroa Golf course. Figure 4 shows a one kilometre radius around the subject land.
Neighbourhood conditions - meaning conditions in the area within 400 metres of a site	Within 400 metres of the assessment areas western boundary is flat open grassland, currently farmed. The western boundary is Euroa-Mansfield Road which contains canopy trees along its entirety. North of the site are larger Farming Zoned properties with areas of approximately 2 hectares. All but two of these properties have existing dwellings. The site fronts Hillview Road to the north which is a small dirt road that contains significant sized road reserve canopy trees. East of the site is the Hume Highway containing vegetation on each side and dividing the north and southbound lanes. South of the assessment area is the Hume Highway overpass containing canopy vegetation within all road reserves. Either side of the overpass the land is flat. Figure 5 shows the 400m assessment of the surrounding area.
The site for the development.	The land for assessment has an area of approximately 38 hectares. The land measures 860 metres north to south and 730 metres east to west. The land is flat, contains multiple dams and farm infrastructure. The land contains a patch of woodland assess vegetation in the north as well as scattered canopy trees. Separating the two properties is a linear wind break extending east to west across the entirety of the assessment area. Figure 6 shows the subject site.

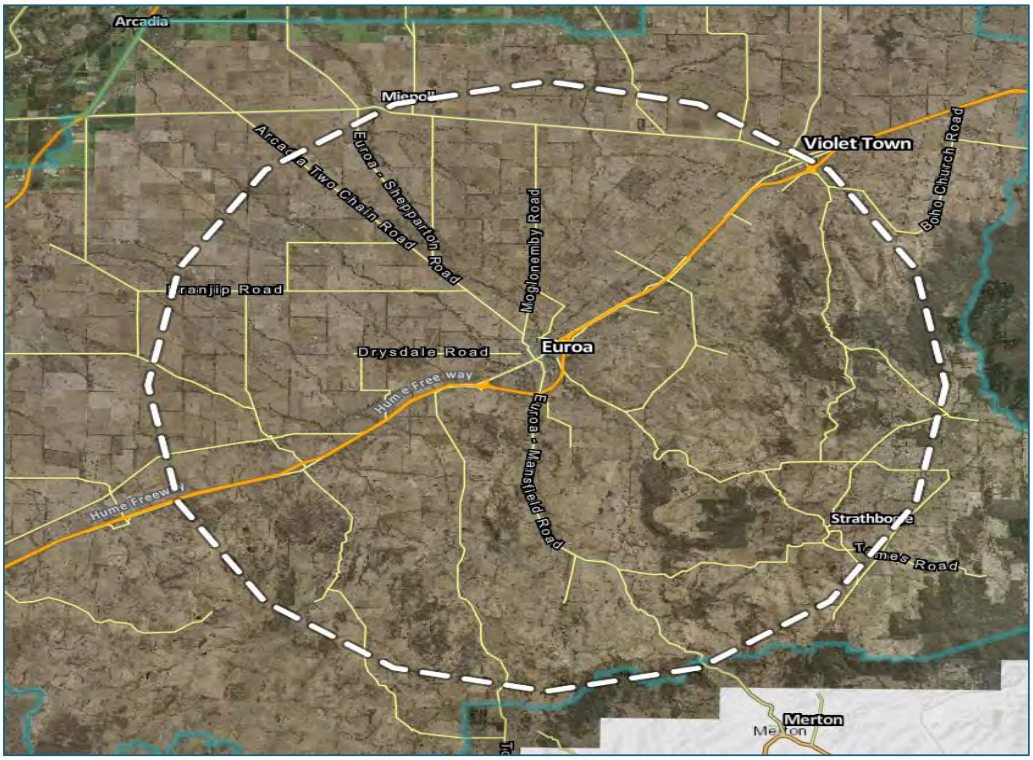


Figure 3: Twenty kilometre radius of the subject land



Figure 4: One kilometre radius of the subject land

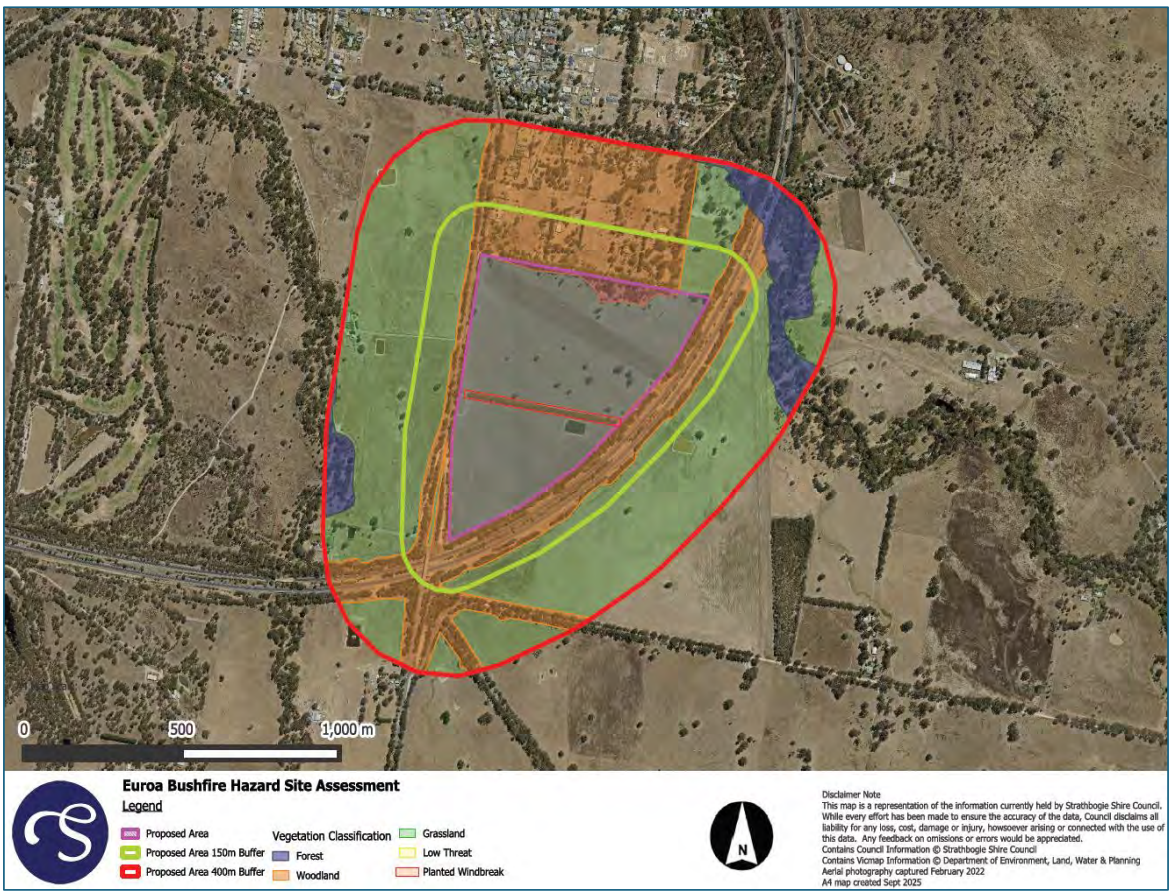


Figure 5: Four hundred metre radius of the subject land



Figure 6: Subject site

Bushfire Hazard assessment

During the site visit undertaken for Euroa each direction was reviewed to determine the slope, vegetation type and classifiable vegetation:

- **North** – is directed towards the Euroa township. The land is largely flat, except for the north-east of the assessment area sloping down to Seven Creeks where it flows under the Hume Highway. This section of assessment area has been considered as forest.

  The Farming Zoned land between Hillview Road and Boundary Road South has been assessed as Woodland. All but two of these allotments contain dwellings, and during the site assessment it was noted that the vegetation on each lot is carefully managed, with little understorey present.

  The Hillview Road reserve contains significant sized canopy trees. Its classification is woodland although it is to be noted that this applies only to the road reserve vegetation, which is modified as it has no understorey.

- **East** – is the Hume Highway which contains planted vegetation along each side as well as within the north and south bound lane divider. The Hume Highway makes up the easter and southern boundary for the assessment area. Further east is a mix of open farmland with the Sevens Creek containing significant canopy vegetation.

- **South** – is away from Euroa township. This direction includes the Hume Highway and overpass and also several local roads. Each road has vegetation along either side, which does not meet the exemption of low threat at Section 2.2.3.2 of AS3959:2018 and would therefore be considered as woodland.

- **West** – Euroa-Mansfield Road makes up the western boundary of the subject land. There is roadside vegetation on both sides of Euroa-Mansfield Road which has been assessed as Woodland, with several breaks containing only grassland. Further west across Euroa-Mansfield Road is Castle Creek which is surrounded by riparian vegetation assessed as forest, setback between 310 and 400 metres from the assessment area.

	North	East	South	West
Slope under the classified vegetation	Upslope/0°	Upslope/0°	Upslope/0°	Upslope/0°
Vegetation class	Woodland	Woodland	Woodland	Woodland
BAL-12.5 defendable space setback (metres)	33	33	33	33
Is the setback met offsite?	No	No	No	No

Landscape typology

DELWP's 2017 publication 'Planning Permit Applications Bushfire Management Overlay: technical guide' provides guidance on determining broader landscape types for assessment areas, rated on a sliding scale from one being the lowest risk to four being the highest risk.

The study area lies within a broader Landscape Type two. Beyond 150 metres from the assessment area is largely made up of the following observed features:

- Sevens Creek and Castle Creek containing significant riparian vegetation, including canopy trees. Areas assessed as forest.
- Farmland to the south, east and west.
- Euroa township to the north.
- Golf course further west.
- North and south transport links.

Past bushfire and planned burns

The NatureKit software provided by DEECA shows past planned burned activity has been concentrated on and around the Euroa Airport, west of Euroa. The identified planned burn occurred in 2024.

Past bushfire activity directly around Euroa is shown to have occurred between 2020 and 2024. Further south of Euroa has seen significant fires in both years 1990 and 2015 that impacted between Longwood East to south of Strathbogie and across the municipality boundary into Mansfield Shire. It is to be noted that the NatureKit software goes back only to the 1970's.

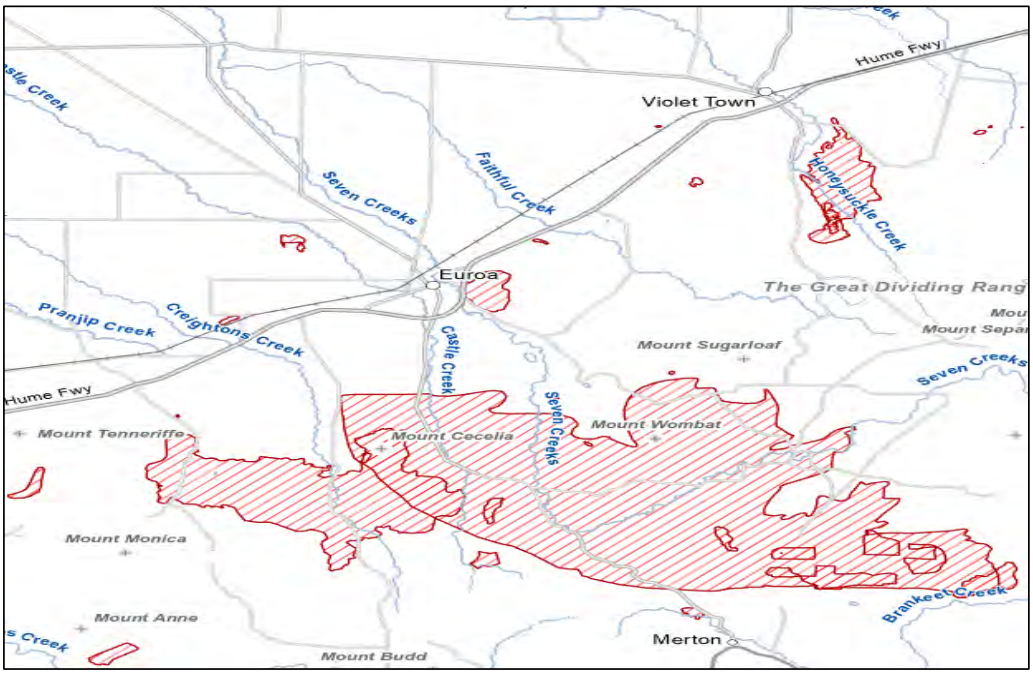


Figure 7: Past fire history (red hatched) around Euroa, NatureKit software.

Settlement planning

Plan to strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities and prioritise protection of human life by:

Policy	Response
Directing population growth and development to low risk locations, being those locations assessed as having a radiant heat flux of less than 12.5 kilowatts/square metre under *AS 3959-2009Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-prone Areas* (Standards Australia, 2009).	The municipal wide assessment carried out earlier in this report has narrowed down lower risk areas to which it is recommended that Rural Living Zone be directed as part of the Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy. Euroa is one such area that has been identified as lower risk in the context of the municipality.
Ensuring the availability of, and safe access to, areas assessed as a BAL-LOW rating under *AS 3959-2009Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-prone Areas* (Standards Australia, 2009) where human life can be better protected from the effects of bushfire.	Access to BAL-LOW areas is along Euroa-Mansfield Road and approximately 450 metres north of the assessment area. Euroa-Mansfield Road is the primary southern access to Euroa from Merton. Further north along the road the speed limit reduces from 100km/hr to 60km/hr.
Ensuring the bushfire risk to existing and future residents, property and community infrastructure will not increase as a result of future land use and development.	The proposed Rural Living Zone area will help to eliminate the existing grassland threat on the Euroa side of the Hume Highway. The assessment area in on the southern side of the Euroa township, away from the more likely fire direction of north-west.
Achieving no net increase in risk to existing and future residents, property and community infrastructure, through the implementation of bushfire protection measures and where possible reducing bushfire risk overall.	The proposed direction of development for Euroa, seeks to increase the level of protection afforded to the existing township. and therefore, reduce the current risk from the south. Supporting growth in this area with strict design mechanisms including perimeter roads will provide Euroa with an increased level of protection.
Assessing and addressing the bushfire hazard posed to the settlement and the likely bushfire behaviour it will produce at a landscape, settlement, local, neighbourhood and site scale, including the potential for neighbourhood-scale destruction.	Refer to previous assessment above on landscape, local and neighbourhood conditions.
Assessing alternative low risk locations for settlement growth on a regional, municipal, settlement, local and neighbourhood basis.	Euroa is not specified in any regional bushfire strategy. Earlier in this report a municipal wide assessment was undertaken to determine areas that are more appropriate to have growth directed to. One of which is Euroa.

	The south of the township was chosen due to the relatively lower risk and other non-bushfire related matters.
Not approving any strategic planning document, local planning policy, or planning scheme amendment that will result in the introduction or intensification of development in an area that has, or will on completion have, more than a BAL-12.5 rating under *AS 3959-2009Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-prone Areas* (Standards Australia, 2009).	This assessment demonstrates, that with the inclusion of certain mitigation measures in the final subdivision layout, rural living zone can be supplied that provides developable land that can comply with BAL-12.5 requirements. Mitigation measures include, but are not limited to, perimeter roads, wider road reserves, building exclusion areas, vegetation management requirement and water supply. Further on in this report are suggested policy changes that would likely accompany any planning scheme amendment that rezones either of the three assessment site to Rural Living Zone.

Conclusion

Overall, Euroa has been identified as one of the few lower risk townships for which it is considered suitable to identify land for the further investigation of rezoning to Rural Living Zone within Strathbogie Shire. The south of the township has been chosen due to other non-bushfire considerations (such as flooding and impact on agricultural land), as well through the community panel process. Mitigation measures undertaken with the assessment area would allow for the attainment of all future lots to designate a building envelope for construction standards to meet the requirements of BAL-12.5 as per AS3959.



North-eastern boundary of assessment site looking west along Hillview Road.



North-western corner of assessment area looking south along the western boundary.



Looking across the southern boundary of the assessment areas intersection with the Hume Highway.



Forest alongside Sevens Creek north of the assessment area

8.3 Nagambie

Criteria	Response
Efficient Settlement Patterns	The site adjoins Nagambie's township boundary and benefits from existing infrastructure, avoiding leapfrog development in more remote locations. Directing RLZ here supports compact urban form and maximises the efficiency of existing road networks and service corridors.
Protection of Agricultural Land	The land is already fragmented and constrained by its proximity to township uses, meaning it no longer forms part of the broader high-value farming landscape. Directing rural living to this site protects more productive agricultural land on Nagambie's periphery.
Reduced Environmental Impact	The site is largely cleared and modified, reducing the need for native vegetation removal and minimising biodiversity impact. Rural living development here places less pressure on environmentally sensitive areas, with appropriate setbacks and fuel-managed open space providing an additional buffer.
Access to Services and Community Facilities	The land is within close proximity to Nagambie's schools, healthcare, retail centre, and community hubs. Residents can access township services by short vehicle trips or, in some cases, active transport, reducing car dependency and supporting community integration.
Consistency with Settlement Hierarchy	The proposal aligns with Nagambie's role as a higher-order settlement in Strathbogie Shire's hierarchy. Directing RLZ expansion to this township edge supports the Urban Growth Strategy framework, consolidating growth in strategic locations rather than dispersing it across the Shire.
Improved Bushfire Safety	Proximity to sealed roads (Racecourse Road and Grimwade Road/ High Street) provides multiple, safe evacuation routes. Building envelopes can be sited away from vegetated edges and slope, with defendable space achievable within property boundaries, improving overall bushfire safety outcomes.
Supports Bushfire Risk Management	The land sits in a peri-urban setting with lower bushfire hazard compared with isolated rural locations. A Bushfire Hazard Assessment and Bushfire Management Plan can demonstrate compliance with Clause 13.02 and Clause 53.02 by securing water supply, CFA access, and ongoing vegetation management.
Enables Community Preparedness	Locating RLZ living close to Nagambie assists residents in being able to remain engaged with the local CFA brigade, emergency planning, and township-based education programs. Concentration new RLZ development here strengthens overall community resilience and preparedness.

Bushfire hazard identification

Considering and assessing the bushfire hazard on the basis of the following:

Policy	Response
Landscape conditions - meaning conditions in the landscape within 20 kilometres (and potentially up to 75 kilometres) of a site	Landscape conditions within 20 kilometres are characterised as farmland that is flat and sparsely vegetated to the south and east.

	The Goulburn River runs north-south through the 20km review area, containing significant vegetation. Stretching from the north to the west of the review area is the Heathcote-Graytown National Park, which encompasses a significant portion of the review area west of Nagambie. This national park presents a serious risk of fire, as evidenced in previous planned burns. Figure 11 shows past fire activity in the surrounds. The national park has an undulating topography with several elevated lookouts and extends south-west to Heathcote. Figure 8 shows a 20-kilometre radius around the subject land.
Local conditions - meaning conditions in the area within approximately 1 kilometre of a site	Within one kilometre to the south of the review area is the Nagambie township, the edge of Lake Nagambie and vacant farmland east of the railway line that makes up the assessment areas eastern boundary. West and south-west are greenfield sites that are zoned for residential but have not yet been subdivided. This area is flat with scattered canopy trees. Further north-west and north are larger equine focused farming properties. This area is characterised by wind break plantings along fence lines and grassland. In the north-west the land slopes more gradually up to isolated woodland pockets. The land elevates in the north where there are larger patches of woodland present on private allotments and more intensive vegetation in the road reserves. East is the Goulburn Valley Highway which bypasses the Nagambie township. The Highway is elevated in comparison to the surrounding landscape. The east comprises primarily of open farmland. Figure 9 shows a one kilometre radius around the subject land.

Neighbourhood conditions - meaning conditions in the area within 400 metres of a site	Within 400 metres south of the assessment area is the northern edge of the Nagambie township, classified as low threat vegetation. Lots in this vicinity are larger, however several have approved permit for further subdivision. The landscape is flat and extends to vacant grazing land east of the railway line. East of the assessment area are larger farming properties. Directly east of the assessment area is a farm that contains a residence and scattered canopy vegetation identified as woodland. The eastern neighbouring property slopes down to the assessment site. North of the assessment area continues to be flat with consistent plantings in the Grimwade Road reserve. A linear stretch of significant sized canopy trees stretched south from Coes Road to within 110 metres of the assessment areas northern boundary. Four hundred metres west of the assessment area is Grimwade Road which makes up the western boundary of the site and contains linear woodland assessed vegetation on each side of the road. Further west are farm properties containing scattered vegetation and planted windbreak within the property. Figure 10 shows the landscape within 150 metres and 400 metres of the assessment area.
The site for the development.	The subject land is located on the northern side of Racecourse Road bordered by Grimwade Road to the west and the Shepparton-Melbourne Railway line to the east. The site is flat and which containing several canopy tress trees and dams, is assessed as grassland. The subject land has an area of approximately 56 hectares, measuring 610 metres north south and 980 metres east west. The south-western corner of the site contains a residence whilst the remainder of the site is used for cropping. Figure 11 shows the subject land.

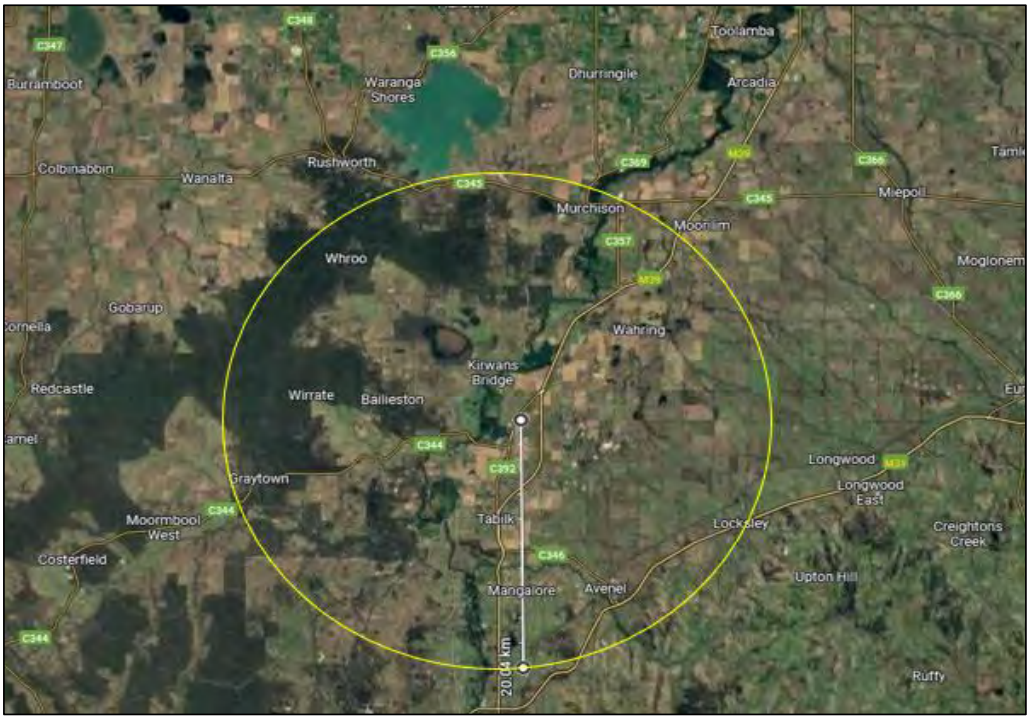


Figure 8: Twenty kilometre radius of the subject land

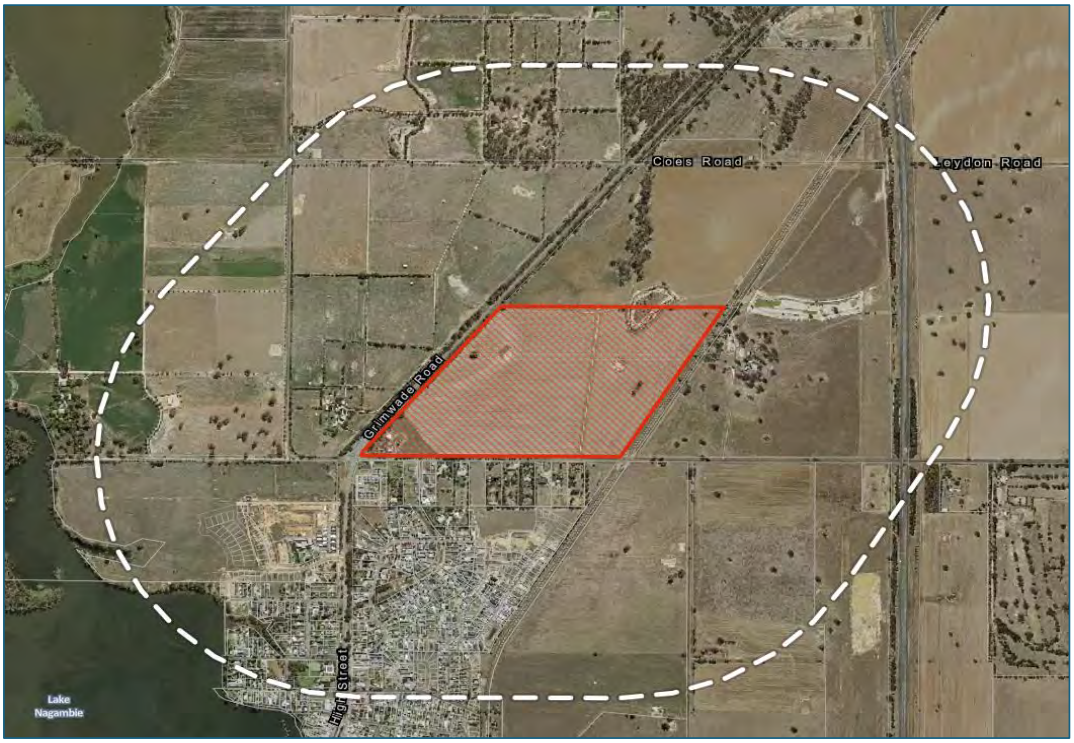


Figure 9: One kilometre radius of the subject land

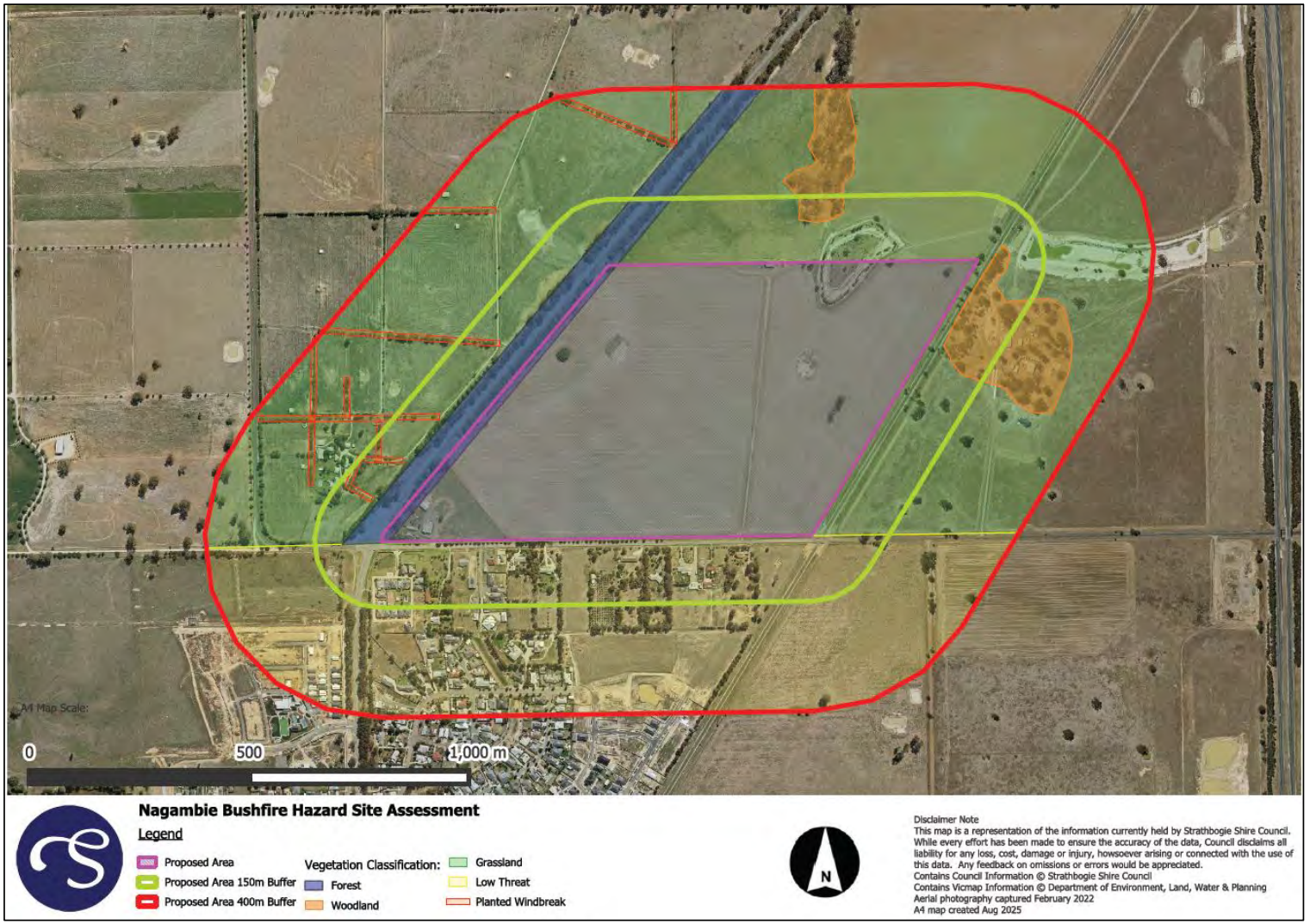


Figure 10: 400 metre radius of the subject land.

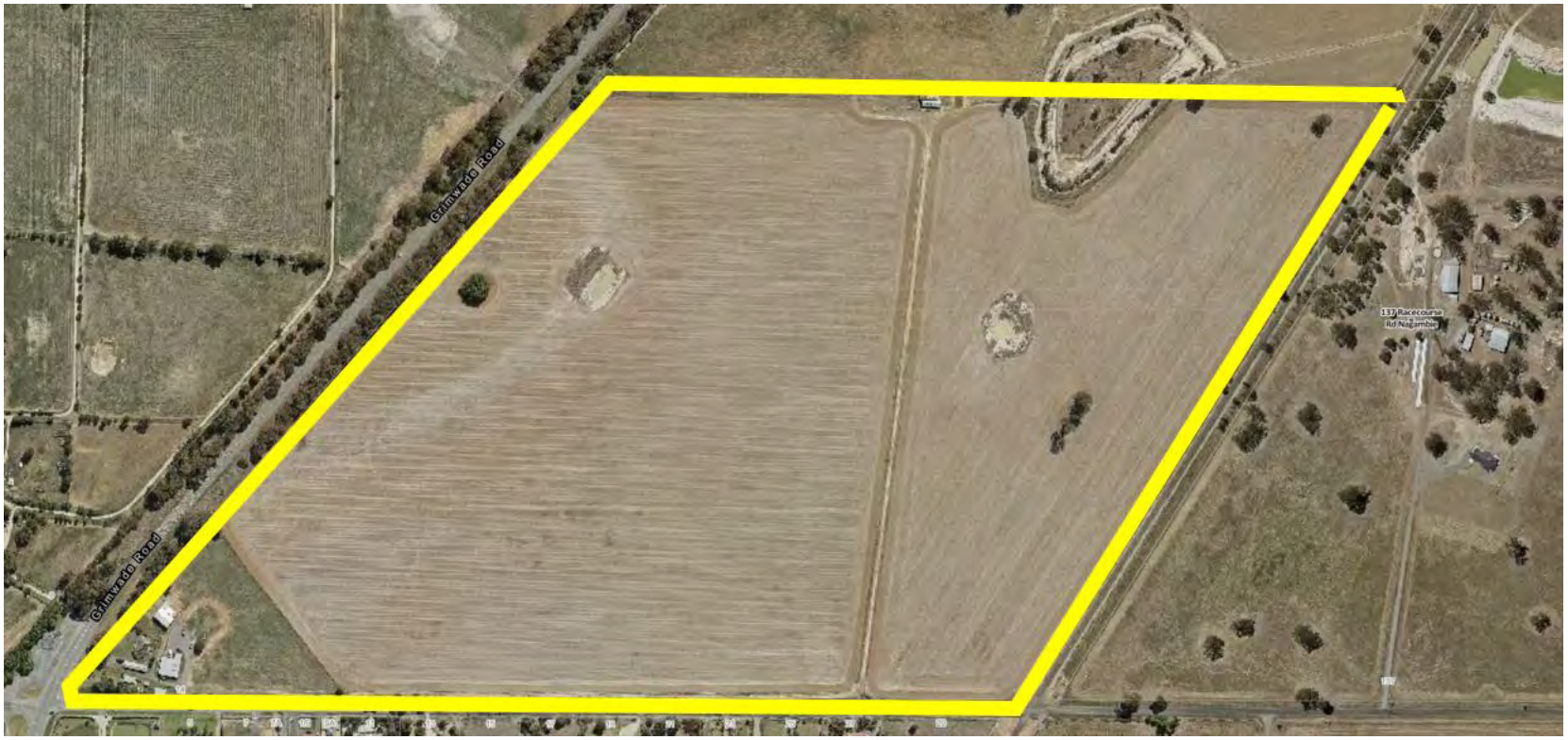


Figure 11: Subject land.

Bushfire Hazard assessment

During the site visit undertaken for Nagambie each direction was reviewed to determine the slope, vegetation type and classifiable vegetation:

- **North** – is directed away from the Nagambie township. The land is largely flat, however begins to slope upwards towards the end of the assessment area. The land slopes upwards more drastically on the western side of Grimwade Road where there is Woodland classified vegetation on the highest point. There is a linear section of Woodland classified vegetation setback approximately 100 metres from the subject land. The closest classifiable is grassland.

- **East** – is towards the railway line with further east being the Goulburn Valley Highway. Directly east of the subject land slope upwards to an area containing a tower and residence. Surrounding this area has been assessed as Woodland due to little or altered understorey. Close to achieving 33 metres setback required.

- **South** – is back towards Nagambie township with south of Racecourse Road being large (more than one hectare) General Residential Zone allotments which are likely to experience future infill developments. This direction is flat, and Council has record of several approved subdivision along Racecourse Road and further south into Kean Road. South-east of the subject land and across the railway line is flat grassland.

- **West** – Grimwade Road makes up the western boundary of the subject land. There is roadside vegetation on both sides of Grimwade Road which have been assessed as Forest, with several breaks with grassland.

	North	East	South	West
Slope under the classified vegetation	Upslope/0°	Upslope/0°	Upslope/0°	Upslope/0°
Vegetation class	Grassland	Woodland	Low threat	Forest
BAL-12.5 defendable space setback (metres)	19	33	0	48
Is the setback met offsite?	No	No	Yes	No

Landscape typology

DELWP's 2017 publication 'Planning Permit Applications Bushfire Management Overlay: technical guide' provides guidance on determining broader landscape types for assessment areas, rated on a sliding scale from one being the lowest risk to four being the highest risk.

The study area lies within a broader Landscape Type One. Beyond 150 metres from the assessment area is largely made up of the following observed features:

- Open farmland used for grazing or equine.
- Golf course to the east.
- Multiple planted windbreaks
- Heavily vegetated road reserves

- Directly south being the Nagambie township
- Strong north, south and east transport links
- Goulburn River and associated riparian vegetation to the west.
- Pockets of woodland further north

Past bushfire and planned burns

The NatureKit software provided by DEECA shows past planned burned activity has been concentrated west of Nagambie between Graytown and Whroo in the Heathcote-Graytown National Park. The identified planned burns occurred primarily between 2005 and 2012. There have been a small number of planned burns 18km north, 15km south and 14km east of Nagambie.

Past bushfire activity again is centred either within or close to the Heathcote-Graytown National Park between 2020 and 2023.

It is to be noted that the NatureKit software goes back only to the 1970's.

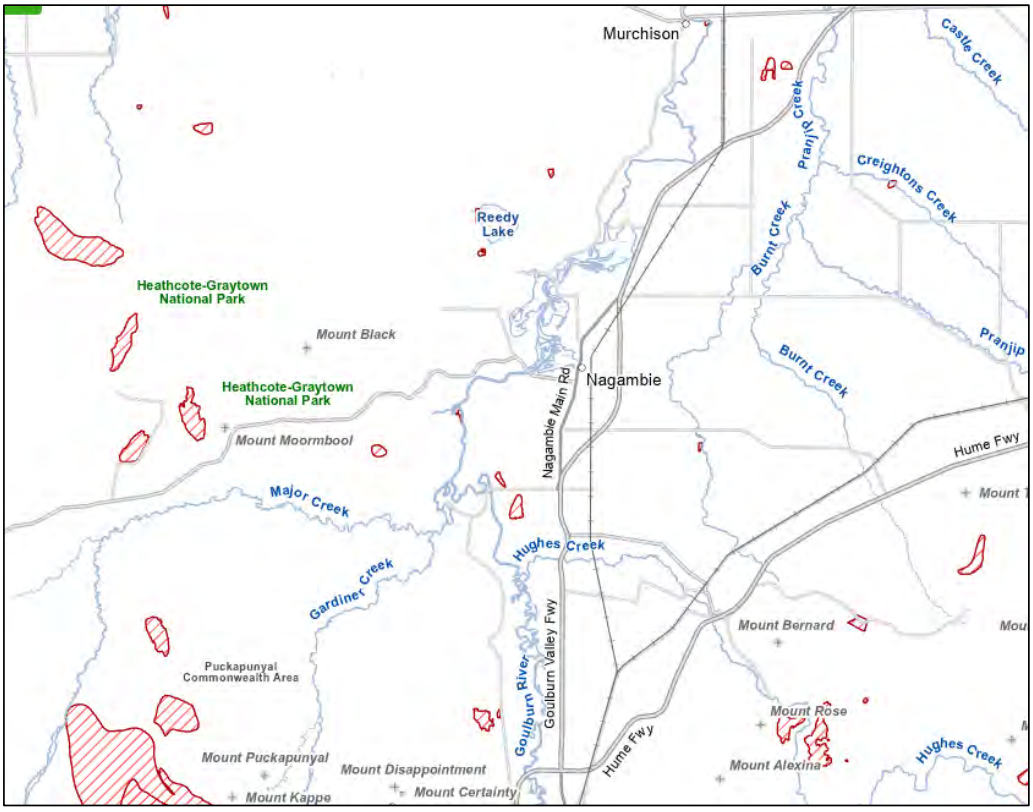


Figure 12: Past fire history (red hatched) around Nagambie, NatureKit software.

Settlement planning

Plan to strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities and prioritise protection of human life by:

Policy	Response
Directing population growth and development to low risk locations, being those locations assessed as having a radiant heat flux of less than 12.5 kilowatts/square metre under *AS 3959-2009Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-prone Areas* (Standards Australia, 2009).	The municipal wide assessment carried out earlier in this report has narrowed down lower risk areas to which it is recommended that Rural Living Zone be directed as part of the Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy. Nagambie is one such area that has been identified as lower risk in the context of the municipality.
Ensuring the availability of, and safe access to, areas assessed as a BAL-LOW rating under *AS 3959-2009Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-prone Areas* (Standards Australia, 2009) where human life can be better protected from the effects of bushfire.	Given the proposals location is immediately adjacent to the township of Nagambie, egress to areas of BAL-LOW is readily accessible. The site has direct access to Racecourse Road and Grimwade Road which is the primary north-south road through Nagambie.
Ensuring the bushfire risk to existing and future residents, property and community infrastructure will not increase as a result of future land use and development.	The rezoning locations allows an additional buffer to the Nagambie township. Creating individual allotments north of Racecourse Road will allow for improved management of the north, north-western and north-eastern peripheries of Nagambie. This will allow for active surveillance for threat of fire from residents of the newly established rural living area. This can be predominantly achieved through subdivision design.
Achieving no net increase in risk to existing and future residents, property and community infrastructure, through the implementation of bushfire protection measures and where possible reducing bushfire risk overall.	The proposed direction of development for Nagambie, seeks to increase the level of protection afforded to the existing township. and therefore, reduce the current risk from the north. Supporting growth in this area with strict design mechanism including perimeter roads will provide Nagambie with an increased level of protection.
Assessing and addressing the bushfire hazard posed to the settlement and the likely bushfire behaviour it will produce at a landscape, settlement, local, neighbourhood and site scale, including the potential for neighbourhood-scale destruction.	The site is located on the peripheries of a settlement. Directly adjoining residential zoned to the south of Racecourse Road. The site and surrounds are relatively cleared when compared to land further north of the subject land. A bushfire hazard assessment has been undertaken earlier in this chapter for the Nagambie assessment area, including at the local and neighbourhood scales.
Assessing alternative low risk locations for settlement growth on a regional, municipal, settlement, local and neighbourhood basis.	Nagambie is not specified in any regional bushfire strategy. Earlier in this report a municipal wide assessment was undertaken to determine

	areas that are more appropriate to have growth directed to. One of which is Nagambie. The north of the township was chosen due to the relatively lower risk and other non-bushfire related matters.
Not approving any strategic planning document, local planning policy, or planning scheme amendment that will result in the introduction or intensification of development in an area that has, or will on completion have, more than a BAL-12.5 rating under *AS 3959-2009Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-prone areas* (Standards Australia, 2009).	This assessment demonstrates, that with the inclusion of certain mitigation measures in the final subdivision layout, rural living zone can be supplied that provides developable land that can comply with BAL-12.5 requirements. Mitigation measures include, but are not limited to, perimeter roads, wider road reserves, building exclusion areas, vegetation management requirement and water supply. Further on in this report are suggested policy changes that would likely accompany any planning scheme changes.

Conclusion

Overall, Nagambie has been identified as one of the few lower risk townships for which it is considered suitable to identify land for the further investigation of rezoning to Rural Living Zone. The north of the township has been chosen due to other non-bushfire considerations, as well through the community panel process.

Mitigation measures undertaken with the assessment area would allow for the attainment of all future lots to designate a building envelope for construction standards to meet the requirements of BAL-12.5 as per AS3959.

8.4 Violet Town

Criteria	Response
Efficient Settlement Patterns	Subject area identified for RLZ is located on the immediate fringe of Violet Town, meaning it sits within a logical extension of the township's settlement pattern. Its proximity to the existing urban area supports compact development and minimises the risk of leapfrog or ad hoc rural living occurring in more remote locations. Development in this area would make use of existing road networks and town-based infrastructure, thereby aligning with objectives for efficient and sustainable settlement.
Protection of Agricultural Land	The subject site and surrounds are already fragmented into smaller rural-living sized allotments, with limited high-value agricultural potential due to lot sizes, existing lifestyle uses, and proximity to residential interfaces. Locating RLZ in this area helps direct rural living demand away from more productive farmland, safeguarding high-value agricultural areas elsewhere in the Shire. This is

	consistent with state policy to protect Victoria's agricultural resources.
Reduced Environmental Impact	The land is relatively unconstrained, with no immediate interface to sensitive environmental or biodiversity assets such as waterways, wetlands, or conservation reserves. Consolidating rural living here reduces the pressure on more environmentally sensitive peri-urban and remote landscapes. This supports a managed, low-impact pattern of rural residential development.
Access to Services and Community Facilities	The site benefits from close access to Violet Town's township services, including primary education, retail facilities, community hubs, and healthcare. Its location on the township edge reduces reliance on car travel compared to more isolated rural areas, improving connectivity for future residents and aligning with principles of sustainable rural settlement.
Consistency with Settlement Hierarchy	The Urban Growth Strategy (UGS) identifies Violet Town as a township capable of accommodating some incremental rural living growth. Aligning RLZ in this location is consistent with the settlement hierarchy framework, as it directs growth to an edge-of-town location where it can be more effectively planned and supported, while maintaining the viability of the township core.
Improved Bushfire Safety	The area's proximity to Violet Town ensures good access to established road networks, reticulated water, and local CFA resources. This allows for shorter response times compared to isolated rural living locations. It therefore supports improved bushfire safety outcomes for residents.
Supports Bushfire Risk Management	The area is not within a designated bushfire management area. Siting RLZ here avoids exposing future dwellings to isolated, high-risk bushfire-prone landscapes, aligning with Clause 13.02 of the Planning Policy Framework which seeks to prioritise human life in bushfire planning.
Enables Community Preparedness	Locating rural living opportunities close to Violet Town strengthens community ties and ensures residents remain connected to the local CFA brigade and township emergency planning initiatives. This fosters greater resilience and preparedness compared to dwellings located in isolated rural bush settings.

Bushfire hazard identification

Considering and assessing the bushfire hazard on the basis of the following:

Policy	Response
Landscape conditions - meaning conditions in the landscape within 20 kilometres (and potentially up to 75 kilometres) of a site	Landscape conditions within 20 kilometres are characterised as flat and sparsely vegetated to the north towards Shepparton. There are certain sections of significant bushland 9 kilometres north. North-east is the Jubilee swamp which intersects with multiple waterways and surrounding vegetation. To the east is where the flat farmland extends into the Strathbogie State Forest

	which a substantial park containing several mountains further east. The land rises significantly to these peaks. To the south the landscape slopes further upwards to the state forest that continues on and intersects with multiple plantations. To the west of the subject area is described as flat farmland with vegetated creeks and scattered paddock trees. Figure 13 shows a 20 kilometre radius around the subject land.
Local conditions - meaning conditions in the area within approximately 1 kilometre of a site	Within one kilometre of the north of the subject land is open farmland. The land is largely flat, aside from a small depression following a seasonal waterway. Hoskin Lane continues north and has substantial woodland l the road reserve. To the east of the assessment area is a mixture of farmland containing paddock trees, the Hume Highway and the railway line. The Hume and railway line contain linear vegetation plantings. Additionally, One Mile Creek flows along the eastern boundary of the site and contains substantial riparian vegetation. To the south of the assessment site is where the railway line and Hume Highway part, with in between being private properties. The majority of these properties contain dwellings with all properties having varying degrees of vegetation. To the west is Shadforth Reserve, with north-east being smaller Farming Zoned properties containing dwelling. South-west is the Violet Town township containing the neighbourhood safe place at the recreation reserve and the Honeysuckle Creek reserve which contains significant vegetation along each side. Figure 14 shows a one kilometre radius around the subject land.
Neighbourhood conditions - meaning conditions in the area within 400 metres of a site	Within 400 metres of the assessment area is open farmland with paddock trees. The land is largely flat with a small depression for a seasonal waterway.

	To the east is farmland and One Mile Creek with established canopy vegetation. To the south are residential properties along High Street. Most of these properties contain significant vegetation. Between these properties and the review site is the railway line and Foreman Street. Foreman Street contains canopy trees on the either side of the road. West of the subject land is Shadforth Reserve, which is flat. The road reserve has been assessed as being woodland and further west is Shadforth Reserve. The reserve contains several different vegetation classifications including two ovals, a golf course and a mixture of planted and non-planted canopy vegetation and shrubs. On a site inspection it was observed that understorey was pretty well managed, although shrubs are present further into the reserve. Shadforth Reserve has been considered as forest classification. Figure 15 shows the 400 metre radius of the subject land.
The site for the development.	The site has an area of approximately 44 hectares, measuring 980m wide from east to west and 740m long from north to south at its longest and 150m at its smallest. The subject land is largely flat and is made up of multiple parcels, three of which contain dwellings all facing the western boundary. The western section of the review area contains multiple windbreaks, manicured gardens and maintained woodland canopy trees. Figure 16 shows the subject site.



Figure 13: Twenty kilometre radius of the subject land

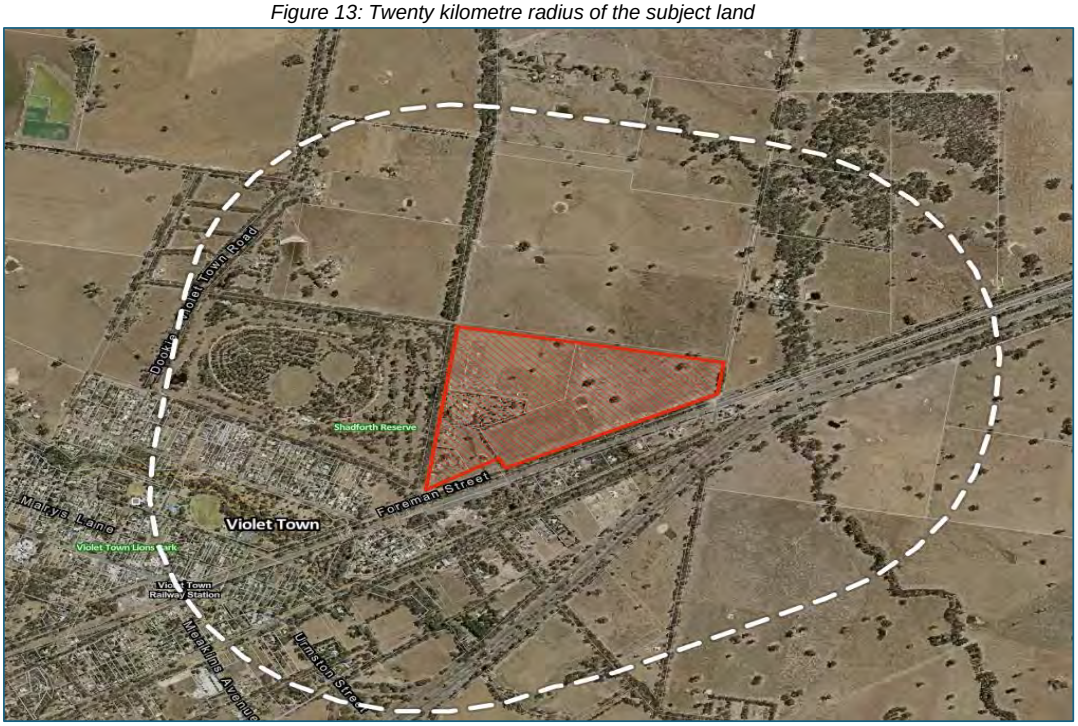


Figure 14: One kilometre radius of the subject land

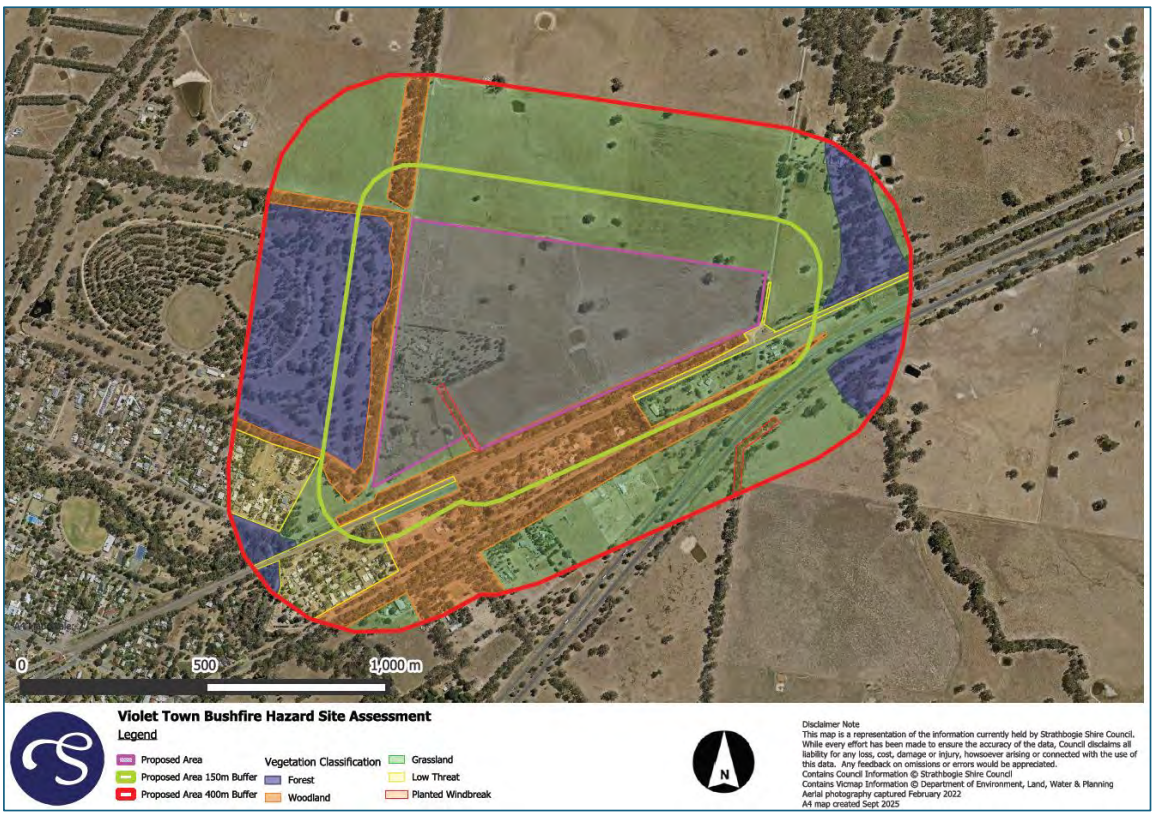


Figure 15: Four hundred metre radius of the subject land



Figure 16: Subject land

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Bushfire Hazard assessment

During the site visit undertaken for Violet Town each direction was reviewed to determine the slope, vegetation type and classifiable vegetation:

- **North** – is directed away from the Violet Town township. The land is largely flat, with the exception of a small depression that leads further north into One Mile Creek. This section of assessment area has been considered as grassland. The section of Hoskin Lane continuing north of the assessment area contains road reserve vegetation also partially present on the private property on the western side of the road. The vegetation has been assessed as woodland.

- **East** – is the intersection of One Mile Creek and the Hume Highway. The Hume Highway contains vegetation along each side as well as within the north and south bound lane divider. This area is largely flat. Aside from waterway corridors and a small area north-east, the majority of land is open farmland and therefore considered as grassland. There is an isolated patch of vegetation in the southern corner of the Rampage Road reserve that has been assessed as being low threat.

- **South** – is towards the Violet Town township. directly south is Foreman Street and the railway line. Foreman Street road reserve has been assessed as woodland. Further south are Township Zoned properties containing scattered canopy tress with little understorey, assessed as woodland.

- **West** – Hoskin Lane makes up the western boundary of the subject land. West of the assessment area is flat. The road reserve has been assessed as being woodland and further west is Shadforth Reserve. The reserve contains several different vegetation classifications including two ovals, a golf course and a mixture of planted and non-planted canopy vegetation and shrubs. On a site inspection it was observed that understorey was pretty well managed, although shrubs are present further into the reserve. Shadforth Reserve has been considered as forest classification.

	North	East	South	West
Slope under the classified vegetation	Upslope/0°	Upslope/0°	Upslope/0°	Upslope/0°
Vegetation class	Grassland	Grassland	Woodland	Forest
BAL-12.5 defendable space setback (metres)	19	19	33	48
Is the setback met offsite?	No	Yes	No	No

Landscape typology

DELWP's 2017 publication 'Planning Permit Applications Bushfire Management Overlay: technical guide' provides guidance on determining broader landscape types for assessment areas, rated on a sliding scale from one being the lowest risk to four being the highest risk.

The study area lies within a broader Landscape Type three. Beyond 150 metres from the assessment area is largely made up of the following observed features:

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- Honeysuckle Creek containing significant riparian vegetation, including canopy trees and understorey. Areas assessed as forest.
- Farmland surrounding Violet Town.
- Violet Town township to the south.
- South towards Boho is a mixture of plantations and state forest.
- North-east, west and south-west transport links.

Past bushfire and planned burns

The NatureKit software provided by DEECA shows past planned burned activity has been concentrated in the Hoskin Lane and the Dookie-Violet Town Road reserves. The section of Hoskin Lane bordering the assessment site is the extent of where the planned burns were undertaken. The identified planned burns occurred in 2022 and 2024. Significant planned burns occurred further east in Mount Samaria State Park.

Past bushfire activity directly around Violet Town is concentrated to the south-east of the township, with the most significant being in Boho in 2013. It is to be noted that the NatureKit software goes back only to the 1970's.

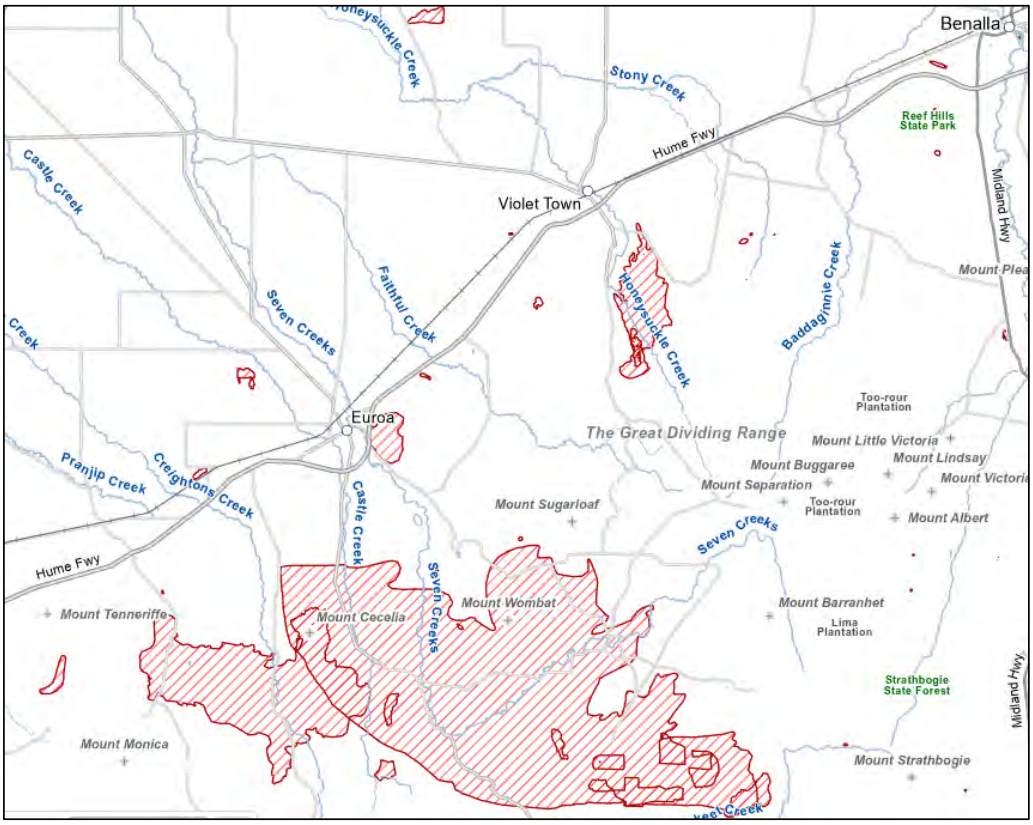


Figure 17: Past fire history (red hatched) around Violet Town, NatureKit software.

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Settlement planning

Plan to strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities and prioritise protection of human life by:

Policy	Response
Directing population growth and development to low risk locations, being those locations assessed as having a radiant heat flux of less than 12.5 kilowatts/square metre under *AS 3959-2009Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-prone Areas* (Standards Australia, 2009).	The municipal wide assessment carried out earlier in this report has narrowed down lower risk areas to which it is recommended that Rural Living Zone be directed as part of the Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy. Violet Town is one such area that has been identified as lower risk in the context of the municipality. The area chosen is close to the centre of the Violet Town township and close to the neighbourhood safe place. The western side of the township would have been the preferred location to identify for Rural Living Zone. However, due to the significant flood impacts identified this direction is now not considered to be appropriate.
Ensuring the availability of, and safe access to, areas assessed as a BAL-LOW rating under *AS 3959-2009Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-prone Areas* (Standards Australia, 2009) where human life can be better protected from the effects of bushfire.	Access to BAL-LOW areas is back south to the Violet Town township. This includes the recreation reserve which is the towns neighbourhood safe place and is within 650 metres of the site for review.
Ensuring the bushfire risk to existing and future residents, property and community infrastructure will not increase as a result of future land use and development.	The proposed Rural Living Zone area will help to eliminate the existing grassland threat on the northern side of Violet Town. The assessment area is adjoining Shadforth Reserve. Further development around the reserve will allow for better protection and surveillance of threats from the north to the township and the reserve.
Achieving no net increase in risk to existing and future residents, property and community infrastructure, through the implementation of bushfire protection measures and where possible reducing bushfire risk overall.	The proposed direction of development for Violet Town, seeks to increase the level of protection afforded to the existing township. and therefore, reduce the current risk from the north. Supporting growth in this area with strict design mechanisms including perimeter roads will provide Violet Town with an increased level of protection.
Assessing and addressing the bushfire hazard posed to the settlement and the likely bushfire behaviour it will produce at a landscape, settlement, local, neighbourhood	Refer to previous assessment above on landscape, local and neighbourhood conditions.

and site scale, including the potential for neighbourhood-scale destruction.	
Assessing alternative low risk locations for settlement growth on a regional, municipal, settlement, local and neighbourhood basis.	Violet Town is not specified in any regional bushfire strategy. Earlier in this report a municipal wide assessment was undertaken to determine areas that are more appropriate to have growth directed to. One of which is Violet Town. The township was chosen due to the relatively lower risk and the north of town due to other non-bushfire related matters.
Not approving any strategic planning document, local planning policy, or planning scheme amendment that will result in the introduction or intensification of development in an area that has, or will on completion have, more than a BAL-12.5 rating under *AS 3959-2009Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-prone Areas* (Standards Australia, 2009).	This assessment demonstrates, that with the inclusion of certain mitigation measures in the final subdivision layout, rural living zone can be supplied that provides developable land that can comply with BAL-12.5 requirements. Mitigation measures include, but are not limited to, perimeter roads, wider road reserves, building exclusion areas, vegetation management requirement and water supply. Further on in this report are suggested policy changes that would likely accompany any planning scheme amendment that rezones either of the three assessment sites to Rural Living Zone.

Conclusion

Overall, Violet Town has been identified as one of the few lower risk townships for which it is considered suitable to identify land for the further investigation of rezoning to Rural Living Zone within Strathbogie Shire. The east of the township has been chosen due to bushfire and non-bushfire considerations (such as flooding and impact on agricultural land), as well through the community panel process.

Mitigation measures undertaken with the assessment area would allow for the attainment of all future lots to designate a building envelope for construction standards to meet the requirements of BAL-12.5 as per AS3959.

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Southern boundary of the assessment area – Foreman Street.



South-western corner of review site looking north along Hoskin Lane.



Example of vegetation along Honeysuckle Creek adjoining Honeysuckle Caravan Village.



Shadforth vegetation when viewed from Hoskin Lane.

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9 Previous Rural Residential Land Use Strategy (2004) Identified Sites

The 2004 Rural Residential Strategy identified historically surveyed small lots within the Farming Zone. Since then, significant bushfire policy reform has reshaped how such properties are strategically assessed for dwellings.

The current Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy (RRLUS) directs Rural Living Zone (RLZ) opportunities to peri-urban edges of priority townships, where safer bushfire settings, access to services, and existing infrastructure can better support rural living. In contrast, scattered or remote hamlets, high-value agricultural areas, floodplains, and sensitive landscapes are intentionally excluded to avoid ad hoc expansion and to protect the established settlement hierarchy.

Area (2004 RRLUS)	Efficient Settlement Patterns	Protection of Agricultural Land	Environmental Impact	Access to Services	Settlement Hierarchy	Bushfire Risk
Euroa (1)	Township edges preferred; scattered pockets no longer supported	Some risk of fragmentation	Limited issues if outside sensitive areas	Good access in Euroa only	Supported only on edge	Moderate risk; safer near township
Gooram (2)	Remote, scattered	Within farming areas	Sensitive landscapes nearby	Poor access	Not a growth township	High bushfire risk
Strathbogie (3)	Remote, isolated	Adjacent farmland	Forested, high-value landscape	Limited services	Not priority township	Extreme bushfire risk
Violet Town (4)	Edges may be suitable; scattered allotments not supported	Some farming conflict	Low–moderate impact	Township services available	Secondary township only	Lower risk on edges

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Arcadia – Two Chain Rd (5)	Scattered rural	Productive land	Floodplain/sensitive	Limited services	Not identified as growth area	Moderate bushfire
McKindleys Rd (6)	Fragmented	High-value agriculture	Sensitive rural landscape	Limited services	Not priority township	Elevated bushfire
Goulburn Weir (7)	Scattered, ad hoc	Farming nearby	Waterway/sensitive environment	Limited access	Not supported	High bushfire/environmental constraints
Nagambie North (8)	Scattered outside growth boundary	Productive farmland	Environmental corridors	Good township access if close	Only supported near UGS edge	Moderate bushfire
Kirwans Bridge (9)	Scattered	Farming land conflict	Floodplain/riverine sensitivity	Poor services	Not growth township	Flood + bushfire hazard
Allowah Dr, Whroo (10)	Remote	Limited farming	Environmental/forest setting	No services	Not supported	High bushfire
Whroovale Ct, Whroo (11)	Remote	Limited farming	Environmental/forest setting	No services	Not supported	High bushfire
Gold Diggers Ct, Bailieston East (12)	Scattered, isolated	Adjacent farmland	Sensitive landscape	No services	Not supported	High bushfire
Graytown (13)	Very isolated	Little productive land	High environmental significance	No services	Not a township	Extreme bushfire
Costerfield (14)	Small hamlet	Surrounding farmland	Sensitive landscapes	Very limited	Not in hierarchy	High bushfire
Tabilk (15)	Scattered	Productive agriculture	Sensitive waterway	Limited	Not supported	Bushfire/flood
Mangalore (16)	Small settlement, fragmented	High-value farmland	Rural buffer values	Very limited	Not priority	Bushfire hazard
Avenel (17)	Edges supported,	Farming conflict	Sensitive areas near creeks	Township access	Growth township (UGS)	Safer on township edge

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	scattered outside not					
Old Longwood & Gap Rd (18)	Scattered	Farming land	Sensitive rural bush setting	Limited	Not priority	High bushfire
Ruffy (19)	Remote hamlet	Farming surrounds	High landscape values	Poor access	Not supported	Extreme bushfire
Longwood (20)	Small settlement	Farming conflict	Landscape values	Very limited	Not priority	Elevated bushfire

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10 Rural Living Zone Policy

The following draft policy has been identified as necessary for inclusion in any planning scheme amendment that proposes to introduce additional Rural Living Zoned land. The planning scheme changes are proposed through the introduction of local policy and the use of an overlay such as the Design and Development Overlay to provide controls for subdivisional layout. The policy identified below is intended to be introduced at the same time that the rezonings identified in this report are lodged as a planning scheme amendment.

Whilst the bushfire hazard assessment earlier in this report helps to assess risk of bushfire to the municipality, further planning scheme changes are required to complement the rezonings and ensure that residents of new RLZ land are adequately protected.

Local policy

- Discourage residential buildings and group accommodation.
- Avoid courts and cul-de-sacs in neighbourhood subdivision design.
- Ensure that the design of development does not result in any increase in bushfire risk to existing development.
- Design any subdivision to ensure that all lots can achieve informed and appropriate setbacks from bushfire hazard interfaces to ensure future development can achieve a radiant heat level of no greater than 12.5KW/m^2.
- Require informed and appropriate setbacks from bushfire hazard interfaces to ensure future development is exposed to radiant heat no greater than 12.5KW/m^2.

Overlay controls

Require the design of subdivisions to demonstrate and achieve:

- A maximum of BAL-12.5 for all dwellings or building envelopes in accordance with AS.3959-2018.
- The incorporation of strategic communal water supply (tank/s) or fire hydrants to support bushfire suppression activities.
- The provision of defendable space to ensure all dwellings can achieve a BAL 12.5 rating in accordance with AS.3959-2018 (if applicable).
- The requirement that emergency vehicle can achieve access to each lot and to water supply in accordance with the requirements of Clause 53.02.
- Require staged subdivision to implement a logical staging and maintenance plan that avoids leapfrogging to reduce the level of bushfire exposure to newly developed land from undeveloped stages.
- The design of any landscaping or vegetated areas to contain bushfire resilient species and consider any on-going management requirements.

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11 Conclusion and Recommendations

Having completed the landscape scale bushfire assessments and localised bushfire assessments, including an analysis of the suitability of identifying land to be rezoned to Rural Living Zone, the following recommendations are made to inform the development of the Strathbogie Shire Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy:

- Further investigation should be undertaken to the viability of rezoning land in Euroa, Nagambie and Violet Town to Rural Living Zone.
- Further bushfire assessment will need to be undertaken prior to a planning scheme amendment to rezone any land to Rural Living Zone.
- Any future planning scheme amendment will require additional policy to be included to ensure that future lots created can achieve a BAL 12.5 rating.
- Support should be given to developing existing Rural Living Zoned land.

11.2 Community

11.2.1 Rainbow Ready Petition Response

AUTHOR Manager Community and Culture

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director Community and Planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A petition was received from Rainbow Local Government, calling for the Strathbogie Shire Council to establish a Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex Queer Asexual Plus (LGBTIQA+) Advisory Committee. Rainbow Local Government believe this action will make a positive difference for LGBTIQA+ people in the community and show that LGBTIQA+ people are valued, accepted and beloved community members. The petition was signed by thirty five (35) people.

At the March 2025 Council meeting it was resolved that Council:

1. Receive and note the petition in relation to Council establishing an LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee
2. That the petition be referred to the Director Community and Planning for consideration and a report to Council by no later than September 2025.

Officers have initiated engagement with local signatories to the petition requesting to meet for a discussion on existing engagement models and opportunities to work together to better support inclusion, safety, and visibility for LGBTIQA+ community members in Strathbogie Shire using the Rainbow Resource for Victorian Councils as a guide.

This report provides a response to the petition.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Note the report**
2. **Authorise Officers to provide a formal response to the petitioner.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The petition submitters, Rainbow Local Government, is a campaign coordinated by the Victorian Pride Lobby. The Lobby is a community-based advocacy group that works towards equality, social justice and advancing human rights for LGBTIQA+ Victorians. They look to support and promote the efforts of local governments to foster a culture that is inclusive, responsive and accessible to LGBTIQA+ Victorians.

Rainbow Local Government advocate for LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committees to be established so that LGBTIQA+ issues can be easily brought to Council's attention, ensuring that the community's needs are heard and addressed.

Several Victorian state laws and policies mandate local governments to provide inclusive services for LGBTIQA+ communities. The *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic) and the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth) protect individuals from discrimination based on sexual

orientation, gender identity, and other attributes. The *Gender Equality Act 2020* (Vic) further promotes gender equality, including for LGBTIQA+ individuals, across the public sector and local councils. Additionally, the Victorian Government's LGBTIQA+ Strategy, "Pride in our future," guides government efforts to achieve equality for LGBTIQA+ people.

Despite legislative advancements and changes in community attitudes, many LGBTIQA+ people still face discrimination and inequality especially in regional locations. Some LGBTIQA+ people have poorer health and wellbeing outcomes than others in the community. These may include experiencing higher than average rates of violence, harassment and discrimination, and poorer mental health such as anxiety, depression, psychological distress, self-harm and risk of suicide. LGBTIQA + people experience higher rates of isolation and rejection, and poorer life outcomes in terms of drug and alcohol use, homelessness, and early school leaving.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

The petition requests Council establish a LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee.

Council has worked closely with community advisory committees over previous decades to inform Council of community issues and to help guide and improve service delivery, policy and plans. The management of these Committees can be resource intensive and limited in who and how they represent. There has also been an increased requirement for broader community engagement, following the introduction of the *Local Government Act 2020*, a principles-based Act which identifies community engagement as a core principle.

Attracting members to these committees has become challenging as individuals are busier than ever with competing demands on their time. These Advisory Committees can be well intended but are not always representative or inclusive and be viewed as tokenistic.

At the conclusion of the 2019-2022 Community Engagement Strategy Council took the opportunity to review the current advisory committee structure and the way we engage with our community. There has been a deliberate movement away from Advisory Committees.

There are varied ways to engage with and include diverse views, perspectives and lived experience to inform Council policy, services and strategy. An Advisory Committee is one structure to support this.

Aligned with Objective One of the Council Plan, Council is committed to enhancing access, promoting healthy living, fostering connections, and enabling all residents to thrive in community life. To support this, the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan has been incorporated into the Council Plan 2025–2029, embedding health, wellbeing, and inclusion priorities throughout.

Council also recognises that all people have equal rights to Council services and facilities, and the key role community plays in decision making. This commitment enables a focus on equity where community members of all ages, genders, sexualities, religions, backgrounds, locations and abilities have the same opportunities to participate and to achieve maximum health and wellbeing.

Council’s Health, Wellbeing and Inclusion Action Plan 2025-29 (Action Plan) supports the Council Plan 2025-29 setting out the actions Council will undertake over the next four years to build environments both internally and throughout the broader community that provide opportunities for people of all backgrounds to participate and support high standard of livability and healthy lifestyles.

Council’s *Health and Wellbeing Strategy Four. Respect, Diversity, and Inclusion* outlines Council’s role to:

- Provide funding, support, and capacity building to community groups to deliver accessible, inclusive and diverse arts and cultural events and activities
- Work in partnership with State government and peak bodies to support campaigns and days of significance that celebrate inclusion, diversity, and other periods of significance
- Develop and implement strategies/plans that support and promote creativity, diversity and inclusion within the organisation and the broader community.

One of the key actions of these strategies is the adoption and implementation of a Social Inclusion Framework, this would also include the Council's commitment to diversity.

This framework is intended to provide Council with a structured approach to support members of our community and have the opportunity to participate fully and equally in all aspects of life, including social, economic, and cultural activities, within Council's sphere of influence.

This framework provides the roadmap for how Council will work to achieve our vision for diversity and inclusion and make a commitment to working towards the removal of barriers to social inclusion, reflecting the voices and aspirations of our diverse communities in our organisation: evidenced through our policies, plans, services and programs, and in the decision making that affects our community. The Actions will identify the projects and mechanisms for Council to achieve the above.

Following recommendation 15 of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System *'that communities are best placed to understand and drive local social inclusion and connection efforts to support mental health and wellbeing'', i*t was recommended the Victorian Government establish and recurrently resource 'community collectives' (now known as Social Inclusion Action Groups) in each of Victoria's 79 local government areas.

The Department of Health, through the Wellbeing Promotion Office, has recently established the first ten Social Inclusion Action Groups across various local government areas.

Social Inclusion Action Groups are community led groups that make decisions and develop solutions at a local level to support social connection and inclusion delivering community-led initiatives that foster local participation, inclusion and connection.

Under the current funding program arrangement, each Social Inclusion Action Group is supported by a local government coordinator and a Local Social Inclusion Investment Fund.

Council will continue to deliver programs that support LGBTIQA+ communities and develop the strategies and actions documented in the Council Plan and Health and Wellbeing Plan, including the development of a Social Inclusion Framework.

In addition, Officers will engage with the Victorian Government on the implementation timeframe for the development of a Social Inclusion Action Group for Strathbogie Shire as an alternative to a standalone advisory committee.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Council engages with the community in line with Council's adopted Community Engagement Policy. Council aims to consider and vary its engagement and consultation depending on the program, service or policy being considered, identifying the level of engagement in accordance with the IAP2 spectrum of public participation, which articulates a level of influence and promise.

Council will continue to engage with the willing petition signatories to inform the development of the Social Inclusion Framework, associated actions and the Social Inclusion Action Group

to ensure the voices, views and lived experiences of LGBTIQA+ community are represented and inform Council policy, programs and services.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following Objectives and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

Objective One: Connect

We are committed to enhancing access for all residents, promoting healthy living, fostering connections, and providing opportunities to thrive and participate in community life.

Objective Two: Sustain

We aim to collaborate with others to foster a sustainable environment, a thriving economy and resilient communities.

Objective Three: Deliver

We are committed to delivering quality services and infrastructure that meets the needs of our community. We aim to strengthen the Council's governance and provide improved, customer-focused experiences.

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

This report is aligned with the following legislation, Council Policies and key strategic documents:

- *The Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- *The Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)*
- *The Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic)*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- Council Plan and Integrated Health and Wellbeing Plan
- Victorian Government's LGBTIQA+ Strategy

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Poor health outcomes for LGBTIQA+ community	Almost certain	Catastrophic	High	Progress initiatives that improve social inclusion
Lack of trust in Council engagement processes	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Clear communication on timelines, purpose, participation requirements
Reputational risk to Council	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Clear communication,

				follow through on commitments, share successes

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no significant legal considerations associated with this report.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

This report continues to demonstrate that Council is being transparent in its position in relation to petition responses.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The work being done at all levels of Government to provide inclusive services for LGBTIQA+ communities and further promote gender equality, including for LGBTIQA+ individuals demonstrates a culture of innovation and continuous improvement.

COLLABORATION

Officers have sought collaboration from the LGBTIQA+ Community on the production of this report, and on the date of writing the report Officers have not been able to formalise a meeting with local community members.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* was considered in the preparation of this report with particular consideration given to the aspects of respect, equality and dignity.

CONCLUSION

Council is committed to improving health, wellbeing and social inclusion through the implementation and delivery of the Council Plan and the health and wellbeing action plan.

Officers will continue to progress initiatives that support the LGBTIQA+ community to feel heard and supported through regular programs and actions within the Council Plan and the Health and Wellbeing Plan.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

11.2.2 Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-29

AUTHOR Manager Community Safety

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director Community and Planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In accordance with the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, all Victorian councils are required to prepare and implement a Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) every four years, with the aim of promoting responsible pet ownership and ensuring the welfare of animals within the municipality. Councils must also review the plan annually and submit the updated four-year plan to the Secretary of the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions by 4 December every year.

This draft Plan has been developed in consultation with the community and key stakeholders, reflecting shared priorities, local challenges, and opportunities for improvement. It outlines a clear vision for domestic animal management across the municipality and provides a strategic framework to guide Council's approach to animal registration, compliance, community education, animal welfare, and the operation of pound and shelter services.

The Plan seeks to balance community safety, animal welfare, and responsible pet ownership through proactive education, evidence-based policy, and strong partnerships with veterinarians, animal rescue organisations, and the broader community. It sets measurable objectives and actions to support Council's continued leadership in the effective management of domestic animals.

This report seeks Council's endorsement of the draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-2029 to endorse public consultation on the draft plan, for a period of four weeks commencing on 19 September 2025 and concluding on 17 October 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Note the draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-2029**
2. **Note the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-2029 Engagement Report August 2025**
3. **Endorse the draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-2029 for public consultation for the period 19 September 2025 to 17 October 2025**
4. **Note officers will provide a report to Council on feedback received and present a final Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-2029 for consideration, at a future council meeting.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to present Council with the draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-29 (DAMP), and to recommend that the draft DAMP be released for public consultation.

Under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (Act), councils are legally required to prepare and implement a Domestic Animal Management Plan every four years. This plan provides a structured approach to managing domestic animals within the municipality, aiming to support responsible pet ownership, safeguard animal welfare, and minimise the impact of nuisance animals on the community and environment. The current plan will expire in 2025, and a new version must be submitted to the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action by 4 December 2025.

As outlined in the Act, the DAMP must address the following elements:

- Evaluation methods for animal control services
- Training programs for authorised animal management officers
- Planned programs, services, and strategies for animal management
- Review of existing Council orders and consideration of new ones
- Inclusion of any additional relevant matters
- Ongoing evaluation of all implemented initiatives.

The draft DAMP (Attachment 1) has been developed by Council's Community Compliance Team, incorporating input from community members, key stakeholders, research, and comparisons with other councils. The draft Plan aims to reflect community expectations and local priorities while aligning with statutory obligations under the Act.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

A community survey was conducted between 9 July 2025 and 1 August 2025 to seek feedback to inform the development of the draft DAMP. A total of 304 people visited the Share Strathbogie website, with 45 people completing a survey specifically about the DAMP.

Over 100 people participated across seven pop up engagement sessions which were held by our Local Laws Team.

Key Stakeholders such as local Veterinary Clinics, Action Groups and Community groups were also invited to participate.

The social media campaign achieved a reach of 3547 people. The campaign comprised of a series of Facebook posts during the consultation period designed to promote opportunities for the community to provide feedback.

A copy of the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-2029 Engagement Report August 2025 has been attached (Attachment Two).

The report indicated strong and consistent themes outlined below that have been used to help shape the priorities and actions of the draft DAMP:

- **Strong support** for initiatives that promote responsible pet ownership, and promote animal welfare
- A clear interest in **cat containment policies**, **desexing programs**, and **community education**
- Concerns raised about **roaming/stray cats** and **nuisance behaviour** from dogs (e.g., barking, lack of control in public spaces)
- Desire for improved **infrastructure** to support pet owners (e.g., off-leash areas, bins, signage)

The draft DAMP identifies nine focus areas, these include:

1. A skilled, capable workforce
2. Promoting registration and identification
3. Promoting and encouraging responsible pet ownership of dogs and cats
4. Minimising the potential for nuisance dogs and cats
5. Minimising dog attacks
6. Managing over population and reducing euthanasia rates
7. Working with domestic animal business
8. Managing dangerous, menacing and restricted dog breeds
9. Monitoring, reporting and continuous improvement

The draft Plan identifies a number of actions associated with each focus area and details measures and completion timeframes/ frequency for each action.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

All consultation associated with the draft plan will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy.

This draft Plan considers and was informed by the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-2029 Engagement Report August 2025 (Attachment two).

The draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-2029 will be placed on consultation for a four-week period, opening on 19 September 2025 and closing on 17 October 2025 and will include website, social media and newspaper advertising.

Engagement will be set at the 'Consult' level of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation.

Online feedback will be received via Share Strathbogie, and hard copy responses can be accepted via mail, email or hand delivered to customer service centres in Euroa and Nagambie. A hard copy draft Plan will also be available at the Euroa and Nagambie Customer Service Centre's for viewing.

Targeted email communications will be sent to encourage feedback from individual community members, community groups and stakeholders on Council's community distribution lists.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following Objectives and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

- Objective One: Connect
- Objective Three: Deliver

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

This report is aligned with the following legislation, council policies and key strategic documents:

- *Domestic Animal Act 1994*
- Community Local Law 2

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Community and Stakeholders don't feel heard throughout the project.	Possible	Moderate	Medium	A two stage consultation approach providing multiple opportunities for community input.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

All Councils are required to develop a Domestic Animal Management Plan in accordance with section 68A of the *Domestic Animal Act 1994*. Section 68A(2) sets out the requirements for a DAMP.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

In the interests of transparency and open and honest communication with our community this report is presented to a public Council meeting.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The proposed actions included in the draft DAMP are subject to Council's annual budget process. Actions identified to be delivered in year one of the DAMP, can be accommodated within the existing Community Safety annual operating budget in 2025-26.

Social

The draft DAMP aims to strike the right balance and seek positive social outcomes for both pet owners and non-pet owners. Council is committed to providing high quality, responsive and effective services to meet the community's needs.

Pet owners and the broader community look to Council for guidance and support to assist them by providing a balanced approach to safe, well maintained open spaces for animals to exercise, play and be trained.

The community expectation is that Council maintains registration systems for cats and dogs, community education, and collection of lost pets whilst balancing the needs of the greater community.

Responsible pet ownership contributes to community safety by reducing dog attacks and safe management of dangerous and restricted dog breeds.

Environmental

The DAMP actions are anticipated to have positive impacts on the environment by facilitating responsible pet ownership, thereby protecting the cleanliness, safety and amenity of the municipality.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

There are no significant human rights implications arising from this report.

CONCLUSION

The draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-2029 is being presented to Council to endorse public consultation on the draft plan, for a period of four weeks commencing on 19 September 2025 and concluding on 17 October 2025.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 20250729 DAMP 2025-2029
2. 20250806 Domestic Animal Management Engagement Report

Strathbogie Shire Council
Domestic Animal Management Plan
2025-2029
DRAFT



Acknowledgement of Country

Strathbogie Shire Council acknowledges the Taungurung and Yorta Yorta people as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waterways in the area now known as Strathbogie Shire.

We pay our respect to their rich cultures and to Elders, past and present, as well as other First Nations people who live, work and play in the area.

DRAFT

Document ID	
Last review	
Current review	
Adopted by Council	
Next review	
Responsible officer/s	

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Domestic Animal Ownership in Strathbogie Shire

Strathbogie Shire Council can see the popularity of dogs and cat as pets through the number of animal registration council processed each year. As shown in table 1, dog registration has increased by 25.83%, while cat registrations have grown by 34.43%.

Table 1: Number of animal registrations in Strathbogie Shire.

Type of Animal	2024	2025	Change (%)
Dog	***1947***	***2450***	***25.83%***
Cat	***427***	***574***	***34.43%***

The increase in cat registrations is due to council's previous DAMP initiatives to promote responsible pet ownerships that targeted unregistered cats and nuisance cats which included:

- Promoting and communicating responsible pet ownership
- Increase in cat trappings by the compliance team
- All animals reunited with owners or adopted out of the pound having to be microchipped and registered before leaving the premises

DRAFT

About our Domestic Animal Management Plan

Pets play an important role in the lives of many Strathbogie Shire residents. Our most recent animal registration data shows a total of 2450 dogs and 574 cats are actively registered in the Strathbogie Shire as of August 2025.

It is important that Strathbogie Shire Council's DAMP addresses the needs of our many pet owners, while also promoting responsible pet ownership and effectively managing the potential for domestic animals to have a negative impact on public amenities, our neighbours, and the environment.

Council reviews these activities annually and reports on our performance to the Victorian Government Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions.

Table 2: Domestic Animal Management Services Provided by Council 2024-2025

Animal Registrations	Service Level or Measure
Dog registrations	2450
Cat registrations	574
Domestic Animal Businesses in Strathbogie	2
Animals Brought into the Euroa Pound by Authorised Officers	
Dogs brought in	27
Dogs reunited with owner/ adopted	24
Cats brought in	107
Cats reunited with owner/ adopted	12
Customer Requests Responded to	
Dogs at large/ stray dogs collected	80
Dog attacks	20
Dogs rushing/ menacing	4
Dog barking complaints	29
Nuisance cats	10
Cats trapped/ contained for collection by Authorised Officer	2

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Process Applied in Developing the Plan

The Strathbogie Shires DAMP has been developed in consultation with councils Community Safety team, relevant internal departments, stakeholders and most importantly the community.

Key steps in the development include:

Engagement Stage 1

- An online survey seeking feedback on animal management was made available via Strathbogie Shire council website - Share Strathbogie: Have your say
  Home | Share Strathbogie
- Community consultation
- Stakeholders consultation
- 'Meet the Local Law Team'

Engagement Stage 2

- Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan to be provided to the Community for consultation and feedback

The plan outlines the following areas of focus:

- A skilled, capable workforce
- Promoting registration and identification
- Promoting and encouraging responsible pet ownership of dogs and cats
- Minimising the potential for nuisance dogs and cats
- Minimising dog attacks
- Managing over population and reducing euthanasia rates
- Working wih domestic animal businesses
- Managing dangerous, menacing and restricted dog breeds
- Monitoring, reporting and continuous improvement

The DAMP draft was made available to the community between 19 September - 17 October 2025. Comments received during this period were also considered in the preparation of the draft DAMP.

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About the Shire of Strathbogie

The Shire of Strathbogie Shire spans an area of just over 3303 km^2 in the northeastern region of Victoria.



There is a diverse mix of housing types across these towns, from residential, rural residential and farming properties.

Current Programs in Place

The following table 3 provides a summary of Domestic Animal Management Programs and services provided by Strathbogie Shire Council.

Table 3: Strathbogie Shire Council DAM Programs

Program	Service Provided
Registration and identification	New registrations are processed within 1 working day of application being received Annual pet registration renewal notices mailed out Online application for new registrations in addition to hardcopy's as well Tags sent out with new registration. New tags about to be purchased if old tag is lost
After hours service	Emergency response 24/7 Our authorised officers are on call for: • dog attacks • animals at large • to assist Victoria police if they need help with animals
Dog attacks	Our Authorised officers are on call 24/7 for all emergency or dangerous situations. They aim to assist the community as soon as possible.
Wandering dogs	Authorised officers will respond to reports of wandering within 24 hours of report being received
Wandering cat complaints	Authorised officers will respond to reports of wandering within 24 hours of report being received Community members can hire council cat traps and return trapped cats to Authorised Officers. Cats are then taken to vet to get microchipped and assessed
Animal nuisance complaints	Authorised officers will respond to complaints within 2 business days. Regarding barking dogs - officers will contact complainant to gather all details and then contact owner of dog and discuss and provide education/ guidance to reduce barking. Officers will then follow up with complainant 2 weeks after for an update. If not resolved complainant will need to keep a barking dog diary and further action may need to be taken. Other animal nuisance complaints will be followed up with authorised officers and they can assist with cat trapping for nuisance cats
Municipal animal pound	Strathbogie shire pound (council owned and operated) able to hold dogs and livestock Adoption and rehoming or surrendered/ abandoned dogs. Communication on website and Facebook pages when advertising rehoming of dogs and cats. All impounded animals are registered, microchipped, desexed and given parasite prevention before being released.
Animal welfare matters	Refers all animal welfare/ cruelty cases to RSPCA
Domestic Animal Business registration	New DAB application processed and inspected annually
Declared dogs	Annual inspection of properties and enclosure of declared dogs Check registrations at renewal time, 10th of April

Focus Areas

FOCUS 1 – A Skilled, Capable Workforce

Strathbogie Shire Council's Compliance team are a part of the Community Safety team. The team consist of a Manager of Community Safety, two full time Compliance Officers, one Community Safety Support Officer and two Administration Support Officers.

As well as animal management the Compliance officers are responsible for investigation and enforcement in several different areas. This includes parking enforcement, planning enforcement, local laws and fire prevention.

An after-hours emergency service is provided by rostered Authorised Officers.

The compliance team are responsible for providing animal management service which includes:

- Domestic animal registrations
- Responding to livestock out on roads
- Impounding domestic animals
- Rehoming surrendered and unclaimed stray animals
- Investigating nuisance complaints e.g. Barking dogs
- Investigating dog attacks
- Wandering dogs and cats
- Promoting responsible pet ownership
- Referring animal welfare cases to RSPCA
- Inspecting premises for both Domestic Animal Business and Excess Animal permits.
- After-hours services

1.1 Training Authorised Officers

Action	Measure	Outcome Timeframe or Frequency
A. Induction training for new staff. • Including induction of all relevant programs/systems and familiarisation of animal management tasks	Staff training register	Year 1
B. OH&S, customer service training, conflict resolution and dealing with aggressive customers training	All staff to attend training if required which is determined through reviews	Year 1
C. Maintain accurate staff training register	Register maintained	Annually
D. Develop training programs for staff such as staff attendance at industry related seminars such as RSPCA training, Animal Welfare Victoria training and animal specific training as the opportunity arises	Attend identified training and register updated	Annually
E. Complete a nationally accredited first aid and CPR training	Complete required training and register updated	As required
F. Attend Australian institute of Animal Management Conference	Attend conference and update Register	Biannually
G. Continue to review and update animal management processes	Process continually updated and reviewed	Annually

1.2 Additional Qualifications and Training for Authorised Officers

Qualification/Training	Frequency
Certification IV in Government Investigations or equivalent	Upon appointment or begin within 12 months
Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation	As required
Animal handling Behaviour and Animal Assessment	As required
Customer service/ OH&S training	As required
Breed identification (restricted)	As required

Council aims to ensure all Compliance Officers in the Community Safety team has the knowledge and skills to carry out their work safely for the officers, animals and community members.

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FOCUS 2 – Promoting Registration and Identification

The Domestic Animals Act 1994 requires all dogs and cats to be registered with Council after 3 months of age. The first 12 months of the animal's life is registered for free with Strathbogie Shire Council. After 12 months of age there is an annual renewal on 10th of April.

All animals registered must be microchipped and are provided with a council identified tag that is to be worn on the dogs collar.

By registering a pet as part of the shire it increases opportunity for reunification. This further means less time for animals in the pound and the quicker they are returned home to their owner.

Registration fees help support

- Animal management services by the council's Compliance Team
- Compliance audits of Domestic Animal Business such as breeders and boarding kennels
- Stray cat collections to reduce overpopulation across the shire
- Pet facilities such as the off-lead dog park and the Euroa council pound.
- Community education

The rate of animal registered as increased significantly over the last financial year. This can be attributed to public education as well as the introduction of SMS, emails reminders and the use of other databases.

2.1 Our Plan to Improve Registration and Identification

Action	Measure	Outcome Timeframe or Frequency
A. Ensure councils registration database is maintained and accurate	Increase in animals registered	Annually
B. Develop a 'New Pet Owner' information pack	Increase in packs either been posted and or downloaded from our website.	Year 1
C. Ensure the community are provided sufficient notice via Social Media, Website updates etc. on their obligation to Register their animal and renew annually	Increase in registrations being paid on time. Reduction in the volume of registrations that require following up.	Annually
D. Website content revised to ensure it provides all necessary information and downloadable forms for pet registration, supporting responsible pet ownership and compliance with local animal management laws.	Reduction in volume of registrations that require follow up.	Annually
E. Conduct quarterly cross-checks with microchip databases (e.g. Central Animal Records) to ensure registration accuracy and compliance.	Increase in the volume of new registrations	Ongoing
F. Investigate with the Customer Service team, improvements to pet owner registration platforms	Community Satisfaction, reduce the need for manual intervention for the benefit of the community.	Year 2

G. Ensure all impounded/ surrendered animals are registered before being released to their owners or before being rehomed/ adopted	100% Compliance with legislation.	Ongoing

FOCUS 3 – Promoting and Encouraging Responsible Pet Ownership of Dogs and Cats

Strathbogie Shire Council aims to promote and encourage responsible pet ownership to provide a positive environment for all members of the community. Responsible pet ownership encompasses a very broad range of issues to ensure that the welfare of the domestic animal is met whilst also ensuring that the community, environment and wildlife are protected.

Strathbogie Shire Council Local Law No.2 part Four (39)-Keeping Animals states that owners or occupiers of land must not without a permit keep any more animals that is stated in the following table.

Table 4: Maximum Domestic Animals in Residential Areas

Type of animal	Maximum allowed in residential areas
Dogs	2
Cats	2

(44) A person in charge of a dog must not allow any part of the animals excrement to remain on a road or council land and must carry suitable receptacle for the removal of that animals' excrement from the road or council land.

(46) a person may unleash a dog in an area designated by council and sign posted

3.1 Our Plan to Promote Responsible Pet Ownership

Action	Measure	Outcome Timeframe or Frequency
A. Enhance community education and engagement through regular updates on Council's website and social media, including information on responsible pet ownership, legislative requirements, registration benefits, barking dog management, and promotion of impounded and surrendered animals to support rehoming and reunification Increase social media posts	Increase in the number of animal registrations as well as a clearer understanding of the role of Council.	Ongoing
• Identify areas with high dog activity to determine opportunities for additional waste bag dispensers or signage, and provide findings to Parks and Gardens for action	Improve access to promote dog litter being collected by owners and dogs on leads	Year 3

B. Develop procedures and processes to support victims of domestic violence that have pets	Improved processes to assist victims	Year 1
C. Investigate the possibility of delivering a Pet Expo	Dependent on outcome.	Year 4

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FOCUS 4 – Minimising The Potential for Nuisance Dogs and Cats

Council has been successful in dealing with nuisance complaints and promoting responsible pet ownership. This is an ongoing issue that is expected to grow as population grows, and the number of pets grow with that population. Council currently has procedures in place to deal with the many types of nuisances caused by dogs and cats.

Barking/ noisy dogs is an issue in the shire and can take significant time to resolve. Most owners are not aware of a barking issue as it normally occurs when owners are away from their property. Authorised officers have a process in place for dealing with barking/noise complaints. They try to work with the owner to resolve the issue by helping them take the appropriate steps to address the noise complaint.

Animals at large is another ongoing issue in Strathbogie Shire. When an animal is impounded, Authorised officers will first check microchip/ registration details to try to identify owners. If they are correct/up to date details animal can be reunited with owners in a timely manner. If animal is not registered/ microchipped the animal will be taken to the Euroa pound, and attempts will be made to try to find owner via website lost dog page and the Strathbogie Shire Facebook page. If no owner is found after 8 days, the dog is advertised for adoption.

Nuisance/ trespassing cats is a large issue. This plan proposes an investigation of ways to address this issue. This not only aims to help wildlife and the environmental factors impacted by feral cats however also aims to keep pet safer from injury and diseases.

4.1 Nuisance Noise Complaints

Action	Measure	Outcome Timeframe or Frequency
A. Review the noise complaint process to ensure current best practice	Reduction in time to resolve such complaints	Year 1
B. Provide education on reducing noise nuisance on website and other social media.	Increase quality of evidence for officers to use and reduce the need for officer intervention.	Ongoing

4.2 Encourage Owners to Pick Up Their Dog's Litter

Action	Measure	Outcome Timeframe or Frequency
A. Promote responsible pet ownership through education and social media to promote carrying waste bags and picking up after their dog	Reduced number of complaints about dog litter	Ongoing
B. Investigate a way to promote picking up dogs' litter in the registration/ renewal process to advice owners on local laws surrounding pets and waste	Reduced number of complaints about dog litter	Year 3
C. Increase in routine patrols of Authorised officers in public high dog presence areas or 'high complaint' areas	Reduced number of complaints about dog litter	Ongoing

4.3 Dogs Off Lead and at Large in the Community

Action	Measure	Outcome Timeframe or Frequency
A. Promote responsible pet ownership through education signage and social media	Reduction in number of complaints about dogs at large	Annually
B. Investigate a way to promote dog on leads in the registration/ renewal process to advise owners on local laws surrounding pets	Reduction in number of Dog attacks in public and complaints.	Year 3
C. Update and add signage around high dog presence areas regarding responsible pet ownership and Local Laws	Reduction in number of dog attacks in Public.	Years 4
D. Identify areas to enable more off leash parks	Reduction in number of complaints regarding dogs off lead	Year 4
E. Investigate potential new off leash areas	Off leash area established	Year 4

4.4 Nuisance Cat Complaints

Action	Measure	Outcome Timeframe or Frequency
A. Investigating a cat curfew	If introduced, a reduction of cat nuisance complaints.	Year 4
B. Provide community members with loan cat trap for trespassing nuisance cats	Reduction of cat nuisance complaints	As required
C. Provide community with education information on the website and other social media pages on how to keep cats contained to their own property to reduce cats being nuisances to neighbours	Reduction of cat nuisance complaints	Year 1
D. Promote the benefits of preventing cats from wandering	Reduction of cat nuisance complaints	Year 1

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FOCUS 5 – Minimising Dogs Attacks

Strathbogie Shire Council is committed to minimising the risk of attacks on people and animals within our community. As a result, Council's Compliance Officers investigate all allegations of dog attacks and aggressive behavior displayed by dogs as quickly and efficiently as possible. Officers utilise their skills to investigate and remove the risk from the community.

There are a large range of reasons surrounding why dogs attacks and reports are received from a range of different sources. That range of sources includes government agencies, other councils, veterinary clinics or the parties involved such as victims or the owner.

Table 5: Call Outs

Types of Call Outs	2024	2025
Dogs/cats at large	165	80
Minor attack/ rushing offence	9	4
Dog attacks	19	20

5.1 Minimise Risk of Dog Attacks in the Community

Action	Measure	Outcome Timeframe or Frequency
A. Provide education through social media and website updates	Reduced number of dog attacks	Year 1
B. Updated processes and procedures to ensure all reports of dog attacks are investigated thoroughly and in time.	Improved processes and procedures	Ongoing
C. Providing after-hour services to respond to reports of aggressive dogs or dog attacks	Improve response times to reports	Ongoing
D. Proactive patrols around the shire for roaming, unsecured and unregistered dogs	Reduced number of dogs at large to reduce attacks	Ongoing
E. Actively enforce reoccurring instances of wandering at large.	Reduced number of dogs at large	Ongoing
F. Record accurate and complex data for all dog attack reports and investigations	Improved evidence available for authorised officers which will help if case needs to be taken further or dog needs to be classed as dangerous/ menacing	Ongoing

FOCUS 6 – Managing Over Population and Reducing Euthanasia Rates

6.1 Excess animal permits

Excess animal permits are to help protect the health of pets and prevent inconvenience to neighbours. It also helps reduce overpopulation.

Strathbogie Shires Councils Local Law states that a person must not, without a permit, have domestic pet or other animal on any property if the number of animals exceeds the permitted number in the table below. This table was for the previous local law.

Table 6: Keeping Animals

Type of Animal*	Land Less than 1,000m² *	Between 1,000-10,000m² and in a Residential Zone	Land Greater then 10,000m² *
Dogs	2	2	5
Cats	2	2	5
Poultry	5	5	Not Limited by this Local Law
Roosters**, Peacocks and Donkeys	Not Permitted	Not Permitted	Not Limited by this Local Law
Pigs	Not Permitted	Not Permitted	Not Limited by this Local Law
Other Large Birds (excluding peacocks, poultry and roosters)	5	5	Not Limited by this Local Law
Livestock	Not Permitted	Maximum Density of one Animal per every 2,000m2 of Open Land (excluding buildings)	Not Limited by this Local Law
Maximum Total Number of Animals of any Kind	20	20	

*The Planning Scheme may also affect a person's right to use land for the keeping of animals

**Roosters are prohibited in a Residential Zone

Table 7: Number of Excess Animal Permit

	2024	2025
Number of excess animal permits	14	9

Table 8: Cats Impounded

	2023-2024	2024-2025
Impounded	24	115
Reclaimed	7	7
Rehomed	0	5
Euthanised	16	103

Table 9: Dogs Impounded

	2023-2024	2024-2025
Impounded	72	56
Reclaimed	69	34
Rehomed	6	8
Euthanised	0	4

Cat overpopulation and high euthanasia is a major issue in the shire. The rise in impounded and euthanised cats has significantly increase from 2023-2024 as shown in table 8 compared to dogs in table 9. This plan proposes multiple ways to overcome this ongoing issue. As previously stated in Focus 4 on how to reduce nuisance cats that plan can also be used/ investigate to help reduce over population.

6.2 Reduce Overpopulation

Action	Measure	Outcome Timeframe or Frequency
A. Ensure excess animal permits are being enforced to help reduce nuisance to neighbours and overpopulation in the shire	Reduced number of nuisance complaints	Ongoing
B. Promotes and raise awareness on social media and websites on the benefits of desexing	Reduction in surrender of animals and unplanned litters	Annually
C. Investigate desexing programs/grants	Reduction in surrender of animals and unplanned litters	Year 4
D. Investigate mandatory desexing of cats	Reduction in surrender of animals and unplanned litters	Year 4
E. All dogs adopted/ rehomed must be desexed before going to new homes	100% Compliance with the code of practice	Ongoing

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6.3 Reduce High Euthanasia Rates

Action	Measure	Outcome Timeframe or Frequency
A. Leverage Council's website and social media platforms to promote animals found at large, support the rehoming of surrendered animals, and highlight adoption success stories.	Reduced animals time spent impounded. Increase number of adoptions of surrendered animals	Ongoing
B. Promote the importance of up-to-date microchipping and registration to help reunite owners with animals if they get picked up by an Authorised officer	Quick reunifications and reduce euthanasia rates	Annually
C. Increase foster carers to help provide care before rehoming animals	Reduced number of animals kept at the pound and increase chances of animals being rehomed	Ongoing
D. All animals impounded must be held for 8 days for the owner to reclaim.	100% Compliance with code of practice	Ongoing

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FOCUS 7 – Working with Domestic Animal Businesses

In accordance with the Domestic Animals Act 1994, all Domestic Animal Businesses must be registered with local council. In 2025, council had 2 registered Domestic Animal Business. These include:

- 1 breeding and rearing establishment
- 1 boarding kennel

Registered Domestic Animal Businesses are inspected at time of registrations as well as inspected annually to ensure the business is complaint with all relevant codes of practices and legislations applicable to that business.

The five types of Domestic Animal Businesses that must be registered are:

- Pet shop
- Boarding kennel establishments
- Breeding and rearing establishments
- Shelters/ pounds
- Dog training establishments

7.1 Domestic Animal Businesses

Action	Measure	Outcome Timeframe or Frequency
A. Identify all businesses that should be registered. Follow up to determine if they do need to be registered and ensure they do register if required	100% Compliance	Ongoing
B. Authorised officers to conduct inspections annually of DABs registered	100% Compliance	Annually
C. Promote and educate DAB definitions and code of practices that must be adhered to.	Increased awareness and education	Annually
D. Enforce action such as infringements for non-compliance	Increased compliance	Ongoing
E. Investigate advertisements of litters for sale	Increased compliance from Breeders within the shire	Ongoing
F. Investigate all reports of suspected backyard breeding	Increased compliance of illegal breeders	Ongoing

FOCUS 8 – Managing Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Dog Breeds

All councils must register all restricted/ dangerous/ menacing dogs with the Victorian Dangerous Dog register (VDDR). Any animal entered into the VDDR is declared for the life of that animal and cannot be revoked by the council.

The Act defines restricted breed dogs as any one of the following breeds:

- Japanese Tose
- Fila Brasileiro
- Dogo Argentino
- Perro de Prasa Canario
- American Pit Bull Terrier

Strathbogie Shire Council has no restricted breed dogs registered to date. To own a restricted breed dog owners must follow conditions specified in the Act, including:

- Must have implanted permanent identification
- Must notify the council if the dog goes missing, there is a change of ownership or address.
- Owners must notify the council if the municipal district where the dog is kept changes
- Must not consent to, arrange or recklessly allow the dog to breed
- Must ensure the dog cannot escape the dwelling and is kept in a prescribed enclosure
- Must display warning signs which comply with regulations at all entrances of the premises where the dog is kept warning people that a restricted breed dog is kept at the premises.
- Must wear a prescribed collar
- The dog must be muzzled and be on a leash when outside the premises
- When the dog is not inside the premises, the dog must be kept in a prescribed enclosure
- Minors must not enter the dwelling where the dog is kept without an adult
- Owners cannot own more the 2 restricted breed dogs unless that person has a permit from the council of that municipal district where the dogs are kept

Strathbogie Shire Council has no declared dangerous dogs registered to date. A dangerous dog is one that has been declared dangerous by the council or the courts, a guard dog kept for the purpose of guarding non-residential property or a dog that has been trained to attack or bite any person or anything when attached to or worn by a person. Owners of dangerous dogs must abide by conditions specified by the act, including:

- Dangerous dogs must be desexed unless they are kept as a guard dog or undergone protection training in accordance with any relevant business code of practice
- Must have implanted permanent identification
- Must notify the council if the dog goes missing, there is a change of ownership or address.
- Owners must notify the council if the municipal district where the dog is kept changes
- The dog must be confined to the dwelling and must ensure the dog cannot escape.
- Must display warning signs which comply with regulations at all entrances of the premises where the dog is kept warning people that a dangerous breed dog is kept at the premises.
- When the dog is not inside the premises, the dog must be kept in a prescribed enclosure
- Must wear a prescribed collar
- The dog must be muzzled and be on a leash when outside the premises
- Minors must not enter the dwelling where the dog is kept without an adult

Strathbogie Shire Council has no declared menacing dogs registered to date. A menacing dog is one that has been deemed/ declared menacing by council or the courts. Owners of menacing dogs must abide by conditions specified by the Act, including:

- Must have implanted permanent identification
- Must notify council if dog rushes or chases a person
- Must notify councils if the municipal districts where the dog is being kept changes
- The dog must be muzzled and be on a leash when taken outside the premises.

8.1 Helping Reduce/Control Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs

Action	Measure	Outcome Timeframe or Frequency
A. Promote and enhance information for dog owners to ensure there is a clear understanding of dog behaviours that may lead to dogs been declared as dangerous or menacing • Promote on social media and website	Reduction in Dogs to be Declared Menacing/Dangerous	
B. Create a menacing and dangerous dog registry	Compliant with DAA 100%	
C. Maintain the Victorian Declared Dog Registry	Compliant with DAA 100%	
D. Complete random unannounced property inspections of all declared dogs to ensure owners are compliant with the Domestic Animal Act 1994 and regulations	Completed audits and ensured full compliance with all requirements achieved	
E. Review all dog attack investigations upon completion to assess if anything needs to be changed to the procedures in place.	Improved process and outcomes for Victims	
F. Proactive patrols around the shire for roaming, unsecured and unregistered dogs	Reduced number of reports of dogs at large and reduced complaints of attack	
G. Prosecute repeat offenders or serious breaches of compliance	Prosecutions completed	

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FOCUS 9 – Monitoring, Reporting and Continuous Improvement

Council must:

1. Review its Domestic Animal Management Plan annually and if appropriate, amend the plan.
2. Provide the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions secretary with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan.
3. Publish and evaluation of its implementation of the plan in its annual report.

Council will review the plan annually with a full review being completed in year 4.

9.1 Monitoring, Review and Continuous Improvement

Action	Measure	Outcome Timeframe or Frequency
A. Establish a timeline and program by reviewing objectives and if the plan has been implemented successfully	Ensure reporting requirements are met	Year 1
B. Establish as a set agenda item for the Community Safety Department to ensure ongoing reporting on actions and progress	Ensuring plan is being actioned	Ongoing
C. Complete an evaluation of the plan which needs to include any proposed changes	Evaluation completed annually	Annually
D. If amendments are made, submit a copy to the secretary.	Copy provided to secretary	Annually

Table 7: Evaluation of Implementation of the Domestic Animal Management Plan

Complete for each activity	
Was each activity completed?	Yes/ No
Describe any changes you will make if you do that activity again.	
Was an activity not done or is now not planned to be done?	If so, why?
If an activity was unsuccessful and you don't plan to do it again, outline insights you have into why it didn't work	
Are any amendments required for the DAM plan, if so, please describe	
If the DAMP has been amended, has a copy been proved to the secretary?	Yes / No
Complete for each objective	
Did you meet your objective by carrying out the planned activities?	Yes/ No
Describe your level of success/ progress in meeting the objectives	

Conclusion

The Strathbogie Shire Council Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP plan) has been developed in line with legislative requirements that all councils must develop a DAMP plan every 4 years.

The DAMP plan must:

- Set out a method for evaluating whether animal control services provided by council are adequate to give effect to the requirements of the Act and Domestic Animal regulations
- Outline programs for the training of Authorised Officers to ensure they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of the Act
- Outline programs, services and strategies council intends to pursue to:
    - Promote and encourage responsible pet ownership of dogs and cats
    - Ensure that people comply with the Domestic Animals Act, the regulations and any associated legislation
    - Minimise risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals
    - Address any over-population and high euthanasia rates in dogs and cats
    - Encourage registration and identification of dogs and cats
    - Minimise potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance
    - Effectively identify all dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs and ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with the Domestic Animals Act
- Provide for review of existing orders made under the Act and local laws
- Provide for review of any other matter related to management of dogs and cats
- Provide for periodic monitoring and evaluation of any programs, services, strategy or review outlines under the DAMP plan.

Council is required to review and, if appropriate, amend the DAMP on an annual basis and to include an evaluation of the implementation of the plan in the Annual Report.

Acknowledgements

The Strathbogie Shire Council would like to thank the many community members who participated in the consultation. Your participation was valuable in developing the plan.

Thank you to the councillors for providing their feedback. Thank you also to the community safety team who provided input towards the development of the plan.

Tracking Our Progress

In line with the requirements of the Domestic Animals Act Council will:

- review the Domestic Animal Management Plan annually to ensure actions and priorities are still relevant and can be completed within available resources
- provide community with annual updates on the progress of actions in the plan
- undertake a major review of the plan in 2028/2029.
- provide the Secretary with a copy of the plan
- provide the Secretary with an annual report highlighting progress against the actions and any amendments to priority actions.

Contact Strathbogie Shire Council

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Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-2029

Engagement Report August 2025

Phase 1

Contents

- Executive Summary - Engagement
- Background
- Who We Heard From
- What We Heard
- Community Priorities
- Outcome and Next Steps

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Executive Summary Overview

The first phase of community consultation for the development of Strathbogie Shire's **Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) 2025–2029** was conducted from **9 July to 1 August 2025**. This early engagement aimed to give the community an opportunity to help shape the direction, priorities and actions of the draft Plan.

To ensure the draft Plan reflects local needs and expectations, Council adopted a **targeted and inclusive approach** that included both online and in-person methods to reach a broad cross-section of the Shire.

Engagement Activities

Engagement methods included:

- An **online survey** hosted on the *Share Strathbogie* platform
- **"Meet the Local Laws Team"** pop-up sessions held in seven towns across the Shire including Strathbogie, Ruffy, Longwood, Euroa, Nagambie, Violet Town, and Avenel
- **Social media promotion** via Council's official channels
- **Direct outreach** to Community Action Groups and Business Associations, Vet clinics, stock agents and other key identified key stakeholders

These activities provided residents the opportunity to share their views on key topics such as responsible pet ownership, registration, cat curfews, desexing, nuisance behaviour, and off-leash areas.

Reach and Participation

- **Social Media**
  - Reach: **3,547 people**
  - Reactions: **22**
  - Comments: **8**
- **Share Strathbogie (online engagement platform)**
  - Page Views: **304**
  - Surveys Completed: **45**
- **In-Person Engagement**
  - Local Laws Team visited **7 towns** engaging with over **100 people**
  - Direct conversations and information shared with residents

Key Community Insights

From the **45 completed surveys** and in-person discussions, several key themes emerged:

- **Strong support** for initiatives that promote responsible pet ownership, and animal welfare
- A clear interest in **cat containment policies**, **desexing programs**, and **community education**
- Concerns raised about **roaming/stray cats** and **nuisance behaviour** from dogs (e.g., barking, lack of control in public spaces)

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- Desire for improved **infrastructure** to support pet owners (e.g., off-leash areas, bins, signage)

This feedback provides a valuable foundation to guide the drafting of the Domestic Animal Management Plan, ensuring it balances community expectations, public safety, and animal welfare across Strathbogie Shire.

Background

Under the Domestic Animals Act 1994, Victorian councils are required to develop a Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) every four years. The plan must detail how Council will manage dogs and cats within the municipality, encourage responsible pet ownership, and ensure community safety and animal welfare.

The Strathbogie Shire Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026–2029 will address:

- Promotion of responsible pet ownership
- Support for registration, microchipping and desexing
- Management of dog and cat nuisance issues
- Education and enforcement approaches
- Management of unowned and semi-owned animals
- Provision of animal-related infrastructure and services

Who We Heard From

Throughout the engagement, participants had the opportunity to engage online through Share Strathbogie page. This is a snapshot of who we heard from:

Share Strathbogie Survey Contributions 45

Respondent Postcodes

Postcode	Percentage
3608	6.67%
3664	13.33%
3665	2.22%
3666	62.22%
3669	11.11%
No answer	4.44%

Age Breakdown

Age Range	Percentage
Under 18	0%
18-24	2.33%
25-44	28.89%
45-65	24.44%
Over 65	44.44%

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Gender Breakdown

Answer Choices	Percent
Male	31.82%
Female	65.91%
Other	0%
Prefer not to say	2.27%

Pet Ownership

Types of Pets

Answer Choices	Percent
Yes, a dog	41.86%
Yes, a cat	4.65%
Yes, both a dog and a cat	4.65%
No	39.53%
Other	9.30%

Pet Registration Details

Answer Choices	Percent
Registered with Council	90.910%
Microchipped	95.45%
Desexed	86.36%
None of the above	0%

What We Heard

Pet Ownership is Promoted and Supported in the Community

Answer Choices	Percent
Very well	9.30%
Somewhat well	30.23%
Neutral	37.21%
Poorly	13.95%

What Will Help Improve Responsible Pet Ownership

Answer Choices	Percent
More community education	65.91%
Access to affordable desexing	65.91%
Increased enforcement of laws	50.00%
More off-leash areas	40.91%
Other	6.82%

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How to Encourage More People to Register Their Pets

Answer Choices	Percent
Greater understanding of what pet registration supports	53.85%
Easier online registration process	48.72%
Community awareness campaigns	46.15%
Other	20.51%

How Do You Want to Receive Information

Answer Choices	Percent
Social media	67.44%
Council website	39.53%
Community events	27.91%
Local newspaper	62.79%
Other	23.26%

What Information Do You Want to Receive

Answer Choices	Percent
Why microchipping is important	65.85%
Why you need to register your pet	63.41%
Responsibilities of dog owners when walking/exercising their dog	80.49%
What 'effective control' of a dog means	70.73%
Why cat containment is important	73.17%
Why de-sexing is important	73.17%
How to renew or add a pet registration on-line	51.22%
Dog on-leash areas and the rules	73.17%
What to do if you can no longer care for your pet	53.66%
What to do if you find a lost pet	56.10%
What to do if you lose your pet	48.78%
Barking dogs in your neighbourhood	73.17%
Making a complaint about another pet or owner	53.66%
Other	7.32%

Support for Cat Curfews

Answer Choices	Percent
Introduce a Sunset to Sunrise Curfew where cats must be confined between 7.00pm – 7.00am	52.38%
Introduce 24hr Cat Curfew – Cats must be confined to their registered property at all times	33.33%
No Cat Curfew	7.14%
I don't have a response	7.14%

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Cat Containment Support to Protect Environment and Wildlife

Answer Choices	Percent
Very supportive	76.19%
Somewhat supportive	9.52%
Neutral	4.76%
Not supportive	9.52%

Preferred Curfew Implementation Period

Answer Choices	Percent
3 months	26.83%
6 months	41.46%
12 months	12.20%
Other	19.51%

Nuisance Issues Identified

Answer Choices	Percent
Barking dogs	40.00%
Dogs off-leash where they shouldn’t be	40.00%
Wandering/stray cats	62.50%
Dog attacks	17.50%
Other	15.00%

How Often Nuisance Animals Have had an Impact

Answer Choices	Percent
Frequently	39.02%
Occasionally	21.95%
Rarely	29.27%
Never	9.76%

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Community Priorities

An overriding concern is the issue of barking dogs, which many residents identified as a persistent nuisance, particularly in areas such as Avenel and Euroa. This issue is often linked to dogs being left unattended or inadequately managed, with some respondents noting the impact on mental health and quality of life. Roaming animals, especially cats and dogs, were also frequently mentioned. Cats particularly were identified as a major threat to native wildlife, with strong support for the introduction of cat curfews and containment requirements.

There is a clear call for stricter enforcement of existing laws, including higher penalties for unregistered pets, repeat offenders, and those who fail to contain their animals. Some respondents advocated for a “three strikes” policy for roaming or unregistered pets, leading to rehoming or euthanasia. Others suggested that council officers should be more visible and proactive in the community, including conducting property checks for unregistered animals and enforcing fencing standards.

Affordability was another recurring theme. Many residents cited the cost of registration and desexing as a barrier to compliance. Suggestions included reducing or removing registration fees, offering financial support for desexing, and participating in national desexing programs. There was also a desire for more accessible registration options, particularly for elderly residents who may struggle with online systems.

The community expressed a strong interest in education and awareness initiatives. Respondents recommended more signage, community engagement, and educational materials—such as infographics or videos—on topics like responsible pet ownership, dealing with nuisance animals, and the benefits of registration and microchipping. Collaboration with veterinary professionals and local shelters was also encouraged.

A number of submissions, including one from Avenel Active, advocated for the creation of off-leash dog parks, particularly in Avenel, to support responsible dog ownership and provide safe spaces for exercise. This was linked to broader concerns about dogs wandering off-leash and the need for designated areas to reduce conflict and improve safety.

Other concerns included animal welfare, particularly for neglected or mistreated pets and livestock within town limits, and the need for quicker responses to complaints and cruelty reports. There was also support for limiting the number of animals per household and improving the council’s website to make information and services more accessible.

Conclusively the feedback is reflective of a community that values responsible pet ownership, effective enforcement, and practical support.

There is a strong appetite for improved education, infrastructure, and affordability measures, alongside tougher regulations for those who fail to meet their responsibilities. These insights should guide the development of the next Domestic Animal Management Plan to ensure it aligns with community expectations and promotes the wellbeing of both residents and animals.

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Outcome and Next Steps

The feedback received during this initial consultation will directly inform the drafting of the Plan. Once the draft is complete, it will be presented to Councillors for endorsement and released for a second round of community consultation requesting submissions to the draft between 19 September and 17 October 2025.

11.2.3 Variations and Grants Awarded Under Delegation August 2025

AUTHOR Manager Community and Culture

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director Community and Planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to inform Council and the community of community grants or variations approved under delegation by the Chief Executive Officer or relevant Director, as per Council's adopted Community Funding Model, for the period 1 August to 31 August 2025.

Council adopted the 2025-2026 Community Funding Model and associated Grant Guidelines at the April 2025 Council Meeting. This provides authorisation for the Chief Executive Officer to determine and award Community Grants and Event Grants under delegation, following a robust eligibility and assessment process, and subject to budget availability. Variations to Community Grants and Event Grants can also be approved via the Chief Executive Officer and/or the Director Community and Planning.

This report provides transparency to the community for decisions being made under delegation relating to the Community Funding Model 2025-2026.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Note that there was one event grant and one quick response grant awarded to the total value of $3,331 by the Chief Executive Officer between 1 August to 31 August 2025.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

In line with Council's approach to transparency and good governance, the grants and variations awarded under delegation report will be tabled for information purposes at each Council Meeting where there has been variations or grants awarded under delegation during the reporting period.

This report details any grant variations approved or grants awarded under delegated authority by the Chief Executive Officer/ and or grant variations approved by the Director Community and Planning, within their approved financial threshold and in line with Council's 2025-26 Community Funding Model.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Council adopted the 2025-2026 Community Funding Model and associated Grant Guidelines at the April 2025 Council Meeting. This provides authorisation for the Chief Executive Officer to determine and award Community Grants and Event Grants under delegation, following a robust eligibility and assessment process, and subject to budget availability. Variations to Community Grants and Event Grants can also be approved via the Chief Executive Officer and/or the Director Community and Planning.

Community Grants Awarded Under Delegation

Grant	Applicant	Project	Brief Description	Amount
Event Grant	Ruffy Tablelands Community Centre	Annual Community Christmas Party	The Annual Community Christmas Party in Ruffy is the main community event of the year with fun activities for kids. It is an opportunity for the whole community to come together to celebrate and connect.	$2,331
Quick Response	Euroa Agricultural Society Inc	Family Rooms at the Showgrounds	Two existing disability-accessible toilets at the Euroa Showgrounds will be converted into dual-purpose family rooms. The improvements will increase accessibility and comfort, encouraging greater participation in events at the Showgrounds. By removing barriers for parents and caregivers, the project will help build stronger community connections, particularly for families new to the region or those caring for young children and enhance the Showgrounds' reputation as an inclusive community venue.	$1,000
TOTAL				**$3,331**

In line with the adopted Community Funding Model and Grant Guidelines 2025-26, all applications were reviewed for eligibility and assessed via a comprehensive assessment process providing a recommendation to the Chief Executive Officer, to then determine grant outcomes and recipients.

Applications for the 2025-2026 Event Grants opened on the 1 June 2025 and are open until 1 June 2026 or until such time as funds are exhausted. Quick Response Grants opened on the 1 July 2025 and remain open until 31 May 2026 or until such time as funds are exhausted.

Following the award of these grants, the remaining Event Grant budget is $22,960.

Following the award of this grant, the remaining funds in the Quick Response Grant budget is $8,000.

Variations Awarded under delegation

Nil.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The author of this report considers that no external community consultation was necessary as part of this report.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following key strategic objectives and or actions in the 2025-29 Council Plan:

Objective One: Connect
Objective Two: Sustain
Objective Three: Deliver

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

The author considers that this report is aligned with the following legislation, Council Policies and key strategic documents, including Council's community funding model and Annual budget.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Lack of transparency with community	Unlikely	Moderate	Low	Regular reporting to Council and the community on grants awarded under delegation
Without grants being awarded under delegation, delays are caused, resulting in community not being able to deliver projects in a timely manner	Possible	Moderate	Low	Delegations in place and regular reporting to Council and the community on grants and variations awarded under delegation.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no significant legal considerations associated with this report.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

In the interests of transparency and open and honest communication with our community, this report is presented to a public Council meeting.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The Grants awarded were within the total budget allocation of $50,000 for Event Grants and $10,000 for Quick Response Grants, contained in the Council's Adopted Budget 2025-2026, and were awarded within the relevant financial delegations.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Economic

Community Funding supports economic growth across the Shire. Local businesses benefit from an increased visitor economy with projects and events assisting in an increase in visitors as well as an increase in the average length of stay of those visitors. Applicants are also encouraged to buy from local suppliers where possible.

Social

The Community Funding Model encourages projects and events that demonstrate significant social benefit, that will support building a vibrant, inclusive and connected community.

Environmental

Environmental sustainability is promoted at various stages of the grants process. Impacts of projects and events on the natural environment will be assessed in the assessment process and mitigation strategies included in funding agreements.

Climate Change

Community Grant and Event Grant applications must also consider climate change including minimising waste going to landfill and ensure that their project or event is minimising harmful impacts on our natural environment. Event Grant recipients must complete a Waste Wise Plan.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The change to award all grants under CEO delegation in the 2025-2026 community funding model demonstrates a continuous improvement approach streamlining the process for applicants, reducing administration time and incorporating the findings from the VAGO Fraud Control over Local Government Grants Report 2022.

COLLABORATION

No formal collaboration was undertaken in the production of this report.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

There are no significant implications for human rights arising from this report.

CONCLUSION

It is important that decisions and actions taken under delegation be properly documented and transparent in nature. This report advises Council of any grants or variations awarded under the Chief Executive Officer or the Director delegation as per Council's adopted Community Funding Model.

There was one event grant and one quick response grant awarded under CEO delegation during the reporting period from 1 August to 31 August 2025.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

11.3 Infrastructure

11.3.1 Climate Change Action Plan Update

AUTHOR Coordinator Waste and Environment

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director Sustainable Infrastructure

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an update on the implementation of Strathbogie Shire Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2022–2027, alongside a summary of corporate emissions reporting.

At the end of the 2024-25 financial year, 50% of the Plan's fifty four actions have been marked green as ongoing or completed, with Council on track to deliver the plan substantially by 2027.

While the target of Net Zero corporate emissions by 2025 has not been met, Council has achieved a 34% reduction since 2021 - a significant achievement that demonstrates clear progress and commitment to climate action.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

Note the Climate Change Action Plan 2022-2027 Update.

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Climate Change Action Plan 2022-2027 as well as provide a brief summary of our corporate emissions. It is also important to note that Objective 2.7 of the Council Plan states "Prepare Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2027-2032".

At its meeting on 22 April 2021, Strathbogie Shire Council declared a climate emergency. Declaring a climate emergency meant that Council acknowledged that current and projected levels of global warming require urgent action. Council also committed to develop and implement a Climate Change Action Plan to reduce our corporate emissions and support our community to adapt to a changing climate.

As of May 2025, 118 Australian Local Councils have declared a climate emergency. These 118 local councils account for 46% of the Australian population.
(Source climateemergencydeclaration.org)

The Climate Change Action Plan 2022-2027 outlines a comprehensive strategy to address climate change through a series of targeted actions.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

The Climate Change Action Plan 2022-2027 Implementation

At the end of the 2024-25 financial year, Council has successfully delivered 50% of the fifty-four actions outlined in the plan. With two years remaining in the implementation period, the

remaining actions are progressing in accordance with the established schedule. This level of progress provides confidence that all planned actions will be completed within the designated timeframe.

To ensure we achieve significant reductions in community and corporate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2027, Council will follow and monitor the action plan as outlined. Each action is categorized by its description, the responsible entity, its area of influence, the fiscal year schedule for implementation, indicative costs, and its status - whether completed, in progress, or pending. This structured approach allows us to track progress effectively and assess the impact of our climate initiatives within the Strathbogie Shire.

Please note that the published Climate Change Action Plan does not include this level of detail. A more detailed traffic light style spreadsheet was developed to be used internally to measure progress and track implementation of the plan.

The Climate Change Action Plan comprises fifty-four distinct actions, the status of which is as follows:

- 50% Green (19 Complete / 8 Ongoing)
- 42% Amber (8 In Progress / 15 Scheduled)
- 7% Red (2 delayed, 1 infeasible, 1 superseded)

The full list of actions in a traffic light format can be found in the attached spreadsheet Attachment 4.1.1.3.

Highlights of Completed Action (Marked Green)

Below are selected examples of actions successfully completed over the past 12 months:

Action 8: Promote the Benefits of Native Vegetation and Biodiversity

“Provide access to information on the benefits of retaining native vegetation and biodiversity for rural ratepayers.”

In May 2025, Council published a new booklet titled *Creating Wildlife Friendly Gardens*. This resource was developed and printed with funding from Sustainability Victoria’s Circular Economy Organics Council Fund. It provides practical guidance to support biodiversity on rural properties.

Action 9: Support the Gardens for Wildlife Program

“Work with the Euroa Arboretum to promote the Gardens for Wildlife program across the Shire to increase biodiversity in our urban areas.”

Council partnered with the Euroa Arboretum to deliver eight *Climate Ready Garden Workshops* between February and May 2025. These workshops attracted over 130 attendees and received an average participant rating of 4.6 out of 5. The sessions empowered residents to create resilient, biodiversity-friendly gardens and demonstrated strong community interest, with nearly all sessions fully booked.

Action 16: Support Community-Led Waste Reduction Projects

“Support local groups and businesses engaging in waste reduction projects and events that reduce emissions and waste going to landfill via the community grant process.”

In 2024, Council awarded six community groups funding through the *Community Grants:*

Sustainability Grant program. Grants ranged from $3,500 to $20,000 and supported initiatives such as installing electric heating and cooling systems, solar panels, and battery storage. This grant stream is now a permanent feature of Council's annual Community Grants Program.

Comments for High-Risk Actions (Marked Red)

Action 1: Update the Roadside Management Plan

"Work with our partner organisations to update the Roadside Management Plan to reflect best practice for protecting biodiversity."

This action was originally scheduled for 2023. Due to staffing constraints and delays, the draft document is still under review. Work is currently underway to progress this action.

Action 38: Develop an 'Active and Connected Cycling and Walking Strategy'

"Undertake an 'Active and Connected Cycling and Walking Strategy' and review the opportunities and barriers, infrastructure, routes, and social initiatives required for residents and visitors to access a safe and enjoyable lifestyle in Strathbogie Shire."

This action has been superseded. Council has instead committed, through the Council Plan 2025–2029, to develop a consolidated strategy encompassing all existing paths, trails, and footpath plans. This new comprehensive strategy will incorporate the elements originally intended for the above action.

Action 48: Establish a Revolving Energy Fund

"Institute a revolving energy fund to fund future projects."

This action has been deemed infeasible due to limitations within Council's current financial accounting systems and procedures.

Action 50: Develop Fossil Fuel Divestment Policy Options

"Develop fossil fuel divestment policy options for the consideration of Council and consider community submissions regarding divestment when updating Council's investment policy."

This action was scheduled for 2024. Council's current Investment Policy is due for review in September 2025. However, environmental considerations such as emissions reduction and waste minimisation have already been embedded in Council's current Procurement Policy.

Emissions Target

The Climate Change Action Plan 2022-2027 set a target of Net Zero by 2025 for Council operations. The plan did not set a community wide emissions target.

As of August 2025, Council has not reached the target of Net Zero, however we have reduced our net emissions by 1,479 tCO_2e/year (34%) since 2021. See Figure 1 below.
To achieve the target of Net Zero, carbon offsets would need to be purchased or created. For activities such as tree planting to formally count towards carbon offsets, tree planting must meet strict national or international standards (like the Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs)). To be considered a valid offset, the project must be something that goes beyond business-as-usual. Offset schemes require long-term monitoring and risk buffers.

Council's financial constraints make it unrealistic to invest in Carbon Offsets. This is a metric and a measure that should be reviewed as part of the development of the new Climate Change Action Plan going forward.

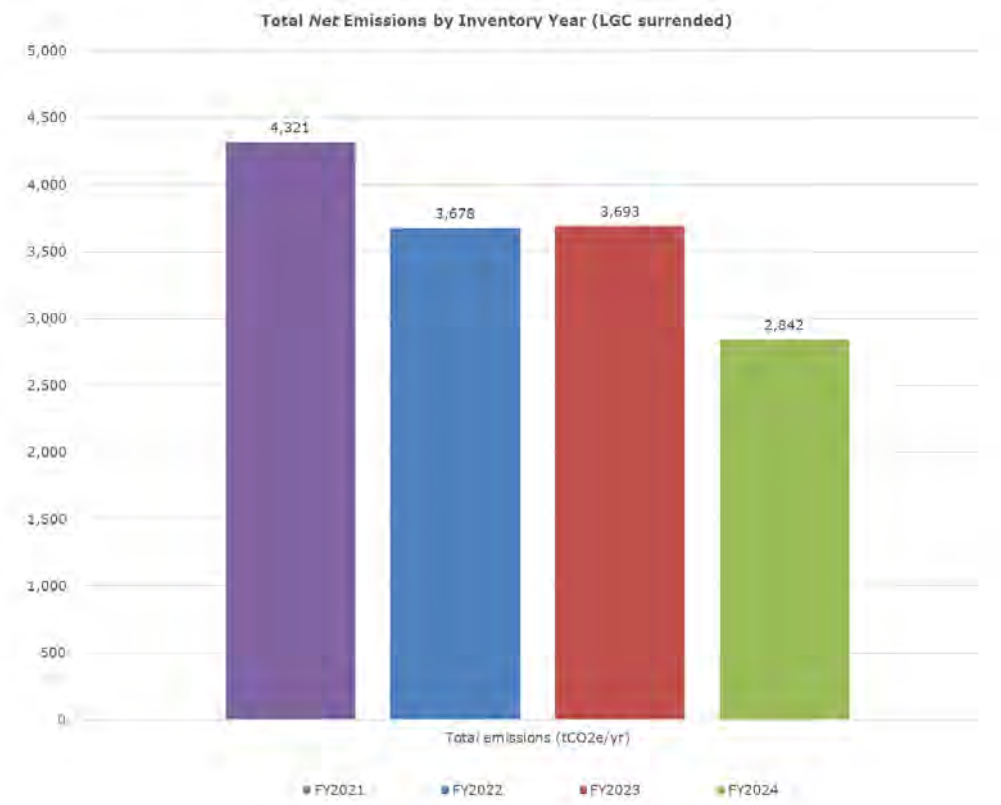
We can still celebrate our success of reducing emission by 34% and continue to stive for further emission reductions.

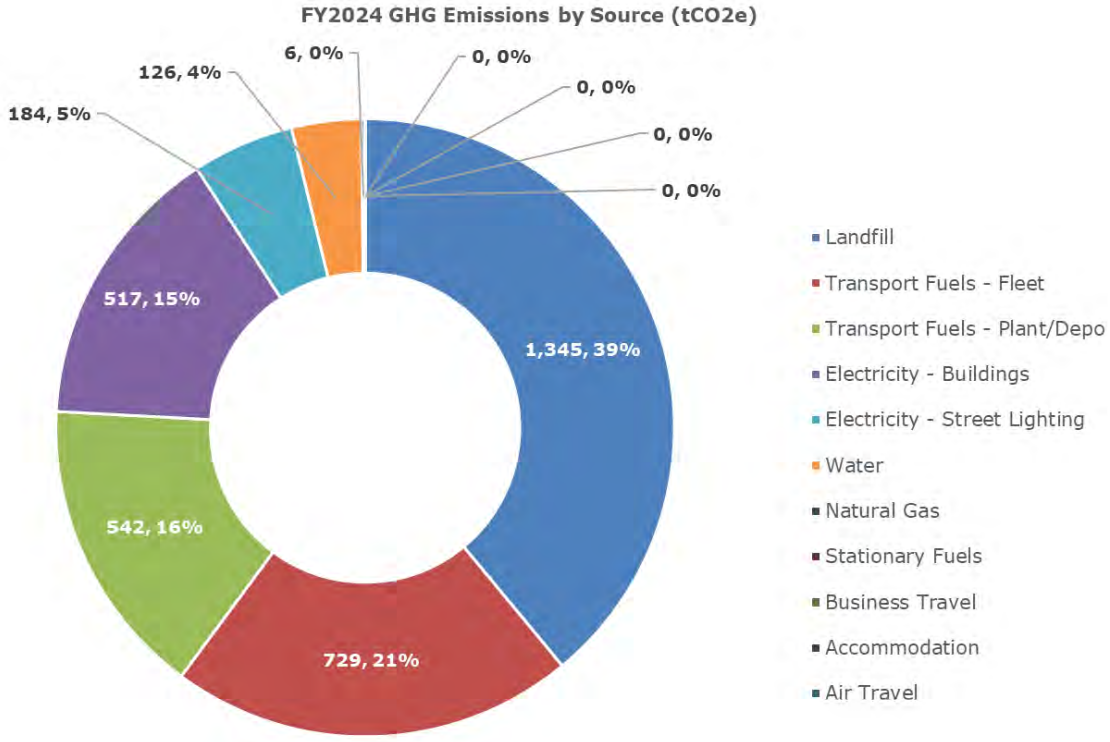
Please note that the data presented below includes emission reported up until 30 June 2024. The data from the most recent financial year is still being collected and collated.

The closed landfill at Violet Town accounts for 40% of our emissions in 2023-24. These emissions will reduce every year as we continue to monitor and rehabilitate the site as per EPA guidelines. Emissions from the landfill are calculated using the *National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting System* (NGERS). This system is part of Australia's framework for collecting and reporting data on greenhouse gas emissions, energy production, and energy consumption by corporations. See Figure 2 below.

Emissions from fuel use - specifically from Council's corporate fleet and depot operations - represent the next two largest sources of emissions, accounting for 21% and 16% respectively. These figures have increased over the past two years, largely due to improved monitoring and reporting practices. It is anticipated that these emissions will begin to decline as fuel efficiency initiatives are implemented.

Electricity consumption from Council-owned buildings remains a significant source of emissions. Council is committed to sourcing 100% of its electricity from renewable energy providers. Through ongoing collaboration with our energy suppliers, we aim to achieve net zero emissions from electricity use across our facilities.


Total Net Emissions by Inventory Year (LGC surrended)
5,000
4,500
4,000
3,500
3,000
2,500
2,000
1,500
1,000
500
0
4,321
3,678
3,693
2,842
Total emissions (tCO2e/yr)
FY2021
FY2022
FY2023
FY2024


FY2024 GHG Emissions by Source (tCO2e)
6, 0%
0, 0%
126, 4%
0, 0%
184, 5%
0, 0%
0, 0%
517, 15%
1,345, 39%
542, 16%
729, 21%
Landfill
Transport Fuels - Fleet
Transport Fuels - Plant/Depo
Electricity - Buildings
Electricity - Street Lighting
Water
Natural Gas
Stationary Fuels
Business Travel
Accommodation
Air Travel

Measurement and Tracking

In response to a request from Council's Audit and Risk Committee, Council has strengthened its approach to monitoring the implementation of the Climate Change Action Plan. A traffic light tracking system has been developed to enable rapid identification of overdue or delayed actions. This tool supports proactive risk management and promotes timely delivery of initiatives. Each action now includes a scheduled completion date and a dedicated monitoring field to ensure clear accountability.

This enhanced tracking framework facilitates regular internal reviews and enables transparent reporting on progress toward Council's climate objectives.

Council's operational emissions, as outlined in the Corporate Greenhouse Gas Inventory, are now monitored using the Trellis software platform. While Australian local governments are not currently legislated to report greenhouse gas inventories, Council anticipates requests for emissions data from various external bodies, including the Victorian Government and large corporations subject to mandatory reporting requirements.

Maintaining accurate and up-to-date greenhouse gas inventories and action plans will streamline collaboration with these organisations and support Council's participation in grant applications and business activities such as capital works, waste management, and service delivery involving large commercial entities.

Furthermore, under Victorian legislation, local governments are required to plan for both mitigation of and adaptation to the impacts of climate change. Council's improved monitoring and reporting systems are aligned with these statutory obligations and reinforce our commitment to climate resilience.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Inform - To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions.

The webpage for Climate Action should be updated to reflect current emissions and action plan status.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following Objectives and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

Objective One: Connect

We are committed to enhancing access for all residents, promoting healthy living, fostering connections, and providing opportunities to thrive and participate in community life.

Objective Two: Sustain

We aim to collaborate with others to foster a sustainable environment, a thriving economy and resilient communities.

Objective Three: Deliver

We are committed to delivering quality services and infrastructure that meets the needs of our community. We aim to strengthen the Council's governance and provide improved, customer-focused experiences.

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

This report is aligned with the following legislation, Council Policies and key strategic documents:

- Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance (GMCA) Strategic Plan:

Strathbogie Shire is an active member of the GMCA, which supports collaboration across councils on climate action, knowledge-sharing, and regional adaptation planning. The Climate Change Action Plan aligns with GMCA's focus areas of emissions reduction, climate adaptation, and regional resilience.

The *Local Government Act 2020* was legislated in March 2020, amending the previous 1989 Act and in numerous ways including strengthening the mandate for considerations of climate change risk in Council decision-making processes.

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Victorian Climate Change Act 2017*
- *Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021*
- Victoria's Climate Change Strategy (2021)
- Climate Change Act (2022) (Commonwealth)
- National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy (2021–2025)
- Australian Government's Powering Australia plan
- Net Zero Plan (under development)

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Not completing all actions within the Climate Change Action Plan 2022-27	Almost Certain	Minimal	Medium	Continue to report Action Plan Progress on our website and explain why a small number of actions will not be completed.
Community unease with not reaching our target of Net Zero by 2025	Possible	Minimal	Medium	Provide transparency with the community about our operational emission reporting results regularly and celebrating achievements.
Community pressure to purchase or create carbon offsets	Possible	Minimal	Medium	Provide transparency about the real costs associated with these activities.
Operational emission rise	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium	Continue implementing the Climate Change Action Plan
Not accounting for Climate Change risks such as extreme	Unlikely	Catastrophic	Medium	Ensure climate change adaptation is fully considered in Council's

weather and it's impacts on Council's operations and infrastructure				risk register and in project and in contract management (as per Climate Change Action Plan)

To ensure we achieve significant reductions in community and corporate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2027, we will follow and monitor the action plan.

Risk has been further minimised by providing improving how the action plan items will be monitored and evaluated moving forward by including the new "Monitoring" column in the traffic light spreadsheet. Each action is categorized by its description, the responsible entity, its area of influence, the fiscal year schedule for implementation, indicative costs, and its current status—whether completed, in progress, or pending. This structured approach allows us to track progress effectively and assess the impact of our climate initiatives within the Strathbogie Shire.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no significant legal considerations associated with this report.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

In the interests of transparency and open and honest communication with our community this report is presented to a public Council meeting.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

There are no current financial considerations to be considered. The future implications of potential carbon offsets (purchase or creation) could be reviewed in more detail if requested.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Economic

The Climate Change Action Plan supports long-term cost savings and local economic development through energy efficiency, circular economy initiatives, and climate-resilient infrastructure.

Social

The Climate Change Action Plan promotes community wellbeing, equity, and inclusion by building climate resilience and empowering residents to take action.

Environmental

The Climate Change Action Plan protects and enhances local ecosystems by reducing emissions, improving resource recovery, and supporting biodiversity.

Climate Change

The Climate Change Action Plan directly addresses climate change by embedding mitigation and adaptation actions across Council operations and the wider community.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

This is Strathbogie Shire's first Climate Change Action Plan, marking a significant step toward coordinated local climate action.

As part of Council's commitment to continuous improvement, the next iteration of the Plan will be developed in 2026 and will incorporate insights, data, and community feedback gathered during the implementation of this inaugural plan.

This ongoing review process ensures our approach remains responsive, evidence-based and aligned with emerging best practices.

COLLABORATION

No formal collaboration was undertaken in the production of this report.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The recommendation does not limit any human rights under the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.*

CONCLUSION

The Climate Change Action Plan 2022–2027 has delivered tangible and meaningful outcomes in its first three years, underpinned by strong community engagement and growing organisational momentum.

While the Net Zero target remains aspirational, Council has achieved significant emissions reductions and laid a solid foundation for future progress.

These achievements reflect Council's commitment to evidence-based decision-making, transparent reporting, and collaborative climate action. As we look ahead to the next iteration of the Plan in 2027, Council will build on these learnings to accelerate our transition to a low-emissions future.

Through strategic investment, innovation, and continued partnership with our community, Strathbogie Shire is well-positioned to lead by example in responding to the challenges of climate change.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 20250905 Climate Action Plan Traffic Lights Update
2. 20250916 Strathbogie Shire GHG Inventory Report F Y 2324

OFFICIAL

No.	Action	Monitoring	Action year	Trafic Lights
1	Work with our partner organisations to update Roadside Management Plan to reflect best practice for protecting biodiversity.	Update Roadside Management Plan	2022/23	RED
2	Every five years update the Roadside Conservations Values Assessments.	Complete	2023/24	Complete
3	Continue the Conservation Covenant Rate Incentive, at $25ha/$500 per property, to lock up carbon and protect biodiversity for landowners who have land registered for a conservation covenant on the Cert of Title and create a Rebate Program to enhance property biodiversity values.	Conservation Covenant Rate Incentive increased - budget, project plan and council report completed. -Increased incentive available to ratepayers	2025/26	In Progress
4	Plan for replacement of all vacant tree sites in our urban areas over the next five years	Complete	2023/24	Complete
6	Review our current species list for planting to ensure that it still fit for purpose and climate appropriate.	Complete	2022/23	Complete
7	Develop a Significant Tree Register	Significant Tree Register published on website	2025/26	In Progress
8	Provide access to information on the benefits of retaining native vegetation and biodiversity for rural ratepayers	Printed and website information available to public	2024/25	Complete
9	Work with the Euroa Arboretum to promote the Gardens for Wildlife program across the Shire to increase biodiversity in our urban areas.	C&E plan developed and implemented At least 1 face to face workshop completed	2024/25	Complete
10	Work with our partner Councils to update the Sustainable Gardening Guide and include further information on the benefits of Roadside Vegetation	Sustainable Gardening Booklet updated	2024/25	Complete
11	Update the Nature Strip Planting Policy to reflect a consistent approach to urban plantings to increase biodiversity in our townships.	Updated Document: Nature Strip Planting Policy	2026/27	Pending - Scheduled
12	Report every 12 months on Council's emissions reduction figures	Completed Reports	Ongoing	Ongoing
13	Water and Electricity: Support households to improve water and energy efficiency in their homes.	Printed and website information available to public At least 1 face to face workshop completed	2024/25	Complete
14	Water: Undertake and support water use audits, retrofits, integrate rainwater and water re-use principles into operations and guidelines for Parks and Gardens, recreation areas, toilets, truck wash facilities, street tree watering and other identified users.	Complete	2022/23	Complete
15	Waste: Ensure internal and external capital works contracts and project briefs include planning for construction and demolition waste	Develop and implement standard waste management guidelines for inclusion in all internal capital works contracts and project briefs	2025/26	Pending - Scheduled

OFFICIAL

No.	Action	Monitoring	Action year	Trafic Lights
16	Waste: Support local groups and businesses engaging in waste reduction projects and events that reduce emissions, and waste going to landfill via the community grant process.	Ensure current community grant process includes waste reduction projects in 2025 ongoingly	2025/26	Ongoing
17	Electricity: Determine Councils biggest users of electricity and plan for solar installation at these sites over the next 5 years.	Utilise Trellis to identify and prioritise solar installations. Plan for solar installation at identified Council sites by 2027	2026/27	Pending - Scheduled
18	Waste: Prioritise the use of recycled products (this should happen automatically if the cost is less than 10%)	Complete	2022/23	Ongoing
19	Waste: Monitor paper use and implement paper saving measures across the organisation.	Complete	2022/23	Complete
20	Water: Investigate and trial recycled water options for street trees	Complete	2022/23	Complete
21	Waste: Investigate low carbon and/or high recycled content concrete and asphalt/emulsion options that can become a standard specification.	Research and evaluate low carbon and/or high recycled content concrete and asphalt alternatives. Present this as a Council Report with budget for trial project.	2025/26	Pending - Scheduled
21	Fuel: Monitor fuel use for plant and continue to implement fuel efficiency measures.	Establish fuel consumption monitoring for plant operations by June 2025, and implement ongoing fuel efficiency measures to achieve a 10% reduction in fuel usage	2025/26	In Progress
23	Water: Continue to support Greening Euroa to get it ready to go to tender once funding has been secured.	Support Greening Euroa projects	Ongoing	Ongoing
24	Water: Passive irrigation of street trees be a training priority for the Parks and Gardens team in order to implement best practice water saving techniques across street tree infrastructure in the Strathbogie Shire.	Make passive irrigation of street trees a training priority for the Parks and Gardens team, with a goal to implement best practice water-saving techniques across street tree infrastructure in the Strathbogie Shire by conducting a workshop	2026/27	Pending - Scheduled
25	Waste : All events held on Council owned or managed land must adhere to the Waste Wise Events guide to minimise waste at events.	All events held on Council owned or managed land complete a waste management plan.	Ongoing	Ongoing
26	Review and commence the implementation of existing facilities in each major township capable of operating independently to be available to the community during extreme climate events.	Ensure each township has at least one facility capable of operating independently to be available to the community during extreme climate events	2026/27	In Progress
27	Ensure that all new developments consider Water Sensitive Urban Design during the planning process.	Sustainable subdivision guidelines being utilised	2025/26	In Progress

OFFICIAL

No.	Action	Monitoring	Action year	Trafic Lights
28	Development of a 10 year, climate-appropriate, street tree planting plan and budget for the Shire's townships.	Complete	2025/26	Complete
29	Investigate permeable concrete options for footpaths and other uses	Complete	2022/23	Complete
30	Ensure climate change adaptation is fully considered in Council's risk register and in project and in contract management	Complete	2026/27	In Progress
31	Improve access to reliable, easy to understand climate change data and projections to inform community planning and action	Regular updates to ELT and Councillors	2024/25	Complete
32	Provide access to information on current and emerging smart agriculture initiatives to farmers and other relevant stakeholders	Printed and website information available to public	2026/27	Pending - Scheduled
33	Advocate to local and regional education partners to increase agriculture and land management knowledge, including on whole of property planning approaches, AgTech, precision agriculture, nutrient budgeting and other emerging practices	Continue to seek out advocacy opportunities to participate in	Ongoing	Complete
34	Support farmers and landowners' access to regional and state government programs such as the Victorian Carbon Farming Program	Printed and website information available to public	2026/27	Pending - Scheduled
35	New development and precinct plans must include shaded areas to enable active transport including shaded bike and walking paths.	100% of new precinct plans must include shaded areas as per Active Transport Strategy	2026/27	In Progress
36	Undertake urban heat island mapping in each township and plan planting to increase active transport corridors.	Mapping completed for Euroa, Avenel, Nagambie and Violet Town.	2026/27	Pending - Scheduled
37	Advocate for electric vehicle infrastructure in our local communities.	Electric vehicle inclusion/stall at Euroa Show and Shine Material available on website	2026/27	Pending - Scheduled
38	Undertake an 'Active & Connected Cycling and Walking Strategy' and review the opportunities and barriers, infrastructure, routes, and social initiatives required for residents and visitors to access a safe and enjoyable lifestyle in Strathbogie Shire.	Published strategy	2022/23	RED
39	Transition to a fully hybrid passenger fleet by 2025	90% hybrid passenger fleet by 2025	2026/27	Pending - Scheduled
40	Transition to a fully electric passenger fleet by 2030	% electric passenger fleet by 2030	2026/27	Pending - Scheduled
41	Advocate for and investigate local net zero emissions community energy solutions (e.g., Solar PV, wind power, hydro)	Solar savers program promoted. Susutainbility community grants Neighbourhood batteries education provided to community groups such as REA	2024/25	Complete

OFFICIAL

No.	Action	Monitoring	Action year	Trafic Lights
42	Partner with local environment groups to have a screening of environmental films like 2040 at the Community Cinema.	Film screening	2024/25	Complete
43	List all Climate Change Actions on Councils website which is updated as each action is completed	Complete	2022/23	Ongoing
44	Advocate on behalf of our community for a federal Carbon Net zero goal	Complete	Ongoing	Complete
45	Advertise for community members to be on an Environment Reference Group to support the delivery of Council's Climate Change aspirations	Environment Reference Group established	2026/27	Pending - Scheduled
46	Review this plan every 5 years to ensure that it continues to be proactive and embraces best practice opportunities, or earlier if recommended by Council	2027 Review	2026/27	Pending - Scheduled
47	Establish a Climate Action Steering Committee or Green Team (internal) to guide implementation of new climate actions projects and increase collaboration between lead departments.	Internal Climate Action Steering Committee or Green Team established and meet twice per year	2024/25	In Progress
48	Institute a revolving energy fund to fund future projects	NA	NA	RED
49	Continue to support projects and advocacy through the Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance	Continued support	Ongoing	Ongoing
5	Ensure that there is appropriate budget each year to replace all trees that are required to be removed	Complete	2023/24	Complete
50	Develop fossil fuel divestment policy options for the consideration of Council and consider community submissions regarding divestment when updating Council's investment policy.	Council report completed for divestment policy options and carbon offset options for the consideration of Council	2024/25	RED
51	Include information on Council's climate change response and culture of energy and resource efficiency in staff recruitment and induction processes.	Updated staff recruitment process	2026/27	Pending - Scheduled
52	Council recognises the primary interest and knowledge of Taungurang Land and Waters Council in relation to climate change and will work with TLaWC to incorporate this knowledge into Councils Climate Emergency Response	Complete	2022/23	Complete
53	Advocate for integration ESD principles in the Local Government Infrastructure Design Manual	This can be completed via GMCA	2026/27	Ongoing
54	Advocate to the state government to strengthen the planning scheme to protect and enhance the extent of native vegetation	This can be completed via GMCA	2026/27	Pending - Scheduled

Ironbark Sustainability

Corporate Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory for FY2022/23 & FY2023/24

Strathbogie Shire Council

Strathbogie SHIRE COUNCIL

Prepared for
Strathbogie Shire Council

Version	Author	Date	Description of changes
v0a	Sue Oliver	01/10/2024	Draft
v0b	Ankit Kamra	02/10/2024	Review
v1a-b	Sue Oliver	05/10/2024	For council review.
v1c	Sue Oliver	10/10/2024	Released

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About Ironbark Sustainability
Ironbark Sustainability is a specialist consultancy that works with government and business around Australia by assisting them to reduce energy and water usage through sustainable asset and data management and on-the-ground implementation.

Ironbark has been operating since 2005 and brings together a wealth of technical and financial analysis, maintenance and implementation experience in the areas of building energy and water efficiency, public lighting and data management. We pride ourselves on supporting our clients to achieve real action regarding the sustainable management of their operations.

Our Mission
The Ironbark mission is to achieve real action on sustainability for councils and their communities.

Ironbark is a certified B Corporation. We have been independently assessed as meeting the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, public transparency, and legal accountability to balance profit and purpose

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1. Introduction

Strathbogie Shire Council (SSC) is committed to transitioning towards net zero emissions and creating a climate resilient region. Council previously developed a baseline corporate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory for financial year (FY) 2016/17 and a greenhouse reduction plan to guide Council in reducing its corporate emissions as part of Sustainability Victoria's Local Government Energy Saver (LGES) Program.

Later, Council developed inventories for FY2020/21 and 2021/22 and a robust data management plan to provide the Council with the tools to continue monitoring and reporting its emissions.

Council should note that this report focuses on Strathbogie Shire Council's organisational emissions (also known as corporate emissions), a subset of the broader community (or municipal) emissions. Community emissions are not the focus of the report.

This report presents SSC's corporate inventory for the financial years 2022/23 and 2023/24 and compares it with previous years.



Image supplied by SSC

2. Methodology

2.1 Reporting Framework

Council's corporate emissions have been calculated based on the guidelines provided by the Australian NGER methodology and the WRI GHG Protocol Corporate Standard. To align with best practice and to set Council up for possible carbon neutral certification, the inventory has been developed with the view to meet Climate Active requirements as much as possible. As such, it includes Scopes 1, 2 and 3 emissions, and has an emphasis on completeness.

2.2 Reporting Boundaries

2.2.1 Operational Boundary - Scopes

The operational boundary is defined using the scopes framework. In line with NGER, and the Global Greenhouse Gas Protocol, corporate emissions have been divided into three scopes:

- Scope 1 emissions are defined as "direct emissions from owned or controlled sources" and are emissions created when Council burns a fuel in an owned asset such as fleet burning diesel, petrol, or a building using natural gas.
- Scope 2 emissions are defined as "indirect emissions from the generation of purchased energy" and related to electricity purchased for Council-owned and operated assets.
- Scope 3 emissions are defined as "all indirect emissions (not included in scope 2) that occur in the value chain of the reporting entity (Council)." These include electricity purchased for Council owned but not occupied buildings, electricity purchased for street lighting, emissions associated with water use and emissions from the extraction and production of fuels (including diesel, petrol, natural gas and electricity).

The three scopes are also described in Figure 1.

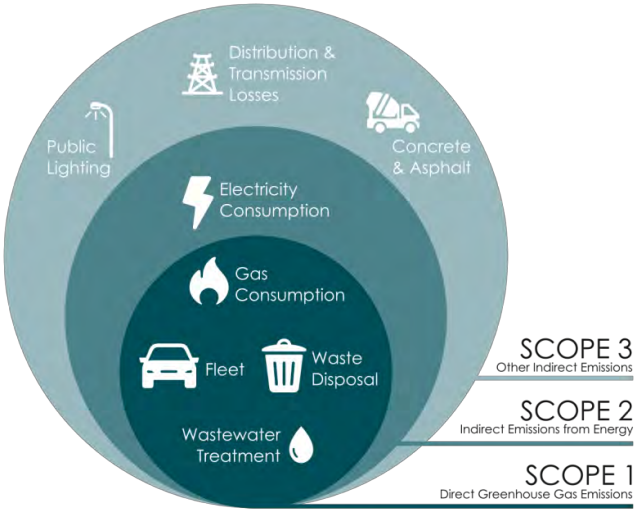


Figure 1: Example of scopes of GHG emissions

3. Council's Corporate Emissions Inventory

3.1 2023/24 Emissions Summary

Council's total emissions for the period 2022/23 have been calculated as 3,449 tonnes of CO_2 equivalent (tCO_2e). Across Council's inventory, scope 1 (direct emissions) accounts for 69% of emissions (2,367 tCO2e), scope 2 (emissions associated with consumption of grid electricity, not including DNSP owned streetlighting) accounts for 13 % (453 tCO2e) and scope 3 (indirect emissions) accounts for 18% (629 t CO2e). See Figure 2 for a breakdown.

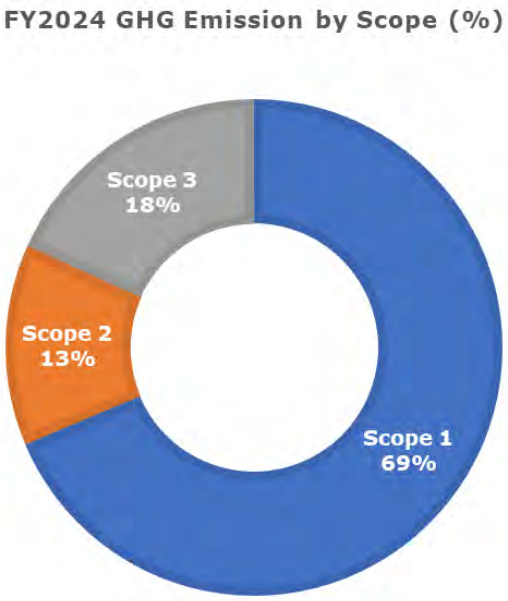


Figure 2: FY2023/24 GHG emissions by scope

Figure 3 shows the GHG emissions profile summary for Strathbogie Shire Council by source. Major emissions sources include:

- Landfill (39%; 2,272 tCO_2e) | Scope 1 and 3
- Transport fuels (37%; 1271 tCO_2e) | Scope 1 and 3
- Electricity consumption (20%; 701 tCO_2e) including buildings, street lighting, open space lighting | Scopes 2 and 3
- Water supply (4%; 126 tCO_2e) | Scope 3
- Natural Gas (<1%; 6 tCO_2e) | Scope 3

Scope 1 sources not included in this inventory due to unavailable data are lubricants (grease and oils) and fugitive (refrigerants) emissions. Scope 3 sources not included in this inventory due to unavailable data include construction materials, contractor fuels, office paper, staff commute and business travel (accommodation, air travel, and hire car/taxis). Moving forward Council might also consider including products and professional services used for events, entertainment and business services and other emissions within Council's supply chain.

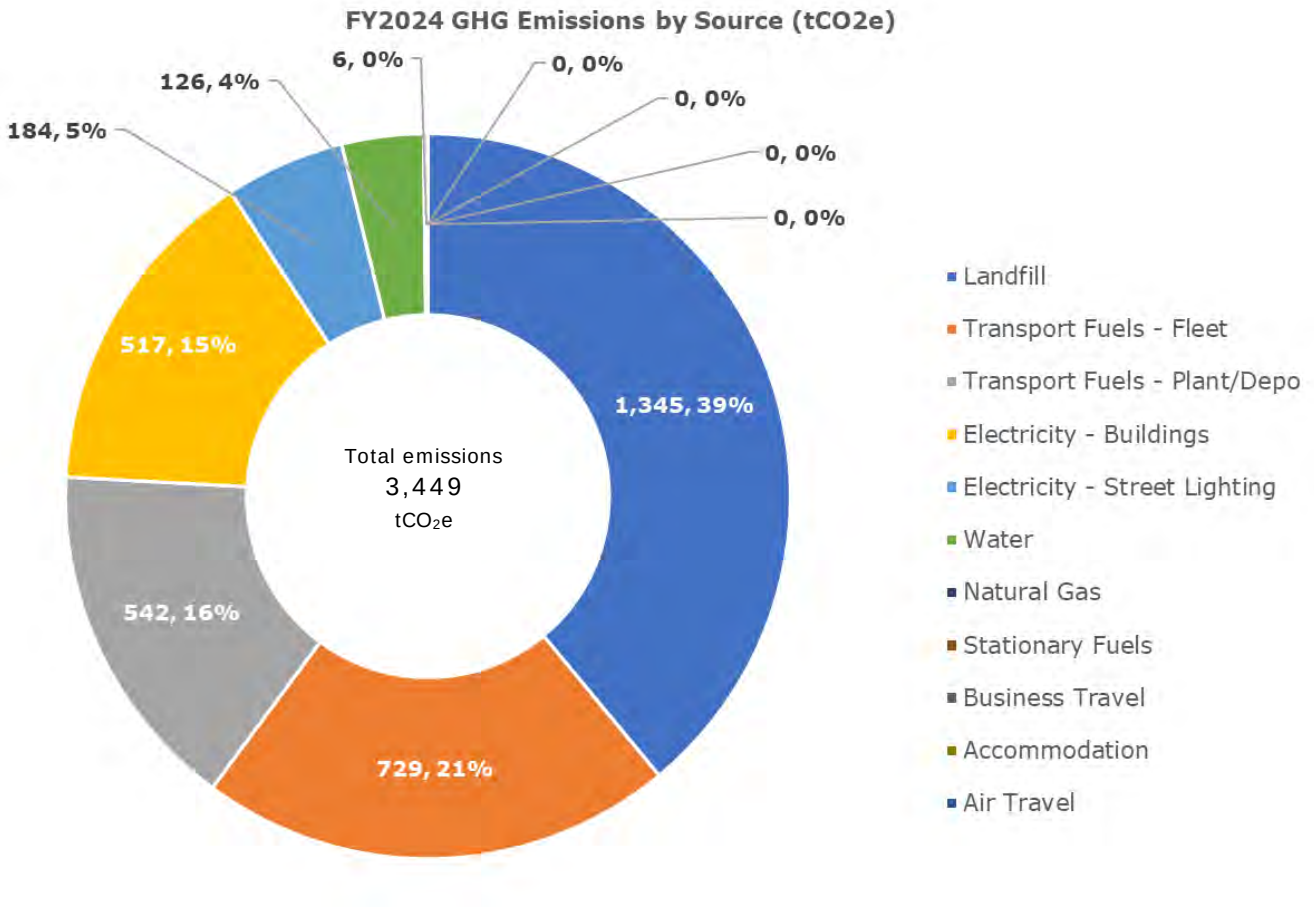


Figure 3: FY2023/24 GHG emissions profile summary by sector

Table 1 shows the detailed breakdown of GHG emissions of Council corporate operations for FY 2023/24.

Table 1: 2023/24 Detailed GHG emissions inventory (by Scope)

Emissions Source	Consumption	Units	Emissions (tCO2e)	% Total	Cost ($)
Direct emissions (scope 1)					
Transport - Diesel for fleet	162	kL	440	12.75%	$325,973
Transport - Diesel for plant	160	kL	435	12.61%	$-
Transport - Petrol for fleet	63	kL	145	4.19%	$97,369
Natural Gas - Council owned/operated/occupied	116,187	MJ	6	0.17%	$4,612
Landfill – Council owned	-	tonnes	1,342	38.91%	$-
TOTAL DIRECT EMISSIONS (scope 1)			2,367	68.63%	$427,954
Indirect emissions (scope 2)					
Electricity - Council owned/operated/occupied	573,842	kWh	453	13.14%	$126,647
TOTAL INDIRECT EMISSIONS (scope 2)			453	13.14%	$126,647
Indirect emissions (scope 3)					
Electricity - Street Lighting - DNSP owned	213,833	kWh	184	5.33%	$49,374
Electricity - Council owned/commercial occupied	27,637	kWh	24	0.69%	$6,814
Emissions from extraction, production and transport of Electricity - Council owned/operated/occupied	573,842	kWh	40	1.16%	$-
Emissions from extraction, production and transport of Transport - Diesel for fleet	162	kL	108	3.13%	$-
Emissions from extraction, production and transport of Transport - Diesel for plant	160	kL	107	3.10%	$-
Emissions from extraction, production and transport of Transport - Petrol for fleet	63	kL	37	1.07%	$-
Emissions from extraction, production and transport of Natural Gas - Council owned/operated/occupied	116,187	MJ	0.46	0.01%	$-

Emissions Source	Consumption	Units	Emissions (tCO2e)	% Total	Cost ($)
Landfill – Corporate Waste	1,888	kg	3	0.09%	$-
Water - Council owned/operated/occupied	74,881	kL	126	3.64%	$175,972
TOTAL INDIRECT EMISSIONS (scope 3)			628	18.23%	$232,160
TOTAL EMISSIONS (scope1+2+3)			3,449	100.00%	$786,761
Reduction Measures					
Solar Power exported	25,679	kWh	-	0.00%	
LGCs surrendered from PPA	706,000	kWh	-607	-17.60%	
Net Emissions			2,842		

3.2 2022/23 Emissions Summary

Council's total emissions for the period 2022/23 have been calculated as 4,267 tonnes of CO_2 equivalent (tCO_2e). Across Council's inventory, scope 1 (direct emissions) accounts for 77% of emissions (3,300 tCO2e), scope 2 (emissions associated with consumption of grid electricity, not including DNSP owned streetlighting) accounts for 9 % (375 tCO2e) and scope 3 (indirect emissions) accounts for 14% (591 t CO2e). See Figure 4 for a breakdown.

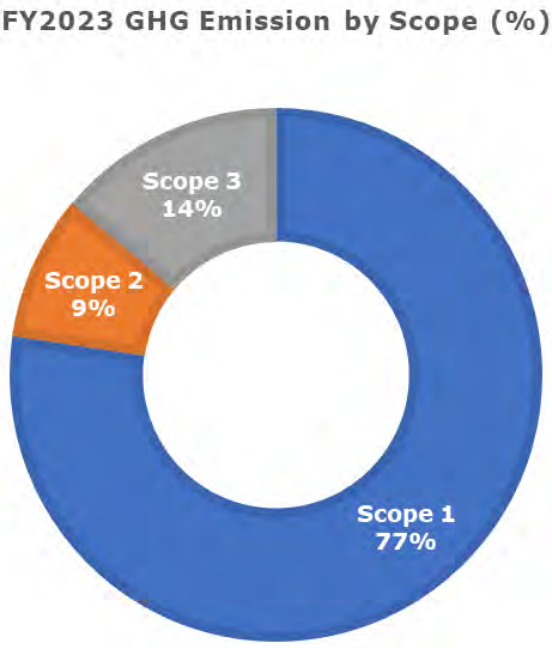


Figure 4: FY2022/23 GHG emissions by scope

Figure 5 shows the GHG emissions profile summary for Strathbogie Shire Council by source. Major emissions sources include:

- Landfill (56%; 2,390 tCO_2e) | Scope 1 and 3
- Transport fuels (27%; 1132 tCO_2e) | Scope 1 and 3
- Electricity consumption (15%; 633 tCO_2e) including buildings, street lighting, open space lighting | Scopes 2 and 3
- Water supply (2%; 105 tCO_2e) | Scope 3
- Natural Gas (<1%; 6 tCO_2e) | Scope 3

Minor sources include business travel, air travel, and accommodation, which together emit just over one tCO2e and contribute less than 0.5 % of the total emissions inventory.

Scope 1 sources not included in this inventory due to unavailable data are lubricants (grease and oils) and fugitive (refrigerant) emissions. Scope 3 sources not included in this inventory due to unavailable data are construction materials, contractor fuels, office paper, staff commute, and car hire/taxis.

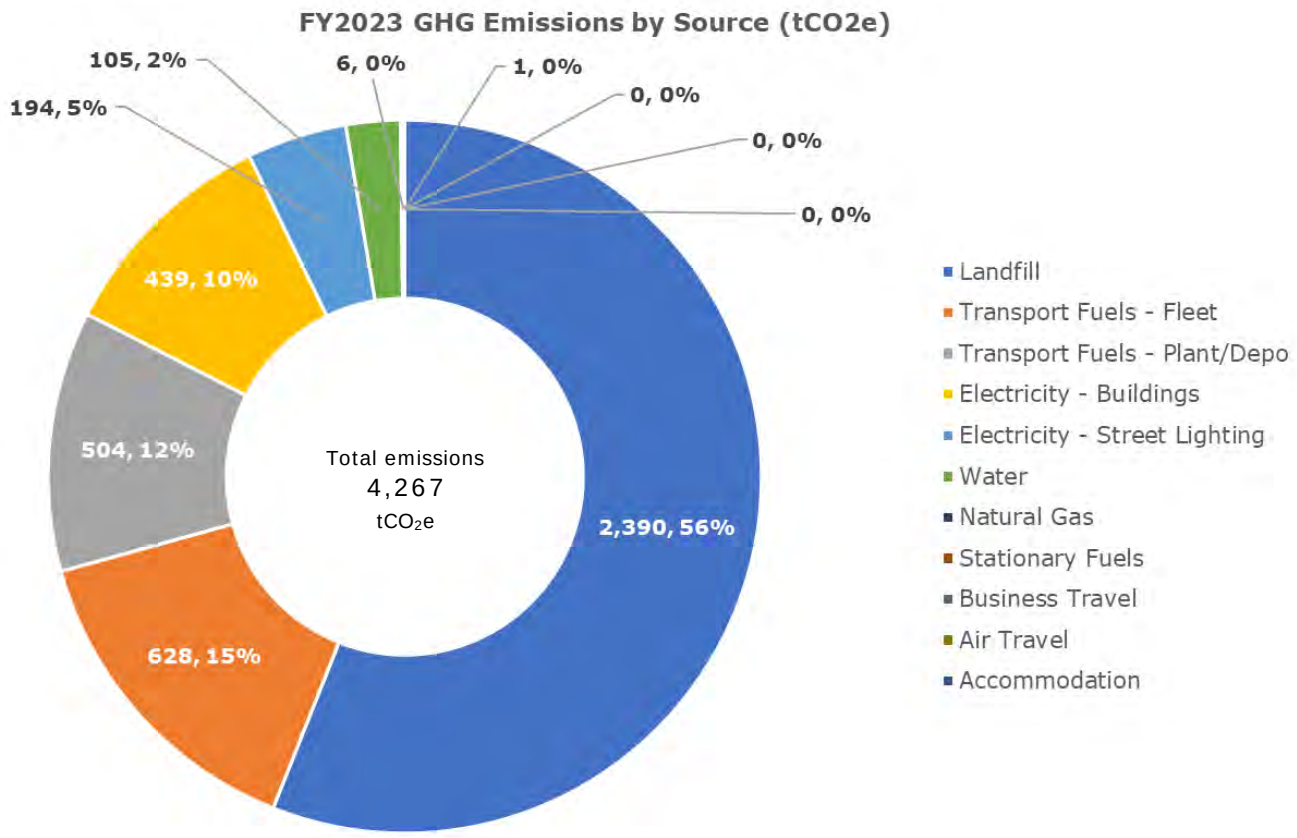


Figure 5: FY2022/23 GHG emissions profile summary by sector

Table 2 shows the detailed breakdown of GHG emissions of Council corporate operations for FY 2023/24.

Table 2: 2022/23 Detailed GHG emissions inventory (by Scope)

Emissions Source	Consumption	Units	Emissions (tCO2e)	% Total	Cost ($)
Direct emissions (scope 1)					
Transport - Diesel for fleet	116	kL	316	7.40%	$216,334
Transport - Diesel for plant	149	kL	405	9.48%	$279,609
Transport - Petrol for fleet	81	kL	187	4.38%	$150,334
LPG bottled & bulk for buildings	157	L	0.24	0.01%	$332
Natural Gas - Council owned/operated/occupied	115,123	MJ	6	0.14%	$3,998
Landfill – Council owned	-	tonnes	2,387	55.94%	$-
TOTAL DIRECT EMISSIONS (scope 1)			3,300	77.35%	$650,606.77
Indirect emissions (scope 2)					
Electricity - Council owned/operated/occupied	441,522	kWh	375	10.80%	$106,973
TOTAL INDIRECT EMISSIONS (scope 2)			375	10.80%	$106,973
Indirect emissions (scope 3)					
Electricity - Street Lighting - DNSP owned	210,351	kWh	194	4.54%	$47,482
Electricity - Council owned/commercial occupied	35,150	kWh	32	0.76%	$9,274
Emissions from extraction, production and transport of Electricity - Council owned/operated/occupied	441,522	kWh	31	0.72%	$-
Emissions from extraction, production and transport of Transport - Diesel for fleet	116	kL	78	1.82%	$-
Emissions from extraction, production and transport of Transport - Diesel for plant	149	kL	99	2.33%	$-
Emissions from extraction, production and transport of Transport - Petrol for fleet	81	kL	47	1.11%	$-
Emissions from extraction, production and transport of LPG	157	L	0.08130	0.00%	$-

Emissions Source	Consumption	Units	Emissions (tCO2e)	% Total	Cost ($)
Emissions from extraction, production and transport of Natural Gas - Council owned/operated/occupied	115,123	MJ	0.46	0.01%	$-
Landfill – Corporate Waste	1,888	kg	3	0.07%	$-
Water - Council owned/operated/occupied	62,151	kL	105	2.47%	$137,690
Business Travel	4,034	km	0.78	0.02%	$-
Air Travel	1,426	km	0.24	0.01%	$-
Accommodation	1	Room Nights	0.10	0.00%	$-
TOTAL INDIRECT EMISSIONS (scope 3)			591	13.86%	$194,446
TOTAL EMISSIONS (scope1+2+3)			4,267	100.00%	$952,026
Reduction Measures					
Solar Power exported	22,925.94	kWh	-	0.00%	
LGCs surrendered from PPA	624,000.00	kWh	-574	-16.74%	
Net Emissions			3,693		

3.3 Year on Year GHG emissions

Figure 6 shows the historical trend over 4 financial years while Figure 7 includes emissions reductions for LGC surrendered from Council's Power Purchasing Agreement (PPA).

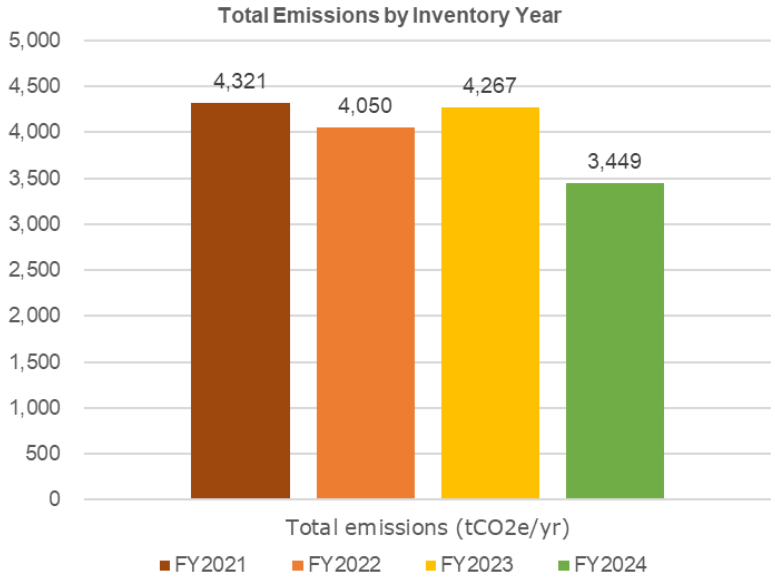


Figure 6: Historical Trend over 4 financial years

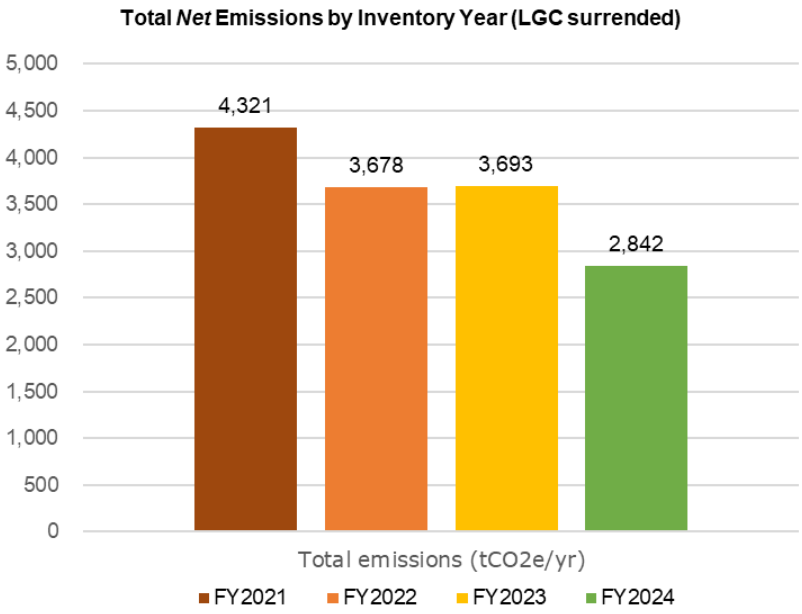


Figure 7: Historical Trend over 4 financial years including LGCs surrendered

Figure 8 shows the historical trend over 4 financial years for each emissions source.
The 'Bulk Diesel' purchase data did not distinguish between stationary (generator) and transport (plant-mower, backhoe, tractor, etc.) fuel. We have categorised all 'Bulk Diesel' as transport fuel for the inventory. Increases in transport fuel emissions in FY2023 and FY2024 are partially the result of improved data collection processes providing increased visibility of Council's fuel emissions.

As of FY2023/24, waste data provided for the NGER waste calculator was updated to include revised opening and closing dates and use the default % for Municipal Solid Waste (MSW), Construction and Demolition (C&D) and Commercial & Industrial (C&I) waste.

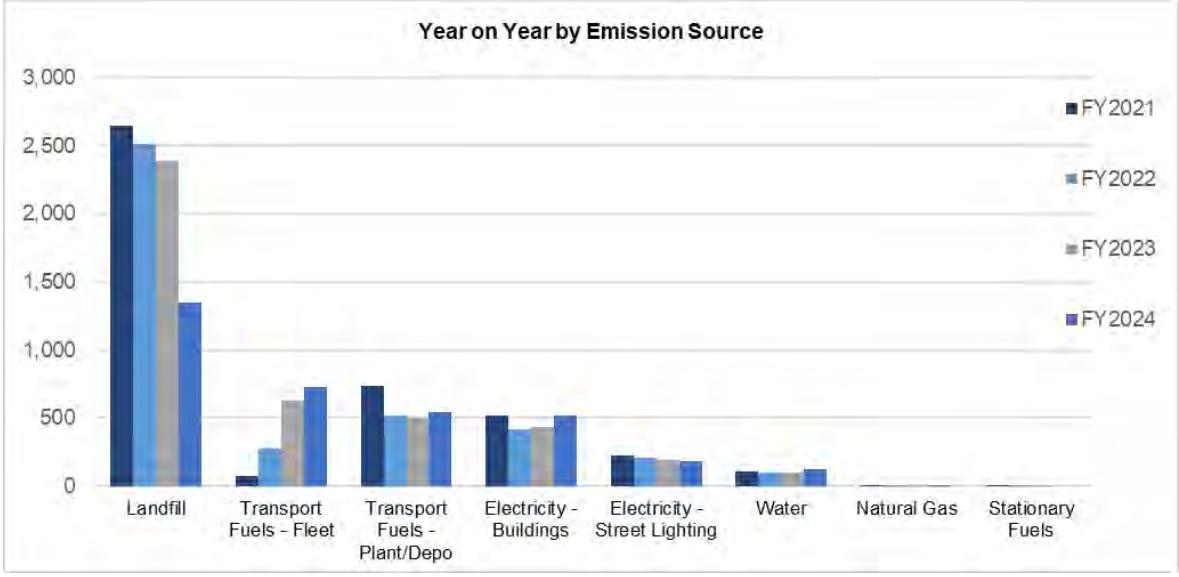


Figure 8: Historical Trend over 4 consecutive years by emissions source

Appendix 1: Glossary

Term	Definition
CA	Climate Active (Australia's carbon neutral certification scheme)
CCA	Climate Change Authority
SSC	Strathbogie Shire Council
CH_4	Methane
CMS	Carbon Management System
CO_2	Carbon dioxide
CO_2-e	Carbon dioxide equivalent. The universal unit of measurement to indicate the global warming potential (GWP) of each GHG, expressed in terms of the GWP of one unit of carbon dioxide. It is used to evaluate the climate impact of releasing (or avoiding releasing) different GHGs on a common basis.
DNSP	Distribution Network Service Provider, also known as Energy Distribution Business (DB) also known as distributors.
Emissions Factor (EF)	An emissions factor is a measure of the mass of Emissions relative to a unit of activity.
ERF	Emissions Reduction Fund
FY	Financial Year
GHG	Greenhouse gas
Global Covenant of Mayors	Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy is a coalition of city leaders addressing climate change by pledging to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, tracking their progress, and preparing for the impacts of climate change. It was formed through a merger of the Compact of Mayors and the Covenant of Mayors.
Greenhouse Gas Protocol	The Greenhouse Gas Protocol, developed by World Resources Institute and World Business Council on Sustainable Development, sets the global standard for how to measure, manage, and report Emissions.
GWP	Global Warming Potential. The Global Warming Potential was developed to allow comparisons of the global warming impacts of different gases. Specifically, it is a measure of how much energy the emissions of one tonne of a gas will absorb over a given period of time, relative to the emissions of one tonne of carbon dioxide
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
kt	Kilotonne
LPG	Liquified Petroleum Gas
MSW	Municipal solid waste - Solid waste generated from municipal and residential activities, and including waste collected by, or on behalf of, a municipal council. MSW does not refer to waste delivered to municipal disposal sites by commercial operators or waste from municipal demolition projects.
Mt	Megatonne
NA	Not available
NGER	National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Scheme
NMI	National Meter Identifier
PV	Photovoltaic
Street lighting	Street lighting found in residential streets and main roads
tCO2e	Tonnes of CO2 equivalent

TS	Transfer Station – Facilities where collection vehicles deposit waste and/or recyclables collected from elsewhere. (Waste or recyclables are then put into larger transfer vehicles for transport to a landfill site, MRF or resource recovery facility.) Transfer stations may be used by both individuals and vehicles and may include recycling facilities and facilities for compacting and baling waste and recyclable materials.
Waste	Any discarded, rejected, unwanted, surplus, or abandoned matter including material intended for recycling, reprocessing, recovery, purification, or sale. In this document, the term 'solid waste' refers to non-hazardous, non-prescribed, solid waste materials ranging from municipal garbage to industrial waste.
WBCSD	World Business Council for Sustainable Development
WRI	World Resources Institute

Appendix 2: Data source details

Table 3: Emissions source and respective data file

Emission Source	Data File
Landfill	FY23: • STB_STR_005_NGER Solid Waste Calculator 2022-23 FY24: • STB_STR_005_NGER Solid Waste Calculator 2022-23
Transport and Stationary Fuels	FY23: Stationary Fuels: • Trellis_emission_source_20240805024320 Transport Fuels: • Fuel 2023-24_Updated • 20230701 June23 BP and Ampol Fuel 2022-2023 • 20230705 June2023 Bulk Fuel Usage • Ironbark Sustainability Mail - Fuel Consolidated Data FY24: Stationary Fuels: • Trellis_emission_source_20240805024348.csv • 2023-12-01_20231130-INV05768505.pdf Transport Fuels: • Fuel 2023-24_Updated • 20240704 Jun 24 BP and Ampol Fuel 2023-2024 (8) • Email - Ironbark Sustainability Mail - Fuel Consolidated Data
Electricity	FY23: • Trellis_emission_source_20240805023832_Updated • Strathbogie Shire Council Voluntary Surrender Jul - Dec 2022 • Strathbogie Shire Council Voluntary Surrender Jan - Jun 2023 FY24: • Trellis_emission_source_20240930053742.csv • Strathbogie Shire Council Voluntary Surrender Jan - Jun 2024 • Strathbogie Shire Council Voluntary Surrender Jul - Dec 2023
Water and wastewater	FY23: • Trellis_emission_source_20240805010459 FY24: • Trellis_emission_source_20240930101421
Natural Gas	FY23: • Trellis_emission_source_20240805010519 FY24: • Trellis_emission_source_20240805010214
Staff business travel	FY23: • Ironbark Sustainability Mail - Green House Gas Inventory – Travel FY24: None
Air travel	FY23: • Ironbark Sustainability Mail - Green House Gas Inventory – Travel FY24: None
Accommodation	FY23: • Ironbark Sustainability Mail - Green House Gas Inventory – Travel FY24: None
Fugitive gases	None
Lubricants	None
Asphalt and construction materials	None

Contractor fuels	None
Office Paper	None
Hire cars and taxis	None

11.3.2 Asset Management Update

AUTHOR Director Sustainable Infrastructure

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director Sustainable Infrastructure

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the ongoing work to improve Asset Management systems and processes. The report includes current lists of some of the key asset classes such as building, facilities, open spaces and land.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the report updating the status of Asset Management systems and processes.

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

In August 2024 the Audit and Risk Committee reviewed the outcomes of an internal audit of Councils Asset Management Systems and Processes. The audit identified that Council's current asset systems were inadequate and that the existing systems and processes were a major risk to Council. The audit identified fourteen actions for Council to address to reduce any potential risk to Council. Of the fourteen actions identified by the internal audit, ten of these actions have been completed through the actions identified within this report.

Council has a substantial portfolio of assets to support the services that are delivered on behalf of the community.

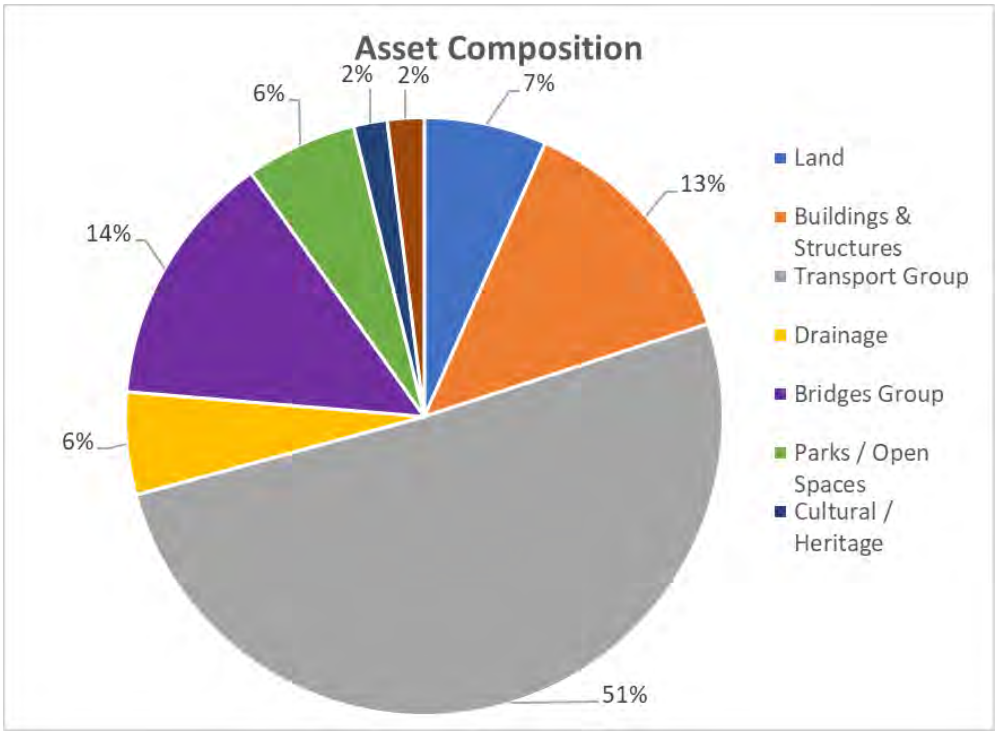


Figure 1

Figure 1 above shows the approximate percentage breakdown of assets into individual asset classes. The total approximate valuation of Councils asset is $617M. This asset valuation is currently under review as part of the 24-25 financial year end, this will include construction price increases, improved standards and approach and in line with new requirements from State Government in relation to Fair Value Measurement AASB13.

Approximate Value of Assets by Asset Class (numbers have been rounded up for reporting purposes)

Asset Class	Inclusions	Approximate Valuations
Transport	Roads sealed and unsealed	$457,340,000
	Bridges	
	Kerb and Channel	
Buildings	Community and sports facilities	$82,800,000
	Council facilities	
	Waste	
	Saleyards	
	Pool Facilities	
Land	Land under roads	$37,650,000
	Community buildings and reserves	
Open Spaces	Sporting facilities and recreation reserves	$39,500,000

Table A

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

As noted earlier several steps have commenced to improve Asset Management Systems and processes and to resolve the issues raised through the internal audit report.

Ten Year Asset Management Plan

In June 2025 Council adopted the Asset Plan 2025-2035. The Asset Plan provides a strategic framework for the sustainable management of these assets over their lifecycle, ensuring they continue to meet current and future service delivery needs.

The Asset Plan outlines the condition, performance, and value of key asset classes—such as roads, bridges, buildings, drainage, footpaths, parks, and plant.

Key objectives of this plan include:

- Ensuring assets are maintained in a safe, functional, and cost-effective condition
- Optimising asset life through planned maintenance, renewal, and replacement strategies
- Aligning asset investment with community expectations and Council’s long-term financial sustainability
- Meeting legislative and regulatory obligations related to asset management and reporting.

Asset Management Steering Committee (AMSC)

To provide oversight to asset management, an internal Asset Management Steering Committee (AMSC) was reinstated in May 2025. The AMSC is made up of officers across the organisation who have a role or input into the management and strategic direction for assets.

The primary function of the AMSC is to provide oversight of the Asset Management Strategy and respective Asset Management Plans. The Committee ensures that asset management aligns with the Council's strategic objectives, legislative requirements, and community needs.

In addition, the Committee ensures a coordinated and integrated approach to asset management across Council, developing an increased understanding amongst staff, Councillors and the community of the need to actively manage Council's existing and future assets.

To support the function of the AMSC has developed and adopted Terms of Reference outlining the purpose and how the committee will function.

Road Management Plan

Council endorsed a Draft Road Management Plan in May 2025.

The Road Management Plan (RMP) outlines our responsibilities in managing and maintaining roads across the municipality. It also describes the management system established by Council to carry out its duty under the *Road Management Act 2004* (Vic) to inspect, maintain and repair public roads and roads assets for which it is responsible.

The draft RMP is currently out for community consultation which closes on 5 September 2025.

Asset Management Policy

Council has an Asset Management Policy which was adopted in December 2023.

This policy was suitable, taking into consideration the state of asset management in Strathbogie Shire at the time. Council's Assets Team have commenced a process to review and update the Asset Management Policy, taking into consideration the adopted 10-year Asset Management Plan, and the ongoing review of systems and processes.

To aid in this process Assets Officers have benchmarked the existing Asset Management Policy against several similar Councils.

A draft Asset Management Policy will be presented at the next Asset Management Steering Committee for discussion and endorsement, to enable it to be presented to Council for adoption.

Asset Management Framework

Officers have developed a visual representation of the Asset Management Framework. This is attached to this report. The purpose of this diagram is to visually map how all the key asset management documents fit together. It will also support the AMSC in tracking progress of the development and review of key documents.

Forward Action Sheet

A forward action spreadsheet has been developed to prioritise and track actions for the Asset Management Team.

This list includes key tasks such as:

1. Review and adoption of the Asset Management Policy
2. Review and Adoption of the Asset Management Strategy
3. Development of Asset Condition Manuals
4. Commence the review and update of Asset Management Plans
5. Develop and update Asset Management Systems
6. Update and develop related policies and procedures

These items will be discussed and tracked through the Asset Management Steering Committee agenda to ensure continued progress and improvements.

Asset Management Systems

In August 2024 an internal working group was formed including Management, Asset Planning Staff, Project Managers, Information Technology and Operations Team members.

This group firstly assessed the current situation and concluded that the current systems was cumbersome and problematic. The existing systems are difficult to manage and as it did not link to finance systems, takes a considerable amount of manual time to complete core tasks.

The decision was made to review alternate systems based on current technologies. This review is complete, and a decision has been made by the AMSC to move forward with Civica Assets as its preferred Asset Management System and Reflect as it preferred mobility works package.

The advantages of this are that Civica Assets will align with Civica Finance which is been rolled out through the CODI project. Reflect is Civica's mobility system and will ensure that works and maintenance activities can link directly to assets and finances which will lead to improved tracking, management of assets as well as efficiencies in financial reporting.

Officers are working on developing a project plan and timeline for the transition to the new systems.

Capital Work Program (CWP)

Each year Council deliver a Capital Works Program that is identified and adopted through the annual budget process. The primary focus of the CWP is renewal of existing assets. Asset management and the collection of accurate data is essential in the development of the CWP to ensure that Council are investing its limited resources in the highest priority assets.

Council officers have utilised the existing asset information and carried out additional check and inspections as part of the development of the 2025-2026 CWP. As part of the improvements to Councils Asset Management systems, new condition data assessments are being completed for Councils, roads, Bridges and Footpaths in 2025. This will, with development of the new asset management system, aid officers in prioritising works for future CWPs.

Plant Committee

A Plant Committee has been established as a subcommittee of the AMSC. This committee is made up of operational leaders and staff who have a role in the management and use of plant and equipment.

The role of this committee is to support the development and review of Councils ten-year plant replacement program, to provide advice and ensure that Council purchases the best plant and equipment available to support the delivery of efficient services.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This report is presented to Council for information and noting purposes. There are elements identified within the report such as, but not limited to, the Ten-Year Asset Plan, the Road Management Plan and the Asset Management Policy which will be subject to a level of community consultation.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following Objectives and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

Objective One: Connect

We are committed to enhancing access for all residents, promoting healthy living, fostering connections, and providing opportunities to thrive and participate in community life.

Objective Two: Sustain

We aim to collaborate with others to foster a sustainable environment, a thriving economy and resilient communities.

Objective Three: Deliver

We are committed to delivering quality services and infrastructure that meets the needs of our community. We aim to strengthen the Council’s governance and provide improved, customer-focused experiences.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no significant legal considerations associated with this report.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

This report continues to demonstrate that Council is being transparent in its position in relation to all applications received and determined by the Council.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The development and roll out of Councils new Asset Management System is budgeted within Councils 2025-2026 Capital Works program.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Economic

As custodian of community assets, Council has the responsibility for managing these assets in the most cost effective manner, whilst maintaining sustainability. This is achieved through managing our assets through their lifecycle from creation and acquisition to maintenance and operation, through to rehabilitation and disposal.

These actions are undertaken with the goals of providing efficient, safe and reliable services for current and future generations.

Social

Councils asset management framework and systems sets the foundation for the way we manage our community's assets. It provides a strategic and financial view of how council will manage the assets that we own and control over the next ten years and beyond.

Environmental and Climate Change

Asset management and the environment are closely connected, as sustainable asset practices help reduce environmental impact (e.g. energy efficient designs, materials).

COLLABORATION

No formal collaboration was undertaken in the production of this report.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

This report does not limit any human rights under the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and encourages participation in civic life by our community.

CONCLUSION

This report updates Council on the ongoing work to improve Asset Management systems and processes, and to resolve the issues raised through the internal audit conducted in August 2024.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 20250822 AM Document Hierarchy v_3

Asset Management Document Hierarchy (Revision 2)

4.1 General Requirements

ACT

4.2 Asset Management Policy

4.3 Asset Management Strategy, objectives & plans.
4.3.1 Asset Management Strategy
4.3.2 Asset Management Objectives
4.3.3 Asset Management Plan(s)
4.3.4 Contingency Planning

Council Plan

Local Government Act 2020
Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008
Climate Change Act 2017
Gender Equality Act 2020.
Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
Asset Management Accountability Framework
Accounting Standards

4.7 Management Review

Asset Management Steering Committee

Plant Committee

Operations Committee

Asset Management Policy (To be reviewed)

Asset Management Strategy (Draft for review)

10 Year Asset Plan

Road Management Plans (In Consultation)

Condition Assessment Manuals

Asset Management Plan (Transport)
- *Roads*
- *Kerbs*
- *Bridges*
- *Pathways*

Asset Management Plan (Buildings & Structures)

Asset Management Plan - Drainage

Asset Management Plan - Open Spaces

Asset Management Plan - Plant & Equipment

Rationalisation Policy

Capitalisation Policy

Valuation Policy

Prioritisation Policy

Investment Policy

CCTV / Dash Cam Policy

Sealing of Unsealed Roads Policy

External SME Condition Assessment (4 Yearly)

Asset Condition

Service Life

Asset Management System

Transport
- Roads
  - Gravel Roads
    - Formation
    - Pavement
  - Sealed Roads
    - Formation
    - Pavement
    - Seal Surface
    - *Shoulder*
    - *Culverts*
  - Kerb & Channel
  - Footpaths
  - Bridges

Buildings

Structures

Stormwater

Open Spaces

Parks

Playgrounds

Community Facilities

Land

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11.4.1 2024-25 Draft Annual Financial Statements

AUTHOR Chief Financial Officer

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director People and Governance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) states it is essential there is a legislative framework that provides for councils to be accountable to their local communities in the performance of functions and the exercise of powers and the use of resources.

Accordingly, it is a statutory requirement under the Act that councils prepare and report on medium and short-term financial plans to discharge their duties of accountability and transparency to their communities.

The Annual Financial Statements for 2024-25 have been prepared and submitted to Crowe (Australasia), the appointed auditors for the Victorian Auditor General's Office, for an independent audit opinion.

Use has been made of the Local Government Model Financial Report 2024-25 released by Local Government Victoria to assist councils across the state in providing uniform financial reports that meet the requirements of the Act and accounting standards.

Overall, the Financial Statements underline that Council's financial position remains sound.

The Act specifically requires that Council pass a resolution giving its approval in principle to the Annual Financial Report prior to formally submitting it to the Auditor-General Victoria.

The approved and audited Report then forms part of the Council's Annual Report, as required by Sections 98 and 99 of the Act.

The Audit and Risk Committee considered the Report at its meeting on Friday 5 September 2025. The Committee, having reviewed the Annual Financial Report consisting of the Financial Statements and Notes, recommends the 2024-25 Annual Financial Report be considered for approval by Council. Since this meeting, minor changes have been made in response to feedback received from the Committee and the Auditors.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Approve in principle the 2024-25 Annual Financial Report**
2. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to make minor amendments to the 2024-25 Annual Financial Report, if required, and brief Council if amendments are made**
3. **Authorise Councillors Ewart-Kennedy and Jeffery to sign the 2024-25 Annual Financial Report once finalised**
4. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to:**

a. certify the 2024-25 Annual Financial Report

b. include the Auditor's Certified Report in the Annual Report to be considered by Council at its October 2025 meeting.

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The Victorian Auditor-General's Office has completed the external audit of the 2024-25 Financial Report through its contracted auditors Crowe (Australasia).

The Auditors were onsite at Council in May 2025 and worked remotely in late August 2025 which included a detailed review of the draft 2024-25 Annual Financial Report, and the supporting working papers and financial records.

The Annual Financial Report consisting of the Financial Statements and accompanying notes has been prepared in accordance with relevant legislation, applicable Australian Accounting Standards and other related accounting guidelines.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

The Annual Financial Report is prepared in accordance with the applicable Australian Accounting Standard which includes the Australian equivalent to International Financial Reporting Standards (AIFRS). These Standards require the preparation of five mandatory statements. These statements include:

- Comprehensive Income Statement (Operating – Accrual Statement), which comprises non-cash items such as Depreciation and cost of goods (assets) sold but excludes Capital Expenditure and Transfers to and from Other Reserves
- Balance Sheet lists Councils' assets and liabilities. It indicates the overall financial position of Council as of 30 June 2025
- Statement of Changes in Equity, which indicates movements in Council's Reserve Funds
- Statement of Cash Flows, which indicates all cash expended and received for all activities during the financial year
- Statement of Capital Works, which details Council's capital works expenditure for the financial year. It sets out the expenditure on creating or buying property, infrastructure, plant, and equipment by each category of asset.

Council is also required to prepare two Budget Comparison Notes with variance explanations to the 2024-25 Annual Budget relating to:

1. Income and Expenditure
2. Capital Works

The following analysis of the 2024-25 Annual Financial Report is at a macro level, which reflects the nature of the report's disclosures. It is not designed nor intended to be used as a management report that provides details of programs, or resultant variances. No analysis has been provided for the Statement of Changes in Equity.

1. Income Statement

The operating result represents the accrual accounting treatments, which includes the noncash items of depreciation and cost of goods (assets) sold, but excludes expenditure on Capital items, loan proceeds and loan principal repayments and transfers to and from other reserves.

For the year ended 30 June 2025, Council reported an operating surplus of $4,395,050. This is a favourable variance of $3.971 million compared to adopted budget and is mainly due to timing of Commonwealth Finance Assistance Grant receipt - $3.6 million, and some other additional income amounts, offset by some unbudgeted and carry forward expenditure, and higher depreciation expense.

2. Balance Sheet

Council's Balance Sheet indicates that Council's overall financial position and its cash and liquidity position is sound and within acceptable financial parameters.

Council's cash position as of 30 June 2025 was represented by cash on hand and investments of $10.6 million. This represents an increase in cash holdings of $1.0 million during the 2024-25 financial year. This increase is due to the early timing of the Commonwealth Finance Assistance Grant $3.6m, offset by completion of prior year operating projects and capital projects carried forward and delivered in 2024-25.

The value of Council's property, infrastructure, plant and equipment non-current assets as at 30 June 2025 is $469.7 million, an increase of $81.5 million, due primarily to an internal revaluation of infrastructure assets.

Council's end-of-year working capital ratio is 2.68:1, which is greater than the target ratio of 1.1:1. This ratio is used to assess Council's ability to meet current commitments and is derived by dividing current assets by current liabilities.

3. Cash Flow Statement

During the year council recorded a net cash inflow of $11.2 million from operating activities mainly due to reduced grant income and increased payments for materials and services. This allowed Council to meet its investing and financing activity cashflow need from this source. There was a small increase in the balance of cash and cash equivalents due to the early receipt of some grants, offset using existing funds to complete prior year projects.

4. Statement of Capital Works

Council completed $9.7 million worth of projects during 2024-25. Overall, this is an achievement of 72% of the adopted capital budget of $13.6 million. Projects not completed during 2024-25 will mostly carry forward into the 2025-26 financial year, many of which were allowed for and detailed in Council's 2025-26 Budget.

Fair Value Assessment as at 30 June 2025

As per Australian Accounting Standards AASB 116, after recognition as an asset, an item of property, plant and equipment whose fair value can be measured reliably shall be carried at a revalued amount, being its fair value at the date of the revaluation less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses. Revaluations shall be made with sufficient regularity to ensure that the carrying amount does not differ materially from that which would be determined using fair value at the end of the reporting period.

During 2024-25, Council had to implement a review of its existing valuations and their methodology to ensure compliance with the amendments to AASB 13 – Fair Value Measurement, that prospectively came into effect during Council's current reporting period.

As part of this review, there were changes in valuation for some asset classes, due to the specific provisions that were detailed in the amendments to AASB 13, as well as broader reviews of the existing valuations and their methodologies and current prices and price indices

for like assets. This overall increment of $80.1 million, as at 30 June 2025 was recorded in the financial statements through the asset revaluation reserve during the 2024-25 year. Approximately $3.5 million of this valuation increment was attributable to the specific provisions of the AASB 13 amendments, and the remainder due to review and updating of valuation methodology and assumptions and unit prices.

In addition, council officers performed an indexation assessment of other asset classes – Land, Buildings and Bridges to see if any significant movements in assets value to consider their impact on 2024-25 financial statements. This indexation movement was not assessed as material, so no adjustments were made here.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Inform - To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions.

The Annual Financial Statements are prepared and audited and once completed Council is required to advertise that they are available for inspection as part of the Annual Report.

The release of the Annual Report will occur after the October 2025 Council meeting, where adoption of the report will be sought.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following objectives and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

Objective One: Connect

We are committed to enhancing access for all residents, promoting healthy living, fostering connections, and providing opportunities to thrive and participate in community life.

Objective Two: Sustain

We aim to collaborate with others to foster a sustainable environment, a thriving economy and resilient communities.

Objective Three: Deliver

We are committed to delivering quality services and infrastructure that meets the needs of our community. We aim to strengthen the Council's governance and provide improved, customer-focused experiences.

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

The Annual Financial Report is prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*, and its regulations.

Additionally, some of the capital works projects and services provided to the community during the year were funded by grant money provided by State and Federal governments and therefore were consistent with the policies and strategies of other levels of government.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Lack of transparency	Unlikely	Low	Low	Implementation of regular reporting and communication protocols to ensure openness
Governance Issues	Unlikely	Low	Low	Establishment of clear policies, procedures, along with regular internal and external audits
Financial sustainability	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Regular monitoring of actuals compared to budget and continually developing the 10-year financial plan.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Annual Statements were prepared according to the requirements and timelines in the *Local Government Act 2020* and its regulations, and in accordance with relevant Accounting Standards.

Use has been made of the Local Government Model Financial Report 2024-25 released by Local Government Victoria to assist councils across the state in providing uniform financial reports that meet the requirements of the Act and accounting standards.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

In the interests of transparency and open and honest communication with our community this report is presented to a public Council meeting.

The Annual Financial Statements will be available on Council's website as well as at the Customer Service Desk in Euroa and Nagambie as part of the Annual report for public review.

Effective planning and reporting by councils is essential for ensuring transparency and accountability to the community and other levels of government as to how public money is being spent and the quality of services delivered.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report, as there is not a decision that has financial implications involved with this report.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Economic

The financial report and associated documentation provide published evidence and data on the financial costs and benefits across the main areas of Strathbogie Shire Council income and expenditure. Our report, when included in the broader Annual Report, is intended to inform the community of the wider financial and economic impact of council expenditure.

Social

Strathbogie Shire Council, in partnership with other levels of government, is responsible for aspects of everyday life that our community value, from our public open spaces to accessible libraries, to strong local business and employment opportunities. The report outlines Council's financial position, and its ability to be able to continue to support its community through services and facilities.

Environmental and Climate Change

The budget provided funds for the continuation of environmental programs and the implementation of the Climate Change Action Plan during 2024-25.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Council continues to refine its end of year processes. The audit has been conducted in a hybrid work environment with remote and in-house field work in partnership with Crowe (Australasia), the Victorian Auditor General's Office appointed service provider.

The external audit process always proves useful to Council staff and management in terms of reviewing our internal processes and collation of evidence and data which form the basis of the report.

COLLABORATION

Council, the Victorian Auditor-General's Office, Crowe (Australasia) and Council's Audit and Risk Committee have worked cooperatively in preparing the Annual Financial Report.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The recommendation does not limit any human rights under the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.*

CONCLUSION

This report summarises the end of year result for 2024-25 and recommends approval in principle of the Annual Financial Report, so it can be transmitted to VAGO for final review and completion of the audit process.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 20250916 Draft- Strathbogie Shire Council Model Accounts 2024-25

Strathbogie Shire Council

Annual Financial Report

For the year ended

30 June 2025



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Strathbogie Shire Council
Financial Report
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Financial Report
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Certification of the Financial Statements

In my opinion, the accompanying financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020,* the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020,* the Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.

Andrew Davis, CPA
Principal Accounting Officer

Dated : *<Date>*
Euroa

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly the financial transactions of the Strathbogie Shire Council for the year ended 30 June 2025 and the financial position of the Council as at that date.

At the date of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances that would render any particulars in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.

We have been authorised by the Council and by the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* to certify the financial statements in their final form.

Cr Claire Ewart-Kennedy
Councillor
Dated : *<Date>*
Euroa

Cr Scott Jeffery
Councillor
Dated : *<Date>*
Euroa

Rachelle Quattrocchi
Chief Executive Officer
Dated : <Date>
Euroa

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Comprehensive Income Statement
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

	Note	2025	2024
		$	$
Income / Revenue			
Rates and charges	3.1	23,290,618	22,242,742
Statutory fees and fines	3.2	580,256	597,544
User fees	3.3	1,183,380	1,009,655
Grants - operating	3.4	12,504,280	3,153,394
Grants - capital	3.4	3,808,611	6,045,049
Contributions - monetary	3.5	1,227,761	249,754
Contributions - non monetary	3.5	-	24,988
Net gain (or loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	3.6	(505,570)	20,475
Share of net profits (or loss) of associates and joint ventures	6.2	10,437	1,764
Other income	3.7	1,164,328	1,599,372
Total income / revenue		**43,264,101**	**34,944,737**
Expenses			
Employee costs	4.1	14,116,840	13,569,178
Materials and services	4.2	16,148,870	16,859,935
Depreciation	4.3	7,537,007	7,103,026
Amortisation - intangible assets	4.4	107,486	80,450
Depreciation - right of use assets	4.5	170,432	261,761
Allowance for impairment losses	4.6	3,235	(3,313)
Borrowing costs	4.7	164,296	173,822
Finance costs - leases	4.8	10,125	18,706
Other expenses	4.9	610,761	487,063
Total expenses		**38,869,052**	**38,550,628**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		**4,395,050**	**(3,605,891)**
Other comprehensive income			
Items that will not be reclassified to surplus or deficit in future periods			
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)	6.1	80,067,810	23,193,445
Total other comprehensive income		**80,067,810**	**23,193,445**
Total comprehensive result		**84,462,860**	**19,587,554**

The above comprehensive income statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Balance Sheet
As at 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 $	2024 $
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	5.1	10,639,390	9,655,645
Trade and other receivables	5.1	5,981,606	4,696,976
Prepayments	5.2	486,305	631,291
Contract assets	5.1	1,710,338	2,228,093
Other assets	5.2	15,340	15,516
Total current assets		**18,832,979**	**17,227,521**
Non-current assets			
Trade and other receivables	5.1	8,602	12,426
Other financial assets	5.1	2,032	2,032
Investments in associates, joint arrangements and subsidiaries	6.2	270,925	260,487
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	6.1	469,688,491	388,157,289
Right-of-use assets	5.8	143,023	324,934
Intangible assets	5.2	168,623	228,812
Total non-current assets		**470,281,696**	**388,985,980**
Total assets		**489,114,675**	**406,213,501**
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	5.3	2,505,894	3,376,405
Trust funds and deposits	5.3	859,578	1,057,889
Contract and other liabilities	5.3	881,689	850,028
Provisions	5.5	2,611,796	2,885,009
Interest-bearing liabilities	5.4	177,291	168,603
Lease liabilities	5.8	75,953	189,434
Total current liabilities		**7,112,201**	**8,527,368**
Non-current liabilities			
Trust funds and deposits	5.3	34,791	34,791
Provisions	5.5	1,353,437	1,382,392
Interest-bearing liabilities	5.4	2,993,765	3,171,056
Lease liabilities	5.8	78,259	154,212
Total non-current liabilities		**4,460,252**	**4,742,451**
Total liabilities		**11,572,453**	**13,269,819**
Net assets		**477,542,222**	**392,943,682**
Equity			
Accumulated surplus		128,461,461	124,158,467
Reserves	9.1	349,080,761	268,785,215
Total Equity		**477,542,222**	**392,943,682**

The above balance sheet should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Changes in Equity
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

2025	Note	Total $	Accumulated Surplus $	Revaluation Reserve $	Other Reserves $
Balance at beginning of the financial year		392,943,682	124,158,467	268,432,227	352,988
Surplus for the year		4,395,049	4,395,049	-	-
Net asset revaluation gain	6.1	80,203,490	-	80,203,490	-
Transfers to other reserves	9.1	-	(92,055)	-	92,055
		477,542,222	128,461,461	348,635,717	445,043
Balance at end of the financial year		**477,542,222**	**128,461,461**	**348,635,717**	**445,043**

2024	Total $	Accumulated Surplus $	Revaluation Reserve $	Other Reserves $
Balance at beginning of the financial year	373,356,128	127,849,568	245,238,782	267,778
Deficit for the year	(3,605,891)	(3,605,891)	-	-
Net asset revaluation gain 6.1	23,193,445	-	23,193,445	-
Transfers to other reserves 9.1	-	(85,210)	-	85,210
	392,943,682	124,158,467	268,432,227	352,988
Balance at end of the financial year	**392,943,682**	**124,158,467**	**268,432,227**	**352,988**

The above statement of changes in equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Cash Flows
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 Inflows/ (Outflows) $	2024 Inflows/ (Outflows) $
Cash flows from operating activities			
Rates and charges		22,532,417	21,316,483
Statutory fees and fines		493,280	97,918
User fees		1,180,145	1,012,968
Grants - operating		11,427,567	1,933,207
Grants - capital		4,518,390	4,979,375
Contributions - monetary		1,227,761	249,754
Interest received		414,225	826,431
Trust funds and deposits taken		2,822,403	2,351,680
Other receipts		953,530	1,089,572
Net GST refund/payment		3,040,473	2,731,436
Employee costs		(14,279,535)	(13,490,938)
Materials and services		(19,539,338)	(23,311,057)
Trust funds and deposits repaid		(3,020,714)	(2,218,348)
Other payments		(610,760)	(487,063)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities		**11,159,842**	**(2,918,581)**
Cash flows from investing activities			
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	6.2	(9,688,946)	(11,792,450)
Payments for intangible assets		(47,297)	(114,986)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		81,125	64,391
Proceeds from sale of investments		-	21,550,000
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		**(9,655,118)**	**9,706,955**
Cash flows from financing activities			
Finance costs		(164,296)	(173,822)
Repayment of borrowings		(168,603)	(255,603)
Repayment of lease liabilities		(188,080)	(285,008)
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities		**(520,979)**	**(714,433)**
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		983,746	6,073,940
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		9,655,645	3,581,705
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year		**10,639,390**	**9,655,645**

Financing arrangements	5.6	

The above statement of cash flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Capital Works
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 $	2024 $
Property			
Buildings		1,526,513	1,184,773
Total property		**1,526,513**	**1,184,773**
Plant and equipment			
Plant, machinery and equipment		686,398	779,140
Fixtures, fittings and furniture		612,369	228,153
Intangible assets		47,297	114,986
Total plant and equipment		**1,346,064**	**1,122,279**
Infrastructure			
Roads		4,175,725	4,382,755
Bridges and culverts		338,900	1,958,650
Footpaths and cycleways		380,578	617,304
Drainage		278,808	331,461
Recreational, leisure and community facilities		165,737	1,294,678
Parks, open space and streetscapes		1,523,918	1,015,536
Total infrastructure		**6,863,666**	**9,600,384**
Total capital works expenditure		**9,736,243**	**11,907,436**
Represented by:			
New asset expenditure		1,258,588	678,503
Asset renewal expenditure		6,504,230	6,673,174
Asset expansion expenditure		312,994	962,630
Asset upgrade expenditure		1,660,431	3,593,129
Total capital works expenditure		**9,736,243**	**11,907,436**

The above statement of capital works should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Note 1 OVERVIEW

Introduction

The Strathbogie Shire Council was established by an Order of the Governor in Council on 18 November 1994 and is a body corporate.
The Council's main office is located at the corner of Binney and Bury Streets, Euroa, Victoria 3666.

Statement of compliance

These financial statements are a general purpose financial report that consists of a Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Cash Flows, Statement of Capital Works and Notes accompanying these financial statements. The general purpose financial report complies with the Australian Accounting Standards (AAS), other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board, the *Local Government Act 2020* , and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* .

The Council is a not-for-profit entity and therefore applies the additional AUS paragraphs applicable to a not-for-profit entity under the Australian Accounting Standards.

Accounting policy information

1.1 Basis of accounting

Accounting policies are selected and applied in a manner which ensures that the resulting financial information satisfies the concepts of relevance and reliability, thereby ensuring that the substance of the underlying transactions or other events is reported. Specific accounting policies applied are disclosed in sections where the related balance or financial statement matter is disclosed.

The accrual basis of accounting has been used in the preparation of these financial statements, except for the cash flow information, whereby assets, liabilities, equity, income and expenses are recognised in the reporting period to which they relate, regardless of when cash is received or paid.

The financial statements are based on the historical cost convention unless a different measurement basis is specifically disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The financial statements are in Australian dollars. The amounts presented in the financial statements have been rounded to the nearest thousand dollars unless otherwise specified. Minor discrepancies in tables between totals and the sum of components are due to rounding.

Judgements, estimates and assumptions are required to be made about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated judgements are based on professional judgement derived from historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and also in future periods that are affected by the revision. Judgements and assumptions made by management in the application of AAS's that have significant effects on the financial statements and estimates relate to:
- the fair value of land, buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment (refer to Note 6.1)
- the determination of depreciation for buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment (refer to Note 6.1)
- the determination of employee provisions (refer to Note 5.5)
- the determination of landfill provisions (refer to Note 5.5)
- the determination of whether performance obligations are sufficiently specific so as to determine whether an arrangement is within the scope of AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers or AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities (refer to Note 3)
- the determination, in accordance with AASB 16 Leases, of the lease term, the estimation of the discount rate when not implicit in the lease and whether an arrangement is in substance short-term or low value (refer to Note 5.8)
- whether or not AASB 1059 Service Concession Arrangements: Grantors is applicable

Unless otherwise stated, all accounting policies are consistent with those applied in the prior year. Where appropriate, comparative figures have been amended to accord with current presentation, and disclosure has been made of any material changes to comparatives.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Income and expenses are recognised net of the amount of associated GST. Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is included with other receivables or payables in the balance sheet.

1.2 Impact of emergencies and natural disasters

Council continued its recovery works into the 2024/25 financial year from previous natural disaster events – storm/minor flood events in December 2023/January-February 2024 and the flood event in October 2022. Council has noted the following significant impacts on its financial operations:

- Council spent $744,806 on natural disaster recovery work during the year.

- Council received $202,358 grant funding from the Commonwealth government.

- Chinamans Bridge - Nagambie, a heritage listed timber disused bridge was affected by the October 2022 Flood Event. The bridge is in a state of imminent collapse, and subject to an exclusion zone. Council received a permit from Heritage Victoria in early 2025 to demolish Chinamans Bridge with the exception of the land-based abutments. Council continues to work with an experienced Heritage Consultant and structural engineer to meet the conditions of the permit whilst developing the scope of works for a staged demolition plan and specifications to enable a procurement process for the demolition works. Demolition, and associated heritage interpretation work is planned for 2025/26. No real estimates for the demolition of the bridge are available at the moment, however, it is considered it could be in the range of $1-2 million (refer note 8.1).

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Note 2 ANALYSIS OF OUR RESULTS

2.1 Performance against budget

The performance against budget notes compare Council's financial plan, expressed through its annual budget, with actual performance. The *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* requires explanation of any material variances. Council has adopted a materiality threshold of the lower of 10 percent or $100,000 where further explanation is warranted. Explanations have not been provided for variations below the materiality threshold unless the variance is considered to be material because of its nature.

These notes are prepared to meet the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

2.1.1 Income / Revenue and expenditure

	Budget 2025 $	Actual 2025 $	Variance $	Variance %	Ref
Income / Revenue					
Rates and charges	23,188,000	23,290,618	102,618	0.44%	**1**
Statutory fees and fines	693,000	580,256	(112,744)	-16.27%	**2**
User fees	718,000	1,183,380	465,380	64.82%	**3**
Grants - operating	7,911,000	12,504,280	4,593,280	58.06%	**4**
Grants - capital	4,263,000	3,808,611	(454,389)	-10.66%	**5**
Contributions - monetary	132,000	1,227,761	1,095,761	830.12%	**6**
Contributions - non monetary	250,000	-	(250,000)	-100.00%	**7**
Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	50,000	(505,570)	(555,570)	-1111.14%	**8**
Share of net profits/(losses) of associates and joint ventures	-	10,437	10,437	-100.00%	
Other income	1,002,000	1,164,328	162,328	16.20%	**9**
Total income / revenue	**38,207,000**	**43,264,101**	**5,057,101**	**13.24%**	
Expenses					
Employee costs	14,697,000	14,116,840	580,160	3.95%	**10**
Materials and services	15,347,000	16,148,870	(801,870)	-5.22%	**11**
Depreciation	6,813,000	7,537,007	(724,007)	-10.63%	**12**
Amortisation - intangible assets	62,000	107,486	(45,486)	-73.36%	
Depreciation - right of use assets	182,000	170,432	11,568	6.36%	
Allowance for impairment losses	1,000	3,235	(2,235)	-223.50%	
Borrowing costs	164,000	164,296	(296)	-0.18%	
Finance costs - leases	10,000	10,125	(125)	-1.25%	
Other expenses	507,000	610,761	(103,761)	-20.47%	**13**
Total expenses	**37,783,000**	**38,869,052**	**(1,086,052)**	**-2.87%**	
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	**424,000**	**4,395,050**	**3,971,050**	**936.57%**	

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

(i) Explanation of material variations

Income

1	Rates and charges	Favourable variance is due to higher than anticipated supplementary rates notices issued.
2	Statutory fees and fines	Unfavourable variance is due to less than expected subdivision fee income ($90,200) due to lower levels of activity and less than expected infringement fee income received ($22,686).
3	User fees	More than budgeted due to increased saleyard fee income ($136,895), lease income ($106,292) and tip fee income ($86,006).
4	Grants - operating	Higher than budget due to the timing of Commonwealth Financial Assistance grants ($3,589,653), with 100% of 2024/25 and 50% of 2025/26 grants received in the current financial year. There was also the receipt of unbudgeted grants income; LEAPing into Safer Communities grant ($263,063), Flood study and flood support grant ($355,337).
5	Grants - capital	Less than budget due to general capital grants identified in the budget not being fully received ($278,479).
6	Contributions - monetary	Favourable variance is due to receipt of Inland rail project contributions ($690,256), Ausnet Energy Resilience contribution ($163,809) for a community generator project and higher than budgeted contribution from Nagambie Discovery Caravan Park ($122,619).
7	Contributions - non monetary	Council did not receive any developer non monetay contributions during the year.
8	Loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	Higher than budget due to written down value of assets renewed during the year ($554,173).
9	Other income	Higher than budgeted interest on rates debtors, ($185,027) which partly offset reduced income from container deposit scheme ($15,908).

Expense

10	Employee costs	Decrease in employee cost is mainly due staff vacancies during the year. This partly offset with increased Work Cover expense ($69,656) and income protection insurance expense ($32,320).
11	Materials and services	Increased materials and services expense is mainly due to natural disaster recovery expenditure ($752,051) continued from prior years (from funding received in prior periods), and increased contractor and professional services expenses ($555,580). This is partly offset by savings in assets maintenance expenses ($336,997) and computer software expenses ($166,145).
12	Depreciation/ Amortisation - intangible assets	Increased depreciation expenditure in infrastructure assets mainly due to assets revaluation and underbudgeted furniture, plant and equipment depreciation.
13	Other expenses	Mainly due to expenses for the State Government appointed Municipal Monitor.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

2.1.2 Capital works

	Budget 2025 $	Actual 2025 $	Variance $	Variance %	Ref
Property					
Buildings	1,200,000	1,526,513	326,513	27.21%	**1**
Total property	**1,200,000**	**1,526,513**	**326,513**	27.21%	
Plant and equipment					
Plant, machinery and equipment	855,000	686,398	(168,602)	-19.72%	**2**
Computers and telecommunications	995,000	612,369	(382,631)	-38.46%	**3**
Intangible assets	52,000	47,297	(4,703)	-9.04%	
Total plant and equipment	**1,902,000**	**1,346,064**	**(555,936)**	-29.23%	
Infrastructure					
Roads	4,631,000	4,175,725	(455,275)	-9.83%	**4**
Bridges	1,571,000	338,900	(1,232,100)	-78.43%	**5**
Footpaths and cycleways	344,000	380,578	36,578	10.63%	
Drainage	874,000	278,808	(595,192)	-68.10%	**6**
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	1,015,000	165,737	(849,263)	-83.67%	**7**
Parks, open space and streetscapes	2,057,000	1,523,918	(533,082)	-25.92%	**8**
Total infrastructure	**10,492,000**	**6,863,666**	**(3,628,334)**	-34.58%	
Total capital works expenditure	**13,594,000**	**9,736,243**	**(3,857,757)**	-28.38%	
Represented by:					
New asset expenditure	1,492,000	1,258,588	(233,412)	-15.64%	
Asset renewal expenditure	8,284,000	6,504,230	(1,779,770)	-21.48%	
Asset expansion expenditure	186,000	312,994	126,994	68.28%	
Asset upgrade expenditure	3,632,000	1,660,431	(1,971,569)	-54.28%	
Total capital works expenditure	**13,594,000**	**9,736,243**	**(3,857,757)**	-28.38%	

(i) Explanation of material variations

	Item	Explanation
1	Buildings	Mainly due to projects that were carried forward from 2023/24 to 2024/25; Euroa Civic Centre Toilet Upgrade ($116,928), Swimming Pool works ($65,352) and there classification of Play Space Renewal Program ($224,784) which was budgeted under the parks and recreation capital budget.
2	Plant, machinery and equipment	Market constraints and long lead times in sourcing new vehicles and plants. Part of the remaining budget has been carried forward into 2025/26.
3	Computers and telecommunications	Lower than budget, mainly due to contribution for regional council information technology project ($200,900) being carried forward into 2025/26.
4	Roads	Mainly due to savings in land use agreement fees ($268,237) and the road resheeting program ($153,059), as well as the Nagambie School crossing ($100,000) which was completed in prior financial year.
5	Bridges	Due to unspent projects carry forward to 2025/26; Chinamen's Bridge ($1,243,431).
6	Drainage	Mainly due to projects not carried out; Boundary Rd South Future Open Drain ($200,000) (due to much higher than anticipated costs) and Nagambie Industrial Estate Drainage Scoping ($100,000) and underspent projects carried forward to 2025/26; Storm Water Strategy ($239,060). Most of the budgeted drainage works were put on hold until council has finalised and adopts its drainage strategy.
9	Recreational, leisure and community facilities	Mainly due to unspent budget on Nagambie Splash Park ($500,000) which is delayed until 2025/26, and general budget allocation of $300,000 which was reallocated to other projects during the mid-year budget review.
10	Parks, open space and streetscapes	Mainly due to projects carried forward to 2025/26 year; streetscapes project ($529,522) and Street Light upgrade ($50,000).

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

2.2 Analysis of Council results by program

Council delivers its functions and activities through the following programs.

2.2.1 People & Governance

People & Governance provides primarily internally focussed services including financial management, human resources, risk management, occupational health and safety, information communication technology, records management, frontline customer service and corporate governance and council business.

Community & Planning

Community & Planning provides high quality community focused programs. Service areas include maternal and child health, youth, seniors, community grants, arts and culture, tourism, regulatory services, local laws, emergency management and economic development programs. It also includes strategic and statutory land use planning.

Sustainable Infrastructure

Sustainable Infrastructure provides strategic management of council assets and waste management services. Service areas include assets management, operations and waste management.

Corporate Leadership

Corporate Leadership provides effective strategic oversight, policy development and communications/engagement.

Mayor & Councillors

Elected members to the council and associated services.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

2.2.2 Summary of income / revenue, expenses, assets and capital expenses by program

2025	Income / Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Grants included in income / revenue	Total assets
	$	$	$	$	$
People & Governance	27,021,065	(13,341,591)	13,679,474	6,466,567	167,885,960
Community & Planning	2,494,717	(6,172,061)	(3,677,344)	1,451,704	77,667,080
Sustainable Infrastructure	13,741,138	(17,752,576)	(4,011,438)	8,394,620	223,392,256
Corporate Leadership	-	(1,042,985)	(1,042,985)	-	13,124,565
Mayor & Councillors	7,181	(559,839)	(552,657)	-	7,044,815
	43,264,101	**(38,869,052)**	**4,395,050**	**16,312,891**	**489,114,675**

2024	Income / Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Grants included in income / revenue	Total assets
	$	$	$	$	$
People & Governance	20,816,820	(11,981,537)	8,835,283	177,360	126,251,175
Community & Planning	3,787,587	(7,537,775)	(3,750,188)	2,902,790	79,426,615
Sustainable Infrastructure	10,325,930	(17,428,234)	(7,102,304)	6,108,583	183,643,802
Corporate Leadership	9,710	(1,145,004)	(1,135,294)	9,710	12,065,074
Mayor & Councillors	4,690	(458,078)	(453,388)	-	4,826,834
	34,944,737	**(38,550,628)**	**(3,605,891)**	**9,198,443**	**406,213,501**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Note 3 FUNDING FOR THE DELIVERY OF OUR SERVICES

	2025	2024
3.1 Rates and charges	**$**	**$**

Council uses Capital Improved Value (CIV) as the basis of valuation of all properties within the municipal district. The CIV of a property is the valuation of the land and all improvements on the land.

The valuation base used to calculate general rates for 2024/25 was $7.015 million (2023/24 $6,663 million).

General rates	20,097,503	18,987,736
Service rates and charges	3,193,115	3,255,006
Total rates and charges	**23,290,618**	**22,242,742**

The date of the general revaluation of land for rating purposes within the municipal district was 1 January 2024 and the valuation was first applied in the rating year commencing 1 July 2024.

Annual rates and charges are recognised as income when Council issues annual rates notices. Supplementary rates are recognised when a valuation and reassessment is completed and a supplementary rates notice issued.

3.2 Statutory fees and fines

Building fees	120,375	116,105
Planning fees	228,627	243,304
Health registrations	86,508	89,563
Animal registrations	119,230	108,722
Land information certificates	22,452	22,196
Fire Prevention Notice Infringements	3,064	17,654
Total statutory fees and fines	**580,256**	**597,544**

Statutory fees and fines (including parking fees and fines) are recognised as income when the service has been provided, the payment is received, or when the penalty has been applied, whichever first occurs.

3.3 User fees

Tip fees	261,106	231,101
Nagambie Lakes events	20,949	29,749
Saleyard operations revenue	469,522	346,168
Swimming pools revenue	20,570	21,638
Rent/lease Charges	206,689	173,546
Euroa Cinema	40,987	42,743
Septic tank fees	34,308	31,700
Other user charges and contributions	129,249	133,010
Total user fees	**1,183,380**	**1,009,655**
User fees by timing of revenue recognition		
User fees recognised over time	-	-
User fees recognised at a point in time	1,183,380	1,009,655
Total user fees	**1,183,380**	**1,009,655**

User fees are recognised as revenue at a point in time, or over time, when (or as) the performance obligation is satisfied. Recognition is based on the underlying contractual terms.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

	2025	2024
	$	$
3.4 Funding from other levels of government		
Grants were received in respect of the following:		
Summary of grants		
Commonwealth funded grants	14,318,700	6,184,204
State funded grants	1,994,191	3,014,239
Total grants received	**16,312,891**	**9,198,443**
(a) Operating Grants		
Recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Financial Assistance Grants	10,788,653	300,656
Recurrent - State Government		
Maternal & Child Health	284,960	337,477
Community Safety	19,570	7,249
Youth	137,840	127,886
Pests and Plants Program	67,360	67,176
Municipal Emergency Resource Programme	60,000	60,000
Supported Playgroup	67,084	55,336
Vulnerable Persons Register	-	1,005
Boat Ramp Maintenance	-	9,100
Other	13,498	34,945
Total recurrent operating grants	**11,438,965**	**1,000,830**
Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Emergency & Disaster Management	202,357	500,000
Non-recurrent - State Government		
Environment	74,453	56,990
Tourism & Events	77,603	126,130
Emergency & Disaster Management	266,042	1,268,149
Water/Waterways Management	-	57,145
Health	45,000	47,525
Planning	266,457	-
Other	133,403	96,625
Total non-recurrent operating grants	**1,065,315**	**2,152,564**
Total operating grants	**12,504,280**	**3,153,394**
(b) Capital Grants		
Recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Roads to recovery	1,566,581	1,737,470
Total recurrent capital grants	**1,566,581**	**1,737,470**
Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Infrastructure Funding Grant	1,761,109	2,946,078
Drought Funding	-	100,000
Nagambie Locksley Road Bridge	-	600,000
Non-recurrent - State Government		
Recreation	-	129,901
Footpaths and cycleways	-	241,600
Transfer Station Upgrade	-	290,000
Infrastructure	480,921	-
Total non-recurrent capital grants	**2,242,030**	**4,307,579**
Total capital grants	**3,808,611**	**6,045,049**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

(c) Recognition of grant income

Before recognising funding from government grants as revenue the Council assesses whether there is a contract that is enforceable and has sufficiently specific performance obligations in accordance with *AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers* . When both these conditions are satisfied, the Council:
- identifies each performance obligation relating to revenue under the contract/agreement
- determines the transaction price
- recognises a contract liability for its obligations under the agreement
- recognises revenue as it satisfies its performance obligations, at the point in time or over time when services are rendered.

Where the contract is not enforceable and/or does not have sufficiently specific performance obligations, the Council applies *AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities* .

Grant revenue with sufficiently specific performance obligations is recognised over time as the performance obligations specified in the underlying agreement are met. Where performance obligations are not sufficiently specific, grants are recognised on the earlier of receipt or when an unconditional right to receipt has been established. Grants relating to capital projects are generally recognised progressively as the capital project is completed. The following table provides a summary of the accounting framework under which grants are recognised.

	2025	2024
	$	$
Income recognised under AASB 1058 *Income of Not-for-Profit Entities*		
General purpose	12,884,153	4,276,053
Specific purpose grants to acquire non-financial assets	2,242,029	4,307,579
Other specific purpose grants	545,042	546,027
Revenue recognised under AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*		
Specific purpose grants	641,666	68,784
	16,312,890	**9,198,443**
(d) Unspent grants received on condition that they be spent in a specific manner		
Operating		
Balance at start of year	542,425	1,508,649
Received during the financial year and remained unspent at balance date	63,830	174,050
Received in prior years and spent during the financial year	(473,486)	(1,140,274)
Balance at year end	**-**	**542,425**
Capital		
Balance at start of year	307,603	1,094,413
Received during the financial year and remained unspent at balance date	620,923	227,603
Received in prior years and spent during the financial year	(179,606)	(1,014,413)
Balance at year end	**748,920**	**307,603**

Unspent grants are determined and disclosed on a cash basis.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

3.5 Contributions	**2025 $**	**2024 $**
Monetary	1,227,761	249,754
Non-monetary	-	24,988
Total contributions	**1,227,761**	**274,742**
Contributions of non monetary assets were received in relation to the following asset classes.		
Kerb & Channel	-	24,988
Total non-monetary contributions	**-**	**24,988**

Monetary and non monetary contributions are recognised as income at their fair value when Council obtains control over the contributed asset.

3.6 Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

Proceeds of sale	81,125	64,391
Written down value of assets disposed	(586,695)	(43,916)
Total net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	**(505,570)**	**20,475**

The profit or loss on sale of an asset is determined when control of the asset has passed to the buyer.

3.7 Other income

Interest	419,534	841,572
Interest on rates	306,327	236,277
Diesel rebate	87,923	88,677
Insurance recoveries	192,343	322,589
Other items	158,201	110,257
Total other income	**1,164,328**	**1,599,372**

Interest is recognised as it is earned.

Other income is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and is recognised when Council gains control over the right to receive the income.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Note 4 THE COST OF DELIVERING SERVICES	2025 $	2024 $
4.1 (a) Employee costs		
Wages and salaries	11,957,180	11,555,503
WorkCover	334,060	277,227
Superannuation	1,385,000	1,217,076
Fringe benefits tax	106,109	122,493
Other	334,491	396,879
Total employee costs	**14,116,840**	**13,569,178**
(b) Superannuation		
Council made contributions to the following funds:		
Defined benefit fund		
Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	21,682	37,342
Employer contributions - other funds	-	-
	21,682	**37,342**
Employer contributions payable at reporting date.	-	-
Accumulation funds		
Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	685,285	546,019
Employer contributions - other funds	750,975	630,063
	1,436,260	**1,176,082**
Employer contributions payable at reporting date.	-	-

Contributions made exclude amounts accrued at balance date. Refer to note 9.3 for further information relating to Council's superannuation obligations.

4.2 Materials and services

Building maintenance	713,483	674,082
General maintenance	5,591,186	6,759,960
Flood recovery	744,806	1,347,479
Utilities	422,750	365,683
Office administration	2,364,808	2,081,754
Information technology	966,229	735,295
Insurance	676,292	559,686
Consultants	1,289,878	1,088,829
Legal fees	173,328	206,302
Emergency Expense	273,565	708,779
Waste Management	2,932,545	2,332,086
Total materials and services	**16,148,870**	**16,859,935**

Expenses are recognised as they are incurred and reported in the financial year to which they relate.

4.3 Depreciation

Property	1,075,797	1,013,928
Plant and equipment	734,753	474,778
Furniture and Equipment	251,291	260,853
Infrastructure	5,475,166	5,353,467
Total depreciation	**7,537,007**	**7,103,026**

Refer to note 5.2(c), 5.8 and 6.2 for a more detailed breakdown of depreciation and amortisation charges and accounting policy.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

	2025	2024
	$	$
4.4 Amortisation - Intangible assets		
Software	107,486	80,450
Total Amortisation - Intangible assets	**107,486**	**80,450**
4.5 Depreciation - Right of use assets		
Property	5,218	25,045
Plant and equipment	165,214	236,716
Total Depreciation - Right of use assets	**170,432**	**261,761**
4.6 Allowance for impairment losses		
Rates debtors	-	-
Other debtors	3,235	(3,313)
Total allowance for impairment losses	**3,235**	**(3,313)**
Movement in allowance for impairment losses in respect of debtors		
Balance at the beginning of the year	7,351	10,664
New allowances recognised during the year	3,235	-
Expected credit loss adjustment/Amounts allowed for but recovered during the year	-	(3,313)
Balance at end of year	**10,586**	**7,351**

An allowance for impairment losses in respect of debtors is recognised based on an expected credit loss model. This model considers both historic and forward looking information in determining the level of impairment.

4.7 Borrowing costs		
Interest - Borrowings	164,296	173,822
Total borrowing costs	**164,296**	**173,822**

Borrowing costs are recognised as an expense in the period in which they are incurred, except where they are capitalised as part of a qualifying asset constructed by Council.

4.8 Finance Costs - Leases		
Interest - Lease Liabilities	10,125	18,706
Total finance costs	10,125	**18,706**
4.9 Other expenses		
Auditors' remuneration - VAGO - audit of the financial statements, performance statement and grant acquittals	63,600	59,200
Auditors' remuneration - Internal Audit	49,424	51,133
Councillors' allowances	188,277	102,994
Other Councillor expenses	201,857	208,191
Election Expenses	107,603	65,545
Total other expenses	**610,761**	**487,063**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Note 5 INVESTING IN AND FINANCING OUR OPERATIONS	**2025**	**2024**
5.1 Financial assets	**$**	**$**
(a) Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash on hand	2,135	1,281
Cash at bank	737,255	2,654,364
Term deposits	9,900,000	7,000,000
Total cash and cash equivalents	**10,639,390**	**9,655,645**
(b) Other financial assets		
Non-current		
Share in MAV Purchasing Scheme	2,032	2,032
Total non-current other financial assets	**2,032**	**2,032**
Total other financial assets	**2,032**	**2,032**
Total cash and cash equivalents and other financial assets	**10,641,422**	**9,657,677**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits at call, and other highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, net of outstanding bank overdrafts.

Other financial assets are valued at fair value, at balance date. Term deposits are measured at original cost. Any unrealised gains and losses on holdings at balance date are recognised as either a revenue or expense.

Other financial assets include term deposits and those with original maturity dates of three to 12 months are classified as current, whilst term deposits with maturity dates greater than 12 months are classified as non-current.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

(c) Trade and other receivables	**2025 $**	**2024 $**
Current		
Statutory receivables		
Rates debtors	4,178,577	3,417,787
Special rate assessment	15,095	13,860
Net GST receivable	190,920	468,215
Non statutory receivables		
Other debtors	1,607,600	804,465
Allowance for expected credit loss - other debtors	(10,586)	(7,351)
Total current trade and other receivables	**5,981,606**	**4,696,976**
Non-current		
Statutory receivables		
Special rate scheme	8,602	12,426
Total non-current trade and other receivables	**8,602**	**12,426**
Total trade and other receivables	**5,990,208**	**4,709,402**

Short term receivables are carried at invoice amount. An allowance for expected credit losses is recognised based on past experience and other objective evidence of expected losses. Long term receivables are carried at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

(d) Ageing of Receivables

The ageing of the Council's trade and other receivables (excluding statutory receivables) that are not impaired was:

Current (not yet due)	880,402	484,319
Past due by up to 30 days	64,736	5,023
Past due between 31 and 180 days	406,390	91,749
Past due between 181 and 365 days	76,135	41,814
Past due by more than 1 year	179,937	181,560
Total trade and other receivables	**1,607,600**	**804,465**

(e) Ageing of individually impaired Receivables

At balance date, other debtors representing financial assets with a nominal value of $6,226 (2024: Nil) were impaired. The amount of the allowance raised against these debtors was $6,226 (2024: Nil). They individually have been impaired as a result of their doubtful collection. Many of the long outstanding past due amounts have been lodged with Council's debt collectors or are on payment arrangements.

The ageing of receivables that have been individually determined as impaired at reporting date was:

Current (not yet due)	532	-
Past due by up to 30 days	-	-
Past due between 31 and 180 days	225	-
Past due between 181 and 365 days	449	-
Past due by more than 1 year	5,020	-
Total trade & other receivables	**6,226**	-

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

	2025	2024
(f) Contract assets	**$**	**$**
Contract assets	1,710,338	2,228,093
Total contract assets	**1,710,338**	**2,228,093**

Contract assets are recognised when Council has transferred goods or services to the customer but where Council is yet to establish an unconditional right to consideration.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

5.2 Non-financial assets	**2025**	**2024**
(a) Other assets	**$**	**$**
Prepayments	486,305	631,291
Inventories	15,340	15,516
Total other assets	**501,645**	**646,807**

Inventories held for distribution are measured at cost, adjusted when applicable for any loss of service potential. All other inventories, including land held for sale, are measured at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Where inventories are acquired for no cost or nominal consideration, they are measured at current replacement cost at the date of acquisition.

(b) Intangible assets

Software	168,623	228,812
Total intangible assets	**168,623**	**228,812**

	Software	**Total**
	$	**$**
Gross carrying amount		
Balance at 1 July 2024	1,315,211	1,315,211
Additions	47,297	47,297
Balance at 30 June 2025	**1,362,508**	**1,362,508**
Accumulated amortisation and impairment		
Balance at 1 July 2024	1,086,399	1,086,399
Amortisation expense	107,486	107,486
Balance at 30 June 2025	**1,193,885**	**1,193,885**
Net book value at 30 June 2024	228,812	228,812
Net book value at 30 June 2025	**168,623**	**168,623**

Intangible assets with finite lives are amortised as an expense on a systematic basis over the asset's useful life. Amortisation is generally calculated on a straight line basis, at a rate that allocates the asset value, less any estimated residual value over its estimated useful life. Estimates of the remaining useful lives and amortisation method are reviewed at least annually, and adjustments made where appropriate.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

	2025	2024
	$	$
5.3 Payables, trust funds and deposits and contract and other liabilities		
(a) Trade and other payables		
Current		
Non-statutory payables		
Trade payables	1,905,399	2,168,291
Accrued expenses	600,495	1,208,114
Total current trade and other payables	**2,505,894**	**3,376,405**
(b) Trust funds and deposits		
Current		
Fire services levy	207,737	74,958
Retention amounts	288,673	428,446
Other refundable deposits	363,168	554,485
Total current trust funds and deposits	**859,578**	**1,057,889**
Non-current		
Trust funds bequested	34,791	34,791
Total non-current trust funds and deposits	**34,791**	**34,791**
Total trust funds and deposits	**894,369**	**1,092,680**
(c) Contract and other liabilities		
Contract liabilities		
Current		
Grants received in advance - operating	150,166	542,425
Grants received in advance - capital	731,523	307,603
Total contract liabilities	**881,689**	**850,028**
Other liabilities		
Current		
Deferred capital grants	-	-
Total other liabilities	**-**	**-**
Total contract and other liabilities	881,689	**850,028**

Trust funds and deposits
Amounts received as deposits and retention amounts controlled by Council are recognised as trust funds until they are returned, transferred in accordance with the purpose of the receipt, or forfeited. Trust funds that are forfeited, resulting in council gaining control of the funds, are to be recognised as revenue at the time of forfeit.
Contract liabilities
Contract liabilities reflect grants received in advance from other government agencies. Contract liabilities are derecognised and recorded as revenue when promised goods and services are transferred to the customer. Refer to Note 3.

Other liabilities
Grant consideration was received from State and Fedaral Governments to support various projects. Grant consideration is recognised as income following specific guidance under AASB 1058 as the asset is constructed. Income is recognised to the extent of costs incurred-to-date because the costs of construction most closely reflect the stage of completion of each project. As such, Council has deferred recognition of a portion of the grant consideration received as a liability for outstanding obligations.

Purpose and nature of items

Fire Service Levy - Council is the collection agent for fire services levy on behalf of the State Government. Council remits amounts received on a quarterly basis. Amounts disclosed here will be remitted to the state government in line with that process.

Retention Amounts - Council has a contractual right to retain certain amounts until a contractor has met certain requirements or a related warrant or defect period has elapsed. Subject to the satisfactory completion of the contractual obligations, or the elapsing of time, these amounts will be paid to the relevant contractor in line with Council's contractual obligations.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

5.4 Interest-bearing liabilities

	2025	2024
	$	$
Current		
Treasury Corporation of Victoria borrowings - secured	177,291	168,603
Total current interest-bearing liabilities	**177,291**	**168,603**
Non-current		
Treasury Corporation of Victoria borrowings - secured	2,993,765	3,171,056
Total non-current interest-bearing liabilities	**2,993,765**	**3,171,056**
Total	**3,171,056**	**3,339,659**

Borrowings are secured by a registered change over the Council rates on the Personal Property Security Register.

(a) The maturity profile for Council's borrowings is:

Not later than one year	177,291	168,603
Later than one year and not later than five years	805,330	982,641
Later than five years	2,188,435	2,188,415
	3,171,056	**3,339,659**

Borrowings are initially measured at fair value, being the cost of the interest bearing liabilities, net of transaction costs. The measurement basis subsequent to initial recognition depends on whether the Council has categorised its interest-bearing liabilities as either financial liabilities designated at fair value through the profit and loss, or financial liabilities at amortised cost. Any difference between the initial recognised amount and the redemption value is recognised in net result over the period of the borrowing using the effective interest method.
The classification depends on the nature and purpose of the interest bearing liabilities. The Council determines the classification of its interest bearing liabilities based on contractual repayment terms at every balance date.

In classifying borrowings as current or non-current Council considers whether at balance date it has the right to defer settlement of the liability for at least twelve months after the reporting period. Council's loan arrangements include covenants based on Council's financial performance and position at the end of the reporting period. These covenants are assessed for compliance after the reporting period based on specified financial ratios.

5.5 Provisions

2025	Employee $	Landfill restoration $	Total $
Balance at beginning of the financial year	3,310,149	957,252	4,267,401
Additional provisions	1,142,979	(48,505)	1,094,474
Amounts used	(1,283,295)	(104,475)	(1,387,770)
Change in the discounted amount arising because of time and the effect of any change in the discount rate	(22,379)	13,507	(8,872)
Balance at the end of the financial year	**3,147,454**	**817,779**	**3,965,233**
Provisions - current	2,558,029	53,767	2,611,796
Provisions - non-current	589,425	764,012	1,353,437
2024			
Balance at beginning of the financial year	3,231,910	2,661,804	5,893,714
Provisions Addition/(Reversal)	848,052	(515,264)	332,788
Amounts used	(723,468)	(1,161,483)	(1,884,951)
Change in the discounted amount arising because of time and the effect of any change in the discount rate	(46,345)	(27,805)	(74,150)
Balance at the end of the financial year	**3,310,149**	**957,252**	**4,267,401**
Provisions - current	2,832,908	52,101	2,885,009
Provisions - non-current	477,241	905,151	1,382,392

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

	2025	2024
(a) Employee provisions	**$**	**$**
Current provisions expected to be wholly settled within 12 months		
Annual leave	827,832	810,242
Long service leave	191,130	211,149
Other	61,351	21,576
	1,080,313	**1,042,967**
Current provisions expected to be wholly settled after 12 months		
Annual leave	300,216	292,309
Long service leave	1,177,500	1,497,632
	1,477,716	**1,789,941**
Total current employee provisions	**2,558,029**	**2,832,908**
Non-current		
Long service leave	589,425	477,241
Total non-current employee provisions	**589,425**	**477,241**
Aggregate carrying amount of employee provisions:		
Current	2,558,029	2,832,908
Non-current	589,425	477,241
Total aggregate carrying amount of employee provisions	**3,147,454**	**3,310,149**

The calculation of employee costs and benefits includes all relevant on-costs and are calculated as follows at reporting date.

Annual leave

A liability for annual leave is recognised in the provision for employee benefits as a current liability because the Council does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability. Liabilities for annual leave are measured at:
- nominal value if the Council expects to wholly settle the liability within 12 months
- present value if the Council does not expect to wholly settle within 12 months.

Liabilities that are not expected to be wholly settled within 12 months of the reporting date are recognised in the provision for employee benefits as current liabilities, measured at the present value of the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled using the remuneration rate expected to apply at the time of settlement.

Long service leave

Liability for long service leave (LSL) is recognised in the provision for employee benefits. Unconditional LSL is disclosed as a current liability as the Council does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement. Unconditional LSL is measured at nominal value if expected to be settled within 12 months or at present value if not expected to be settled within 12 months. Conditional LSL that has been accrued, where an employee is yet to reach a qualifying term of employment, is disclosed as a non-current liability and measured at present value.

Key assumptions:		
- discount rate	4.20%	4.35%
- index rate	3.00%	3.00%

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

	2025	2024
(b) Landfill restoration	**$**	**$**
Current	53,767	52,101
Non-current	764,012	905,151
	817,779	**957,252**

Council is obligated to restore Violet Town landfill site to a particular standard. The forecast life of the site is based on current estimates of remaining capacity and the forecast rate of infill. The provision for landfill restoration has been calculated based on the present value of the expected cost of works to be undertaken. The expected cost of works has been estimated based on current understanding of work required to reinstate the site to a suitable standard. Accordingly, the estimation of the provision required is dependent on the accuracy of the forecast timing of the work, work required and related costs. Council reviews the landfill restoration provision on an annual basis, including the key assumptions listed below.

Key assumptions:		
- discount rate	4.20%	4.35%
- index rate	2.50%	3.60%

5.6 Financing arrangements

The Council has the following funding arrangements in place as at 30 th June.

Bank overdraft	1,145,000	1,145,000
Credit card facilities	100,000	100,000
Treasury Corporation of Victoria facilities	3,500,000	3,500,000
Total facilities	**4,745,000**	**4,745,000**
Used facilities	(3,171,056)	(3,339,659)
Unused facilities	**1,573,944**	**1,405,341**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

5.7 Commitments

The Council has entered into the following commitments. Commitments are not recognised in the Balance Sheet. Commitments are disclosed at their nominal value and presented inclusive of the GST payable.

(a) Commitments for expenditure

2025	Not later than 1 year	Later than 1 year and not later than 2 years	Later than 2 years and not later than 5 years	Later than 5 years	Total
	$	$	$	$	$
Operating					
Finance	123,306	90,000	135,000	-	348,306
Environment & Waste	3,067,765	3,130,263	9,965,589	1,761,569	17,925,186
Community Engagement	67,741	164,010	-	-	231,751
Community	453,973	304,278	3,300	-	761,551
Compliance	48,400	48,400	48,400	-	145,200
Assets	1,865,600	1,572,398	712,292	-	4,150,290
IT	453,821	297,055	618,409	-	1,369,284
Total	6,080,605	5,606,404	11,482,990	1,761,569	24,931,568
Capital					
Buildings	-	-	-	-	-
Roads	740,607	-	-	-	740,607
Drainage	-	-	-	-	-
Parks open spaces and streetscapes	290,793				290,793
Total	1,031,399	-	-	-	1,031,399

2024	Not later than 1 year	Later than 1 year and not later than 2 years	Later than 2 years and not later than 5 years	Later than 5 years	Total
	$	$	$	$	$
Operating					
Finance	151,520	52,996	84,516	-	289,032
Environment & Waste	64,333	-	-	-	64,333
Community Engagement	17,466	17,466	17,466	-	52,398
Community	682,688	110,106	35,706	-	828,500
Compliance	148,400	105,000	105,000	-	358,400
Assets	48,399	-	-	-	48,399
IT	592,319	452,054	1,341,004	-	2,385,377
Total	**1,705,125**	**737,622**	**1,583,692**	**-**	**4,026,439**
Capital					
Buildings	417,765	-	-	-	417,765
Bridges	312,431	-	-	-	312,431
Roads	2,415,383	-	-	-	2,415,383
Parks open spaces and streetscapes	239,019				239,019
Total	**3,384,598**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**3,384,598**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

5.8 Leases

At inception of a contract, Council assesses whether a contract is, or contains, a lease. A contract is, or contains, a lease if the contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration. To identify whether a contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset, it is necessary to assess whether:

- The contract involves the use of an identified asset;
- Council has the right to obtain substantially all of the economic benefits from use of the asset throughout the period of use; and
- Council has the right to direct the use of the asset.

This policy is applied to contracts entered into, or changed, on or after 1 July 2019.

As a lessee, Council recognises a right-of-use asset and a lease liability at the lease commencement date. The right-of-use asset is initially measured at cost which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability adjusted for:

· any lease payments made at or before the commencement date less any lease incentives received; plus

· any initial direct costs incurred; and

· an estimate of costs to dismantle and remove the underlying asset or to restore the underlying asset or the site on which it is located.

The right-of-use asset is subsequently depreciated using the straight-line method from the commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the right-of-use asset or the end of the lease term. The estimated useful lives of right-of-use assets are determined on the same basis as those of property, plant and equipment. In addition, the right-of-use asset is periodically reduced by impairment losses, if any, and adjusted for certain measurements of the lease liability.

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments that are not paid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease or, if that rate cannot be readily determined, an appropriate incremental borrowing rate. Generally, Council uses an appropriate incremental borrowing rate as the discount rate.

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability comprise the following:

· Fixed payments

· Variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate, initially measured using the index or rate as at the commencement date;

· Amounts expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee; and

· The exercise price under a purchase option that Council is reasonably certain to exercise, lease payments in an optional renewal period if Council is reasonably certain to exercise an extension option, and penalties for early termination of a lease unless Council is reasonably certain not to terminate early.

When the lease liability is remeasured in this way, a corresponding adjustment is made to the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset, or is recorded in profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset has been reduced to zero.

Under *AASB 16 Leases* , Council as a not-for-profit entity has elected not to measure right-of-use assets at initial recognition at fair value in respect of leases that have significantly below-market terms.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Right-of-Use Assets	**Property**	**Plant & Equipment**	**Total**
	$	**$**	**$**
Balance at 1 July 2024	16,696	308,238	**324,934**
Additions	-	-	**-**
Disposal	(11,478)	-	**(11,478)**
Depreciation charge	(5,218)	(165,214)	**(170,432)**
Balance at 30 June 2025	**-**	**143,024**	**143,024**

Lease Liabilities	**2025**	**2024**
Maturity analysis - contractual undiscounted cash flows		
	$	**$**
Less than one year	80,903	199,740
One to five years	80,721	161,624
More than five years	-	-
Total undiscounted lease liabilities as at 30 June:	**161,624**	**361,364**
Lease liabilities included in the Balance Sheet at 30 June:		
Current	75,953	189,434
Non-current	78,259	154,212
Total lease liabilities	**154,212**	**343,646**

Short-term and low value leases

Council has elected not to recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for short-term leases of machinery that have a lease term of 12 months or less and leases of low-value assets (individual assets worth less than exisiting capitalisation thresholds for a like asset up to a maximum of AUD$10,000), including IT equipment. Council recognises the lease payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

	2025	**2024**
Expenses relating to:	**$**	**$**
Short-term leases	18,659	18,659
Leases of low value assets	-	-
Total	**18,659**	**18,659**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

6.1 PROPERTY, INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

Summary of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

	Carrying amount 30 June 2024	Additions	Found Assets	Revaluation	Depreciation	Disposal	Write-off	Transfers	Carrying amount 30 June 2025
	$	$	$	$	$	$	$	$	$
Property									
	87,538,494	343,268	47,764	-	(1,075,797)	(1,642)	(95,962)	66,223	**86,822,348**
Plant and equipment	5,484,337	867,583	-	-	(986,044)	(30,880)	-	-	**5,334,996**
Infrastructure	292,052,302	6,013,499	301,930	80,067,810	(5,475,166)	(554,173)	(20,445)	1,719,081	**374,104,838**
Work in progress	3,082,156	2,464,596	-	-	-	-	(335,138)	(1,785,304)	**3,426,310**
	388,157,289	**9,688,946**	**349,694**	**80,067,810**	**(7,537,007)**	**(586,695)**	**(451,545)**	**-**	**469,688,491**

Summary of Work in Progress	Opening WIP	Additions	Write-off	Transfers	Closing WIP
	$	$	$	$	$
Property	349,472	1,183,245	(144,722)	(82,223)	1,305,772
Plant and equipment	-	431,184	-	-	431,184
Infrastructure	2,732,684	850,167	(190,416)	(1,703,081)	1,689,354
Total	**3,082,156**	**2,464,596**	**(335,138)**	**(1,785,304)**	**3,426,310**

Reconciliation of net revaluation increment per Note 6.1 to Statement of Changes in Equity & Note 9.1 Reserves

Net revaluation increment	80,067,810
Plus - Found assets	349,694
Less - Write-off assets - Buildings	(95,962)
Less - Write-off assets - Parks open spaces and streetscapes	(20,445)
Less - Write-off Work in Progress - Parks open spaces and streetscapes	(97,607)
Net revaluation increment per Statement of Changes in Equity and Note 9.1	**80,203,490**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

(a) Property

	Land - specialised	Land - non specialised	Land under roads	Total Land	Buildings - specialised	Buildings - non specialised	Total Buildings	Cultural and heritage assets	Work In Progress	Total Property
	$	$	$	$	$	$	$	$	$	$
At fair value 1 July 2024	24,768,823	9,779,289	3,097,069	**37,645,181**	73,047,228	2,582,970	**75,630,198**	4,728,950	349,472	**118,353,801**
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2024	-	-	-	**-**	(29,441,541)	(1,024,294)	**(30,465,835)**	-	-	**(30,465,835)**
	24,768,823	**9,779,289**	**3,097,069**	**37,645,181**	**43,605,687**	**1,558,676**	**45,164,363**	**4,728,950**	**349,472**	**87,887,966**
Movements in fair value										
Additions	-	-	-	**-**	343,268	-	**343,268**	**-**	1,183,245	**1,526,513**
Found Assets *	-	-	-	**-**	47,764	-	**47,764**	**-**	-	**47,764**
Disposal	-	-	-	**-**	(4,380)	-	**(4,380)**	**-**	-	**(4,380)**
Write-off *	-	-	-	**-**	(141,120)	-	**(141,120)**	**-**	(144,722)	**(285,842)**
Transfers	-	-	-	**-**	62,223	-	**62,223**	**-**	(82,223)	**(20,000)**
	-	-	-	**-**	307,755	-	**307,755**	**-**	956,300	**1,264,055**
Movements in accumulated depreciation										
Depreciation and amortisation	-	-	-	**-**	(1,026,181)	(49,616)	**(1,075,797)**	**-**	-	**(1,075,797)**
Found Assets	-	-	-	**-**	-	-	**-**	**-**	-	**-**
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	-	-	-	**-**	2,738	-	**2,738**	**-**	-	**2,738**
Write-off *	-	-	-	**-**	45,158	-	**45,158**	**-**	-	**45,158**
Transfers	-	-	-	**-**	4,000	-	**4,000**	**-**	-	**4,000**
	-	-	-	-	(974,285)	(49,616)	**(1,023,901)**	-	-	(1,023,901)
At fair value 30 June 2025	24,768,823	9,779,289	3,097,069	**37,645,181**	73,354,983	2,582,970	**75,937,953**	4,728,950	1,305,772	**119,617,856**
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2025	-	-	-	**-**	(30,415,826)	(1,073,910)	**(31,489,737)**	-	-	**(31,489,737)**
Carrying amount	**24,768,823**	**9,779,289**	**3,097,069**	**37,645,181**	**42,939,156**	**1,509,060**	**44,448,216**	**4,728,950**	**1,305,772**	**88,128,120**

* Buildings - Found Assets ($47,764) and Write-off ($95,962) recorded against Assets Revaluation Reserves as a net revaluation decrement ($48,198) (refer note 9.1).

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

(b) Plant and Equipment

	Plant machinery and equipment	Fixtures fittings and furniture	Cultural and heritage assets - Arts & Monuments	Work In Progress	Total plant and equipment
	$	$	$	$	$
At fair value 1 July 2024	7,340,843	3,916,838	2,146,950	-	**13,404,632**
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2024	(4,729,590)	(3,190,704)	-	-	**(7,920,295)**
	2,611,253	**726,134**	**2,146,950**	**-**	**5,484,337**
Movements in fair value					**-**
Additions	686,398	181,185	-	431,184	**1,298,767**
Disposal	(313,887)	-	-		**(313,887)**
	372,511	**181,185**	**-**	**431,184**	**984,880**
Movements in accumulated depreciation					
Depreciation and amortisation	(734,753)	(251,291)	-	-	**(986,044)**
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	283,007	-	-	-	**283,007**
	(451,746)	**(251,291)**	**-**	**-**	**(703,037)**
At fair value 30 June 2025	7,713,354	4,098,023	2,146,950	431,184	14,389,512
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2025	(5,181,336)	(3,441,995)	-	-	**(8,623,332)**
Carrying amount	**2,532,018**	**656,028**	**2,146,950**	**431,184**	**5,766,180**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

(c) Infrastructure

	Roads	Bridges	Footpaths and cycleways	Drainage	Kerb and channel	Parks open spaces and streetscapes	Cultural and heritage assets	Work In Progress	Total Infrastructure
	$	$	$	$	$	$	$	$	$
At fair value 1 July 2024	263,571,017	75,669,519	8,781,039	31,424,194	15,805,098	34,298,666	3,083,288	2,732,685	**435,365,505**
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2024	(87,867,601)	(21,990,981)	(1,836,340)	(9,974,384)	(6,369,652)	(12,541,562)	-	-	**(140,580,519)**
	175,703,416	**53,678,538**	**6,944,699**	**21,449,810**	**9,435,446**	**21,757,104**	**3,083,288**	**2,732,685**	**294,784,986**
Movements in fair value									
Additions	3,959,559	338,900	281,503	50,804	84,017	1,298,716	-	850,167	**6,863,666**
Found Assets *	-	67,430	-	-	-	260,000	-	-	**327,430**
Revaluation	94,473,155		1,722,654	4,031,692	2,579,768				**102,807,269**
Disposal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
Dispose Infrastructure Assets Renewed	-	(319,270)	-	-	-	(605,000)	-	-	**(924,270)**
Write-off to Assets Revaluation Reserves *	-	-	-	-	-	(20,792)	-	(97,607)	**(118,399)**
Write-off to Comprehensive Income Statement								(92,809)	**(92,809)**
Transfers	1,403,705	675,886	(612,589)	15,301	-	240,778	-	(1,703,081)	**20,000**
	99,836,419	**762,946**	**1,391,568**	**4,097,797**	**2,663,785**	**1,173,702**	**-**	**(1,043,330)**	**108,882,887**
Movements in accumulated depreciation									
Depreciation and amortisation	(3,116,886)	(753,019)	(153,754)	(326,201)	(208,459)	(916,847)	-	-	**(5,475,166)**
Found Assets *	-	-	-	-	-	(25,500)	-	-	**(25,500)**
Revaluation	(20,691,754)		(279,573)	(603,947)	(1,164,185)				**(22,739,459)**
Dispose Infrastructure Assets Renewed	-	149,127	-	-	-	220,970	-	-	**370,097**
Write-off *	-	-	-	-	-	347	-	-	**347**
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	(4,000)	-	-	**(4,000)**
	(23,808,640)	**(603,892)**	**(433,327)**	**(930,148)**	**(1,372,644)**	**(725,030)**	**-**	**-**	**(27,873,681)**
At fair value 30 June 2025	363,407,436	76,432,465	10,172,607	35,521,991	18,468,883	35,472,368	3,083,288	1,689,355	**544,248,391**
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2025	(111,676,241)	(22,594,873)	(2,269,667)	(10,904,532)	(7,742,296)	(13,266,592)	-	-	**(168,454,200)**
Carrying amount	**251,731,195**	**53,837,591**	**7,902,940**	**24,617,459**	**10,726,587**	**22,205,776**	**3,083,288**	**1,689,355**	**375,794,191**

* Bridges - Found Assets recorded against Assets Revaluation Reserves as a net revaluation increament ($67,430) (refer note 9.1).
* Parks open spaces and streetscapes - Found Assets ($234,500) and Write-off ($118,052) recorded against Assets Revaluation Reserves as a net revaluation increment ($116,448) (refer note 9.1).

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Acquisition

The purchase method of accounting is used for all acquisitions of assets, being the fair value of assets provided as consideration at the date of acquisition plus any incidental costs attributable to the acquisition. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset (or paid to transfer a liability) in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. Refer also to Note 8.4 for further disclosure regarding fair value measurement.

Where assets are constructed by Council, cost includes all materials used in construction, direct labour, borrowing costs incurred during construction, and an appropriate share of directly attributable variable and fixed overheads.

In accordance with Council's policy, the threshold limits have applied when recognising assets within an applicable asset class and unless otherwise stated are consistent with the prior year.

	Depreciation Period	Threshold Limit
Asset recognition thresholds and depreciation periods		**$**
Property		
land	-	10,000
Buildings		
buildings	10 to 100 years	5,000
Plant and Equipment		
plant, machinery and equipment	2 to 20 years	1,000
furniture and equipment	2 to 10 years	1,000
leased plant and equipment including right of use assets	3 to 5 years	5,000
Infrastructure		
road pavements - sealed	40 to 130 years	5,000
road pavements - unsealed	25 to 40 years	5,000
road seals	18 to 40 years	5,000
formation and earthworks	100 years	5,000
bridges deck	50 to 120 years	5,000
bridges substructure	60 to 250 years	5,000
culverts	60 to 250 years	5,000
footpaths	10 to 60 years	5,000
drainage	100 years	5,000
parks open spaces and streetscapes	15 to 100 years	5,000
kerb and channel	50 to 100 years	5,000
cultural and heritage assets	-	5,000

Land under roads

Council recognises land under roads it controls at fair value.

Depreciation and amortisation

Buildings, land improvements, plant and equipment, infrastructure, and other assets having limited useful lives are systematically depreciated over their useful lives to the Council in a manner which reflects consumption of the service potential embodied in those assets. Estimates of remaining useful lives and residual values are made on a regular basis with major asset classes reassessed annually. Depreciation rates and methods are reviewed annually.

Where assets have separate identifiable components that are subject to regular replacement, these components are assigned distinct useful lives and residual values and a separate depreciation rate is determined for each component.

Road earthworks are not depreciated on the basis that they are assessed as not having a limited useful life.

Straight line depreciation is charged based on the residual useful life as determined each year.

Depreciation periods used are listed above and are consistent with the prior year unless otherwise stated.

Repairs and maintenance

Where the repair relates to the replacement of a component of an asset and the cost exceeds the capitalisation threshold the cost is capitalised and depreciated. The carrying value of the replaced asset is expensed.

Leasehold improvements

Leasehold improvements are recognised at cost and are amortised over the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful life of the improvement, whichever is the shorter. There are no leasehold improvements at balance date.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Valuation of land and buildings

Valuation of land and buildings were undertaken by a qualified independent valuer, LG Valuation Services Pty Ltd (Marcus Hann, Qualified Valuer as per Valuation of Land Act 1960 Section 13DA(1A)) in June 2024, and the methodology incorporated the amendments to AASB 13 that were required to be implemented by the end of the current reporting period. The valuation of land and buildings is at fair value, being market value based on highest and best use permitted by relevant land planning provisions. Where land use is restricted through existing planning provisions the valuation is reduced to reflect this limitation. This adjustment is an unobservable input in the valuation. The adjustment has no impact on the comprehensive income statement.

Specialised land is valued at fair value using site values adjusted for englobo (undeveloped and/or unserviced) characteristics, access rights and private interests of other parties and entitlements of infrastructure assets and services. This adjustment is an unobservable input in the valuation. The adjustment has no impact on the comprehensive income statement.

Any significant movements in the unobservable inputs for land and land under roads will have a significant impact on the fair value of these assets.

The date and type of the current valuation is detailed in the following table.

Details of the Council's land and buildings and information about the fair value hierarchy as at 30 June 2025 are as follows:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Date of Valuation	Type of Valuation
Land	-	9,779,289	-	Jun-24	Full Valuation
Specialised land	-	-	24,768,823	Jun-24	Full Valuation
Land under roads	-	-	3,097,069	Jun-24	Full Valuation
Heritage Buildings	-	-	4,728,950	Jun-24	Full Valuation
Buildings & site improvements	-	1,509,060	42,939,156	Jun-24	Full Valuation
Total	**-**	**11,288,349.19**	**75,533,998.71**		

Valuation of infrastructure

The date and type of the current valuation is detailed in the following table.

A full revaluation of Parks, open space and streetscapes assets were undertaken by a qualified independent valuer, LG Valuation Services Pty Ltd (Marcus Hann, Qualified Valuer as per Valuation of Land Act 1960 Section 13DA(1A)) during the financial year 2023/24, with the methodology incorporating the amendments to AASB 13 that were required to be implemented by the end of the current reporting period.

Valuation of other infrastructure asset classes has been determined in accordance with an internal management valuation undertaken by Council's Asset Management Team.

An inhouse revaluation was conducted by management in the current year for roads, footpaths and cycleways, drainage and kerb and channel, this valuation was based on Rawlinsons Construction Cost Guide 2025 - ePub Application 3.2 or recent contract rates for Council, as well as revisions to valuation methodology, but not condition data, for some asset classes to incorporate required adjustments from the amendments to AASB 13 that were required to be implemented by the end of the current reporting period. A full revaluation of these assets will be conducted in 2025/26.

The date and type of the current valuation is detailed in the following table.

The valuation is at fair value based on current replacement cost less accumulated depreciation as at the date of valuation.

Details of the Council's infrastructure and information about the fair value hierarchy as at 30 June 2025 are as follows:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Date of Valuation	Type of Valuation
Roads	-	-	251,731,195	Jun-25	Inhouse full valuation
Bridges	-	-	53,837,591	Jun-23	Indexation
Footpaths and cycleways	-	-	7,902,940	Jun-25	Inhouse full valuation
Drainage	-	-	24,617,459	Jun-25	Inhouse full valuation
Kerb and channel	-	-	10,726,587	Jun-25	Inhouse full valuation
Parks, open space and streetscapes	-	-	22,205,776	Jun-24	Full Valuation
Total	**-**	**-**	**371,021,549**		

Condition surveys of Roads, Bridges and Kerb and Channel were independently conducted by Peter Moloney (Dip CE. CE. EWS. MIEAust) of Moloney Asset Management Systems in 2021/22. Replacement unit rates were applied to the asset condition to arrive at revaluation amounts in 2021/22, 2022/23 and in 2024/25. Rawlinson's data from 2025 or recent contract rates were used for arriving at the 2024/25 indexation valuation for Roads and Kerb and Channel.

Condition surveys of Footpaths and cycleways were conducted internally in 2022/23. Replacement unit rates were applied to the asset condition to arrive at the revaluation figure in 2022/23. Recent contract rates were used for the 2024/25 unit rates.

Drainage assets were revalued based on its age and replacement unit rates as at 30 June 2023. All valuations were reviewed by Jeeva Ali, Civil Engineer/Manager Assets. Rawlinson's data from 2025 was used for determining the 2024/25 indexation valuation for Drainage assets.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Description of significant unobservable inputs into level 3 valuations

Specialised land and land under roads is valued using a market based direct comparison technique. Significant unobservable inputs include the extent and impact of restriction of use and the market cost of land per square metre. The extent and impact of restrictions on use varies and results in a reduction to surrounding land values between 10% and 60%. The market value of land varies significantly depending on the location of the land and the current market conditions. Currently land values range between $1 and $826 per square metre.

Specialised buildings are valued using a current replacement cost technique. Significant unobservable inputs include the current replacement cost and remaining useful lives of buildings. Current replacement costs are calculated on a square metre basis and ranges from $55 to $9,500 per square metre. The remaining useful lives of buildings are determined on the basis of the current condition of buildings and vary from 4 years to 80 years. Replacement cost is sensitive to changes in market conditions, with any increase or decrease in cost flowing through to the valuation. Useful lives of buildings are sensitive to changes in expectations or requirements that could either shorten or extend the useful lives of buildings.

Infrastructure assets are valued based on the current replacement cost. Significant unobservable inputs include the current replacement cost and remaining useful lives of infrastructure. The remaining useful lives of infrastructure assets are determined on the basis of the current condition of the asset and vary from 1 year to 99 years. Replacement cost is sensitive to changes in market conditions, with any increase or decrease in cost flowing through to the valuation. Useful lives of infrastructure are sensitive to changes in use, expectations or requirements that could either shorten or extend the useful lives of infrastructure assets.

	2025	2024
Reconciliation of specialised land	**$**	**$**
Parks and reserves	15,545,855	15,545,855
Waste management	1,727,028	1,727,028
Civic centres	5,060,207	5,060,207
Council depts	1,263,111	1,263,111
Pre schools	782,620	782,620
Saleyards	390,002	390,002
Total specialised land	**24,768,823**	**24,768,823**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

6.2 Investments in associates, joint arrangements and subsidiaries	2025 $	2024 $
(a) Investments in associates		
- Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation	270,925	260,487

Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation

Background

The Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation is an entity which has been established to serve three northern Victorian councils; Strathbogie Shire Council, the Greater Shepparton City Council and Moira Shire Council. Each Council has two committee representatives on the Board of Directors. Each Member council contributes financially to the operation of the Corporation based on the ratio of their population base. Contribution payments are considered a 'fee for service' on a commercial basis and are relative to the services the Corporation provides. The amount of financial contributions does not bring with it any additional voting rights or influence on the library activities and therefore no greater power or control.

Fair value of Council's investment in Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation	**270,925**	**260,487**
Fair value of Council's investment in Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation		
Council's share of accumulated surplus(deficit) at start of year	260,487	258,723
Reported surplus(deficit) for year	10,437	1,764
Council's share of accumulated surplus(deficit) at end of year	**270,925**	**260,487**
Movement in carrying value of specific investment		
Carrying value of investment at start of year	260,487	258,723
Share of surplus(deficit) for year	10,437	1,764
Carrying value of investment at end of year	**270,925**	**260,487**

Associates are all entities over which Council has significant influence but not control or joint control. Investments in associates are accounted for using the equity method of accounting, after initially being recognised at cost.

Investments in joint arrangements are classified as either joint operations or joint ventures depending on the contractual rights and obligations each investor has, rather than the legal structure of the joint arrangement.

For joint operations, Council recognises its direct right to, and its share of jointly held assets, liabilities, revenues and expenses of joint operations.

Interests in joint ventures are accounted for using the equity method. Under this method, the interests are initially recognised in the consolidated balance sheet at cost and adjusted thereafter to recognise Council's share of the post-acquisition profits or losses and movements in other comprehensive income in profit or loss and other comprehensive income respectively.

(b) Community Asset Committee

All entities controlled by Council that have material income, expenses, assets or liabilities, such as community asset committees, have been included in this financial report. Any transactions between these entities and Council have been eliminated in full.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Note 7 PEOPLE AND RELATIONSHIPS

7.1 Council and key management remuneration

(a) Related Parties

Parent entity

Strathbogie Shire Council is the parent entity.

Subsidiaries and Associates

Interests in subsidiaries and associates are detailed in Note 6.3.

(b) Key Management Personnel

Key management personnel (KMP) are those people with the authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of Strathbogie Shire Council. The Councillors, Council Administrator, Chief Executive Officer, Directors and Executive Managers are deemed KMP.

Details of KMP at any time during the year are:

Councillors (appointed on 12th November 2024)
Mayor Claire Ewart-Kennedy
Deputy Mayor Scott Jeffery
Councillor Clark Holloway
Councillor Fiona Stevens
Councillor Gregory Carlson
Councillor Laura Binks
Councillor Vicki Halsall

Council Administrator Peter Stephenson (concluded on 25 October 2024)

Management
Chief Executive Officer (Rachelle Quattrocchi - joined 5 May 2025)
Interim Chief Executive Officer (Tim Tamlin - joined on 15 July 2024 and resigned 2 May 2025)
Chief Executive Officer (Julie Salomon - resigned 4 July 2024)
Acting Chief Executive Officer (Amanda Tingay -05 July 2024 to 14 July 2024)
Director - People & Governance (Amanda Tingay)
Director - Community & Planning (Rachael Frampton)
Director - Sustainable Infrastructure (Oliver McNulty - joined 3 March 2025)
Director - Sustainable Infrastructure (John Harvey - resigned 29 November 2024)
Acting Director - Sustainable Infrastructure (Brian Doyle - 19/09/2024 to 4/11/ 2024 and 4/12/2024 to 28/02/2025)
Executive Manager Communications and Engagement (Michelle Harris - joined 7 November 2024)
Executive Manager Communications and Engagement (Rosemary Scott - resigned 14 October 2024)

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Total Number of Councillors	7	7
Total Number of Council Administrators/Municipal Monitors	1	1
Total of Chief Executive Officer and other Key Management Personnel	11	9
Total Number of Key Management Personnel	**19**	**17**

* On 5th December 2023, Minister for Local Government suspended the Councillors for the remainder of its term and appointed a Council Administrator who completed their appointment on 25 October 2024.

Remuneration comprises employee benefits including all forms of consideration paid, payable or provided by Council, or on behalf of the Council, in exchange for services rendered. Remuneration of Key Management Personnel and Other senior staff is disclosed in the following categories.

Short-term employee benefits include amounts such as wages, salaries, annual leave or sick leave that are usually paid or payable on a regular basis, as well as non-monetary benefits such as allowances and free or subsidised goods or services.
Other long-term employee benefits include long service leave, other long service benefits or deferred compensation.

Post-employment benefits include pensions, and other retirement benefits paid or payable on a discrete basis when employment has ceased.
Termination benefits include termination of employment payments, such as severance packages.

	2025 $	2024 $
Total remuneration of key management personnel was as follows:		
Short-term employee benefits	1,336,550	1,267,019
Other long-term employee benefits	200,902	257,664
Post-employment benefits	117,065	117,286
Termination benefits	-	-
Total	**1,654,517**	**1,641,969**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

The numbers of key management personnel whose total remuneration from Council and any related entities, fall within the following bands:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
$1 - $9,999	-	3
$10,000 - $19,999	3	4
$20,000 - $29,999	3	-
$30,000 - $39,999	1	3
$40,000 - $49,999	1	-
$50,000 - $59,999	-	-
$60,000 - $69,999	1	-
$70,000 - $79,999	3	-
$80,000 - $89,999	1	-
$90,000 - $99,999	1	-
$100,000 - $109,999	-	1
$120,000 - $129,999	-	1
$140,000 - $149,999	2	1
$160,000 - $169,999	-	1
$200,000 - $209,999	-	-
$210,000 - $219,999	1	
$220,000 - $229,999	-	-
$230,000 - $239,999	1	1
$240,000 - $249,999	1	-
$280,000 - $289,999	-	1
$300,000 - $309,999	-	-
$400,000 - $409,999	-	1
	19	**17**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

(d) Remuneration of other senior staff

Other senior staff are officers of Council, other than Key Management Personnel, whose total remuneration exceeds $170,000 and who report directly to a member of the KMP.

	2025 $	2024 $
Total remuneration of other senior staff was as follows:		
Short-term employee benefits	279,234	340,654
Other long-term employee benefits	67,684	4,389
Post-employment benefits	38,079	27,057
Termination benefits	-	-
Total	**384,997**	**372,100**

The number of other senior staff are shown below in their relevant income bands:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Income Range:		
$170,000 - $179,999	-	1
$180,000 - $189,999	1	-
$190,000 - $199,999	1	1
	2	**2**
Total remuneration for the reporting year for other senior staff included above, amounted to:	384,997	372,100

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

	2025	2024
7.2 Related party disclosure	**$**	**$**
(a) Transactions with related parties		
During the period Council entered into the following transactions with related parties.		
Contribution expenses - Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation	294,522	290,648
Goulburn Region Tourism Inc	39,000	-
*Other Related Party Expenses **	19,064	42,765
*Euroa Caravan Park - Operating and Capital Expenses ***		71,729
*Euroa Caravan Park - Lease Income * **		165,477

(b) Outstanding balances with related parties

The following balances are outstanding at the end of the reporting period in relation to transactions with related parties

Euroa Caravan Park - Sundry Debtors (Lease) **	81,821

(c) Loans to/from related parties

There are no loans in existence at balance date that have been made, guaranteed or secured by the Council to a related party.

(d) Commitments to/from related parties

The aggregate amount of commitments in existence at balance date that have been made, guaranteed or secured by the council to a related party are as follows:

*Euroa Caravan Park - Commitments to related parties - Amount allocated for specific purposes ***	*204,212*

** Other Related Party Expenses include transactions with related parties to Amanda Tingay - Director People and Governance ($19,064).*

*** 2024 Comparatives - On 26 June 2013 Council entered into a lease agreement with a tenant for 21 years for Euroa Caravan park and subsequently the lease agreement was transferred to the new tenant Lilly Ann Pty Ltd on 27 February 2017. Former Councillor Kristy Hourigan is a director of Lilly Ann Pty Ltd and Kristy Hourigan was a Councillor from 17 November 2020 to 26 July 2023. There has been no change to the terms and conditions of the lease agreement during the year.*

*** Euroa Caravan Park - Commitments include 1/3 of lease revenue allocated for rehabilitation and renewal work and 2/3 of revenue allocated for capital work at Euroa caravan park.*

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Note 8 MANAGING UNCERTAINTIES

8.1 Contingent assets and liabilities

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Balance Sheet, but are disclosed and if quantifiable, are measured at nominal value. Contingent assets and liabilities are presented inclusive of GST receivable or payable, respectively.

(a) Contingent assets

Contingent assets are possible assets that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Council.

At balance date the Council has been impacted by three significant storms in October 2022, December 2023/ January 2024 and February 2024. These storms led to clean-up and recovery activities in recent financial years, which are now mostly complete. Council has lodged claims with the Victorian State Government for assessment in line with the Diasater Recovery Funding Arrangements 2018. At June 2025 5 claims across the three events totalling $2.759 million are undergoing formal assessment, for some completed works ($0.338 million) or planned works that will have certified estimates confirmed ahead of works being undertaken. The amount repayable to Council will not be known until later in the 2025-26 financial year.

(b) Contingent liabilities

Contingent liabilities are:
- possible obligations that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Council; or
- present obligations that arise from past events but are not recognised because:
- it is not probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation; or
- the amount of the obligation cannot be measured with sufficient reliability.

Superannuation

Council has obligations under a defined benefit superannuation scheme that may result in the need to make additional contributions to the scheme, matters relating to this potential obligation are outlined below. As a result of the volatility in financial markets the likelihood of making such contributions in future periods exists.

Landfill

Council does not have an operational landfill. However, rehabilitation works at Violet Town old landfill site was completed in 2024/25. Council has an obligation to maintain landfill after the rehabilitation work. Landfill provision $817,779 include future maintenance cost.

Bridges

- Chinamans Bridge - Nagambie, a heritage listed timber disused bridge was affected by the October 2022 Flood Event. The bridge is in a state of imminent collapse, and subject to an exclusion zone. Council received a permit from Heritage Victoria in early 2025 to demolish Chinamans Bridge with the exception of the land-based abutments. Council continues to work with an experienced Heritage Consultant and structural engineer to meet the conditions of the permit whilst developing the scope of works for a staged demolition plan and specifications to enable a procurement process for the demolition works. Demolition, and associated heritage interpretation work is planned for 2025/26. No real estimates for the demolition of the bridge are available at the moment, however, it is considered it could be in the range of $1-2 million.

Insurance claims

There are no major insurance claims that could have a material impact on future operations.

Legal matters

There are no major legal matters that could have a material impact on future operations.

Liability Mutual Insurance

Council is (was) a participant of the MAV Liability Mutual Insurance (LMI) Scheme. The LMI scheme provides public liability and professional indemnity insurance cover. The LMI scheme states that each participant will remain liable to make further
contributions to the scheme in respect of any insurance year in which it was a participant to the extent of its participant's share of any shortfall in the provision set aside in respect of that insurance year, and such liability will continue whether or not the participant remains a participant in future insurance years.

MAV Workcare

Council was a participant of the MAV WorkCare Scheme. The MAV WorkCare Scheme provided workers compensation insurance. MAV WorkCare commenced business on 1 November 2017 and the last day the Scheme operated as a self-insurer was 30 June 2021. In accordance with the Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013 , there is a six-year liability period following the cessation of the Scheme (to 30 June 2027). At the end of the liability period, an adjustment payment may be required (or received). The determination of any adjustment payment is dependent upon revised actuarial assessments of the Scheme's tail claims liabilities as undertaken by Work Safe Victoria.

(c) Guarantees for loans to other entities

The amount disclosed for financial guarantee in this note is the nominal amount of the underlying loan that is guaranteed by the Council, not the fair value of the financial guarantee.

Financial guarantee contracts are not recognised as a liability in the balance sheet unless the lender has exercised their right to call on the guarantee or Council has other reasons to believe that it is probable that the right will be exercised.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

8.2 Change in accounting standards

Certain new Australian Accounting Standards and interpretations have been published that are not mandatory for the 30 June 2025 reporting period. Council assesses the impact of these new standards. As at 30 June 2025 there were no new accounting standards or interpretations issued by the AASB which are applicable for the year ending 30 June 2025 that are expected to impact Council.
In September 2024 the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) issued two Australian Sustainability Reporting Standards (ASRS). This followed Commonwealth legislation establishing Australia's sustainability reporting framework. Relevant entities will be required to undertake mandatory reporting of climate-related disclosures in future financial years. Public sector application issues remain under consideration and Council will continue to monitor developments and potential implications for future financial years.

8.3 Financial instruments

(a) Objectives and policies

The Council's principal financial instruments comprise cash assets, term deposits, receivables (excluding statutory receivables), payables (excluding statutory payables) and TCV borrowings. Details of the material accounting policy information and methods adopted, including the criteria for recognition, the basis of measurement and the basis on which income and expenses are recognised, in respect of each class of financial asset, financial liability and equity instrument is disclosed in the notes of the financial statements. Risk management is carried out by senior management under policies approved by the Council. These policies include identification and analysis of the risk exposure to Council and appropriate procedures, controls and risk minimisation.

(b) Market risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of council financial instruments will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. The Council's exposure to market risk is primarily through interest rate risk with only insignificant exposure to other price risks and no exposure to foreign currency risk.

Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk refers to the risk that the value of a financial instrument or cash flows associated with the instrument will fluctuate due to changes in market interest rates. Council's interest rate liability risk arises primarily from long term loans and borrowings at fixed rates which exposes council to fair value interest rate risk / Council does not hold any interest bearing financial instruments that are measured at fair value, and therefore has no exposure to fair value interest rate risk. Cash flow interest rate risk is the risk that the future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. Council has minimal exposure to cash flow interest rate risk through its cash and deposits that are at floating rates.

Investment of surplus funds is made with approved financial institutions under the *Local Government Act 2020* . Council manages interest rate risk by adopting an investment policy that ensures:

- diversification of investment product;
- monitoring of return on investment; and
- benchmarking of returns and comparison with budget.

There has been no significant change in the Council's exposure, or its objectives, policies and processes for managing interest rate risk or the methods used to measure this risk from the previous reporting period.

Interest rate movements have not been sufficiently significant during the year to have an impact on the Council's year end result.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

(c) Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that a contracting entity will not complete its obligations under a financial instrument and cause Council to make a financial loss. Council have exposure to credit risk on some financial assets included in the balance sheet. Particularly significant areas of credit risk exist in relation to outstanding fees and fines as well as loans and receivables from sporting clubs and associations. To help manage this risk:

- council have a policy for establishing credit limits for the entities council deal with;
- council may require collateral where appropriate; and
- council only invest surplus funds with financial institutions which have a recognised credit rating specified in council's investment policy.

Receivables consist of a large number of customers, spread across the ratepayer, business and government sectors. Credit risk associated with the council's financial assets is minimal because the main debtor is secured by a charge over the rateable property.

There are no material financial assets which are individually determined to be impaired.
Council may also be subject to credit risk for transactions which are not included in the balance sheet, such as when council provide a guarantee for another party. Details of our contingent liabilities are disclosed in Note 8.1(b).

The maximum exposure to credit risk at the reporting date to recognised financial assets is the carrying amount, net of any allowance for impairment of those assets, as disclosed in the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements. Council does not hold any collateral.

(d) Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk includes the risk that, as a result of council's operational liquidity requirements it will not have sufficient funds to settle a transaction when required or will be forced to sell a financial asset at below value or may be unable to settle or recover a financial asset.
To help reduce these risks Council:
- have a liquidity policy which targets a minimum and average level of cash and cash equivalents to be maintained;
- have readily accessible standby facilities and other funding arrangements in place;
- have a liquidity portfolio structure that requires surplus funds to be invested within various bands of liquid instruments;
- monitor budget to actual performance on a regular basis; and
- set limits on borrowings relating to the percentage of loans to rate revenue and percentage of loan principal repayments to rate revenue.

The Council's maximum exposure to liquidity risk is the carrying amounts of financial liabilities as disclosed on the face of the balance sheet and the amounts related to financial guarantees disclosed in Note 8.1(c), and is deemed insignificant based on prior periods' data and current assessment of risk.

There has been no significant change in Council's exposure, or its objectives, policies and processes for managing liquidity risk or the methods used to measure this risk from the previous reporting period.

With the exception of borrowings, all financial liabilities are expected to be settled within normal terms of trade. Details of the maturity profile for borrowings are disclosed at Note 5.4.

Unless otherwise stated, the carrying amounts of financial instruments reflect their fair value.

(e) Sensitivity disclosure analysis

Taking into account past performance, future expectations, economic forecasts, and management's knowledge and experience of the financial markets, Council believes the following movements are 'reasonably possible' over the next 12 months:

- A parallel shift of +0.10% and -0.75% in market interest rates (AUD) from year-end rates of 4.01%.

These movements will not have a material impact on the valuation of Council's financial assets and liabilities, nor will they have a material impact on the results of Council's operations.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

8.4 Fair value measurement

Fair value hierarchy

Council's financial assets and liabilities are not valued in accordance with the fair value hierarchy , Council's financial assets and liabilities are measured at amortised cost.

Council measures certain assets and liabilities at fair value where required or permitted by Australian Accounting Standards. AASB 13 Fair value measurement, aims to improve consistency and reduce complexity by providing a definition of fair value and a single source of fair value measurement and disclosure requirements for use across Australian Accounting Standards.

Council has considered the amendments to AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement that apply for the 2024-25 financial year as a result of AASB 2022-10 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards - Fair Value Measurement of Non-Financial Assets of Not-for-Profit Public Sector Entities. For assets, where the Council adopts a current replacement cost approach to determine fair value, the Council now considers the inclusion of site preparation costs, disruption costs and costs to restore another entity's assets in the underlying valuation.
The AASB 13 amendments apply prospectively, comparative figures have not been restated.

The AASB 13 amendments have impacted Council's financial statements as follows:
•The current replacement cost of Council infrastructure assets, such as roads, has increased by $3.5 million as at 30 June 2025 due to the inclusion of site preparation costs, disruption costs and costs to restore another entity's assets;
•Due to the increase in the current replacement cost of Council infrastrcuture assets, such as roads outlined above, combined with indexation valuation adjustments as at 30 June 2025 to infrastructure assets such as roads, footpaths and cycleways, drainage and kerb and chanel, the annual depreciation express for these asset clases is estimated to increase in the 2025/26 financial year by $1.503 million, from $3.805 million to $5.308 million

All assets and liabilities for which fair value is measured or disclosed in the financial statements are categorised within a fair value hierarchy, described as follows, based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement as a whole:

Level 1 — Quoted (unadjusted) market prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities
Level 2 — Valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is directly or indirectly observable; and

Level 3 — Valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is unobservable.

For the purpose of fair value disclosures, Council has determined classes of assets and liabilities on the basis of the nature, characteristics and risks of the asset or liability and the level of the fair value hierarchy as explained above.

In addition, Council determines whether transfers have occurred between levels in the hierarchy by re-assessing categorisation (based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement as a whole) at the end of each reporting period.

Revaluation

Subsequent to the initial recognition of assets, non-current physical assets, other than plant and equipment, are measured at their fair value, being the price that would be received to sell an asset (or paid to transfer a liability) in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. (For plant and equipment carrying amount is considered to approximate fair value given short useful lives). At balance date, the Council reviewed the carrying value of the individual classes of assets measured at fair value to ensure that each asset materially approximated its fair value. Where the carrying value materially differed from the fair value at balance date, the class of asset was revalued.

Fair value valuations are determined in accordance with a valuation hierarchy. Changes to the valuation hierarchy will only occur if an external change in the restrictions or limitations of use of an asset result in changes to the permissible or practical highest and best use of the asset. In addition, Council undertakes a formal revaluation of land, buildings, and infrastructure assets on a regular basis ranging from 3 to 5 years. The valuation is performed either by experienced council officers or independent experts. The following table sets out the frequency of revaluations by asset class.

Asset class	**Revaluation frequency**
Land	3 to 5 years
Buildings	3 to 5 years
Roads	3 to 5 years
Bridges	3 to 5 years
Footpaths and cycleways	3 to 5 years
Drainage	4 to 5 years
Kerb and channel	3 to 5 years
Parks open spaces and streetscapes	3 to 5 years
Other infrastructure	3 to 5 years

Where the assets are revalued, the revaluation increases are credited directly to the asset revaluation reserve except to the extent that an increase reverses a prior year decrease for that class of asset that had been recognised as an expense in which case the increase is recognised as revenue up to the amount of the expense. Revaluation decreases are recognised as an expense except where prior increases are included in the asset revaluation reserve for that class of asset in which case the decrease is taken to the reserve to the extent of the remaining increases. Within the same class of assets, revaluation increases and decreases within the year are offset.

Impairment of assets

At each reporting date, the Council reviews the carrying value of its assets to determine whether there is any indication that these assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs of disposal and value in use, is compared to the assets carrying value. Any excess of the assets carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the comprehensive income statement, unless the asset is carried at the revalued amount in which case, the impairment loss is recognised directly against the revaluation surplus in respect of the same class of asset to the extent that the impairment loss does not exceed the amount in the revaluation surplus for that same class of asset.

8.5 Events occurring after balance date

No matters have occurred after balance date that require disclosure in the financial report.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Note 9 OTHER MATTERS

9.1 Reserves (a) Asset revaluation reserves	Balance at beginning of reporting period $	* Increase (decrease) $	Balance at end of reporting period $
2025			
Property			
Land and land improvements	25,593,438	-	25,593,438
Buildings **	45,184,610	(48,198)	45,136,412
	70,778,048	**(48,198)**	**70,729,850**
Plant and Equipment			
Cultural and heritage assets	1,541,200	-	1,541,200
Infrastructure			
Roads	128,267,477	73,781,401	202,048,878
Bridges **	40,600,896	67,430	40,668,326
Footpaths and cycleways	3,034,881	1,443,081	4,477,962
Drainage	11,339,619	3,427,745	14,767,364
Parks, open space and streetscapes **	9,429,399	116,448	9,545,847
Kerb and channel	3,423,614	1,415,583	4,839,197
Other infrastructure	17,093	-	17,093
	196,112,979	80,251,688	**276,364,667**
Total asset revaluation reserves	**268,432,227**	**80,203,490**	**348,635,717**

* Refer note 6.1 for reconciliation of assets revaluation reserve movement.

** Assets revaluation reserve movement in Buildings, Bridges and Parks, open space & streetscapes include found assets and assets write-offs during the year (Refer note 6.1).

2024			
Property			
Land and land improvements	20,417,160	5,176,278	25,593,438
Buildings	29,075,158	16,109,452	45,184,610
	49,492,318	**21,285,730**	**70,778,048**
Plant and Equipment			
Cultural and heritage assets	1,541,200	-	1,541,200
Infrastructure			
Roads	128,267,477	-	128,267,477
Bridges	40,736,302	(135,407)	40,600,896
Footpaths and cycleways	3,034,881	-	3,034,881
Drainage	11,339,619	-	11,339,619
Parks, open space and streetscapes	7,386,277	2,043,122	9,429,399
Kerb and channel	3,423,614	-	3,423,614
Other infrastructure	17,093	-	17,093
	194,205,264	**1,907,715**	**196,112,979**
Total asset revaluation reserves	**245,238,782**	**23,193,445**	**268,432,227**

The asset revaluation reserve is used to record the increased (net) value of Council's assets over time.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

	Balance at beginning of reporting period $	Transfer from accumulated surplus $	Balance at end of reporting period $
(b) Other reserves			
2025			
Open space reserve	352,988	92,055	445,043
Total Other reserves	**352,988**	**92,055**	**445,043**
2024			
Open space reserve	267,778	85,210	352,988
Total Other reserves	**267,778**	**85,210**	**352,988**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

9.2 Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities to surplus/(deficit)	2025 $	2024 $
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	4,395,050	(3,605,891)
Non-cash adjustments:		
Depreciation/amortisation	7,814,925	7,445,237
Profit/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	505,570	(20,475)
Contributions - Non-monetary assets	-	(24,988)
Borrowing costs/Finance Cost	174,421	192,528
Share of net profits of associates	(10,437)	(1,764)
WDV of Infrastructure Assets Renewed		-
Other	237,532	216,883
Change in assets and liabilities:		
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	(1,280,806)	(387,121)
Trust funds and other deposits received /(repaid)	(198,311)	133,332
(Increase)/decrease in prepayments	144,986	(337,493)
Increase/(decrease) in contract assets	517,755	(1,422,620)
Increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	(870,511)	(1,726,110)
(Decrease)/increase in contract and other liabilities	31,661	(1,753,034)
(Increase)/decrease in inventories	176	(754)
(Decrease)/increase in provisions	(302,168)	(1,626,312)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	**11,159,842**	**(2,918,581)**

9.3 Superannuation

Council makes the major proportion of its employer superannuation contributions in respect of its employees to the Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (the Fund). This Fund has two categories of membership, accumulation and defined benefit, each of which is funded differently. Obligations for contributions to the Fund and other funds are recognised as an expense in the Comprehensive Income Statement when they are made or due. Vision Super is also the clearing house for contributions to Other superannuation funds for Council employees.

Accumulation

The Fund's accumulation category, Vision MySuper/Vision Super Saver, receives both employer and employee contributions on a progressive basis. Employer contributions are normally based on a fixed percentage of employee earnings (for the year ended 30 June 2025, this was 11.5% as required under Superannuation Guarantee (SG) legislation (2024: 11.0%)).

Defined Benefit

Council does not use defined benefit accounting for its defined benefit obligations under the Fund's Defined Benefit category. This is because the Fund's Defined Benefit category is a pooled multi-employer sponsored plan.

There is no proportional split of the defined benefit liabilities, assets or costs between the participating employers as the defined benefit obligation is a floating obligation between the participating employers and the only time that the aggregate obligation is allocated to specific employers is when a call is made. As a result, the level of participation of Council in the Fund cannot be measured as a percentage compared with other participating employers. Therefore, the Fund Actuary is unable to allocate benefit liabilities, assets and costs between employers for the purposes of AASB 119.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Funding arrangements

Council makes employer contributions to the Defined Benefit category of the Fund at rates determined by the Trustee on the advice of the Fund Actuary.
As at 30 June 2024, an interim actuarial investigation was held as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category.
The vested benefit index (VBI) of the Defined Benefit category as at 30 June 2024 of which Council is a contributing employer was 105.4%. The financial assumptions used to calculate the VBI were:

Net investment returns	5.7% pa
Salary information	3.5% pa
Price inflation (CPI)	2.6% pa

As at 30 June 2025, an interim actuarial investigation is underway as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category. It is expected to be completed by 31 October 2025.

Vision Super has advised that the VBI at 30 June 2025 was 110.5%. Council was notified of the 30 June 2025 VBI during August 2025 (2024: August 2024). The financial assumptions used to calculate this VBI were

Net investment returns	5.7% pa
Salary information	3.5% pa
Price inflation (CPI)	2.6% pa

The VBI is used as the primary funding indicator. Because the VBI was above 100%, the 30 June 2024 actuarial investigation determined the Defined Benefit category was in a satisfactory financial position and that no change was necessary to the Defined Benefit category's funding arrangements from prior years.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Employer contributions

(a) Regular contributions

On the basis of the results of the 2024 interim actuarial investigation conducted by the Fund Actuary, Council makes employer contributions to the Fund's Defined Benefit category at rates determined by the Fund's Trustee. For the year ended 30 June 2025, this rate was 11.5% of members' salaries (11.0% in 2023/24). This rate is expected to increase in line with any increases in the SG contribution rate and was reviewed as part of the 30 June 2023 triennial valuation.

In addition, Council reimburses the Fund to cover the excess of the benefits paid as a consequence of retrenchment above the funded resignation or retirement benefit.

(b) Funding calls

If the Defined Benefit category is in an unsatisfactory financial position at an actuarial investigation or the Defined Benefit category's VBI is below its shortfall limit at any time other than the date of the actuarial investigation, the Defined Benefit category has a shortfall for the purposes of SPS 160 and the Fund is required to put a plan in place so that the shortfall is fully funded within three years of the shortfall occurring. The Fund monitors its VBI on a quarterly basis and the Fund has set its shortfall limit at 98% from 26 July 2024 (previously 97%).

In the event that the Fund Actuary determines that there is a shortfall based on the above requirement, the Fund's participating employers (including Council) are required to make an employer contribution to cover the shortfall.

Using the agreed methodology, the shortfall amount is apportioned between the participating employers based on the pre-1 July 1993 and post-30 June 1993 service liabilities of the Fund's Defined Benefit category, together with the employer's payroll at 30 June 1993 and at the date the shortfall has been calculated.

Due to the nature of the contractual obligations between the participating employers and the Fund, and that the Fund includes lifetime pensioners and their reversionary beneficiaries, it is unlikely that the Fund will be wound up.

If there is a surplus in the Fund, the surplus cannot be returned to the participating employers.
In the event that a participating employer is wound-up, the defined benefit obligations of that employer will be transferred to that employer's successor.

The 2024 interim actuarial investigation surplus amounts

An actuarial investigation is conducted annually for the Defined Benefit category of which Council is a contributing employer. Generally, a full actuarial investigation is conducted every three years and interim actuarial investigations are conducted for each intervening year. An interim investigation was conducted as at 30 June 2024 while a full investigation was conducted as at 30 June 2023.

The Fund's actuarial investigation identified the following for the Defined Benefit category of which Council is a contributing employer:

	2024 (Interim) $m	2023 (Triennial) $m
- A VBI Surplus	108.4	84.7
- A total service liability surplus	141.4	123.6
- A discounted accrued benefits surplus	156.7	141.9

The VBI surplus means that the market value of the fund's assets supporting the defined benefit obligations exceed the vested benefits that the defined benefit members would have been entitled to if they had all exited on 30 June 2024.

The total service liability surplus means that the current value of the assets in the Fund's Defined Benefit category plus expected future contributions exceeds the value of expected future benefits and expenses as at 30 June 2024.

The discounted accrued benefit surplus means that the current value of the assets in the Fund's Defined Benefit category exceeds the value of benefits payable in the future but accrued in respect of service to 30 June 2024.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

The 2025 interim actuarial investigation

An interim actuarial investigation is being conducted for the Fund's position as at 30 June 2025 as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category.
Vision Super has advised that the VBI at 30 June 2025 was 110.5%. Council was notified of the 30 June 2025 VBI during August 2025 (2024: August 2024). The financial assumptions used to calculate this VBI were

Net investment returns 5.6% pa
Salary information 3.5% pa
Price inflation (CPI) 2.7% pa

It is anticipated that this actuarial investigation will be completed by 31 October 2025.

The 2023 triennial investigation

The last triennial actuarial investigation conducted prior to 30 June 2023 was at 30 June 2020. This actuarial investigation was completed by 31 December 2020. The financial assumptions for the purposes of that investigation was:

	2020 Triennial investigation	2023 Triennial investigation
Net investment return	5.6% pa	5.7% pa
Salary inflation	2.5% pa for two years and 2.75% pa thereafter	3.50% pa
Price inflation	2.0% pa	2.8% pa

Superannuation contributions
Contributions by Council (excluding any unfunded liability payments) to the above superannuation plans for the financial year ended 30 June 2024 are detailed below:

Scheme	Type of Scheme	Rate	2025 $	2024 $
Vision super	Defined benefits	11.5% (2024:11.0%)	21,682	37,342
Vision super	Accumulation	11.5% (2024:11.0%)	685,285	546,019
Other funds	Accumulation	11.5% (2024:11.0%)	750,975	630,063

Council hasn't paid any unfunded liability payments to Vision Super in 2023/24 or 2024/25.

The expected contributions to be paid to the Defined Benefit category of Vision Super for the year ending 30 June 2026 is $30,739.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Note 10 CHANGE IN ACCOUNTING POLICY

There have been no changes to accounting policies in the 2024-25 year.

11.4.2 Draft Performance Statement 2024-25 and Draft Governance Management Checklist

AUTHOR Chief Financial Officer

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director People and Governance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework is a mandatory system of performance reporting for all Victorian councils. It ensures that councils are measuring and reporting on their performance in a consistent way to promote transparency and accountability in the local government sector.

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires that Council pass a resolution giving its approval to the Draft 2024-25 Performance Statement and 2024-25 Draft Governance and Management Checklist prior to formal submission to the Auditor General Victoria for their audit opinion.

The Draft Governance and Management Checklist focus on a range of policies, plans, and other documents, and Strathbogie has performed well against this Checklist, with a 'Yes' answer against all the listed items of the good governance framework.

The Audit and Risk Committee considered the Draft Performance Report and Governance and Management checklist at its meeting on 5 September 2025, in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*. Since this meeting, any identified minor changes have been made, and these changes will be incorporated as part of the final papers

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Adopt, in principle, the:**

    a) 2024-25 Draft Performance Statement
    b) 2024-25 Draft Governance and Management Checklist

2. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer and Councillors Ewart-Kennedy and Jeffery to certify the 2024-25 Performance Statement and Governance and Management Checklist once reviewed by the Victorian Auditor General's Office subject to any minor corrections required by the Victorian Auditor General**

3. **Once finalised, the Performance Statement and Governance and Management Checklist be included in Council's 2024-25 Annual Report.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

In accordance with section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the 2024-25 Annual Budget included a list of prescribed indicators of service performance and financial sustainability that Council must report against in an annual Performance Statement. The indicators are identified in Local Government Victoria's (LGV) Local Government Performance Reporting Framework System (LGPRF).

The Performance Statement compares 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 with comments detailing any significant variances outside the tolerance identified by LGV. The Draft Performance Statement represents an independent certification of Council's results against the prescribed indicators. Crowe (Australasia), the external auditors appointed by the Victorian Auditor General's Office, has conducted an audit of the Performance Statement and supporting evidence.

In addition, Section 98 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires Council to report on Council's assessment against the prescribed governance and management checklist for 2024-25. This checklist identifies a range of policies and documents prescribed by LGV as creating a sound governance framework that also complies with key legislative requirements.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework is a mandatory system of performance reporting for all Victorian councils. It ensures that councils are measuring and reporting on their performance in a consistent way to promote transparency and accountability in the local government sector.

The LGPRF system is used to produce two documents: a Performance Statement and a Governance and Management Checklist. Both documents have been prepared and submitted to Crowe Australasia, the external auditors appointed by the Victorian Auditor General's Office for review. This audit process has now been completed.

The Performance Statement uses a series of service and financial indicators such as library usage, percentage of planning permit applications decided within statutory timeframes, asset management data and financial performance metrics. Local Government Victoria use a tolerance range of + or – 10% for variations from the previous year's performance; any variation above or below this figure requires a management comment to be provided to explain why performance is beyond this tolerance level.

The Draft Performance Statement shows consistent performance with previous years, with some metrics such 0% non-compliance on food safety and animal management prosecutions, increased utilisation of aquatic facilities, increase in satisfaction with community engagement and consultation, and participation in maternal and child health remaining steady.

The financial metrics identify sound and stable working capital ratio (over 200%), lower percentage of loan and borrowing repayment compared to rates (1.37%) and over 100% (108%) asset renewal ratio that helps to maintain the condition of the asset network.

The Draft Governance and Management Checklist focuses on a range of policies, plans, and other documents, with its aim to identify if a sound good governance framework is in place for Council. Strathbogie has performed well against this Checklist, with a 'Yes' answer against all the listed items of the good governance framework.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Performance Statement and Governance and Management Checklists are prescribed legislative requirements set out by Local Government Victoria. While community engagement is a direct part of the reporting process, it is noted that some of the metrics used in the Performance Statement are based on the results of the Community Satisfaction Survey. The community therefore contributed to the Performance Statement.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following objectives and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

Objective Two: Sustain

We aim to collaborate with others to foster a sustainable environment, a thriving economy, and resilient communities.

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

This report is aligned with the following legislation, Council Policies and key strategic documents:

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- Local Government Performance Reporting Framework

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Lack of transparency	Unlikely	Low	Low	Reports presented to Council for full transparency
Governance Issues	Unlikely	Low	Low	Establishment of clear policies, procedures, along with regular internal and external audits
Financial Sustainability	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Regular monitoring and continually developing the 10- year financial plan.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

The collation and reporting of data comprising the Performance Statement and Governance and Management Checklist has been done in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and its regulations.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

Performance reporting is a key program promoting council transparency, accountability, and performance. The data in the Performance Statement will appear on the Know Your Council website which will be available to the community, and the data will also be included in Council's Annual Report.

Transparency is also reinforced through the review of the Performance Statement and Governance and Management Checklist by Crowe (Australasia), the external auditors appointed by VAGO, and a further review by VAGO itself.

In the interests of transparency and open and honest communication with our community this report is presented to a public Council meeting.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Some of the indicators used in the Performance Statement indicators are directly from the Financial Statements. The Performance Statement shows Council's finances are in a sound position and that Council is performing relatively well against financial sustainability metrics as at 30 June 2025, although Council is planning to improve these over the medium term.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Economic

The Performance Statement contains an indicator of performance in Statutory Planning which includes 83.84% of planning applications decided within required time frames.

Social

The Performance Statement includes reporting in Indicators relating to:

- Maternal and Child Health
- Aquatic facilities
- Animal Management
- Food Safety

Environmental

The Performance Statement contains an indicator on waste diversion from landfill. This indicator measures how much waste is diverted from landfill via organics and recyclables. The year 2024-25 saw an average diversion from landfill of 68.59%.

Climate Change

As highlighted above the indictors within the performance statement report on several environmental factors to do with waste diversion. Council also continues to deliver actions from the Climate Change Action Plan to help our community adapt and become more resilient.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Council continues to refine its end-of-year processes. Feedback from Crowe (Australasia) is also important to inform a review of our internal processes so that performance reporting can be further streamlined and strengthened for the 2025-26 reporting cycle.

COLLABORATION

Council staff, the Victorian Auditor-General's Office, their appointed service provider Crowe (Australasia) and Council's Audit and Risk Committee have been involved in preparing these Reports.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The recommendation does not limit any human rights under the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.*

CONCLUSION

The annual Performance Statement and Governance and Management Checklist has been prepared in accordance with *the Local Government Act 2020* and its regulations. Both documents have been subject to an external audit by Crowe (Australasia), appointed by the Victorian Auditor General's Office, and will be subject to a final review by the Auditor General prior to finalisation.

In accordance with the Act, Council is required to adopt the documents in principle and identify two Councillors to sign the statement, along with the Chief Executive Officer. Once the final audit has been undertaken, minor amendments may need to be made prior to the inclusion of the Statement and the Checklist in Council's Annual Report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 20250916 2024-25 LG Model Performance Statement 2024-25 Strathbogie
2. DRAFT Governance and Management Checklist 2024-25



Strathbogie Shire Council

Performance Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Graphic to be supplied

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Certification of the Performance Statement

In my opinion, the accompanying performance statement has been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020.

_____
Andrew Davis
Chief Financial Officer
Dated: *(Date)*

In our opinion, the accompanying performance statement of the Strathbogie Shire Council for the year ended 30 June 2025 presents fairly the results of council's performance in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020.

The performance statement contains the relevant performance indicators, measures and results in relation to service performance, financial performance and sustainable capacity.

At the date of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances that would render any particulars in the performance statement to be misleading or inaccurate.

We have been authorised by the council and by the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 to certify this performance statement in its final form.

_____
Claire Ewart-Kennedy
Mayor
Dated: *(Date)*

_____
Scott Jeffery
Deputy Mayor
Dated: *(Date)*

_____
Rachelle Quattrocchi
Chief Executive Officer
Dated: *(Date)*

Victorian Auditor – General's Office Audit Report

VAGO letter to be embedded here

VAGO
Victorian Auditor-General's Office

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Councillors of ABC Shire Council

Opinion	I have audited the accompanying performance statement of ABC Shire Council (the council) which comprises the: • description of municipality for the year ended 30 June 2024 • service performance indicators for the year ended 30 June 2024 • financial performance indicators for the year ended 30 June 2024 • sustainable capacity indicators for the year ended 30 June 2024 • notes to the accounts • certification of the performance statement. In my opinion, the performance statement of ABC Shire Council in respect of the year ended 30 June 2024 presents fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with the performance reporting requirements of Part 4 of the *Local Government Act 2020 and* Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020.
Basis for Opinion	I have conducted my audit in accordance with the *Audit Act 1994* which incorporates the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the performance statement* section of my report. My independence is established by the *Constitution Act 1975*. My staff and I are independent of the council in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the performance statement in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.
Councillors' responsibilities for the performance statement	The Councillors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the performance statement in accordance with the performance reporting requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 and for such internal control as the Councillors determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a performance statement that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the performance statement

As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the performance statement based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the performance statement as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the decisions of users taken on the basis of this performance statement. As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the performance statement, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the council's internal control
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the performance statement, including the disclosures, and whether performance statement represents the underlying events and results in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Councillors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

MELBOURNE
xx September 2024

Travis Derricott
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

Section 1. Description of municipality

Strathbogie Shire is a large rural municipality situated in central Victoria, encompassing an area of 3,300 square kilometres and home to 11,455 residents. Around 80% of total land is used for agricultural and farming purposes, which is the primary driver of the local economy.

The Shire is strategically located approximately 125 kilometres north of Melbourne's CBD and is surrounded by the key regional centres of Bendigo, Shepparton, Seymour and Wangaratta, which provide access to employment, services and amenity for its residents. Accessibility is provided via major transport routes, including the Hume Freeway and Goulburn Valley Freeway, in addition to rail transport and Mangalore Regional Airport, which is an advantage for industry and the community.

The Shire has several key townships spread across the Shire that support residents, visitors, businesses and rural industries, including Euroa and Nagambie. These are complemented by smaller communities including Avenel, Violet Town and Strathbogie.

The municipality provides a diverse range of natural assets that contribute to resident and visitor amenity. These include the Strathbogie Ranges to the east and the Goulburn River to the west, which includes Lake Nagambie and its surrounding amenities. These assets support nature-based and outdoor recreation including cycling, walking, water sports and fishing.

Section 2. Service performance indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	Results					
	2022	2023	2024	2025		Comments
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	
Aquatic Facilities ***Utilisation*** *Utilisation of aquatic facilities* [Number of visits to aquatic facilities / Municipal population]	1.64	0.75	1.22	N/A	1.57	A new scanning process was implemented in 2024/2025 which has improved capturing of attendance. All facilities also saw an increase in user group bookings most notably school swimming carnivals
Animal Management ***Health and safety*** *Animal management prosecutions* [Number of successful animal management prosecutions / Number of animal management prosecutions] x 100	0%	0%	0%	N/A	0%	There has been no Animal Management Prosecutions in the reporting period. Council continues to prioritise education, early intervention, and voluntary compliance as the most effective methods for managing animal related matters within the community. Not matters escalated to a severity that required prosecution, and therefore legal action was not warranted during this time.

Food Safety ***Health and safety*** *Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications* *[Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises followed up / Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises] x100*	100%	0.00%	0.00%	N/A	0.00%	There has been nil critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications during the reporting period.
Governance ***Satisfaction*** *Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement (community satisfaction rating out of 100 with the consultation and engagement efforts of Council)*	52	50	44	57	50	There has been an increase in satisfaction with community consultation and engagement since the last reporting period. This improvement suggests that efforts to improve communication and involvement with the community are being well-received and are having a positive impact.
Libraries ***Participation*** *Library membership* *[percentage of the population that are registered library members] x100*	N/A	N/A	36.52%	N/A	31.25%	Members who have borrowed a collection item within the last 36 months. Includes members who have borrowed eBooks or other resources. Mobile Library, HQ members and members who have borrowed eResources are allocated equally between municipalities. Population based on ABS.

Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Participation *Participation in the MCH service* *[Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x100*	69.47%	69.46%	71.01%	N/A	71.37%	Participation in MCH services have remained steady and on a par with the previous reporting period.
Participation *Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children* *[Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x100*	66.67%	73.33%	80.77%	N/A	62.07%	There has been a decrease in participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children. This is due to the age of this cohort being older than 18 months and having less scheduled key age and stage visits during the reporting period.
Roads ***Condition*** *Sealed local roads below the intervention level* *(percentage of sealed local roads that are below the renewal intervention level set by Council and not requiring renewal)*	99.91%	98.87%	99.93%	99.90%	80.84%	Accelerated deterioration of Council managed sealed roads is being experienced, possibly as a result of delayed impact of extreme weather events. A full reassessment of roads is planned for 2025/2026
Statutory Planning						

Service standard *Planning applications decided within the relevant required time* *(percentage of planning application decisions made within the relevant required time)*	78.25%	75.42%	89.19%	88.00%	83.84%	Planning applications decided within timeframes remains steady and within target range.
Waste Management ***Waste diversion*** *Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill* *[Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x100*	70.72%	70.80%	70.74%	71.00%	68.59%	Waste diverted from landfill remains steady and is within the target range.

Section 3. Financial performance indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Dimension/indicator/ measure	2022	2023	2024	2025		2026	2027	2028	2029	Material Variations and Comments
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target As per budget	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	
Efficiency **Expenditure level** *Expenses per property assessment* *[Total expenses / Number of property assessments]*	$3,597.77	$4,919.81	$4,818.75	$4,595.00	$4,856.87	$4,691.26	$4,650.15	$4,682.97	$4,775.84	
Revenue level *Average rate per property assessment* *[Sum of all general rates and municipal charges / Number of property assessments]*	$2,156.43	$2,249.41	$2,373.38	N/A	$2,475.98	$2,555.86	$2,626.09	$2,691.71	$2,758.98	

Liquidity										
Working capital *Current assets compared to current liabilities* *[Current assets / Current liabilities] x100*	232.08%	230.80%	202.03%	136.00%	264.80%	97.17%	118.29%	144.06%	165.22%	At the end of 2024/25, there are slightly higher current assets, and slightly lower current liabilities (trade and other payables and trust funds), that are contributing to this ratio improving. Current assets are positively impacted by the early receipt of 50% of the Financial Assistance Grants.
Unrestricted cash *Unrestricted cash compared to current liabilities* *[Unrestricted cash / Current liabilities] x100*	-85.07%	-7.93%	50.16%	N/A	149.59%	47.06%	67.84%	93.51%	115.00%	At the end of 2024/25, there are slightly higher current assets (and lower restricted assets), and slightly lower current liabilities (trade and other payables and trust funds), that are contributing to this ratio improving. Current assets are positively impacted by the early receipt of 50% of the Financial Assistance Grants.

Obligations										
Loans and borrowings										
Loans and borrowings compared to rates *[Interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x100*	0.92%	16.82%	15.02%	N/A	13.44%	12.30%	11.34%	10.28%	9.22%	No new borrowings during the 2024/25 year. Decrease reflects ongoing loan repayments. Funds for Violet Town Landfill rehabilitation work and truck wash capital projects were borrowed at the end of the 2022/23 financial year. Decrease in forecast years is due to no new proposed borrowings in the 2025/26 Council budget.
Loans and borrowings repayments compared to rates *[Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x100*	0.51%	0.50%	1.93%	N/A	1.41%	1.37%	1.35%	1.31%	1.28%	No new borrowings during the 2024/25 year. Decrease reflects lower loan and borrowing repayments compared to the prior year. Funds for Violet Town Landfill rehabilitation work and truck wash capital projects were borrowed at the end of the 2022/23 financial year. Decrease in forecast years is due to no new proposed borrowings in the 2025/26 Council budget.
Indebtedness										
Non-current liabilities compared to own source revenue *[Non-current liabilities / Own source revenue] x100*	10.15%	21.88%	18.62%	N/A	16.97%	15.91%	14.86%	13.88%	12.78%	

Asset renewal and upgrade *Asset renewal and upgrade compared to depreciation* *[Asset renewal and asset upgrade expense / Asset depreciation] x100*	75.62%	135.43%	144.53%	173.00%	108.33%	195.94%	104.44%	103.29%	101.92%	This ratio has decreased in 2024/25, due to lower amounts of upgrade expenditure, due to a lower level of grant funded capital works, including flood recovery funding, and LRCIP program funding.
Operating position ***Adjusted underlying result*** *Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)* *[Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit)/ Adjusted underlying revenue] x100*	11.07%	0.77%	-25.94%	N/A	5.18%	4.94%	0.66%	1.44%	1.64%	There has been an improved ratio in 2024/25 due to the higher level of Financial Assistance Grants received in the current year. Council forecasts aim to maintain this ratio in the positive range in future years.
Stability ***Rates concentration*** *Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue*	62.81%	53.68%	72.66%	66.00%	56.76%	60.56%	64.77%	65.33%	65.46%	The decrease in 2024/25 is due to the timing of Financial Assistance Grants in 2024/25, which were much higher than 2023/24 and included a prepayment of 50% of the 2025/26 grant. The usual outcome is forecast to be in

[Rate revenue / Adjusted underlying revenue] x100										the range of 60 to 65% in future years.
Rates effort *Rates compared to property values* *[Rate revenue / Capital improved value of rateable properties in the municipality] x100*	0.39%	0.40%	0.33%	N/A	0.33%	0.33%	0.33%	0.33%	0.33%	

Section 4. Sustainable capacity indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	Results				
Indicator / measure [formula]	2022	2023	2024	2025	Comments
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	
Population *Expenses per head of municipal population*	$2,628.01	$3,436.34	$3,329.59	$3,358.31	
Infrastructure per head of municipal population *[Value of infrastructure / Municipal population]*	$26,428.49	$28,448.16	$30,237.97	$36,804.12	There has been an increase in this measure as a result of the revaluations to a number of Council's infrastructure asset classes in response to the amendments to the AASB 13 accounting standard that took effect in the current reporting period. The fair value of Council's infrastructure assets increased by $80 million.

Population density per length of road *[Municipal population / Kilometres of local roads]*	5.29	5.20	5.28	5.35	
Own-source revenue *Own-source revenue per head of municipal population* *[Own-source revenue / Municipal population]*	$2,039.13	$2,159.59	$2,199.95	$2,238.49	
Recurrent grants *Recurrent grants per head of municipal population* *[Recurrent grants / Municipal population]*	$826.99	$910.94	$236.48	$1,107.89	The increase in 2024/25 is due to the timing of receipt of Financial Assistance Grants in 2024/25, which were much higher than 2023/24 and included a prepayment of 50% of the 2025/26 grant.

Disadvantage *Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage* *[Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage by decile]*	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	Auto populated from the Victorian SEIFA index figure Socio-Economic indexes for Areas (SEIFA), Australia, 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics
Workforce turnover *Percentage of staff turnover* [Number of permanent staff resignations and terminations / Average number of permanent staff for the financial year] x100	29.0%	26.2%	16.0%	14.8%	

Section 5. Notes to the accounts

5.1. Basis of preparation

Council is required to prepare and include a performance statement within its annual report. The performance statement includes the results of the prescribed, service performance, financial performance and sustainable capacity indicators and measures together with a description of the municipal district, an explanation of material variations in the results and notes to the accounts. This statement has been prepared to meet the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

Where applicable the results in the performance statement have been prepared on accounting bases consistent with those reported in the Financial Statements. The other results are based on information drawn from council information systems or from third parties (e.g., Australian Bureau of Statistics or the Council's community satisfaction survey provider).

The performance statement presents the actual results for the current year and the previous three years, along with the current year's target, if mandated by *the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*. Additionally, for the prescribed financial performance indicators and measures, the performance statement includes the target budget for the current year, and the results forecast for the period 2025-26 to 2028-29 by the council's financial plan.

The *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* requires explanation of any material variations in the results contained in the performance statement. Council has adopted materiality thresholds relevant to each indicator and measure and explanations have not been provided for variations below the materiality thresholds unless the variance is considered to be material because of its nature.

5.2. Definitions

Key term	Definition
Aboriginal children	means a child who is an Aboriginal person
Aboriginal person	has the same meaning as in the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006
adjusted underlying revenue	means total income other than: • non-recurrent grants used to fund capital expenditure; and • non-monetary asset contributions; and • contributions to fund capital expenditure from sources other than those referred to above
adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)	means adjusted underlying revenue less total expenditure
annual report	means an annual report prepared by a council under section 98 of the Act
asset renewal expenditure	means expenditure on an existing asset or on replacing an existing asset that returns the service capability of the asset to its original capability
asset upgrade expenditure	means expenditure that— (a) enhances an existing asset to provide a higher level of service; or (b) extends the life of the asset beyond its original life
critical non-compliance outcome notification	means a notification received by council under section 19N(3) or (4) of the *Food Act 1984*, or advice given to council by an authorized officer under that Act, of a deficiency that poses an immediate serious threat to public health
current assets	has the same meaning as in the Australian Accounting Standards
current liabilities	has the same meaning as in the Australian Accounting Standards
food premises	has the same meaning as in the *Food Act 1984*
intervention level	means the level set for the condition of a road beyond which a council will not allow the road to deteriorate and will need to intervene
local road	means a sealed or unsealed road for which the council is the responsible road authority under the *Road Management Act 2004*
major non-compliance outcome notification	means a notification received by a council under section 19N(3) or (4) of the *Food Act 1984*, or advice given to council by an authorized officer under that Act, of a deficiency that does not pose an immediate serious threat to public health but may do so if no remedial action is taken
MCH	means the Maternal and Child Health Service provided by a council to support the health and development of children within the municipality from birth until school age
non-current liabilities	means all liabilities other than current liabilities
own-source revenue	means adjusted underlying revenue other than revenue that is not under the control of council (including government grants)
population	means the resident population estimated by council

rate revenue	means revenue from general rates, municipal charges, service rates and service charges
relative socio-economic disadvantage	in relation to a municipal district, means the relative socio-economic disadvantage, expressed as a decile for the relevant financial year, of the area in which the municipal district is located according to the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage of SEIFA
restricted cash	means cash, cash equivalents and financial assets, within the meaning of the Australian Accounting Standards, not available for use other than for a purpose for which it is restricted, and includes cash to be used to fund capital works expenditure from the previous financial year
SEIFA	means the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas published from time to time by the Australian Bureau of Statistics on its Internet site
unrestricted cash	means all cash and cash equivalents other than restricted cash

5.3. Other Matters

Overview of 2025

For part of the 2024-2025 reporting period, Strathbogie Shire Council remained under Administration. In December 2023, Strathbogie Shire Council was suspended for the remainder of its term, and an interim administrator (Mr Peter Stephenson) was appointed in response to the Municipal Monitors final report. The suspension applied to all members of Strathbogie Shire Council and took effect from Wednesday, 6 December 2023 until the end of the council term, October 2024.

On 7 March 2024, the Minister for Local Government, the Hon Melissa Horne MP (the Minister) announced the re-appointment of Mr Peter Stephenson as the Administrator for Strathbogie Shire Council effective from 7 March 2024 until 6.00am on the day of the October 2024 Council elections, this was to ensure continuity of leadership, functions and duties of the council.

Following the Council election, a new councillor group was elected and officially sworn in on 12 November 2024. The councillor group underwent an intense and diligent induction, to achieve high levels of teamwork, good governance, accountability, transparency, efficiency, representation and inclusion for our municipal community.

Pursuant to section 179(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), in November 2024, the Minister for Local Government provided notice of the appointment of Ms Marg Allan as Municipal Monitor to Council. The appointment effective from 6 November 2024 to 6 November 2025.

Ms Allan has been a positive influence and has provided supportive, steadying and reassuring advice and mentoring to the Councillor group, and the Councillors have reciprocated by seeking Ms Allan out for one-on-one mentoring as required.

The new council group appointed Rachelle Quattrocchi as the new permanent Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in July 2025. Rachelle brings over 25 years of experience in local government, with a strong background in strategic leadership, community engagement, and service delivery.

With the support of the new Councillor group, CEO, Council Staff and the Municipal Monitor, Strathbogie Shire Council has achieved great strides towards improving governance and accountability and regaining the trust of our community.

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2024-2025 Governance and Management Checklist

Metric Code	Governance and Management Item	Status	In place? YES or NO	Date if YES	Supporting Comments	Reason(s) if answer is No
GC1	Community Engagement Policy	Adopted in accordance with section 55 of the Act	YES	20/06/2023	Adopted in accordance with section 55 of the Act. Date of adoption: 20/06/2023 The Community Engagement policy requires the preparation of an engagement plan for projects, polices and other matters where Council is seeking community input. Constructive deliberative engagement will be used to inform key strategies including 2025-29 Council Plan and other integrated strategies. The Community Engagement policy was adopted by Council on 20/6/2023.	
GC2	Community Engagement Guidelines	Current guidelines in operation	YES	20/06/2023	Current guidelines in operation. Date of commencement: 20/06/2023 Guidelines are outlined in the Community Engagement Policy, adopted 20/06/2023- engagement plans are developed for projects and strategies to identify optimal engagement approach.	
GC3	Financial Plan	Adopted in accordance with section 91 of the Act	YES	17/06/2025	Adopted in accordance with section 91 of the Act. Date of adoption 17/06/2025. The Financial Plan 2025-35, prepared under the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*, was adopted by Council on 17/06/2025	
GC4	Asset Plan	Adopted in accordance with section 92 of the Act	YES	17/06/2025	Adopted in accordance with section 92 of the Act. Date of adoption 17/06/2025. The Asset Plan 2025-35 prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, was adopted by Council on 17/06/2025.	
GC5	Revenue And Rating Plan	Adopted in accordance with section 93 of the Act	YES	17/06/2025	Adopted in accordance with section 93 of the Act Date of adoption: 17/06/2025. The Revenue and Rating Plan 2025 was adopted by Council on 17/06/2025	

GC6	Annual Budget	Budget adopted in accordance with section 94 of the Act	YES	17/06/2025	Budget adopted in accordance with section 94 of the Act. Date of adoption: 17/06/2025. Following extensive community engagement, the 2025-26 annual budget, fees and charges and declaration of rates and charges was adopted by Council on 17/06/2025.	
GC7	Risk Policy	Current policy in operation	YES	18/06/2024	Current policy in operation. Date of commencement: 18/06/2024. The Risk Management Policy was adopted by Council 18/06/2024.	
GC8	Fraud Policy	Current policy in operation	YES	17/10/2023	Currently policy in operation. Date of commencement 17/10/2023 The Fraud and Corruption Control Policy was adopted by Council 17/10/2023.	
GC9	Municipal Emergency Management Plan	Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)	YES	31/05/2023	Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) meetings attended by one or more representatives of Council (other than the chairperson of the MEMPC) during the financial year. Dates of MEMPC meetings attended: 31/05/2023 The 2023-2026 Municipal Emergency Management Plan was adopted 31/05/2023. Four Strathbogie Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee meetings were held in 2024-25 with a minimum of two additional Council staff attending each meeting excluding the Chair. On two occasions three Council staff attended in addition to the Chair.	
GC10	Procurement Policy	Adopted in accordance with section 108 of the Act	YES	20/08/2024	Adopted in accordance with section 108 of the Act. Date of commencement: 20/08/2024 The Procurement Policy and Procedure was adopted by Council on 20/08/2024	
GC11	Business Continuity Plan	Current plan in operation	YES	20/04/2021	Current plan in operation Date of commencement: 20/04/2021 The Business Continuity Plan was adopted 20/04/2021. The Business Continuity Management Policy was adopted by Council on 15/04/2025	
GC12	Disaster Recovery Plan	Current plan in operation	YES	31/07/2022	Current plan in operation Date of commencement: 31/07/2022 The Disaster Recovery Plan was updated 31/07//2022. Council have engaged a Managed Service	

					Provider for the ICT Disaster Recovery systems. Council maintains an average Recovery Point Objective of 15 seconds. Six monthly testing is undertaken: the most recent test being undertaken on 22/05/2024	
GC 13	Complaint Policy	Policy developed in accordance with section 107 of the Act	Yes	13/12/2022	Policy developed in accordance with section 107 of the Act. Date of commencement: 13/12/2022 The Complaints Policy was adopted by Council on 13/12/2022	
GC14	Workforce Plan	Policy developed in accordance with section 46 of the Act	Yes	15/12/2021	Plan developed in accordance with section 46 of the Act. Date of commencement: 15/12/2021 The workforce plan was developed and approved in December 2021 and is due for renew in 2025.	
GC15	Payment of Rates and Charges Hardship Policy	Current policy in operation	Yes	16/07/2024	Current policy in operation Date of commencement: 16/07/2024 The Rates Payment and Collection Policy and Procedures was adopted by Council on 16/07/2024.	
GC16	Risk Management Framework	Current framework in operation	YES	18/06/2024	Current framework in operation Date of commencement: 18/06/2024 The Risk Management Framework was adopted by Council on 18/06/2024.	
GC17	Audit And Risk Committee	Established in accordance with section 53 of the Act	YES	10/12/2024	Established in accordance with section 53 of the Act. Date of commencement: 10/12/2024 The Audit and Risk Committee was established in 1997. Following the 2020 general council elections the Audit and Risk Committee was reconstituted as an Audit and Risk Committee on 25/08/2020. The Audit and Risk Charter is reviewed annually and was adopted by Council on 10/12/2024	
GC18	Internal Audit	Internal auditor engaged	YES	12/09/2023	Internal auditor engaged Date of engagement: 12/09/2023 Council appointed internal auditors RSD Audit on 12/09/2023 and their contract is valid until 31/08/2026.	

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GC19	Performance Reporting Framework	Current framework in operation	YES	30/06/2025	Current framework in operation Date of adoption: 30/06/2025 Indicators are established through the adoption of the 2025-2029 Council Plan. The Annual 2024-2025 Financial Statements and 2024-2025 Performance Statement and Governance Management Checklist has been completed and audited by VAGO.	
GC20	Council Plan Report	Current report	YES	17/06/2025	Current report Date of report: 17/06/2025 The 2025-29 Council Plan was adopted on 17/06/2025. The 2025-29 Council Plan Action Plan requires twice yearly reporting to Council against the Action Plan. The first report is due 21/10/2025.	
GC21	Quarterly Budget Reports	Quarterly reports presented to Council in accordance with section 97(1) of the Act	YES	30/06/2025	Quarterly reports presented to Council in accordance with section 97(1) of the Act. Date of report: 17/06/2025 Quarterly budget reports are made to Council: Financial Report 17/09/2024, 10/12/2024, 18/03/2025 and 17/06/2025	
GC22	Risk Reporting	Risk reports prepared and presented	YES	30/06/2025	Risk reports prepared and presented Dates of reports: 30/06/2025 The Strategic Risk Register is reported quarterly to the Audit and Risk Committee (06/09/2024, 29/11/2024, 28/02/2025, 06/06/2025), and to Council meetings for endorsement of Audit and Risk Committee meeting minutes.	
GC23	Performance Reporting	Performance reports prepared	YES	18/02/2025	Performance reports prepared Dates of reports: 18/02/2025 A mid-year budget was prepared for Council for the period ending December 2024 (noted by Council 18/02/2025) and Annual Financial Statements for the period ending 30/06/2024. The biannual reviews of the 2021-2025 Council Plan were adopted by Council 18/02/2025 and final 2021-25 Council Plan Action Plan report adopted by Council 15/07/2025	

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GC24	Annual Report	Annual report presented at a meeting of Council in accordance with section 100 of the Act	YES	15/10/2024	Annual report presented at a meeting of Council in accordance with section 100 of the Act. Date of presentation: 15/10/2024 The 2023-2024 Annual Report was adopted by Council 15/10/2024	
GC25	Councillor Code of Conduct	Code of conduct reviewed and adopted in accordance with section 139 of the Act	YES	24/10/2024	Code of conduct reviewed and adopted in accordance with section 139 of the Act. Date reviewed and adopted: 24/10/2024 The Model Councillor Code of Conduct was legislated on 24/10/2024 - Local Government Act 2020	
GC26	Delegations	Delegations reviewed in accordance with section 11(7) of the Act and a register kept in accordance with sections 11(8) and 47(7) of the Act	YES	30/06/2025	Delegations reviewed in accordance with section 11(7) of the Act. and a register kept in accordance with sections 11(8) and 47(7) of the Act. Date of review: 18/03/2025 Delegations and Authorisations are reviewed biannually in January and July each year. Delegations were reviewed and updated in July 2024 and March 2025. A register of the Delegations and Authorisations is available on Council's website.	
GC27	Meeting Procedures	Governance Rules adopted in accordance with section 60 of the Act	YES	20/08/2024	Governance Rules adopted in accordance with section 60 of the Act. Date rules adopted: 20/08/2024 The Governance Rules were adopted by Council on 20/08/2024	

11.4.3 Goulburn Valley Library Corporation - New Governance Arrangements

AUTHOR Director People and Governance

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director People and Governance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation (trading as Goulburn Valley Libraries) was formed in agreement between Moira Shire Council, Greater Shepparton City Council and Strathbogie Shire Council to deliver library services on behalf of the member Councils.

The *Local Government Act 2020 (the Act)* requires that regional library corporations move to alternative governance arrangements by 2030.

Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation (GVRLC) member Councils have recently considered how they will deliver their library services and then transition to new governance and operating arrangements by 2030.

At the August 2024 Council meeting, Council resolved to:

1. Approve continued collaboration in the delivery of library services by the current member Councils of the Goulburn Calley Regional Library Corporation; and

2. Approve adoption of the 'Not-for-profit' Company Limited by Guarantee model, registered under the Corporations Act 2001 and registered as a charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission, as the preferred future governance model for the Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation.

Since August 2024, the Goulburn Valley Libraries Board has made significant progress in developing key documents that will form the foundation of governance for the new entity. These documents include the Constitution and the Library Agreement, which will underpin the future governance structure. As part of this process, a review of member cost contributions has also been conducted to support the collaborative Funding Framework referenced in the Library Agreement.

This report recommends that Council, as a participating member, formally adopt the Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation Constitution and Library Agreement, with the new governance arrangements anticipated to take effect on 1 July 2026.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council as a participating member of the future governance arrangement for the Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation:

1. **Approve the Constitution**
2. **Approve the Library Agreement**
3. **Should there be any necessary minor changes required as advised by the Board to the Constitution or Library Agreement, authorise the Chief Executive Officer to make these changes**
4. **Note that the new governance arrangements are anticipated to commence 1 July 2026.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to recommend that Council, as a participating member, formally adopt the Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation Constitution and Library Agreement, with the new governance arrangements anticipated to take effect on 1 July 2026.

Under the superseded *Local Government Act 1989* (1989 Act), a group of Councils were able to apply to the Minister for Local Government for approval to enter into a regional library agreement and form a Regional Library Corporation (s196). This provision enabled the formation of the current Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation. Regional Library Corporations (RLC) were required to comply with specified provisions of the *Local Government Act 1989* as though they were a council. The winding up of a RLC must be done in accordance with this Act and the member Library Agreement.

The *Local Government Act 2020* (2020 Act) does not refer to RLCs but enables Councils to form 'Beneficial Enterprises', of a type not specified, to share services and resources. The 2020 Act allows existing RLC's to be grandfathered, and continue to operate under the 1989 Act (s330) until 2030. Any change to an existing RLC Library Agreement triggers the change to evolve to a beneficial enterprise.

In December 2023, the Council resolved to:

1. Provide in principle approval for the continued collaboration in the delivery of library services by Strathbogie Shire Council with the current member Councils (Greater Shepparton City Council and Moira Shire Council) of the Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation

2. Provide in principle approval for the adoption of the 'Not-for-profit, Company Limited by Guarantee model, registered under the Corporations Act 2001 and registered as a charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission, as the preferred future governance model for the Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation

3. Note and encourage a review of member Council cost contributions as part of any future collaborative governance model agreement.

In August 2024, the Council subsequently confirmed its commitment to the to the new structure and associated governance arrangements.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Over the past 12 months, the GV Libraries Board has undertaken extensive and considered work to review and strengthen both the Constitution and the Library Agreement, ensuring that these documents are robust and provide a clear Funding Framework to guide the library service through its next stage of transition. This work has involved in-depth discussions and careful analysis of governance structures, operational responsibilities, and financial contributions, with particular attention to creating arrangements that are transparent, equitable, and sustainable for all participating councils and communities.

Throughout this process, the Board has sought to balance operational efficiency with community needs, ensuring that the library service can continue to deliver high-quality, accessible, and innovative programs and facilities. The Board's thorough approach reflects a strong commitment to providing effective leadership, building confidence among stakeholders, and establishing a solid foundation for the long-term success and resilience of GV Libraries. By proactively addressing potential challenges and refining its governance and financial

frameworks, the Board has positioned the organisation to adapt confidently to change and continue enhancing library services for the benefit of the entire community.

A constitution is a formal document (or set of rules) that outlines how an organisation, institution, or country is governed. It sets out the guiding principles, structures, powers, and responsibilities of those in leadership, as well as the rights and obligations of members.

The Library Constitution Covers

- Purpose and objectives – the role of the library and what it exists to do for the community.
- Governance structure – the composition, roles, and responsibilities of the Board
- Membership – who the members are (e.g., partner councils), and their rights and obligations.
- Meetings and decision-making – how Board meetings are conducted, quorum requirements, and voting processes.
- Funding and contributions – how the library is resourced, often outlining how councils contribute.
- Reporting and accountability – requirements for reporting to members, councils, or government.
- Amendments and dissolution – how the constitution can be changed and what happens if the organisation is wound up.

A library agreement is a formal legal document that sets out the arrangements between the councils that jointly fund and operate a regional library service.

The Library Agreement covers -

- Partnership arrangements between member councils
- Financial contributions from each council
- Services to be delivered and service standards
- Roles and responsibilities of councils and the library corporation
- Governance and reporting requirements
- Decision-making processes
- Asset ownership and management
- Dispute resolution mechanisms
- Process for councils to join or withdraw

Under the *Local Government Act 2020*, Library Corporations are required to transition to the new governance model by 2030. A key part of this transition is the establishment of clear governance and accountability arrangements, including a constitution and a library agreement that set out the roles, responsibilities, and financial contributions of member councils, as well as decision-making and reporting processes. Keeping these documents current ensures compliance with legislative requirements and provides a transparent and equitable framework for managing the GV Libraries' service.

Through extensive research and numerus meetings, the GV Libraries Board unanimously adopted the Constitution and Library Agreement at a special meeting held on 14 August 2025. Please note: the board will undertake one last final review of the documents on 4 September, however all changes agreed from previous meetings have been included in the approved (by the Board) version attached.

The purpose of the funding agreement is to clearly outline the financial contributions, responsibilities, and expectations of all parties involved. It provides a transparent framework that ensures sustainable funding, supports accountability, and enables effective planning and delivery of library services for the community.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Although formal community engagement has not been undertaken, the Board of Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation has been working collaboratively and constructively throughout this process.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following Objectives and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

Objective One: Connect

We are committed to enhancing access for all residents, promoting healthy living, fostering connections, and providing opportunities to thrive and participate in community life.

Objective Two: Sustain

We aim to collaborate with others to foster a sustainable environment, a thriving economy and resilient communities.

Objective Three: Deliver

We are committed to delivering quality services and infrastructure that meets the needs of our community. We aim to strengthen the Council's governance and provide improved, customer-focused experiences.

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

This plan is linked to the Goulburn Valley Libraries Library Plan 2022-2026 and also the requirement to transition to a new entity as required in the new *Local Government Act 2020.*

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Funding – Possible reduction in council contributions	Unlikely	Major	Medium	Funding Framework document
Governance – uncertainty around board responsibilities and compliance with new legal requirements	Possible	Major	Medium	Approved Constitution and Library agreement
Staff impact on moral and retention	Unlikely	Minimal	Low	Staff communication and regular briefings
Community – perception of privatisation or reducing equitable access	Unlikely	Minimal	Low	Communications are clear

Operations – complex asset transfers and potential service disruption during the transition	Unlikely	Minimal	Low	Support from Lawyer for a smooth transition

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Compliance with *Local Government Act 2020* provisions, including transitional provisions providing for RLCs to operate as they did under the *Local Government Act 1989* until 2030. Depending on the preferred library service model, compliance may be required during and post-transition with the *Corporations Act 2001* and the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

All officers, and/or contractors, involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

TRANSPARENCY

This report is being presented in a public open meeting which provides the opportunity to keep the community informed of forthcoming changes to the Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Council has budgeted in 2025-26 for an annual contribution to the library service of $303,367 which has been based on historical population splits between the three founding member Councils. The change in governance model will see a rebalancing of the future contribution amount, as per dot point three of the motion approved by Council at the December 2023 Council meeting (as detailed under the Purpose and Background section of this report).

Developing a robust funding framework has been essential to securing the long-term sustainability of library services throughout and beyond the transition. Such a framework provides clarity and transparency around council contributions, while also ensuring equity across all member councils and communities. By applying consistent principles and agreed methodologies, the framework supports financial stability while maintaining a strong commitment to delivering accessible, high-quality library services.

At the heart of the framework is the principle of fairness and equity. An equitable model fosters trust, strengthens collaboration, and establishes a transparent foundation for decision-making, while safeguarding equal access to library services for the entire region.

The five guiding principles of the funding agreement are Equity, Fairness, Transparency, Sustainability and Adaptability.

For many years the funding formula has been purely based on population. With this new model the board has considered all relevant factors for example, memberships, loans, visits, opening hours and still including population. From this examination the GV Libraries Board unanimously resolved to change the formula to 50% population, 30% Memberships and 20% Loans.

The outcome of this is that the cost for Strathbogie Shire is an increase of 1.91% plus rate cap each year, which is planned to be introduced over two years. Moira Shire will increase by .6% and Greater Shepparton City Council decrease by 2.51%.

Strathbogie Shire Council Contribution

Financial Year	Funding Agreement	Contribution ($)	Rate Cap %	Cum. Rate Cap	Total ($)
2025-26	10%	306,660	3.00%	3.00%	315,860
2026-27	10.95%	335,792	2.75%	5.75%	355,100
2027-28	10.95%	335,792	2.50%	8.25%	363,495
2028-29	11.91%	365,232	2.50%	10.75%	404,494
2029-30	11.91%	365,232	2.50%	13.25%	413,625

Assumptions

1. The contributions for each year are calculated as accumulative percentage of $3,066,599, with 10% in the first year, 10.95% in years two and three, and 11.91% in years four and five.
2. The announced rate cap of 3% has been applied and assumptions for future years has been taken from Council's Annual Plan but these are subject to annual confirmation by the Minister for Local Government
3. The figures assume no extraordinary or one-off adjustments (if requested by Goulburn Valley Libraries) outside of the percentage calculations and rate cap.

These financial adjustments will be implemented gradually over a two-year period to provide the Councils with the flexibility needed to manage ongoing budget constraints. By phasing the changes, the Shires can maintain financial stability while ensuring continuity of library services, allowing both councils and the community to adapt smoothly to the new funding arrangements. This approach balances fiscal responsibility with the commitment to delivering accessible, high-quality library services across the region.

Council's Financial Plan 2025-2035 reflects the increase in Council's contribution.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Economic

Libraries today have evolved far beyond being places to simply borrow books. They are dynamic community spaces that offer access to a wide range of resources and services designed to meet the needs of a diverse population. Alongside their traditional collections, libraries now provide e-resources, free Wi-Fi, public computers, and printing facilities, ensuring that everyone has access to the tools needed for learning, communication, and participation in an increasingly digital world.

Social

GV Libraries also serve as gathering places, offering meeting rooms for community groups, creative spaces for art and cultural expression, and welcoming venues for lifelong learning. Through programs tailored for children, youth, and adults, libraries foster literacy, support personal development, and encourage social connection across all ages and backgrounds.
At their core, public libraries remain committed to equity and inclusion. They are vibrant community hubs that provide universal access to information, ideas, and opportunities, helping to bridge gaps in education, technology, and social connection. In doing so, libraries play a vital role in building stronger, more resilient, and more connected communities.

Environmental and Climate Change

There are no environmental or sustainability impacts associated with this report.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

GV Libraries has embraced innovation and continuous improvement as core to its service delivery, ensuring the organisation remains responsive to the evolving needs of its communities.

Recent initiatives include the introduction of Open Library technology, expanding access to branches beyond staffed hours; significant library refurbishments, which have modernised branch spaces, improved accessibility, and created welcoming environments for learning, creativity, and community connection.

The organisation has also focused on digital inclusion, providing access to e-resources, Wi-Fi, and computer facilities, while developing programs that build digital literacy and lifelong learning skills for all ages. Continuous improvement is embedded through regular community surveys, staff development, and partnerships, ensuring GV Libraries delivers modern, equitable, and high-quality services that strengthen its role as a trusted community hub.

COLLABORATION

The 2020 Act provides an opportunity for each council to review the underlying rationale for how they can best serve their community. The case for collaboration: The existing RLC model is a proven method of collaboration that delivers multiple benefits to member Councils:

- Economies of scale, shared overheads, administration and associated cost savings. This is a prime driver for collaboration, reducing costs to Councils and ratepayers

- VAGO report. In 2019 the Victorian Auditor General's Office conducted an Audit of Council Library Services. This report found that "RLCs and co-operative models are overall, more efficient than stand-alone council libraries….". https://www.audit.vic.gov.au/report/council-libraries#page-anchor

- Standardised and equitable service levels across councils. Smaller councils often find it difficult to maintain a standard level of service at disparate locations.

- Access to specialist library staff, skills and training. Recruitment of specialist library staff outside metropolitan areas is difficult. Larger organisations that present promotion, training and development opportunities are more attractive to potential professional and skilled staff.

- Access to wider collection and resource sharing across the member council network and the wider state-wide sharing networks. In a collaborative model the library resources are shared across all locations and the wider state-wide networks, providing better options for patrons.

- Better ability to adapt to the changing nature of the role of public libraries (i.e. the shift from narrower resource lending towards information access, community programs and activities). A specialist service organisation separate from Councils has the ability to be more responsive to patron needs and changes in the current environment

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

Public libraries play a vital role in upholding human rights by ensuring equitable access to information, education, and digital resources for all community members. They provide safe, inclusive spaces where people can learn, connect, and participate in cultural and civic life without discrimination. Libraries also support the right to privacy through the protection of personal data and borrowing records, while their programs and services promote lifelong learning and social inclusion. By bridging digital and social divides, libraries act as enablers of human rights, fostering fairness, equity, and opportunity across the community.

CONCLUSION

Collaborative management arrangements between councils have consistently delivered operational efficiencies and enabled the delivery of more specialised and higher-quality library services to communities.

Building on the significant work already undertaken by the Goulburn Valley Regional Library Board, it is recommended that Council, as a participating member, formally endorse the Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation Constitution and Library Agreement. Adoption of these documents will ensure a smooth transition to the new governance arrangements, scheduled to commence on 1 July 2026.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 20250916 Draft Constitution (version 3 - Sept 2025)
2. 20250902 2024-10-10 Draft Library Agreement version 2 August 2025

Sharrock Pitman Legal

on your side®

Constitution:

Goulburn Valley Libraries Ltd

Draft v. Sept 2025

A Public Company Limited by Guarantee

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DRAFT

1 Preamble

(a) The Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation was established as a regional library corporation under section 196 of the Local Government Act 1989 (Vic).

(b) In accordance with section 330(4) of the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic), as an existing regional library, the Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation must be wound up by 1 July 2031.

(c) Section 110(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic) allows the Founding Member Councils to become members of and participate in the formation of a corporation and appoint directors.

(d) Therefore, on **[insert date],** the Founding Member Councils resolved to apply section 110 of the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic) to establish the Company as a new not-for-profit, public library, registered as a company limited by guarantee under the Corporations Act.

2 Name of Corporation

The name of the company is **Goulburn Valley Libraries Ltd**.

3 Status of the Constitution and replaceable rules

This is the Constitution of the Company. The provisions of the Corporations Act that apply as replaceable rules are displaced by this Constitution and accordingly do not apply to the Company.

4 Interpretation

4.1 Definitions

In this Constitution unless the contrary intention appears:

Auditor means the person appointed for the time being as the auditor of the Company.

ABN means Australian Business Number.

ACNC means the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

ACNC Act means the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (Cth) and includes any regulations made under the ACNC Act and any rulings or requirements of the Commissioner made under the ACNC Act having application to the Company**.**

ASIC means the Australian Securities and Investments Commission.

Appointed Board Member means a Director appointed pursuant to clause 18.1(b) from time to time.

Board means the Directors present at a meeting, duly convened as a Board meeting, at which a quorum is present.

Business Day means a day which is not a Saturday, Sunday or bank or public holiday in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

Company means **Goulburn Valley Libraries Ltd (ACN)**.

Constitution means this constitution as amended from time to time.

Corporations Act means the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth).

Deductible Contributions mean a contribution of money or property as described in item 7 or item 8 of the table in section 30-15 of the Tax Act in relation to a fundraising event held for that purpose.

Director means a person who is a director for the time being of the Company and **Directors** means more than one Director.

Founding Member Councils means Greater Shepparton City Council, Moira Shire Council and Strathbogie Shire Council.

Gifts mean gifts of money or property for the Objects of the Company.

ITAA97 means the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997* (Cth).

Member means the Member Councils and any other body corporate who is, or who is registered as, a member of the Company.

Members mean more than one Member.

Membership means being a Member of the Company.

Member Councils means Greater Shepparton City Council, Moira Shire Council and Strathbogie Shire Council, and, where a subsequent Council is admitted as a Member, includes that Council.

Objects mean the objects of the Company set out in clause 5.1.

Property means any real, personal, tangible, intangible, moveable or immoveable property of any kind wherever situated including money and choses in action.

Register of Members means the register of Members maintained pursuant to the Corporations Act.

Replaceable Rules means the replaceable rules applicable to a public company limited by guarantee set out in the Corporations Act.

Representative means Member's representative appointed under clause 15.

Rule means a rule, by-law or policy made by the Directors in accordance with Clause 19(d) and includes all rules, by-laws or policies previously adopted by the Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation and which become the rules, by-laws or policies of the Company at the date of incorporation of the Company.

Secretary means any person appointed for the time being as, or to perform the functions of, secretary of the Company.

Tax Act means the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997* (Cth) and the *IncomeTax Assessment Act 1936* (Cth) as appropriate.

4.2 Interpretation

In this Constitution:

(a) the words "including", "include" and "includes" are to be construed without limitation;

(b) a reference to legislation is to be construed as a reference to that legislation, any subordinate legislation, regulations and instruments made under it, and that legislation and subordinate legislation, regulations and instruments, as amended, re-enacted or replaced from time to time;

(c) a reference to a "person" includes a corporate representative appointed pursuant to section 250D of the Corporations Act;

(d) headings are used for convenience only and are not intended to affect the

interpretation of this Constitution;

(e) a reference to a meeting includes a meeting by digital or other technology where all attendees have reasonable opportunity to participate;

(f) a reference to a person being present in person includes an individual participating in a meeting as described in clause 4.2(e);

(g) a reference to a person being present includes a person participating in a meeting in person or through a Representative; and

(h) a word or expression defined in the Corporations Act and used, but not defined, in this Constitution has the same meaning given to it in the Corporations Act when used in this Constitution.

4.3 Operation of Corporations Act

While the Company is a registered charity under the ACNC Act the provisions of the Corporations Act in Part 2G.2 and Part 2G.3[1] apply as if section 111L(1) of the Corporations Act was not enacted and if one of those provisions includes a reference to lodging documents with or notifying ASIC that requirement does not apply to the Company.

4.4 Signing

Where, by a provision of this Constitution, a document including a notice is required to be signed, that requirement may be satisfied in relation to an electronic communication of the document in any manner permitted by law or by any State or Commonwealth law relating to electronic transmissions, or in any other manner approved by the Directors.

5 Objects and purpose

5.1 Objects and purpose

The Object and principal purpose of the Company is to be a charity (with charitable sub-type advancing culture) and a public library (endorsed as a deductible gift recipient under item 12.1.2 of the table of cultural organisations set out in section 30-100 of the ITAA97) pursuing the following charitable objects:

(a) to operate library branches and provide library services to and within the Member Councils, and to provide similar services to other Councils, Beneficial Enterprises or library corporations;

(b) provide resources and programs aimed at meeting the information, educational and cultural needs of the communities of the Member Councils and other communities to whom the Company provides services;

(c) to act as trustee and to perform and discharge the duties and functions incidental to acting as a trustee where this is incidental or conducive to the attainment of these Objects; and

(d) to do such things as are incidental or ancillary to the attainment of these Objects.

5.2 Limitation of Powers

The Company is prohibited from making distributions to Members and paying fees (or other remuneration) to the Directors other than in accordance with Clause 24. The Secretary must approve all other payments the Company makes to Directors and provide a report on any such payments at the first available general meeting.

[1] Part 2G.2 and 2G.3 are provisions in relation to meetings of members and keeping minutes

5.3 Non profit

The assets and income of the Company must be applied solely in furtherance of the Objects, and no portion shall be distributed, paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus or by way of profit to members, directors or any trustees of the Company.

5.4 Payment in good faith

Clause 5.3 does not prevent payment, directly or indirectly, in good faith to a Member:

(a) of reasonable remuneration for services to the Company;

(b) for goods supplied in the ordinary course of business;

(c) of fair and reasonable interest on money borrowed from a Member at a rate not exceeding that fixed for the purposes of this clause 5.4(c) by the Company in a general meeting;

(d) of reasonable rent for premises let by a Member;

(e) a contribution towards a grant or project in furtherance of the Objects and Purposes of the Company; or

(f) otherwise in furtherance of the Objects and Purposes of the Company.

5.5 Conduit Policy

Any allocation of funds or property to other persons or organisations must be made in accordance with the Objects of the Company and must not be influenced by the preference of the donor.

6 Amendment of this Constitution

6.1 Amendment by Unanimous Resolution

This Constitution may be modified or repealed only by a unanimous resolution of the Member Councils in a general meeting.

6.2 Date of effect of the amendment

Any modification or repeal of this Constitution takes effect on the date the unanimous resolution is passed or any later date specified, or provided for, in the resolution.

6.3 Notification to the ACNC

The Company will notify ASIC or, if a registered charity, the ACNC (as applicable) of any modification or repeal of this Constitution within the time specified in the ACNC Act or the Corporations Act.

7 Member's Liability

7.1 Liability to contribute

Each Member during the year ending on the day of the commencement of the winding up of the Company, undertakes to contribute to the property of the Company for:

(a) payment of debts and liabilities of the Company;

(b) payment of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up; and

(c) any adjustment of the rights of the contributories among Members.

7.2 Limited liability

The amount that each Member or past Member is liable to contribute under clause 7.1 is not to exceed $1.00.

8 Membership

8.1 Founding Members

The Founding Member Councils are the founding Members of the Company.

8.2 Categories of membership

Additional categories and classes of members, if required, may be created by a unanimous resolution of the Member Councils in a general meeting.

8.3 Admission as a Member

The Company may admit a body corporate as a Member where:

(a) The applicant is eligible under clause 8.5 and makes an application to the Directors in accordance with clause 8.6;

(b) The Board recommends to the existing Member Councils that the applicant be admitted as a member; and

(c) The existing Member Councils consent by unanimous agreement to admit the applicant as a new Member.

8.4 Becoming a Member

Subject to the Corporations Act, a body corporate becomes a Member on the registration of that body corporate's name in the Register of Members.

8.5 Eligibility for Membership

To be eligible to be a Member, a body corporate must:

(a) be nominated by 1 existing Member;

(b) consent in writing to become a Member; and

(c) agree to be bound by this Constitution.

8.6 Application for Membership

(a) Only a body corporate or government entity or body that satisfies the eligibility requirements for Membership may apply for Membership.

(b) The Board may prescribe the process, information and supporting documents required for an applicant to apply for Membership and the form in which the application for Membership is to be made.

(c) An application for Membership must:

(i) be in writing signed by the applicant;

(ii) if the Board has prescribed the form of the application for Membership, be in that prescribed form; and

(iii) be accompanied by the membership fee, if any, determined by the Directors.

8.7 Consideration for application for Membership

(a) At the first meeting of the Board after an application for Membership has been received by the Board, the Board must consider the application and in their discretion either accept, accept subject to conditions, defer the decision to a subsequent meeting of the Board or reject the application.

(b) If the Board accepts the application for Membership, or accepts subject to

conditions, the application must be submitted to the Member Councils for consideration;

(c) The Member Councils may only accept an application in accordance with clause 8.3(c).

(d) The Board and the Member Councils are not required to give reasons for refusing an application for membership.

8.8 Membership fees

The Members must pay such membership fees as prescribed from time to time by the Directors.

8.9 Registration as a Member

If the Company accepts an application for Membership, as soon as practicable, the Secretary must notify the applicant of the decision and must register the name of the body corporate in the Register of Members and record any conditions imposed on that Member's Membership.

9 Rights of Members are non-transferable

The rights and obligations of a Member are specific to that body corporate and are not transferable.

10 Cessation of Membership

10.1 Cessation of Membership

A Member ceases to be a Member:

(a) if the Member resigns as a Member in accordance with this Constitution;

(b) if the Member is expelled as a Member in accordance with this Constitution;

(c) if the Member is being wound up or ceasing to exist;

(d) if the Member is placed under external administration or becomes insolvent, unless the Member is placed under administration by the Minister under section 230 of the *Local Government Act 2020 (Vic).*

unless the Member Councils (but not including a Member Council whose membership is the subject of this clause) unanimously resolve for that Member to remain a Member of the Company.

10.2 Resignation of Member

A Member may resign from the Company by giving the Board at least 12 months' written notice.

10.3 Termination of membership

(a) A Member Council may recommend to the Board that the Company terminate the membership of a Member if the Member Council is of the view that the Member is not complying with its obligations as a Member of the Company.

(b) At the first meeting of the Board after a recommendation is received to terminate a Membership, the Board must consider termination and in their discretion and subject to clause 10.3(c) either accept, accept subject to conditions, defer until further information is provided or reject the recommendation. Any such decision must be based on one of the following substantive grounds:

(i) the Member has failed to pay any fee that may be prescribed by the Directors from time to time within 12 months after the fee was due and payable;

(ii) where the Member is a Member Council, the Appointed Board Member positions for that Council have been vacant for 12 months, or no Appointed Board Member appointed by that Member Council has attended Board meetings for 12 months;

(iii) where the Member is a Member Council, that Member Council has failed to attend 3 consecutive general meetings of the Company;

(iv) the Member refuses or neglects to comply with this Constitution; or

(v) the Member engages in conduct which is prejudicial to the interests of the Company.

(c) Before deciding to accept or accept subject to conditions the recommendation the Board must provide the Member whose Membership is under consideration notice of the proposed action and provide the Member with an opportunity to respond. The Board must allow the Member at least 14 days from when the Board provides the notice to respond to the notice;

(d) If the Board decides to accept or accept subject to conditions the recommendation must be submitted to the Member Councils for consideration;

(e) The Board's final resolution on the termination is subject to each Member Council (but not including a Member Council whose membership is the subject of this clause) agreeing in writing to terminate the Member; and

(f) If the Member Councils (but not including a Member Council whose membership is the subject of this clause) agree in writing to terminate the Member, the Board must terminate the Membership of that Member by giving 14 days' notice of the termination to that Member.

(g) If a dispute arises regarding the termination of a Member's membership under this clause 10.3, the dispute resolution procedure contained in clause 34 must be followed.

11 Maintenance of Register

11.1 Register of Members

The Secretary must maintain a Register of Members setting out:

(a) the name and address of each Member;

(b) the date on which each person became a Member;

(c) any conditions imposed on a Member's Membership; and

(d) in respect of each body corporate who has ceased to be a Member, the date on which that body corporate ceased to be a Member.

11.2 Inspection of Register of Members

The Company must provide access to the Register of Members in accordance with the Corporations Act.

12 General Meetings

12.1 Annual general meetings

The Company must hold an annual general meeting:

(a) within 18 months of incorporation; and

(b) after the first annual general meeting, in each financial year.

The Board shall convene the annual general meeting.

12.2 Business at an annual general meeting

The business of an annual general meeting may include any of the following, even if not referred to in the notice of meeting:

(a) the consideration of the annual financial report, directors' report and auditor's report;

(b) the appointment of the auditor; and

(c) determination of auditor's remuneration.

12.3 Director convening a general meeting

Any Director or the Directors may convene a general meeting.

12.4 Meetings requested by Members

(a) If the Board receives a request from a Member or Members with a right to vote at any general meeting the Board must convene a general meeting within 21 days after the date of receipt of that request.

(b) The request must detail any proposed resolution, the names of the Members requesting the meeting and be signed by all of the Members making the request. For this purpose, the signatures of the Members may be contained in more than one document.

(c) A general meeting requested by the Members must be held no later than two calendar months after the request is received.

12.5 Notice of general meeting

At least 21 days' notice of a general meeting must be given to the Members, Directors and Auditor. The notice must:

(a) state the date, time and place (or places) of the meeting;

(b) state the general nature of the business to be conducted at the meeting; and

(c) state any proposed resolutions.

12.6 Shorter notice of general meeting

Subject to the Corporations Act, a shorter notice of a general meeting may be given if the calling of the notice of the general meeting on shorter notice is agreed to by all Members entitled to attend and vote at the meeting and any such general meeting will be treated as having been duly convened.

12.7 Notice of resumption of an adjourned meeting

If a general meeting is adjourned for 30 days or more, at least 30 days' notice must be given to the Members, Directors and Auditor of the day, time and place (or places) for the resumption of the adjourned general meeting.

12.8 Use of technology

A general meeting may be held in one place or two or more places. If a general meeting is held in two or more places, the Company must use technology that gives Members a reasonable opportunity to participate at that general meeting.

12.9 Postponement or cancellation of a general meeting

(a) Subject to this Constitution and the Corporations Act, the Board may change the place (or places) of a general meeting, or postpone or cancel a general meeting.

(b) If a general meeting is convened pursuant to a request by Members, the Board may not postpone or cancel the general meeting without the consent of the requesting Members.

12.10 Notice of change, postponement or cancellation of a meeting

(a) If the Directors have convened a general meeting, the Board may change the place (or places) of the general meeting, postpone or cancel the general meeting. If a Director has convened a general meeting, only the Director who convened the general meeting may change the place (or places) of the general meeting, or postpone or cancel the general meeting.

(b) If the Board changes the place (or places) of a general meeting, notice must be given to each Member and each person entitled to receive notice of the meeting of the new place (or places) of the meeting.

(c) If the Board postpones a general meeting, notice must be given to each Member and each other person entitled to receive notice of the new date, time and place (or places) of the meeting.

(d) If the Board cancels a general meeting, notice must be given to each Member and each other person entitled to receive notice of general meetings.

12.11 Omission to give notice relating to a general meeting

No resolution passed at or proceedings at any general meeting will be invalid because of any unintentional omission or error in giving or not giving notice of:

(a) that general meeting;

(b) any change of place (or places) of that general meeting;

(c) postponement of that general meeting, including the date, time and place (or places) for the resumption of the adjourned meeting; or

(d) resumption of that adjourned general meeting.

13 Proceedings at general meetings

13.1 Quorum

(a) A quorum at a general meeting is where a Representative of each of the Member Councils is present in person. The quorum must be present at all times during the general meeting.

(b) However, the quorum requirement shall not apply with respect to the Representative of a particular Member Council where a Representative of that Member Council did not attend the prior general meeting, provided that after the general meeting the Company advised the Member in writing that its Representative did not attend the general meeting.

Lack of Quorum

(c) If a quorum is not present within 30 minutes after the time appointed for a general meeting (or any longer period of time as the chair may allow) or ceases to be present at any time during the general meeting, the general meeting:

(i) if convened by a Director or on the request of Members, is dissolved; or

(ii) in any other case:

(A) is adjourned to be resumed on a day, time and place (or places) as the chair determines or if the chair is not present as the Directors or Director at the meeting may determine; or

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(B) if the Directors do not so determine, no Director is present or no Director present so determines:

(1) the date for the resumption of the adjourned general meeting will be on the same day in the next week;

(2) the time for the resumption of the adjourned general meeting will be at the same time as the adjourned meeting; and

(3) the place (or places) for the resumption of the adjourned general meeting will be at the same place (or places) as the adjourned meeting.

(d) If a quorum is not present within 30 minutes after the time appointed for the resumption of the adjourned general meeting or ceases to be present during the meeting, the general meeting is dissolved.

13.2 Chairing general meetings

(a) The chair of the general meeting will be the Director elected for the time being as chair of the Board meetings.

(b) If the chair is not present within 15 minutes after the time appointed for any general meeting or if the chair is unwilling or unable to act as chair for the whole or any part of that general meeting, the Directors present may elect a Director present to chair that general meeting.

(c) If no Director is elected or if all the Directors present decline to take the chair for the whole or any part of that general meeting, or the Members present otherwise determine that they wish to appoint a different person as chair, the Members present may elect a Member present (in person through their Representative) to chair for the whole or any part of that general meeting. If the Members do not so elect a chair, the meeting will be adjourned to be resumed on the same day, at the same time and the same place (or places) in the following week.

13.3 Conduct of general meetings

The chair of each general meeting has charge of the conduct of that meeting, including the procedures to be adopted and the application of those procedures at that meeting.

13.4 Adjournment

(a) The chair of a general meeting may adjourn the meeting to another date, time and place (or places) if it appears to the chair that it is likely to be impracticable to hold or to continue to hold the meeting because of the number of Members who wish to attend but who are not present.

(b) If a majority of Members present at a general meeting in person determine that the meeting should be adjourned, the chair must adjourn the meeting to another date, time and place (or places) determined by the chair.

(c) No business may be transacted on the resumption of an adjourned or postponed general meeting other than the business referred to in the notice convening the adjourned or postponed general meeting.

14 Proxy

A Member must not appoint a proxy to attend a general meeting or vote on their behalf.

15 Body Corporate Representative

15.1 Appointment of a Corporate Representative

(a) Each Member must appoint a natural person as its Representative to exercise on its behalf any or all of the powers it may exercise:

(i) at meetings of the Members;

(ii) at meetings of creditors or debenture holders; or

(iii) relating to resolutions to be passed without meetings.

(b) The appointment of a Representative may be a standing one.

15.2 Authority to act as a Representative

(a) An appointment of a Representative must be in writing and be signed by the Member appointing the Representative and state:

(i) the Member's name and address;

(ii) the Representative's name or the name of the office held by the Representative; and

(iii) the general meeting at which the Representative may act, or if the appointment is a standing one, a clear statement to that effect.

(b) The instrument appointing the Representative may specify the manner in which the Representative must vote on any particular resolution and may restrict the exercise of any power.

(c) The Company may rely on an instrument appointing a Representative as definitive evidence that the Representative has been validly appointed in accordance with the rules and procedures of that Member for the making of such an appointment.

15.3 Instrument to be received by the Company

(a) An instrument purporting to appoint the Representative is not valid unless it is received by the Company at least 48 hours before the general meeting or, in the case of an adjourned meeting, at least 48 hours before the resumption of an adjourned general meeting.

(b) An instrument appointing a Representative must be received by the Company at any of the following:

(i) the registered office; or

(ii) a place or electronic address specified for that purpose in the notice of the general meeting.

15.4 Revocation of appointment of Representative

The appointment of a Representative may be revoked by the Member who appointed the Representative by notice to the Company from the Member stating that the appointment of the Representative is revoked or by appointing a new Representative.

16 Voting

16.1 Entitlement to vote

Each Member entitled to vote at a general meeting may vote in person through their Representative. Each Member has one vote, whether on a show of hands, or a poll.

16.2 No Casting vote

If there is an equality of votes, either on a show of hands or on a poll, then the chairperson of the meeting is not entitled to a casting vote in addition to any votes

to which the chairperson is entitled as a Member or Representative, and consequently, the resolution fails.

16.3 Voting on resolution

At any general meeting, a resolution put to a vote must be determined by a show of hands unless a poll is demanded in accordance with this Constitution. A resolution is taken to be carried if a simple majority of the votes cast on the resolution are in favour of it.

16.4 Objection to right to vote

(a) A challenge to a right to vote at a general meeting:

(i) may only be made at that general meeting; and

(ii) must be determined by the chair.

(b) A determination made by the chair in relation to a challenge to a right to vote is binding on all Members and is final.

16.5 Written resolutions

Members may pass a resolution without a general meeting being held if all the Members entitled to vote on the resolution sign a document containing a statement that they are in favour of the resolution set out in the document. For this purpose, signatures of the Members may be contained in more than one document and a signature includes an electronic signature.

16.6 Minutes

(a) Unless a poll is demanded in accordance with this Constitution, a declaration by the chair that a resolution has, on a show of hands, been:

(i) carried;

(ii) carried unanimously;

(iii) carried by a particular majority; or

(iv) lost or not carried by a particular majority,

is conclusive evidence of the fact declared. An entry to that effect made in the minutes book of the Company and the minutes are adopted at the next general meeting is evidence of that fact unless the contrary is proved.

(b) After each general meeting, the Directors must record or cause to be recorded in the minutes book:

(i) the proceedings and resolutions of each general meeting;

(ii) any declarations at each general meeting; and

(iii) all resolutions passed by Members without a general meeting.

(c) The chair, or the chair of the next meeting, must sign the minutes within one month after the general meeting.

(d) The minute books must be kept at the registered office of the Company.

(e) Members may inspect the minute books between the hours of 9.00 am and 5.00 pm on any Business Day. No amount may be charged for inspection.

16.7 Disputes to be resolved by the chair

The chair will determine any dispute in relation to any vote, and the determination of the chair is binding on all Members and is final.

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17 Poll

17.1 Chair may determine to take a poll

The chair of a general meeting may determine that a poll be taken on any resolution.

17.2 Right to demand a poll

A poll may be demanded on any resolution at a general meeting other than the election of a chair or the question of an adjournment by any Member present at the meeting.

17.3 Procedure for demanding a poll

(a) A poll may be demanded:

(i) before a vote on a show of hands is taken;

(ii) before the result of a vote on a show of hands is declared; or

(iii) immediately after the result of a vote on a show of hands is declared.

(b) If a poll is demanded on the election of a chair or the question of an adjournment, it must be taken immediately. If a poll is demanded on any other matter, it may be taken in the manner and at the time and place (or places) as the chair directs.

(c) Other than where a poll is demanded on the election of a chair or the question of an adjournment, a demand for a poll may be withdrawn at any time by the person or persons who demanded it. A demand for a poll which is withdrawn does not invalidate the result of a show of hands declared before the demand for the poll was made.

(d) Other than where a poll is demanded on the election of a chair or the question of an adjournment, a demand for a poll does not prevent the general meeting from continuing for the transaction of any business.

18 Appointment and removal of Directors

18.1 Number and Composition of Directors

(a) The Company must have at least six (6) Directors, comprising up to two (2) Directors nominated from each Member Council pursuant to sub-clause 18.1(b) (called "**Appointed Board Members**") and any Independent Directors pursuant to sub-clause 18.1(c).

(b) Each Member Council shall be entitled to appoint its two (2) Directors at an Annual General Meeting or, where the Member Council does not have two (2) Appointed Board Members, by providing notice in writing to the Company appointing a person to be an Appointed Board Member for that Member Council. An Appointed Board Member must be either a Councillor or an Executive for their respective Member Council.

(c) The Member Councils may also appoint up to six (6) independent directors in total ("**Independent Directors**") upon a recommendation being made by the Board under clause 18.3, but provided always that the number of Independent Directors never exceeds the number of Appointed Board Members.

(d) Once appointed, a Director holds office in accordance with clause 18.4.

(e) A Member Council that has nominated an Appointed Board Member may withdraw their nomination at any time if the person so nominated no longer holds office with that Member or is no longer suitable to be nominated as the Appointed Board Member.

(f) The Members may create additional Board positions and elect other Directors

as the Members determine at a general meeting, subject to the unanimous approval of the Member Councils.

18.2 Retirement or Vacancy

The Company may, at a General Meeting at which:

(a) a Director retires or otherwise vacates office; or

(b) a Director vacancy exists by operation of clause 18.7 or otherwise,

request that the Board seeks a new nomination from the Member Council for an Appointed Board Member in accordance with clause 18.1.

18.3 Qualifications of Directors

(a) To be eligible for the office of Director a person must consent in writing to act as a Director.

(b) In the event that it is required under a law, regulation or guideline applicable to the Company, the Company must ensure that a majority of the Directors are persons who have the requisite level or degree of responsibility to the general public.

(c) Independent Directors shall be recommended by the Board and are not required to be officers, representatives, Councillors or employees of a Member Council. Independent Directors shall be selected by the Board in accordance with any applicable Rules and on the basis of their skills, background and expertise as may be considered by the Board to be necessary or desirable for the effective governance of the Company.

18.4 Terms and retirement of Directors

(a) Subject to clause 18.5, Directors are elected for terms of two (2) years.

(b) At each Annual General Meeting, any Director who has held office for two (2) years or more since last being elected, must retire from office but subject to clauses 18.3 and 18.5 is eligible for reappointment. A retiring Director holds office until the conclusion of the meeting at which that Director retires.

(c) The Members may by ordinary resolution increase or decrease the period of time for which a Director holds office under clause 18.4(a).

(d) The Members may by ordinary resolution remove any Director who is not an Appointed Board Member before the expiration of that Director's period of office.

18.5 Reappointment of Directors

Directors are entitled to seek reappointment as Directors provided that they are still nominated by the Member as their Appointed Board Member (where applicable) and the Director's period of continuous service to the Company does not exceed a period of seven (7) years unless the Members, by ordinary resolution in General Meeting or unanimous written resolution, elect to waive this requirement for a particular Director.

18.6 Casual vacancy or additional Director

(a) The Directors must request a new nomination from the relevant Member Council to fill a vacant Appointed Board Member position in accordance with clause 18.1.

(b) The Directors may at any time appoint any person meeting the requirements of clause 18.3 to be a Director, either to:

(i) Fill a casual vacancy, other than a vacancy of an Appointed Board Member;

(ii) Appoint an additional Director, where the Members have approved but not filled a Board position under clause 18.1(f).

(c) A Director appointed under this clause 18.6(b) holds office until the conclusion

of the next Annual General Meeting of the Company but is eligible for appointment at that meeting.

18.7 Vacation of office of Director

In addition to the circumstances in which the office of a Director becomes vacant under the Corporations Act, a person ceases to be a Director and the office of Director is vacated if the person:

(a) is removed from office as a Director by a resolution of the Company at a general meeting;

(b) ceases to be eligible under clause 18.3;

(c) resigns as a Director by notice in writing to the Company;

(d) is no longer nominated by the Member as its Appointed Board Member under clause 18.1(e).

(e) if the person is subject to assessment or treatment under any mental health law and the Board resolves that the person should cease to be a Director;

(f) dies;

(g) is disqualified from acting as a Director under the Corporations Act;

(h) is absent from 3 consecutive Board meetings without leave of absence from the Board.

19 Powers and duties of Board

(a) Subject to this Constitution and the Corporations Act, the activities of the Company are to be managed by, or under the direction of, the Board.

(b) Subject to this Constitution and the Corporations Act, the Board may exercise all powers of the Company that are not required to be exercised by the Company in a general meeting.

(c) The powers of the Board include the power to:

(i) borrow or otherwise raise money;

(ii) mortgage, charge (including in the form of a floating charge) any of the Company's assets (both present and future); and

(iii) issue debentures and other securities, and any instrument (including any bond).

(d) Subject to this Constitution, the Directors may from time to time by resolution make and rescind or alter Rules which are binding on the Members for the management and conduct of the business of the Company.

(e) The rules, by-laws or policies previously adopted by the Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation become the rules, by-laws or policies of the Company at the date of incorporation of the Company.

20 ACNC governance standards

The Company and each Director must comply with the duties described in governance standard 5 as set out in the regulations made under the ACNC Act and such other obligations as apply under the ACNC Act and the Corporations Act from time to time.

21 Delegation

(a) The Board may delegate any of its powers to:

(i) a Director;

(ii) a committee in accordance with clause 22;

(iii) an employee of the Company; or

(iv) any other person.

(b) The power may be delegated for such time as determined by the Directors and the Directors may at any time revoke or vary the delegation.

(c) The delegate must exercise the powers delegated in accordance with any directions of the Directors, and the exercise of the power by the delegate is as effective as if the Directors had exercised it.

(d) The Directors may continue to exercise any power they have delegated.

22 Committees

22.1 Delegation to committees

(a) The Directors may delegate any of their powers, to a committee which may consist of one or more Directors and such other persons as they think fit.

(b) A committee to which any powers have been delegated under clause 22.1(a) must exercise those powers in accordance with any directions of the Directors. A power so exercised is taken to have been exercised by the Directors.

(c) Notwithstanding any delegation of authority under this clause 22.1, the Directors remain responsible for any decisions of a committee appointed by them and must ensure that the committee exercises its powers appropriately.

22.2 Meetings of committees

A committee may meet and adjourn as it considers appropriate.

22.3 Chairperson of a committee

The members of a committee may elect one of their number as chairperson of their meetings. If a meeting of a committee is held and:

(a) a chairperson has not been elected; or

(b) the chairperson is not present within 10 minutes after the time appointed for the holding of the meeting or is unable or unwilling to act;

then the committee members involved may elect one of their number to be chairperson of the meeting.

22.4 Determination of questions

(a) Questions arising at a meeting of a committee are to be determined by a majority of votes of the members present and voting.

(b) In the event of an equality of votes, the chairperson of the meeting does not have a casting vote.

23 Negotiable instruments

All negotiable instruments and all receipts for money paid to the Company must be signed, drawn, accepted, endorsed or otherwise executed in such manner as the Board may determine.

24 Remuneration and reimbursement for expenses

24.1 Remuneration of Director

The Company must not pay, and an Appointed Board Member is not entitled to receive, any fee (or other remuneration) from the Company for services performed as a Director.

24.2 Reimbursement of expenses

Appointed Board Members are entitled to be reimbursed by the Company for reasonable costs and expenses incurred or to be incurred in connection with attendance at meetings of the Board and committees of the Board, if approved by the Board.

24.3 Independent Directors

The Company may, by resolution at a general meeting, determine the remuneration of the Independent Directors (if any), provided that such remuneration is:

(a) reasonable and proportionate to the administration services provided by the Independent Directors to the Company, including any specific factors relating to a particular Independent Director or group of Independent Directors (for example, the Chair);

(b) always compliant with any relevant legal requirements including, but not limited to, the ACNC Act, the Corporations Act, Charity Fund Rules, Governance Standards and any other applicable legislation and regulations;

(c) disclosed in the Company's financial statements in accordance with applicable accounting standards and regulations; and

(d) reviewed periodically to in light of the above and the Company's financial position and performance.

25 Board meetings

25.1 Convening meetings

(a) In the ordinary course, the Secretary will convene Board meetings in accordance with the determinations of the Board.

(b) A Director may at any time convene a Board meeting by notice to the other Directors.

25.2 Notice of meetings

(a) Reasonable notice of each Board meeting must be given to the Directors entitled to receive a notice (if any).

(b) Each notice must state:

(i) the date, time and place (or places) of the Board meeting;

(ii) the general nature of the business to be conducted at the Board meeting; and

(iii) any proposed resolutions.

25.3 Omission to give notice

No resolution passed at or proceedings at any Board meeting will be invalid because of any unintentional omission or error in giving or not giving notice of:

(a) that Board meeting;

(b) any change of place (or places) of that Board meeting;

(c) postponement of that Board meeting; or

(d) resumption of that adjourned Board meeting.

25.4 Use of technology

A Board meeting may be held in one, two or more places using such technology as determined by the Board and set out in the notice. The Board must use technology that gives Directors a reasonable opportunity to participate at that Board meeting. The clauses relating to meetings of Directors apply to each such meeting in the usual manner.

25.5 Quorum at meetings

(a) A quorum at a Board meeting is where each Member Council has at least one (1) Appointed Board Member present in person. The quorum must be present at all times during the Board meeting.

(b) However, the quorum requirement shall not apply with respect to the Appointed Board Members of a particular Member Council:

(i) where that Member Council has not appointed any Appointed Board Member within 2 months of all Appointed Board Member positions for that Member Council becoming vacant; or

(ii) where the Appointed Board Member(s) of that Member Council failed to attend the prior two Board meetings, provided that after each Board meeting the Company advised the Member in writing that its Appointed Board Member(s) failed to attend the Board meeting; or

(iii) where a Member Council waives the quorum requirement with respect to their Appointed Board Members in writing.

25.6 Chair of meetings

(a) A chair and deputy chair shall be elected by the Board from among the Board Members.

(b) The chair and deputy chair shall be elected on an annual basis, at the first Board Meeting after the Annual General Meeting each year.

(c) If the chair is not present within 15 minutes after the time appointed for a Board meeting or if the chair is unwilling or unable to act as chair for the whole or any part of that Board meeting, then the deputy chair shall chair the Board meeting, and if the deputy chair is not present or is unwilling or unable to act as chair for the whole or any part of the Board meeting, the Directors present may elect a Director present to chair that Board meeting.

(d) Notwithstanding the other provisions of this clause, the Board may fill a vacancy in the chair or deputy chair positions as it considers appropriate.

25.7 Passing resolutions at meetings

(a) A resolution of the Board must be passed by a majority of the votes cast by the Directors entitled to vote on the resolution.

(b) Each Director present in person is entitled to vote and has one vote.

25.8 Casting vote

If on any resolution an equal number of votes is cast for and against a resolution, the chair of the Board meeting shall have a casting vote in addition to any vote cast by the chair as a Director and the matter will be determined in accordance with the casting vote of the chair.

25.9 Conduct of meetings

The chair of each Board meeting has charge of the conduct of that meeting, of the procedures to be adopted and the application of those procedures at that meeting.

25.10 Written resolutions

The Board may pass a resolution without a Board meeting being held if all the Directors entitled to vote on the resolution sign a document containing a statement that they are in favour of the resolution set out in the document. For this purpose, signatures can be contained in more than one document, with each document to be identical to each other document and a signature can be an electronic signature.

25.11 Minutes of meetings

(a) Within one month after each Board meeting, the Directors must record or cause to be recorded in the minute books:

(i) the proceedings and resolutions of each Board meeting; and

(ii) all resolutions passed without a Board meeting.

(b) The chair, or the chair of the next Board meeting, must sign the minutes within one month after the meeting.

(c) The minute books must be kept at the registered office of the Company.

(d) The Directors may inspect the minute books between the hours of 9.00 am and 5.00 pm on any Business Day. No amount may be charged for inspection.

26 Director's conflict of interests

26.1 Declaration of interest

(a) Any Director who has a material personal interest in a contract or proposed contract of the Company, holds any office or owns any property such that the Director might have duties or interests which conflict or may conflict either directly or indirectly with the Director's duties or interests as a Director, must give the Board notice of the interest at a Board meeting.

(b) A notice of a material personal interest must set out:

(i) the nature and extent of the interest; and

(ii) the relation of the interest to the affairs of the Company.

(c) The notice must be provided to the Board at a Board meeting as soon as practicable.

26.2 Voting by interested Directors

A Director who has a material personal interest in a matter that is being considered at a Board meeting must not:

(a) Vote on the matter at a meeting; or

(b) Be present while the matter is being considered at the meeting, and accordingly will not count for the purposes of determining whether there is a quorum.

27 Appointment of Secretary and Chief Executive Officer

27.1 Secretary

(a) The Company must have at least one Secretary. The Board has the power to

appoint a natural person to act as Secretary on the terms and for such period as the Board may determine. Unless otherwise determined by the Board, the Chief Executive Officer will be appointed to act as Secretary.

(b) Any Secretary appointed may be removed at any time by the Board.

27.2 Chief Executive Officer

(a) The Directors may appoint a Chief Executive Officer on such terms and conditions (including as to remuneration) as they consider appropriate.

(b) The Directors may delegate any of their powers to the Chief Executive Officer:

(i) on the terms and subject to any restrictions they decide; and

(ii) so as to be concurrent with, or to the exclusion of, the powers of the Board,

and may revoke the delegation at any time.

(c) The Chief Executive Officer may be invited to attend meetings of the Directors, but may not hold the office of a Director and is not entitled to vote.

28 Removal and remuneration of Auditor

28.1 Remuneration of Auditor

The remuneration of the Auditor may be determined by the Company at a general meeting. If the remuneration is not determined at a general meeting, it may be determined by the Directors at a Board meeting.

28.2 Removal of Auditor

(a) The Company may remove an Auditor by resolution at a general meeting.

(b) At least two months' notice must be given to the Company of the intention to move a resolution to remove an Auditor at a general meeting.

(c) If notice of an intention to move a resolution to remove the Auditor at a general meeting is received by the Company, the Auditor must be given a copy of the notice as soon as practicable.

(d) The notice of an intention must also inform the Auditor that the Auditor:

(i) may submit written representations to the Company within seven days after receiving the notice and that the Auditor may request the Company to send a copy of the written representations to the Members before the resolution is put to a vote; and

(ii) may speak at the general meeting or request that the written representations be read at the general meeting at which the resolution is voted upon.

28.3 Auditor's attendance at general meetings

The Auditor must be notified of, and may attend, any general meeting. The Auditor is entitled to be heard at any general meeting it attends on any part of the business of the general meeting which concerns the Auditor.

29 Execution of documents

Documents executed for and on behalf of the Company must be executed by:

(a) Directors;

(b) a Director and the Secretary; or

(c) the Chief Executive Officer under delegation.

30 Financial records

30.1 Member's access to financial records

A Member or any other person may inspect financial or any other records of the Company where such inspection is authorised by the Board or its delegate, or required by law or by order of a court with jurisdiction.

30.2 Directors' access to financial records

A Director may at any reasonable time access and inspect any financial and any other record of the Company relevant to the exercise of their duties.

30.3 Access to financial records after ceasing to be a Director

The Board may determine that any person who is to cease or has ceased to be a Director may continue to have access to and inspect any financial record and any other record of the Company relating to the time during which the person was a Director.

31 Notices

31.1 General

Any notice, statement or other communication under this Constitution must be in writing, except that any notice convening a Board meeting does not need to be in writing.

31.2 How to give a communication

In addition to any other way allowed by the Corporations Act, a notice or other communication may be given by being:

(a) personally delivered;

(b) left at the person's current address as recorded in the Register of Members;

(c) sent to the person's address as recorded in the Register of Members by pre-paid ordinary mail or, if the address is outside Australia, by pre-paid airmail; or

(d) sent by email to the person's current email address for notices.

31.3 Communications by post

A communication is given if posted:

(a) within Australia to an Australian address, four Business Days after posting;

(b) outside Australia or to an address outside Australia, ten Business Days after posting.

31.4 Communications by email

A communication is taken to be given if sent by email immediately on sending the email unless the sender receives a delivery failure notification indicating that the email has not been delivered to the information system of the recipient.

31.5 After hours communication

If a communication is given:

(a) after 5.00 pm in the place of receipt; or

(b) on a day which is a Saturday, Sunday or bank or public holiday in the place of receipt,

it is taken as having been given at 9.00 am on the next day which is not a Saturday, Sunday or bank or public holiday in that place.

32 Indemnity and insurance

32.1 Indemnity

(a) To the extent permitted by the Corporations Act and subject to the Corporations Act, the Company may indemnify each officer of the Company in respect of any liability, loss, damage, cost or expense incurred or suffered or to be incurred or suffered by the officer in or arising out of the conduct of any activity of the Company or the proper performance of any duty of that officer.

(b) The indemnity in clause 32.1(a):

(i) is enforceable without the officer first having to make a payment or incur an expense;

(ii) is enforceable by the officer notwithstanding that the officer has ceased to be an officer of the Company; and

(iii) applies to any liability, loss, damage, cost or expense incurred or suffered or to be incurred or suffered by the officer, whether incurred before or after the date of this Constitution.

32.2 Documenting indemnity

The Company may enter into an agreement containing an indemnity in favour of any officer. The Board will determine the terms of the indemnity contained in the agreement.

32.3 Insurance

(a) To the extent permitted by the Corporations Act and subject to the Corporations Act, the Company may pay any premium in respect of a contract of insurance between an insurer and an officer or any person who has been an officer of the Company in respect of the liability suffered or incurred in or arising out of the conduct of any activity of the Company and the proper performance by the officer of any duty.

(b) If the Board determines, the Company may execute a document containing rules under which the Company agrees to pay any premium in relation to such a contract of insurance.

33 Winding up and revocation

33.1 Winding up of the Company

(a) In the case of the winding-up of the Company, any surplus assets that remain after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities, then, subject always to clause 33.2, those surplus assets must be transferred to another organisation with charitable purposes which is not carried on for the profit or gain of its individual members.

(b) The organisation will be determined by a unanimous resolution of the Members at or before the time of dissolution.

33.2 Transfer of surplus assets – deductible gift recipients

(a) Where the Company has been endorsed as a deductible gift recipient under Subdivision 30 BA of the Tax Act, either as an entity or in relation to a fund or an institution it operates, then where:

(i) the Company is wound up;

(ii) the fund or institution is wound up; or

(iii) the endorsement under Subdivision 30 BA of the Tax Act is revoked;

(b) any surplus:

(i) Gifts;

(ii) Deductible Contributions; and

(iii) money received by the Company because of such Gifts or Deductible Contributions,

remaining after payment of all liabilities must be transferred to one or more organisations, funds or institutions that comply with clause 33.1 and are deductible gift recipients.

34 Dispute resolution

34.1 Handling a dispute

Where there is a dispute, grievance or another disagreement between a Member and the Company, or between a Member and a Member, whether arising out of the application of this Constitution or otherwise (**Dispute**), then the party raising the Dispute must, prior to the commencement of any proceedings in a Court or Tribunal or before any authority or board, notify the other party in writing of the nature of the Dispute, and the following must occur:

(a) the parties must in the period of 14 days from the service of the notice of the Dispute (Initial Period) use their best endeavours to resolve the Dispute;

(b) if the parties are unable to resolve the Dispute within the Initial Period, then the Dispute must be referred for mediation to a mediator agreed by the parties;

(c) if the disputants are unable to agree on a mediator within 7 days of the expiration of the Initial Period, the parties may request the President of the Law Institute of Victoria to nominate a mediator to whom the Dispute will be referred;

(d) the costs of the mediation must be shared equally between the parties; and

(e) where:

(i) the party receiving the notice of the Dispute fails to attend the mediation required by clause 34.1(b);

(ii) the mediation has not occurred within 6 weeks of the date of the notice of the Dispute; or

(iii) the mediation fails to resolve the Dispute;

then the party serving the notice of Dispute will be entitled to commence any proceedings in a Court or Tribunal or before any authority or board in respect of the Dispute.

34.2 Urgent interlocutory relief

The procedure in clause 34.1 will not apply in respect of proceedings for urgent or interlocutory relief.

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Schedule 1

Appointment of Representative at a General Meeting

Goulburn Valley Libraries Ltd

ACN

The Member: ..... (name)

of ..... (address)

being a member of the above named Company hereby appoint

..... (name)

of ..... (address)

as its Representative to attend and vote on its behalf at the meeting of the members of the Company to be held on the ..... day of ..... 20 ..... and at any adjournment of that meeting.

[TO BE INSERTED IF DESIRED] This form is to be used in favour of/against the resolution (Strike out whichever is not desired)

[INSERT DETAILS OF SPECIFIC RESOLUTIONS IF DESIRED]

Signed: .....

Name: .....

Position: .....

Dated: .....

This notice must be returned to Goulburn Valley Libraries Ltd ACN at:

[ADDRESS/EMAIL ADDRESS]

by [TIME] on [DATE]

[INSERT SPECIFIC DETAILS ENSURING THAT THE TIME IS 48 HOURS BEFORE THE TIME FOR THE MEETING]

DRAFT

Sharrock Pitman Legal

on your side®

Goulburn Valley Libraries Ltd

Library Agreement

Draft v. August 2025

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LIBRARY AGREEMENT made the day of 2025

BETWEEN:

GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY COUNCIL

- and -

MOIRA SHIRE COUNCIL

- and -

STRATHBOGIE SHIRE COUNCIL

- and -

GOULBURN VALLEY LIBRARIES LTD ACN [TBA]

- and -

GOULBURN VALLEY REGIONAL LIBRARY CORPORATION ABN 44 381 751 770

1 Background

1.1 The Founding Member Councils first established the Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation (ABN 44 381 751 770) on or about 19 February 1997 pursuant to an agreement made under section 196 of the *Local Government Act 1989* (Vic).

1.2 In accordance with section 330(4) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic), as an existing regional library, the Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation must be wound up by 1 July 2031.

1.3 Section 110(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic) allows the Founding Member Councils to become members of and participate in the formation of a corporation and appoint directors.

1.4 Therefore, the Founding Member Councils have each resolved in accordance with section 110 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic) to establish the Company as a new not-for-profit, public library, registered as a company limited by guarantee under the Corporations Act.

1.5 The Founding Member Councils have agreed to record their initial contribution and transfer of assets, licences, operations and activities from the Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation to the Company pursuant to this Agreement, which shall operate in addition to the Constitution of the Company.

2 Purpose of this Agreement

2.1 The purpose of this Agreement is to govern the relationship between the Member Councils as members of the Company, including with respect to the contribution of

assets to the Company and ongoing support and contributions to be provided by the Member Councils to the Company.

2.2 The Member Councils and the Company have entered into their respective undertakings and agreements contained in this Agreement in consideration of the efficient and orderly conduct and management of the Company, in the interests of the Company and the Member Councils.

2.3 The Member Councils jointly and severally covenant that during the continuance of this Agreement, each of them will abide by the provisions of this Agreement and will exercise their rights and powers as Members of the Company, in accordance with the provisions contained in this Agreement.

2.4 Each of the Member Councils covenant that the provisions of this Agreement will be enforceable by or against each of them and by or against any of the other Member Councils, and in the event of an inconsistency between this Agreement and the Constitution, this Agreement shall take precedence.

2.5 Each of the Member Councils will act, and execute such further instruments, consents and make such decisions and vote on resolutions of meetings of the Company and exercise their powers of appointment to the Board, so as to give full effect to the provisions of this Agreement.

2.6 The Company acknowledges that the Member Councils have agreed to regulate their conduct in accordance with this Agreement. The Company will conduct its business and affairs by ensuring that it will act on lawful resolutions and directions given by the Member Councils in accordance with this Agreement in respect of any matter which is governed or regulated by this Agreement.

2.7 Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation joins this Agreement to record the transfer of its assets and liabilities to the Company in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement.

3 Duration

3.1 This Agreement commences on the date of this Agreement and will continue to be binding on each of the Member Councils:

(a) while that Member Council remains a member of the Company and,

(b) insofar as is relevant and appropriate in respect to continuing obligations, after that Member Council has ceased to be a member of the Company.

3.2 This Agreement may be varied or replaced at any time by written agreement signed by the Member Councils.

4 Interpretation

4.1 **Definitions**

In this Constitution, unless the contrary intention appears:

Agreement means this agreement, to be known as the “Goulburn Valley Libraries Library Agreement”.

Board means the directors of the Company present at a meeting, duly convened as a Board meeting, at which a quorum is present.

CEO means the Chief Executive Officer of the Company.

Company means Goulburn Valley Libraries Ltd (ACN TBA).

Constitution means the constitution of the Company as amended from time to time.

Financial Contribution means the annual financial contribution of the Member Councils to the Company.

Founding Member Councils means Greater Shepparton City Council, Moira Shire Council and Strathbogie Shire Council.

Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation means Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation (ABN 44 381 751 770) incorporated under section 196 of the *Local Government Act 1989* (Vic).

Initial Contributions means the assets transferred to the Company from the Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation for the benefit of library branches within the LGAs the Founding Member Councils

LGA means Local Government Area.

Member Councils means Greater Shepparton City Council, Moira Shire Council and Strathbogie Shire Council and, where a subsequent Council is admitted as a Member, includes that Council.

Premises means the premises of the library branches occupied by the Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation at the date of this Agreement listed in the Schedule.

Schedule means the schedule to this Agreement.

Specific Contribution means specific contributions made to the Company by a Member Council for the benefit of libraries and library branches within the LGA of that Member Council.

5 Initial Contribution of Assets

5.1 The Founding Member Councils record that the Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation holds or has the use of assets provided by or obtained for the benefit of libraries operated by the Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation within the LGAs of the respective Founding Member Councils.

5.2 The parties record that:

(a) Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation holds the Initial Contributions set out in the Schedule for the use of library branches within the LGAs of the Founding Member Councils; and

(b) the Founding Member Councils have made available to Goulburn Valley Libraries the Premises set out in the Schedule for the purpose of Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation operating library branches.

5.3 Legal title and ownership of assets held by Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation as at the date of incorporation of the Company shall be deemed to be transferred to the Company upon the incorporation of the Company [*or insert such later date if preferred e.g. 1 July 2025*], and the parties shall do all things reasonably necessary to effect the transfer of such assets.

5.4 The Company shall assume the rights and responsibilities of the Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation with respect to the Premises at the date of incorporation of the Company [or insert such later date e.g. 1 July 2025].

5.5 The parties agree that the Company shall utilise the Initial Contributions for the benefit of libraries within the LGA of the relevant Founding Member Council. In complying with this clause, the Company shall have consideration of the overall value of the Initial Contribution, including any depreciation of the value of the assets comprising the Initial Contribution, rather than any specific asset comprising a part of the Initial Contribution.

6 Specific Contribution of Assets

6.1 A Member Council may make a Specific Contribution of assets to the Company. Subject to any specific agreement at the time of the Member Council making the Specific Contribution, the Company shall utilise the Specific Contribution for the benefit of libraries within the LGA of the relevant Member Council that contributed the Specific Contribution. In complying with this clause, the Company shall have consideration of the overall value of the Specific Contribution, including any depreciation of the value of the assets comprising the Specific Contribution, rather than any specific asset comprising a part of the Specific Contribution.

7 Strategic Plan

7.1 The Company and the Board shall be responsible for the development of a strategic plan. The strategic plan may operate for one or more years, but shall not operate for more than five years.

7.2 The Company and the Board shall formulate the strategic plan in consultation with the Member Councils.

7.3 The Board shall present the strategic plan to a general meeting of the Company for approval by the Member Councils.

8 Annual Budget and payments

8.1 The CEO, in collaboration with the Board, shall be responsible for developing a proposed budget to commence on 1 July of each year.

8.2 The Company shall provide the proposed budget to the Member Councils by no later than 1 April.

8.3 The proposed budget shall be developed in accordance with general accounting principles and shall include:

(a) Current financial reports showing the assets, liabilities and equity of the Company;

(b) The amount of each Member Council's proposed Financial Contribution to the Company for the financial year commencing on 1 July, calculated in accordance with clause 9;

(c) The amount of funds expected to be received from other sources for the financial year commencing on 1 July; and

(d) The expected expenses of the Company for the financial year commencing on 1 July.

8.4 If a Member Council wishes to vary its proposed Financial Contribution to the Company it must give notice in writing of the proposed variation to the Board by 1 May in each year PROVIDED HOWEVER that if the Board does not receive from a Member Council such notice in writing by such date then unless the Board resolves otherwise such Council will be deemed to have agreed to pay the Financial Contribution set out in the proposed budget.

8.5 Where the Board has received a notice in writing in accordance with clause 8.4, the Board and the Member Council from which the notice was received shall negotiate in good faith with a view to reaching agreement as to the Financial Contribution to be paid by the Member Council.

8.6 If by 1 July agreement is not reached between the Board and the Member Council requesting the variation as to the financial contribution payable by such Member Council then the financial contribution which must be paid by such Member Council shall be the financial contribution paid by the Member Council in the 12 months

immediately previous as increased by:

(a) any change to the CPI, for the 12 months immediately previous; and

(b) any change to the Rate Cap as determined by the Minister for Local Government for the previous financial year.

8.7 The Member Councils must pay the Financial Contributions by way of quarterly instalments on the first day of July, October, January and April of each year.

8.8 The first instalment shall be the same amount paid by the Member Council in the previous quarter and the second instalment shall include any adjustment to ensure that the two instalments together equal half the amount to be paid by that Member Council for that financial year.

8.9 In addition to the contributions payable under this clause a Member Council shall be responsible for the Company's costs in providing any additional service or resources requested by the Member Council and such costs are to be paid within fourteen days of the Member Council receiving an invoice from the Company.

8.10 Interest shall be paid on any amount payable under this clause which is not received by the Company within fourteen (14) days of the due date at the rate fixed under section 2 of the *Penalty Interest Rates Act 1983* (Vic), and shall be calculated monthly from the date the amount became due until the date it is received by the Company.

9 Member Council Financial Contributions

9.1 In developing the proposed Financial Contributions of each Member Council, the Company shall have regard to:

(a) The Goulburn Valley Libraries Funding Framework or similar succeeding document, as developed and approved by the Board from time to time (at least every five (5) years at the date of this Agreement);

(b) The number of libraries, library services and other services provided or expected to be provided by the Company in the Member Council's LGA;

(c) The proportion of the Company's resources that will be utilised in the Member Council's LGA;

(d) The proportion of members of the public from the Member Council's LGA holding library accounts with the Company; and

(e) The value of non-monetary contributions made by the Member Council, including the provision of services without fee or at fees below commercial market rates.

9.2 The Financial Contributions shall be calculated with the purpose of covering the ongoing operational costs of the Company, other than operational costs that can be funded by revenue generated by the Company or obtained by other external funding.

10 Branch Libraries

10.1 The Company may open new library branches with the unanimous consent of the Member Councils.

10.2 The Company may expand, renovate or develop existing library branches, provided that any significant expansion, renovation or development has the unanimous approval of the Member Councils.

10.3 The Company and a Member Council may enter into a funding arrangement whereby the Member Council provides the Company with Specific Contributions

towards establishing a new library branch or undertaking a significant expansion, renovation or development of a library branch.

11 Services provided by a Member Council

11.1 The Company and a Member Council may enter into an agreement for the Member Council to provide the Company with services, including:

(a) The lease or licence of a premises; and

(b) The undertaking of building or renovation works.

11.2 The Member Council may charge for the services, provides that it does not charge more than standard commercial rates.

11.3 Where the Member Council provides the services without charge, or at a rate less than standard commercial rates, the Company shall take the provision of such non-monetary contributions into account in determining the Member Council's Financial Contribution pursuant to clause 9.1(e).

11.4 For the avoidance of doubt, the Company and a Member Council may renegotiate any agreement or enter into a new agreement with respect to any Premises listed in the Schedule.

12 Admission of New Member Councils

12.1 The parties agree that a new Member Council shall only be admitted to membership of the Company pursuant to clause 8.3(c) of the Constitution in circumstances where the new Member Council enters into this Agreement with the Company and each existing Member Council.

13 Distribution of Assets upon a Member Council ceasing to be a Member

13.1 In the event that a Member Council ceases to be a member of the Company, the Member Council may require the Company to transfer net assets held by the Company for the benefit of library branches within the LGA of that Member Council to another library corporation or other body corporate, provided that the library corporation or body corporate is a charity of the type which the Company could make a distribution of surplus assets to under clause 33 of the Constitution were the Company being wound up. In calculating net assets:

(a) the Company shall deduct liabilities and contingent liabilities of the Company in proportion to the exiting Member Council's proportionate contributions to and benefits from the Company.

13.2 The Company may charge the Member Council its reasonable costs associated with complying with a direction under clause 13.1. Without limiting this clause, such costs may include:

(a) The costs of redundancy entitlements arising from the Company making roles redundant as a result of the Member Council's exit;

(b) Transport, storage and disposal costs;

(c) Fit out and make goods costs with respect to library premises vacated as a result of the Member Council's exit; and

(d) The costs of the Company terminating or varying any third party contracts as a result of the Member Council's exit.

14 Distribution of Assets upon winding up of Company

14.1 In the event that the Company is wound up, each Member Council may nominate a library corporation or other body corporate to receive surplus assets of the Company.

14.2 The Member Councils, in exercising their power under clause 33 of the Constitution to distribute surplus assets of the Company, shall act in a manner that is fair and reasonable to each Member Council, and in particular:

(a) The parties shall, as far as is reasonably practicable, transfer assets held by the Company for the benefit of library branches within the LGA of a particular Member Council to the library corporation or other body corporate nominated by that Member Council; and

(b) In allocating surplus assets the parties shall have regard to the Initial Contribution, the Specific Contributions, the Financial Contributions and the value of non-monetary contributions made by each Member Council, and where the Company has received external funding connected with a specific LGA or LGAs, the extent to which such funding contributed to the Company's surplus assets.

15 Dispute Resolution

15.1 Any dispute, grievance or other disagreement between Member Councils concerning the interpretation or application of this Agreement shall be dealt with in the same manner as a dispute would be dealt with under the Constitution of the Company.

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The parties execute this Agreement to evidence being bound by it:

EXECUTED BY GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY COUNCIL by being signed by the persons authorised to sign on behalf of the Council

……..	……..
(signature)	*(signature)*
Name of authorised officer:	Name of authorised officer:
……..	……..
Position:	Position:
……..	……..

Date: ……./……./2025

EXECUTED BY MOIRA SHIRE COUNCIL by being signed by the persons authorised to sign on behalf of the Council

……..	……..
(signature)	*(signature)*
Name of authorised officer:	Name of authorised officer:
……..	……..
Position:	Position:
……..	……..

Date: ……./……./2025

DRAFT

EXECUTED BY STRATHBOGIE SHIRE COUNCIL by being signed by the persons authorised to sign on behalf of the Council

……..	……..
(signature)	*(signature)*
Name of authorised officer:	Name of authorised officer:
……	…….
Position:	Position:
……	……

Date: ……./……./2025

EXECUTED BY GOULBURN VALLEY LIBRARIES LTD by being signed by the persons authorised to sign on behalf of the Company

……..	……..
(signature)	*(signature)*
Name of authorised officer:	Name of authorised officer:
……..	……..
Position: Director	Position: Director

Date: ……./……./2025

DRAFT

EXECUTED BY GOULBURN VALLEY REGIONAL LIBRARY CORPORATION by being signed by the persons authorised to sign on behalf of the Library Corporation

……..	……..
(signature)	*(signature)*
Name of authorised officer:	Name of authorised officer:
……..	……..
Position: Board member	Position: Board member

Date: ……./……./2025

DRAFT

Schedule

[insert schedule of assets]

Council: Greater Shepparton City Council
Premises:
List of assets (Initial Contribution):

Council: Moira Shire Council
Premises:
List of assets (Initial Contribution):

Council: Strathbogie Shire Council
Premises:
List of assets (Initial Contribution):

DRAFT

11.4.4 CEO Remuneration and Employment Policy

AUTHOR Director People and Governance

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director People and Governance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In accordance with section 45 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy provides direction and guidance on the management of the life cycle of the Chief Executive Officer's (CEO) employment including recruitment, appointment, performance review and end of contract processes.

This policy applies to the Council in its management of the employment and performance of the Chief Executive Officer.

This policy also establishes the role and functions for the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee which provides advice to Council on the implementation of this policy.

The CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee and relevant Officers have now reviewed the policy with changes made including:

- Minor grammatical and formatting changes
- Policy clarifications and updated terminology for better understanding
- Clarification of the duties for the independent member
- Clarification regarding the appointment of a recruitment consultant including (review and provide any recommendations for the position description and manage the positive advertising)
- Policy Review – deleted the need for the Audit and Risk Committee to undertake an annual review of the policy. Inclusion that the Policy will be reviewed at least every four year by the Committee and within 6 months after each Council election, and the Committee will make a recommendation to Council with respect to any suggested changes.

The Audit and Risk Committee supported the policy changes at the meeting on 5 September 2025

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Adopt the updated Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy.**

2. **Make the updated Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy available to the public through Council's website.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is for Council to adopt the updated CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy. The Policy was last reviewed and adopted in November 2023.

This policy aims to:

- reinforce Council's commitment to good governance practices
- provide a consistent, fair and transparent framework for employment matters relating to the CEO including recruitment, contract terms, performance monitoring and annual review
- establish a guiding document for a CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee to assist Council in administering this policy
- ensure independent advice and input to help guide the Council and the Remuneration and Employment Committee in the implementation of this policy.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Under Section 45 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, councils are required to adopt and maintain a CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy that outlines:

- The recruitment and appointment process for the CEO
- CEO performance monitoring and review mechanisms
- The CEO's remuneration structure and contract conditions

Additionally, the Act requires the CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy must provide for the Council to obtain independent professional advice in relation to the matters dealt with in the Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy.

This policy has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and will:

- remain in force until it is revised or revoked by a resolution of Council
- shall be reviewed within the six (6) months following each Council election.

The policy has been recently reviewed by the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee, the Audit and Risk Committee and relevant Officers and the following changes are proposed:

- Minor grammatical and formatting changes
- Policy clarifications and updated terminology for better understanding
- Clarification of the duties for the independent member
- Clarification regarding the appointment of a recruitment consultant including (review and provide any recommendations for the position description and manage the positive advertising)
- Policy Review – deleted the need for the Audit and Risk Committee to undertake an annual review of the policy. Inclusion that the Policy will be reviewed at least every four year by the Committee and within 6 months after each Council election, and the Committee will make a recommendation to Council with respect to any suggested changes.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Inform - To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions.

There was no community engagement required in the development of this report.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following Objectives and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:
Objective Three: Deliver

We are committed to delivering quality services and infrastructure that meets the needs of our community. We aim to strengthen the Council's governance and provide improved, customer-focused experiences.

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

This report is aligned with the following legislation, council policies and key strategic documents:

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Local Government Regulations 2020*
- *Local Government Amendment (Governance and Integrity) Act 2024*
- *Fair Work Act 2009*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1982*
- *Gender Equality Act 2020*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- *Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- Victorian Government Public Entity Executive Remuneration Policy
- Chief Executive Officer's Employment Contract
- Chief Executive Officer Position Description

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy not in place.	Rare	Major	Low	*Local Government Act 2020* requires a CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy. Policy is included on Policy Register to ensure review is undertaken when required.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

In accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council is required to:

- Establish a CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy
- Establish a CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee to oversee the implementation of the Policy

- Appoint an independent member(s) to the Committee to assist with and advise on the implementation of this Policy
- In the case of a vacancy, appoint an Interim/Acting CEO for a maximum of 12 months only
- Consider reports and recommendations from the Committee
- Review this Policy within six (6) months of a Council election.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

In the interests of transparency and open and honest communication with our community this report is presented to a public Council meeting.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The recommendation does not limit any human rights under the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.*

CONCLUSION

To guarantee the CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy remains fit for purpose it has been reviewed against the legislative requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* to ensure it meets those provisions.

The next date for the review of the Policy will be May 2029 or if required at an earlier date.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 20250916 CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy

OFFICIAL

Strathbogie Shire Council

Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy

July 2025

OFFICIAL

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Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy

Document ID:	737596
Effective Date:	October 2021
Last Review:	November 2023
Current Review:	July 2025
Date Adopted by Council:	TBC
Next Scheduled Review Date:	May 2029
Responsible Officer:	Director People and Governance

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1. PURPOSE

This policy applies to the Council in its management of the employment and performance of the Chief Executive Officer.

The purpose of this policy is to support the requirements of section 45 of the *Local Government Act 2020* by providing direction and guidance on the management of the life cycle of the Chief Executive Officer's (CEO) employment including recruitment, appointment, performance review and end of contract processes.

This policy also establishes the role and functions for the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee (the Committee), which provides advice to Council on the implementation of this policy.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

This policy aims to:

- reinforce Council's commitment to good governance practices
- provide a consistent, fair and transparent framework for employment matters relating to the CEO including recruitment, contract terms, performance monitoring and annual review
- establish a guiding document for a CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee to assist Council in administering this policy
- ensure independent advice and input to help guide the Council and the Remuneration and Employment Committee in the implementation of this policy.

3. APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

The elected Council is responsible for the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer, determining performance criteria in partnership with the CEO, assessing the CEO's performance against the criteria set and determining the CEO contract conditions, including remuneration.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* relating to CEO employment and remuneration.

The Council and the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee will carry out functions related to the appointment, remuneration and performance appraisal of the CEO in accordance with the following principles:

- fair and transparent decision-making principles that are applied consistently
- decision making criteria that are relevant, objective, and available to the person subject to decisions made under this policy
- decisions and actions that achieve the highest standards of good governance
- use of clear and comprehensive documentation to ensure decisions are capable of independent review
- basing employment decisions on the proper assessment of an individual's work-related qualities, abilities and potential against the genuine requirements of the role
- decisions to appoint a CEO are based on merit
- decisions are made through an equal opportunity lens.

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4. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CEO EMPLOYMENT AND REMUNERATION COMMITTTEE

Council will establish a committee, known as the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee (the Committee).

The role of the Committee is to:

1. Recommend a Position Description for the CEO to Council for adoption.
2. Oversee the appointment of a recruitment consultant to conduct the CEO recruitment, after undertaking a competitive process under Council's Procurement Policy.
3. Oversee the recruitment process, leading to a recommendation to Council of a preferred candidate for the CEO position.
4. Recommend to Council employment contract conditions, including a remuneration package and performance criteria for the first 12 months of the contract.
5. Oversee the assessment of the CEO's performance against the prescribed performance criteria and key performance indicators through the completion of an annual review.
6. Provide a report on the annual review process, including recommendations relating to remuneration adjustments, key performance indicators for the 12 months ahead and professional development to be completed by the CEO prior to the next review.
7. Oversee the process for managing the end of a CEO's contract and the transition to a new CEO, ensuring compliance with the contract of employment.
8. Ensure the Committee adheres to statutory obligations and Council's policies and procedures, including equity and fairness.

5. MEMBERSHIP OF THE CEO EMPLOYMENT AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

Membership of the Committee, to be appointed by Council, will be:

- An independent member, who is the Chair
- The Mayor
- Two Councillors, of which one is the immediate past Mayor (if practicable)

A council officer will be appointed to assist the Committee with the co-ordination of meetings and documentation. This officer is not part of the Committee and does not attend meetings unless specifically requested by the Chair to provide advice on factual matters such as details of the *Local Government Act 2020* or to source requested data.

A quorum will consist of the independent member (the Chair), the Mayor and one Councillor. A quorum must be reached to transact any business under this policy.

Councillor members (excluding the Mayor/Chair members) will be appointed every 12 months as part of the appointment to the committee's process through the annual statutory Council meeting.

The Committee is bound by the:

- confidential information provisions under sections 3 and 125 of the *Local Government Act 2020*
- conflict of interest obligations under sections 127 and 128 of the *Local Government Act 2020.*

The Committee will determine the meeting procedures at the first meeting of the Committee, and minutes will be prepared and distributed to the Committee once received from the Chair and within ten (10) working days of the meeting.

The Committee will meet as required and will provide a report of any recommendations to a Council meeting following each Committee meeting.

Attendance at a meeting may be in person or virtually at the discretion of the Committee.

6. RECRUITMENT, DUTIES, TERM AND REMUNERATION OF THE INDEPENDENT COMMITTEE MEMBER

The independent committee member, who will assume the role as Chair of the committee (inclusion), will be appointed by the Council following a public process seeking expressions of interest from suitably qualified and experienced candidates.

The independent member should have extensive experience in:

- human resources
- demonstrated management skills, senior business experience, preferably with experience in local government and/or an employment law
- demonstrated experience in undertaking executive level performance appraisals, setting key performance indicators, and negotiating remuneration packages
- significant experience working with executives and board members in a similar professional advisory role
- an understanding of good governance and previous experience working with governance bodies or boards
- Ability to work effectively with Councillors and the CEO
- Knowledge and understanding of the issues affecting Strathbogie Shire.

The independent member will be appointed for a term of up to four (4) years.

At the conclusion of the term of appointment, the independent member will be eligible to apply to be reappointed at the discretion of Council for a second four-year term.

The duties of the independent member are to:

- Chair meetings of the Committee
- oversee the recruitment process for the CEO, as required
- actively participate as a member of the Committee's review of the CEO's performance against the performance criteria set out in the annual performance review
- ensure agendas and minutes are prepared for all meetings as required
- liaise with the appointed Council officer for the scheduling and co-ordination of meetings and other required administrative tasks.

7. PAYMENT OF A FEE TO THE INDEPENDENT COMMITTEE MEMBER

The remuneration of the independent member will be based on a sitting fee per meeting in line with the Victorian Government guidelines for like committees and will be paid within 30 days of attendance at the meeting.

This fee will be based on a per annum amount, determined by the Council, which will be indexed in alignment with the rate cap percentage applied to councils by the State government each 1 July.

Once every three years Council will benchmark the fee paid to the independent member against other small rural councils to inform the review of fee amounts by the Council.

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Travel costs will be reimbursed in accordance with Australian Tax Office mileage allowances.

8. APPOINTMENT OF A RECRUITMENT CONSULTANT

The Committee must seek to appoint a suitably qualified executive recruitment consultant (in accordance with Council's procurement policy), as required upon the vacancy of the CEO position and make a recommendation to council to appoint such consultant. The consultant will be required to:

- manage and assist in the process of selecting suitable candidates
- review and provide any recommendations for the position description
- manage the position advertising
- arrange and manage the interview process
- provide advice on remuneration
- provide advice on contract conditions
- provide advice on performance criteria for the probation period of employment and beyond.

9. CEO RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT PROCESS

Step One

In conjunction with the recruitment consultant, the Committee will develop and agree upon:

- the key factors that the consultant must consider when preparing a list of candidates to recommend to the Committee for interview
- the proposed remuneration and other employment conditions
- the remuneration arrangements that will be sufficient to attract, retain and motivate senior executives of the quality required, while not paying more than is necessary for this purpose. Such arrangements will include:
    - an initial contract of employment for up to five years, with the option of future extension by agreement
    - the responsibilities of the position
    - leave and other terms and conditions of employment
    - remuneration package
    - conflict of interest management requirements
    - a probationary period of six months
    - assessment parameters for annual remuneration increases based on CPI adjustments, performance, and prevailing industry standards
    - requirements for ongoing professional development
    - termination or renewal of contract provisions by the Council or CEO
- key accountabilities for the role, with succinct statements about the most important things upon which the CEO must focus
- selection criteria based on the key accountabilities
- an agreed recruitment and selection process and timeframe.

Step Two

The Committee will seek approval from Council by way of resolution for the preparatory work completed under Step One.

Once resolved by Council, the Committee, in partnership with the appointed recruitment consultant, will:

- oversee the development of the candidate pool by the consultant, providing feedback on the quality of the candidates being identified
- review the consultant's report on the candidate pool and make decisions regarding which candidates should be carried forward to interviews by the Committee
- interview the selected candidates
- following the interviews, develop a shortlist of no more than three (3) candidates for a second-round interviews to be conducted by all Councillors (deleted "interview the leading candidates identified by the consultant and develop a shortlist of three (3) candidates for a second-round interview")
- identify a preferred candidate/s

The Committee may agree to include additional interviews or selection tools as part of the process if they deem appropriate.

Step Three

The recruitment consultant will then undertake reference checks for the preferred candidate/s and report back to the Committee on the referee outcomes, making a final recommendation to the Committee on the suitability of the preferred candidate.

Step Four

Once the Committee has reviewed the final recommendations from the recruitment consultant on the preferred applicant, the Committee shall, through the consultant, negotiate draft terms of employment within the general framework and policies of the Council.

Step Five

Once negotiations on the draft terms of employment have concluded, the Committee shall submit a report to a Council meeting to recommend the appointment of the preferred candidate. The appointment of the CEO must be made by a resolution of Council.

Step Six

Once the new CEO is determined by way of resolution by Council, the Committee, through the consultant, shall:

- ensure that all candidates are updated on the outcome of the process
- develop and recommend to the Council an onboarding program, including performance criteria for the new CEO.

10. REVIEW OF CEO PERFORMANCE

The Council is responsible for determining the CEO's performance criteria in partnership with the CEO on an annual basis, assessing the CEO's performance against those criteria and determining the annual remuneration package for the CEO.

Following the CEO's appointment, the Committee's ongoing role is to:

- prepare draft annual performance criteria with the CEO for the Council's consideration
- seek advice on remuneration benchmarks
- conduct the performance review of the CEO and make recommendations to the Council on matters including whether:
    - the CEO meets the performance criteria
    - the CEO has undertaken the required personal and professional development

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  - to vary the performance criteria and professional and personal development plan.
- make recommendations on remuneration, and/or other terms and conditions of the contract arising from the performance review.

In discharging these duties, the Committee will:

- establish a timeline for the process and ensure that the CEO is actively engaged in the process
- in consultation with the CEO, identify and agree the performance criteria, including any goals and objectives that the CEO should work towards achieving over a 12-month period
- ensure the CEO submits a performance criteria report and is given the opportunity to present their self-assessment to the Council
- ensure all Councillors are invited to provide comments of appraisal on the CEO's performance to the Committee
- attend to the collection and collation of the Councillor feedback in relation to the CEO's performance as measured against the performance criteria approved by the Council
- consider any feedback available from the broader organisation through staff surveys or similar exercises
- review the CEO's remuneration package as a component of the annual performance review in accordance with the contract conditions
- provide feedback to the CEO about their performance and proposed outcome of the remuneration review
- report to Council seeking decisions on outcomes of the review process in relation to:
  - the CEO's achievement of the performance criteria and objectives
  - any proposed variation in remuneration
  - setting the performance criteria for the measurement of the CEO's performance for the next 12-month period
  - setting the personal and professional development plan for the next 12-month period, as agreed with the CEO
  - whether any options of the CEO's contract should be exercised in accordance with the contract.

11. END OF CONTRACT

The Committee will be responsible for advising the Council on its obligations and options when approaching the expiry date of the contract, within six (6) months prior to the expiry of the CEO Contract.

These obligations and options should cover renewal of the contract for a further term, or termination in accordance with the existing contract.

Where necessary, the Committee should seek independent professional advice to ensure compliance with the contract terms and the *Local Government Act 2020*.

12. INDEPENDENT ADVICE

At any time the Council, including through the Committee, may seek independent professional advice to ensure that its management and administration of the recruitment, selection, employment, performance review and contract management for the CEO accords with the law and good employment practices.

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13. CONFIDENTIALITY

All information relating to the recruitment, selection, performance review, and contract management must be kept strictly confidential under the confidential information provisions of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Councillors, Committee members and staff involved in the process must take all reasonable steps to maintain that confidentiality and respect the privacy of all persons concerned.

Any breach of confidentiality may constitute a breach of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct or Staff Code of Conduct CEO Directive, or grounds for termination of contract for the independent member.

Notwithstanding anything provided in this clause, disclosure of the CEO total remuneration package will be made in the Council's annual report and otherwise to comply with legislative requirements.

14. DEFINITIONS

Term	Meaning
CEO	means the natural person appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of the Strathbogie Shire Council under section 44 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee (the Committee)	means the committee created under this policy to oversee its implementation and compliance with the Act and the Regulations.
Employment matters	means, in regard to the CEO, issues relating to: • the recruitment of the CEO, including re-appointment, as appropriate • contractual and remuneration matters • establishing performance objectives and undertaking performance monitoring and reviews • any other matters set out in the *Local Government Act 2020.*
Independent advice	means any human resources, recruitment, management or legal expert that is engaged by Council to support the work of the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee.
Term of appointment	means the term of the CEO's contract of employment, which must not exceed five (5) years in accordance with the Act (section 44).
the Act	means the *Local Government Act 2020*.
the Regulations	means regulations supporting the *Local Government Act 2020* relating to the employment and remuneration of the CEO.
Vacancy	means the office of CEO is vacant as a result of the resignation, retirement, termination, including the end of the term of appointment, or death of the incumbent.

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15. RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

The following Council, State, regional and national plans and policies are relevant to this policy under each subtitle.

Legislation

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Local Government Regulations 2020*
- *Local Government Amendment (Governance and Integrity) Act 2024*
- *Fair Work Act 2009*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1982*
- *Gender Equality Act 2020*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- *Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- Victorian Government Public Entity Executive Remuneration Policy

Related Council Documents

- Chief Executive Officer's Employment Contract
- Chief Executive Officer Position Description
- Public Transparency Policy
- Gender Equity Policy
- Procurement Policy and Procedure
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Councillor Code of Conduct
- Mutual Respect Charter
- Councillor/Staff Interaction Policy

16. POLICY REVIEW

This Policy remains in force until it is revised or revoked by a resolution of Council.

This Policy will thereafter be reviewed at least every four years by the Committee and within six months after each Council election, and the Committee will make a recommendation to Council with respect to any suggested changes.

11.4.5 Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors August 2025

AUTHOR Governance Officer

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director People and Governance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In accordance with Section (114) of the Strathbogie Shire Council Governance Rules, if there is a meeting of Councillors that:

- is scheduled or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of Council or briefing Councillors
- is attended by at least one member of Council staff, and
- is not a Council meeting, Delegated Committee meeting or Community Asset Committee meeting, these are known as Informal Meetings of Councillors.

The Chief Executive Officer must ensure that a summary of the matters discussed at the meeting are:

- tabled at the next convenient Council meeting
- recorded in the minutes of that Council meeting.

The details of the Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors for the period 1 August 2025 to 31 August 2025 are included in the attachments below.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

Note the Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors from 1 August 2025 to 31 August 2025.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

In the interests of transparency and open and honest communication with our community this report is presented to a public Council meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 20250805 Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors
2. 20250812 Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors
3. 20250819 Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors
4. 20250826 Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors
5. 20250827 Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors (1)

Staff Only

Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors

Meeting Details	**Title**	Councillor Briefing	
	Date	5 August 2025 at 9:30 am	
	Location	Euroa Community Conference Centre	
Present	**Councillors**	• Cr Ewart Kennedy • Cr Jeffery • Cr Binks • Cr Carlson	• Cr Holloway • Cr Stevens •
	Officers	• Rachelle Quattrocchi – Chief Executive Officer • Amanda Tingay – Director People and Governance • Rachael Frampton – Director Community and Planning • Oliver McNulty – Director Sustainable Infrastructure • Michelle Harris- Executive Manager Communications, Engagement and Advocacy • Kerry Lynch – Governance Officer	
	Guest Speakers		
	Apologies	Cr Halsall, Monitor Marg Allan	

Disclosures of Conflict of Interests

Disclosure of Interests are to be made immediately prior to any relevant item being discussed (*Local Government Act 2020* - Section 131)

Matters Considered		Disclosures and Comments
1	Community Satisfaction Survey Results	None
2	MAV State Council Motions	None
3	2025-2026 Rates Notice	None

The meeting concluded at 3:00 pm

Record completed by	**Officer Name - Officer Title**	Kerry Lynch – Governance Officer

Staff Only

Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors

Meeting Details	**Title**	Councillor Briefing	
	Date	12 August 2025 at 9:30 am	
	Location	Euroa Community Conference Centre	
Present	**Councillors**	• Cr Ewart Kennedy • Cr Binks • Cr Carlson	• Cr Holloway • Cr Stevens
	Officers	• Rachelle Quattrocchi – Chief Executive Officer • Amanda Tingay – Director People and Governance • Rachael Frampton – Director Community and Planning • Oliver McNulty – Director Sustainable Infrastructure • Michelle Harris- Executive Manager Communications, Engagement and Advocacy • Kerry Lynch – Governance Officer	
	Guest Speakers	Carl Waters, CEO Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority Various Australia Day Community Representatives	
	Apologies	Cr Halsall, Cr Jeffery, Monitor Marg Allan	

Disclosures of Conflict of Interests

Disclosure of Interests are to be made immediately prior to any relevant item being discussed (*Local Government Act 2020* - Section 131)

Matters Considered		Disclosures and Comments
1	Briefing received from Carl Waters, CEO Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority	None
2	Australia Day – Role of Council in Supporting Australia Day Events	None
3	Advocacy Strategy 2025-2029	None
4	Review Draft Council Meeting Agenda 19 August 2025	Cr Binks General conflict Item 11.1.1

The meeting concluded at 3:30 pm

Record completed by	**Officer Name - Officer Title**	Kerry Lynch – Governance Officer

Staff Only

Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors

Meeting Details	**Title**	Councillor Briefing	
	Date	19 August 2025 at 9:30 am	
	Location	Euroa Community Conference Centre	
Present	**Councillors**	• Cr Ewart Kennedy • Cr Binks • Cr Carlson	• Cr Holloway • Cr Stevens •
	Officers	• Rachelle Quattrocchi – Chief Executive Officer • Amanda Tingay – Director People and Governance • Rachael Frampton – Director Community and Planning • Oliver McNulty – Director Sustainable Infrastructure • Michelle Harris- Executive Manager Communications, Engagement and Advocacy • Kerry Lynch – Governance Officer • Awais Sadiq – Manager Planning and Investment • Dan Maloney – Senior Strategic Planner • Jack Francis – Senior Planner	
	Guest Speakers	Colleen Furlanetto and other community representatives Matt Burns – CEO Taungurung Land and Waters Council	
	Apologies	Cr Halsall, Cr Jeffery, Monitor Marg Allan	

Disclosures of Conflict of Interests

Disclosure of Interests are to be made immediately prior to any relevant item being discussed (*Local Government Act 2020* - Section 131)

Matters Considered		Disclosures and Comments
1	Frost Street Underpass – receive briefing from community representatives	None
2	Receive briefing from Matt Burns – CEO Taungurung Land and Waters Council	None
3	Draft Rural and Residential and Landuse Strategy	None

The meeting concluded at 3:30 pm

Record completed by	**Officer Name - Officer Title**	Kerry Lynch – Governance Officer

Staff Only

Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors

Meeting Details	**Title**	Councillor Briefing	
	Date	25 August 2025 at 9:30 am	
	Location	Euroa Community Conference Centre	
	Councillors	• Cr Binks • Cr Carlson	• Cr Holloway • Cr Stevens (Chair)
Present	**Officers**	• Rachelle Quattrocchi – Chief Executive Officer • Amanda Tingay – Director People and Governance • Rachael Frampton – Director Community and Planning • Oliver McNulty – Director Sustainable Infrastructure • Michelle Harris- Executive Manager Communications, Engagement and Advocacy • Kerry Lynch – Governance Officer • Awais Sadiq – Manager Planning and Investment • Shaun Langlands • Kate McKernan – Manager Community and Culture • Leanne Carbonneau – Manager Community Safety • Chris Bishop – Asset Officer	
	Guest Speakers	Dr Xavier Csar – CEO Regional Development Victoria	
	Apologies	Cr Halsall, Cr Jeffery, Cr Ewart-Kennedy, Monitor Marg Allan	

Disclosures of Conflict of Interests

Disclosure of Interests are to be made immediately prior to any relevant item being discussed (*Local Government Act 2020* - Section 131)

Matters Considered		Disclosures and Comments
1	Council Meeting Registrations	None
2	Australia Day – finalise engagement process	None
3	Climate Change Action Plan 2022-2027 Update	None
4	Planning Application P2025-049 – 280 High Street, Nagambie	None
5	Receive briefing from Dr Xavier Csar – CEO Regional Development Victoria	None
6	Asset Management Update	None
7	Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-2029	None
8	Update on Grants Opportunities	None

The meeting concluded at 3:30 pm

Record completed by	**Officer Name - Officer Title**	Kerry Lynch – Governance Officer

Staff Only

Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors

Meeting Details	**Title**	Agriculture Industry Meeting	
	Date	27 August 2025 at 4:00 pm	
	Location	Nagambie Regatta Centre, 66 Loddings Lane, Nagambie	
Present	**Councillors**	• Cr Claire Ewart Kennedy • Cr Fiona Stevens	• Cr Clark Holloway • Cr Greg Carlson
	Officers	• Rachelle Quattrocchi – Chief Executive Officer • Steve Cooper – Economic Development Coordinator	
	Guest Speakers	• Matt Fowles – Fowles Winery • Alister Purbrick – Tahbilk Winery • Gareth Downey – Lindsay Park Racing • Melanie Gamble – Lindsay Park Racing • Representative – Mitchelton Winery • Representative – Sweetenham Stud • Grant Taresch – Elgo Estate • Badi Kager – Costa Group • Michael Toby – Costa Group	
	Apologies		

Disclosures of Conflict of Interests

Disclosure of Interests are to be made immediately prior to any relevant item being discussed (*Local Government Act 2020* - Section 131)

Matters Considered		Disclosures and Comments
1	Agriculture Industry Discussion • Challenges and Opportunities • Collaboration and Strategic Opportunities • Victorian Chamber of Commerce	None

The meeting concluded at 6:00 pm

Record completed by	**Officer Name - Officer Title**	Steve Cooper – Economic Development Coordinator

11.5 Communications, Engagement and Advocacy

11.5.1 Advocacy Strategy 2025-2029

AUTHOR Executive Manager Communications, Engagement and Advocacy

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Executive Manager Communications, Engagement and Advocacy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks Council's acceptance and endorsement of the Advocacy Strategy 2025–2029. The Strategy has been developed following an advocacy workshop session held in June 2025 and subsequent Councillor feedback.

The Strategy is informed by:

- Councillor feedback captured during the June workshop (via Mentimeter)
- Community input collected during the Council Plan 2025–2029 consultation phase

The Advocacy Strategy 2025–2029 sharpens Council's priorities, strengthens our advocacy voice, and reflects the needs of the Strathbogie community. It is now presented for Council adoption.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Adopt the Advocacy Strategy 2025–2029**
2. **Authorise Officer to make updates to the Advocacy Priority Items to ensure they stay current**
3. **Note that the Advocacy Strategy 2025–2029 will guide Council's advocacy efforts from September 2025 onward.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

This report provides Council with the final Advocacy Strategy 2025–2029, developed following the June 2025 workshop and informed by feedback from Councillors and the broader community during the Council Plan 2025–2029 and Community Vision engagement processes.

The purpose of the report is for Council to adopt the Advocacy Strategy 2025-2029.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Advocacy is a core function of local government—shaping decisions, securing funding, and achieving outcomes for the community.

With increasing community needs and limited resources, a clear and strategic approach is required to:

- Identify priorities requiring sustained, top-level advocacy
- Recognise issues suited to partnership or opportunistic advocacy approaches

- Ensure effective resource allocation across advocacy efforts

The Advocacy Strategy 2025–2029 establishes a structured, prioritised agenda to guide Council's efforts over the next four years.

Key elements include:

- Long-term, complex priorities:
    - Power reliability improvements
    - Expansion of digital infrastructure
    - Addressing climate and drought resilience.
- Local, immediate priorities raised by the community:
    - Significant drought funding
    - Safety upgrades (e.g. Avenel pedestrian rail crossings)
    - Future of key projects: Greening Euroa, Nagambie Industrial Freight Bypass, Kirwans Bridge.

This dual approach recognises that advocacy is both a "long game" for systemic issues and a responsive tool for pressing local concerns.

The Strategy also reinforces Council's commitment to:

- Transparent communication with the community
- Targeted, issue-based advocacy when urgent matters arise
- Strong partnerships with community groups, peak bodies, and other levels of government.

Advocacy Theme Rationale

As part of developing the Advocacy Strategy, officers identified the value of adopting a strong, unifying advocacy theme to frame Council's priorities and reinforce our identity when engaging with State and Federal stakeholders.

The preferred theme "Investing in Tomorrow" is designed to highlight Council's dual role in addressing immediate local needs while championing broader, systemic improvements critical to the Shire's future.

This thematic approach ensures consistency in messaging, strengthens recognition among funding bodies and partners, and supports clear communication to the community about what Council is advocating for and why.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This Strategy is informed by the extensive consultation undertaken during the development of the Council Plan 2025-2029 and Community Vision 2035. These conversations provide insights into what matters most to our residents and ensure our advocacy efforts reflect shared aspirations and local priorities.

Importantly, this is a living document—designed to adapt as community priorities shift, funding opportunities arise, or major announcements are made. Updates will be guided by ongoing engagement, evidence-based decision-making, and a commitment to transparency.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following objectives and or actions in the 2025-2029 Council Plan:

Objective One: Connect

We are committed to enhancing access for all residents, promoting healthy living, fostering connections, and providing opportunities to thrive and participate in community life.

Objective Two: Sustain

We aim to collaborate with others to foster a sustainable environment, a thriving economy and resilient communities.

Objective Three: Deliver

We are committed to delivering quality services and infrastructure that meets the needs of our community. We aim to strengthen the Council's governance and provide improved, customer-focused experiences.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers and/or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a general or material conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

TRANSPARENCY

In line with Council's commitment to transparency and accountability, this report and the final Advocacy Strategy 2025–2029 are presented to an open Council meeting.

CONCLUSION

The Advocacy Strategy 2025-2029 reflects the consultation undertaken whilst developing the the Council Plan 2025-2029 and Community Vision 2035. It also considers opportunities and challenges that are indicative of the Council's current priorities.

It is recommended that the Advocacy Strategy 2025-2029 is adopted noting that strategies may change in the future based on relevant community needs and expectations.

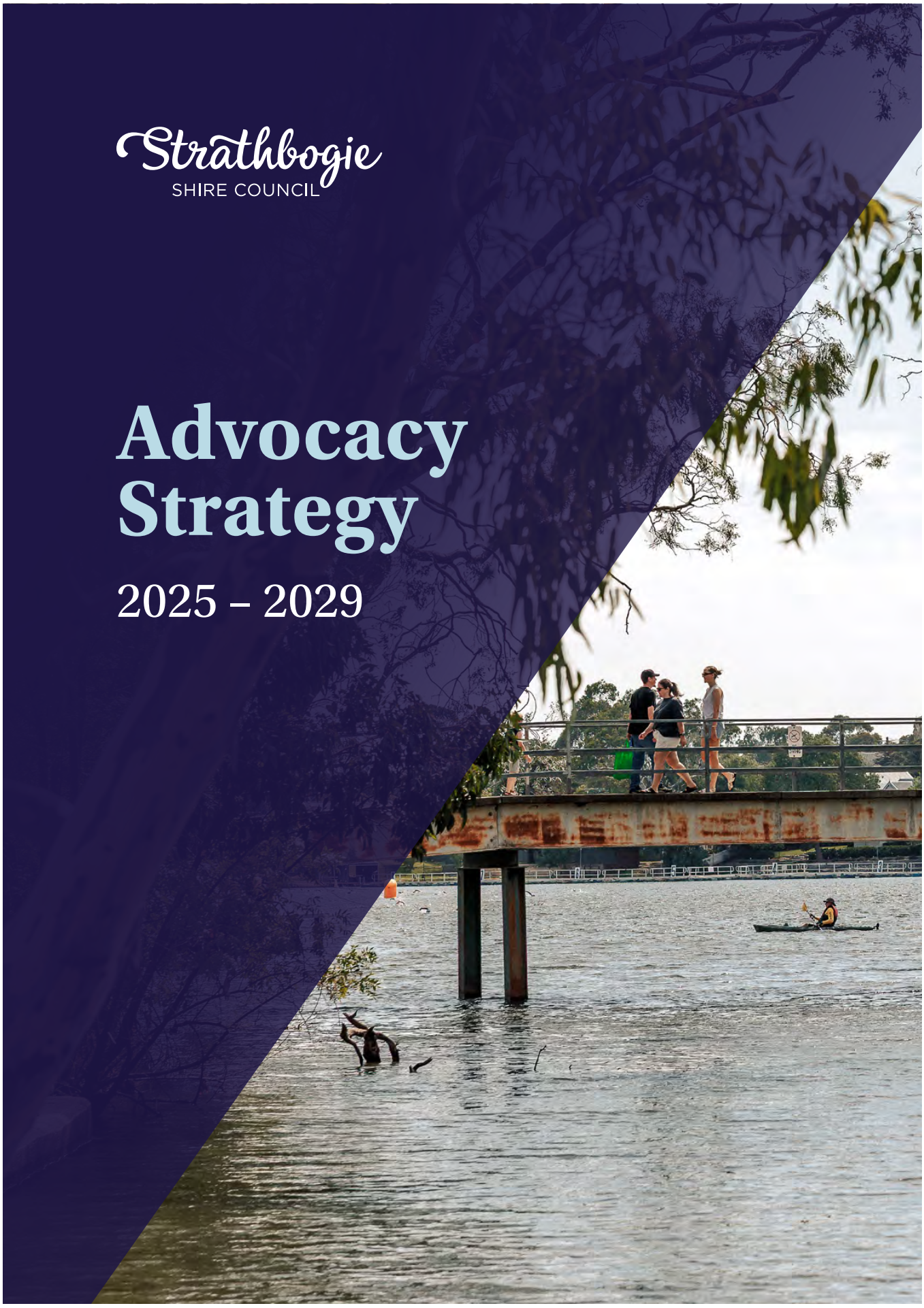
ATTACHMENTS

1. 20250916 Advocacy Strategy 2025-2029

Strathbogie
SHIRE COUNCIL

Advocacy Strategy

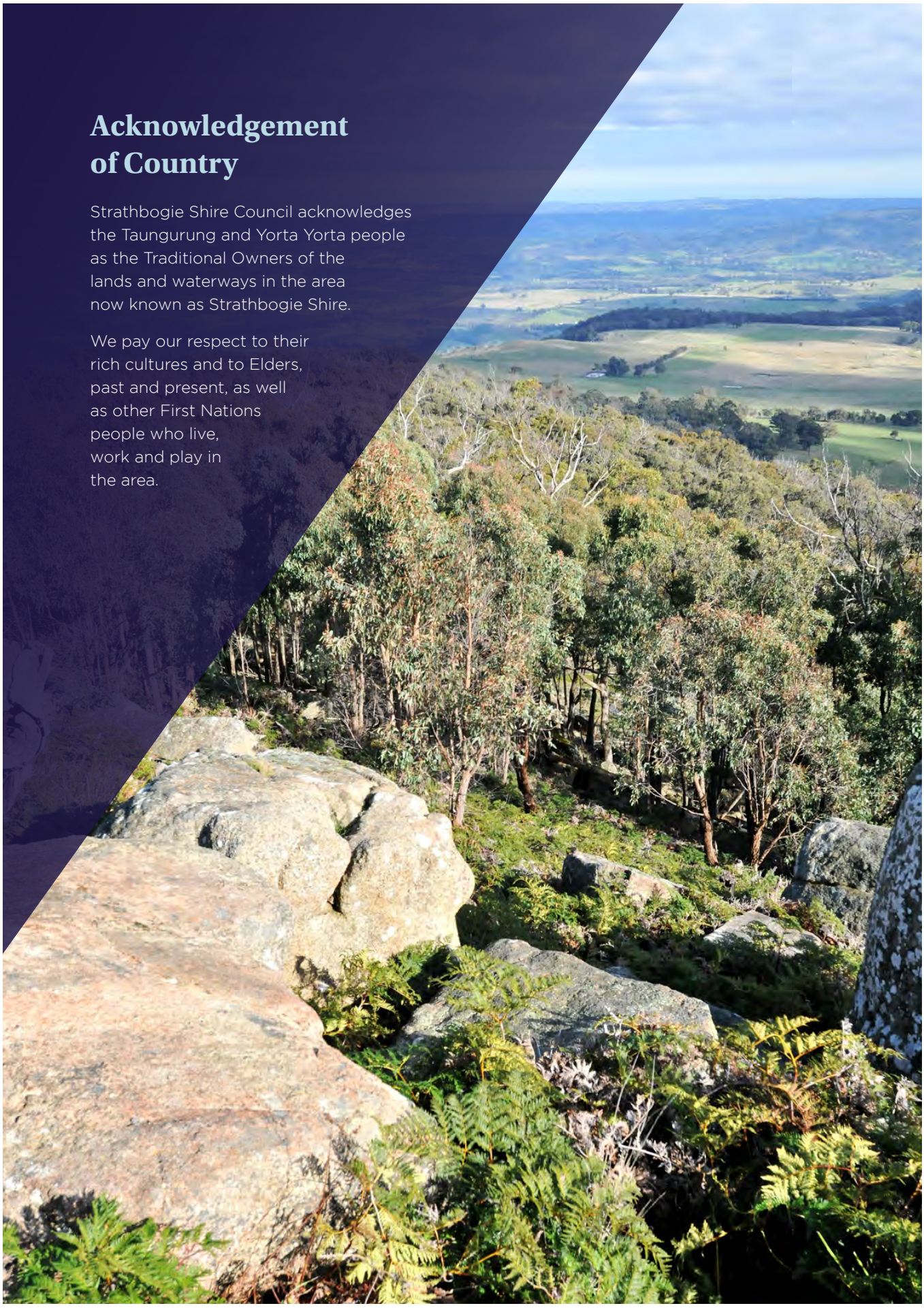
2025 – 2029



Acknowledgement of Country

Strathbogie Shire Council acknowledges the Taungurung and Yorta Yorta people as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waterways in the area now known as Strathbogie Shire.

We pay our respect to their rich cultures and to Elders, past and present, as well as other First Nations people who live, work and play in the area.



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Overview

Our region is increasingly becoming a destination of choice for people looking to invest, live, visit, and play.

For those who are lucky enough to live in Strathbogie Shire we know how special our region is, what was once our secret is now well-and-truly out.

To support growth—both business and residential—Strathbogie Shire Council will advocate to State and Federal Governments for funding. We will advocate intentionally for the needs of our local community, and collaboratively with other councils for the broader needs of our region.

Strathbogie Shire is home to over 1,500 businesses spanning 20 different industry sectors. These businesses provide employment for more than 4,188 people—supporting a significant portion of the region's 11,500 residents

Together, our people and the region's natural attractions generate over $56.1 million in tourism income each year.

For more than 150 years, the agricultural sector; along with the businesses that support and rely on it—has formed the backbone of the local economy.

This document guides Council's advoacacy work and direction, both independently, and as a collective member of local government associations, industry groups, partnerships, and collaborations through a planned, coordinated, and well-resourced approach to facilitate action and deliver results.

Strathbogie Shire is *Investing in Tomorrow*

Why We've Chosen an Advocacy Theme

In today's competitive funding environment, successful advocacy requires more than just a list of projects; it requires a compelling, unified narrative that signals confidence, ambition, and strategic focus.

The overarching theme "Strathbogie Shire is *Investing in Tomorrow*" provides a unifying message. It reflects Council's proactive approach to economic development, infrastructure investment, and community resilience. It communicates that we are not just ready; but eager; to partner with government and industry to unlock the full potential of our region.

Why a Theme Matters

By introducing a clear theme, we:

- Differentiate Strathbogie Shire in a crowded policy and funding landscape.
- Connect the dots between local projects and broader regional or state priorities.
- Support Councillors and stakeholders to speak with one voice when advocating to Ministers, departments, and potential partners.
- Appeal to multiple audiences—from funding bodies to future residents, businesses, and visitors.

How the Theme Supports Our Strategy

This theme acts as the umbrella for all advocacy messaging. Whether we are seeking funding for road and bridge upgrades, revitalising our railway precincts, improving disaster preparedness, or expanding digital infrastructure; each initiative will be framed as part of our vision for a thriving, connected, and forward-looking Shire.

The Core Message

Strathbogie Shire is investing in the infrastructure, connectivity, and community resilience needed to attract residents and visitors, grow industry, support innovation, and ensure liveability into the future. With government support and industry partnerships, we are *Investing in Tomorrow*—and we are ready to build our future together.

Mayor's Message



Cr Claire Ewart-Kennedy
Mayor, Strathbogie Shire Council

I'm proud to share Strathbogie Shire Council's Advocacy Strategy for 2025–2029; a plan that's all about making sure our community's voice is heard loud and clear where it matters most.

If you live here, you already know what makes our Shire special. From our rolling farmland and historic towns to our thriving local businesses and close-knit communities, we have something truly unique. What was once our best-kept secret is now well and truly out—more people are discovering Strathbogie as a fantastic place to live, invest, visit, and build a future.

With this interest comes opportunity, but also the need for support. That's why Council will continue to advocate strongly for the things that matter most—better roads and connectivity, support for our farmers, more investment in our towns, and the infrastructure to keep up with our changing needs.

Our theme, "Strathbogie Shire is *Investing in Tomorrow*," reflects our confidence in what our region offers and our determination to attract the right investment and partnerships to help it grow.

We're ready to work alongside State and Federal governments, industry, and our neighbouring Councils to deliver real results for our community.

Strathbogie Shire is a resilient, vibrant, and connected community, rich in strength and resourcefulness. It boasts significant economic ties to agriculture, equine industries, viticulture, and tourism. The purpose of our advocacy is to ensure our Shire is actively walking, talking, living, and breathing genuine economic development—alongside the incredible businesses and stakeholders we proudly partner with.

This isn't just about dollars and projects. It's about standing up for our community, making sure rural voices are heard, and building a future where Strathbogie Shire continues to be the vibrant, welcoming place we all love.

I invite everyone—residents, businesses, and community groups—to get behind this strategy. Together, we can make sure Strathbogie's best days are ahead of us.

What is Advocacy?

Advocacy is the process of influencing others to create change.

It is often aimed at decision-makers to drive positive changes in public policy.

Advocacy can be undertaken through a series of smaller actions or through a broader, partnership-based approach.

Strong relationships are critical to our Council's advocacy activities.

Our Advocacy Strategy outlines how we identify and develop projects and undertake activities to achieve our identified priorities.

It will also encourage and support a stronger, more strategic, and collaborative approach to existing advocacy activities undertaken across Council services and within departments as well as with our communities.

Successful advocacy relies on working closely with the community to identify problems or needs, research relevant issues, plan targeted activities, take action and evaluate outcomes.

Councillors, as elected representatives of the community, play a key role in directing Council's efforts in this space.



Councillors L-R: Cr Vicki Halsall, Cr Fiona Stevens, Cr Scott Jeffery (Deputy Mayor), Cr Clark Holloway, Cr Gregory Carlson, Cr Claire Ewart-Kennedy (Mayor), Cr Laura Binks

Advocacy Principles

All advocacy activities will be guided by the following principles:



Transparent

Our advocacy efforts are regularly monitored and reviewed. We take deliberate actions to ensure they deliver the best value and outcomes for our community.



Unified

A unified message ensures clarity and reinforces our commitment to *Investing in Tomorrow*. We are ready to collaborate with partners, investors, and government to grow our region.



Balanced representation

Our advocacy activities are politically neutral and inclusive, working with all sides of politics to achieve strong, community-focused outcomes.



Evidence based

Our priority projects will be supported by sound research and reliable data to demonstrate their merit and strengthen our advocacy efforts.



Community focused

Community is our most important stakeholder. We will keep our community informed of our advocacy priorities, listen to their needs, and work together to acheive meaningful outcomes.



Solution oriented

Our approach will incorporate solutions, not just issues.



Why we Advocate

Why We Advocate at Strathbogie Shire Council

Advocacy is a core part of how we serve our communities. While delivering local services and maintaining infrastructure remains central to our role, advocating for support from other levels of government and external partners is just as important.

At Strathbogie Shire, we know that thriving communities do not happen by accident—they are built through strong partnerships and a shared vision for the future.

What Advocacy Means for Us

Some of the biggest opportunities for our region—such as upgraded telecommunications infrastructure or improved digital connectivity—sit outside Council's direct control. That's where the power of advocacy comes in. We work with other levels of government to influence decisions, secure funding, and acheive the best outcomes for our towns, and rural communities.

We also collaborate with neighbouring councils and regional bodies when broader issues—drought funding—require a united voice.

In these cases, advocacy means amplifying the needs of rural communities like ours and ensuring we are not left behind.

Even when projects are within Council's remit—such as building a playground or upgrading local sport and recreation spaces—external funding is often key. To keep things affordable for ratepayers and deliver the infrastructure our communities deserve, we actively pursue grants, election commitments, and partnerships with state and federal governments, as well as philanthropic, private sector and community contributors.

Why It Matters

Advocacy is how we shape the future of Strathbogie Shire. It's how we bring bold ideas to life, champion equity for small communities, and make every dollar go further. Advocacy isn't just about funding—it's about standing up for what our communities need to grow, thrive, and stay resilient in the years ahead.

How We Advocate

Advocacy is about using our voice to make a difference for our communities—and we have a range of tools to help us do that effectively.

Whether it is securing funding, influencing policy, or building strong partnerships, Council uses a variety of approaches to make sure Strathbogie Shire's priorities are heard and acted on.

We use a range of tools to ensure the voices of our communities are heard and their needs are met:

- **Raising awareness** through campaigns and encouraging residents to get involved
- **Building partnerships** with key stakeholders, local groups, regional bodies, and peak organisations
- **Working closely with decision-makers**, including local MPs, Ministers, Shadow Ministers, Crossbenchers, and election candidates
- **Participating in regional and state-level organisations**, such as Rural Councils Victoria and the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)
- **Making submissions** to government consultations, inquiries, and parliamentary processes
- **Pursuing grants and other funding opportunities** from all levels of government and beyond
- **Promoting funding commitments**, once secured, to build momentum and attract further investment
- **Engaging with media** to highlight local priorities and amplify community voices

A Flexible and Strategic Approach

Council's Advocacy Strategy sets out our top priorities—but we know that advocacy needs to remain flexible. Opportunities often arise quickly, and we must be ready to respond.

That is why our advocacy efforts are not limited to the projects listed in this Strategy. We will continue to champion any issue that aligns with our long-term goals and the needs of our community.

Importantly, this Strategy is shaped by the extensive consultation undertaken during the development of the Council Plan and the refreshed Community Vision. These conversations with our community helped us understand what matters most to residents and ensure our advocacy efforts reflect shared aspirations and local priorities.

The Strategy is a living document—designed to evolve as priorities shift, funding opportunities emerge, or major announcements are made.

How our Advocacy approach relates to our Council Plan Objectives

The Strathbogie Shire Advocacy Strategy is a critical enabler of the Council Plan 2025-2029, directly supporting its three strategic pillars:



Connect

We advocate to strengthen relationships—with community, government, industry, and regional partners—ensuring that local voices are heard and that priorities are shaped through genuine engagement and collaboration.



Sustain

Our advocacy focuses on long-term resilience and sustainability, championing initiatives that protect our natural environment, support economic development, and prepare our region for future challenges.



Deliver

Advocacy is one of Council's key delivery tools. We use our voice to secure investment, influence policy, and create the conditions needed to implement projects and services that deliver real, measurable outcomes for our community.

As one of Council's core responsibilities—alongside delivering services and fostering partnerships—advocacy is essential to achieving the goals outlined in the Council Plan. This strategy will guide how we identify priorities, engage stakeholders, and track progress, ensuring that we advocate effectively and transparently on behalf of the Strathbogie community.

Council's Advocacy Priorities

Connect 1.3 and 1.5
Attract grant finding and support community grant writing

Sustain 2.1
Review, adopt and implement Council's Advocacy Strategy

Sustain 2.1 and 2.4
Implement the annual advocacy plan

Sustain 2.4
Pursue increased funding from the State and Federal Governments (or other funding partners).

Advocacy at All Levels

Local Advocacy

Under the *Local Government Act 2020*, councils must involve the community in strategic planning and decision making. Strathbogie Shire Council ensures ongoing engagement through consultation, communication and feedback across all projects and services. This helps us stay connected to our community's changing needs and priorities.

Regional Advocacy

Council is an active member of several regional and industry bodies that bring councils and experts together to strengthen our collective voice. Regional advocacy is especially valuable when issues affect multiple councils, allowing us to push for change together.

Council's regional advocacy partners include:

- Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)
- Victorian Local Government Association (VLGA)
- Australian Local Government Association (ALGA)
- Rail Freight Alliance (RFA)
- Regional Development Australia – Hume (RDA Hume)
- Rural Councils Vic (RCV)
- Hume Regional Local Government Network (HRLGN)

State and Federal Advocacy

We regularly engage with State and Federal Members of Parliament, Senators, Ministers, and government departments to represent our community's interests.

This includes advocating for policy changes, raising issues of concern, and seeking funding and investment. Strong relationships with these key decision-makers are vital to influencing positive outcomes.

Issue-based Advocacy

Council also responds to urgent or emerging issues as they arise. While this type of advocacy is less formal, it can be effective when backed by strong community evidence and support.

Working Across All Levels

Advocacy often crosses local, regional, state, and federal boundaries. While some efforts are planned and resourced, many are embedded within existing roles and services. As campaigns gain momentum and community support, they often require increased Council focus and coordination.

Strategic Advocacy Objectives

Objective	How we will achieve it
1 Formal endorsement of Council advocacy priorities	Advocacy priority projects can be sourced from: • Council Plan and policies (planned and budgeted approach) • Council resolutions as they arise (require full scoping and costing) • Issues of the day as they arise (not planned and may require resourcing.) • Government budget and policy cycles, policy announcements, election cycles.
2 Influence decision and policy makers	Through carefully planned and resourced advocacy campaigns/actions (as outlined in the organisational advocacy agenda) which could include, correspondence, delegations, council resolutions, strategic partnerships, marketing, and promotion etc
3 Attract and secure funding and resources to Strathbogie Shire for major projects	Through research and political climate monitoring and the identification of available funding sources, open grant applications or resources. Advocacy may take the form of correspondence, delegations, Council resolutions, strategic partnerships, marketing, and promotion, and more.
4 Build upon our strategic partnerships	Through shared understandings, connections, agreements and formal alliances with people, organisations, peak bodies, councils, and government that have the willingness and capability to support Council's advocacy and influence policy and decision makers.
6 Build the advocacy capacity of Council and the community	By promoting a culture of advocacy, encouraging, and enabling participation, building the community's ability to advocate on its own behalf, sharing skills, knowledge, and expertise, mobilising of resources and reducing duplication of effort and information.
7 Strengthen our position as a leading local government entity and subject matter expert in our field	Through strategic partnerships and a strong position on policy that aligns with Strathbogie Shire's values and principles, innovation and communications and engagement practices.

Our Advocacy Priorities:

What We're Advocating For
















PURA Milk
THE AGE
Herald Sun
Sunday
RAIL CROSSING
2 TRACKS
CYCLISTS DISMOUNT
STOP

Priority:

Connecting Communities: Bridges and Drainage Infrastructure Renewal Program



Overview

Strathbogie Shire Council is seeking funding support for its Bridge and Drainage Infrastructure Renewal Program, targeting a staged upgrade of critical bridge and watercourse structures across the Shire. These structures are vital connectors for agricultural freight, emergency services, and everyday community access. However many are nearing the end of their serviceable life and require urgent attention.

Council is committed to leading delivery of this program and is calling on state and federal government partners to co-invest in infrastructure that will:

- Enhance safety for all road users
- Strengthen rural resilience
- Unlock future economic opportunities for the region.

The Problem

Many of the Shire's bridges are ageing, structurally deteriorating, or load limited. Council has 132 bridges and over 300 culverts, with limited understanding of their current condition. This impacts not only the safety of road users but also compromises access for freight operators, emergency services, and residents. Some structures have low flood resilience, leading to frequent closures during extreme weather, and further isolating communities when it matters most.

These constraints add cost and risks for local industries, especially agriculture, and limit the potential for growth in tourism and regional development. Without investment, the gap between infrastructure performance and community needs will continue to widen. Council is currently sourcing up to date condition data on its bridge and as many culverts as possible.

The Solution

The Connecting Communities: Bridges and Drainage Infrastructure Renewal Program will deliver targeted upgrade of the region's most critical bridges through a mix of strengthening works, full replacements, and flood-proofing measures. Wherever appropriate, timber bridges will be replaced with modern, low-maintenance structures to improve lifespan and reliability.

Council will lead planning and delivery, coordinate stakeholder engagement, and contribute in-kind through data, design, and project management expertise. To deliver this ambitious program, Council is seeking $1M in capital funding per year for 4 years from both state and federal governments, as well as access to technical advisory services for complex sites.





The Benefit

Investing in rural bridges delivers economic dividends. Renewed bridges reduce travel times and transport costs for local producers, freight carriers, and small businesses. They support access to wineries, farmgate operations, nature-based attractions, and local events, building resilience and reliability in our tourism economy. Future investment in the region depends on the strength of our transport networks. This program will give businesses the confidence to grow, expand, and invest in Strathbogie Shire.

Upgraded bridges reconnect people and services. Rural towns rely on these structures for everything from school bus routes to ambulance access.

Improving bridge infrastructure helps reduce isolation, enhances liveability, and increases equity for smaller, remote communities. Better bridges also support regional identity, safety, and peace of mind for residents who rely on them every day.

Modern bridge designs offer greater flood resilience and can reduce environmental impacts through low-impact foundations and sustainable materials. Replacing vulnerable crossings with more resilient structures will help keep roads open longer during storms and natural disasters, reducing costly repairs and emergency detours. Active consideration of site-specific environmental and cultural factors ensures the program aligns with long-term sustainability and planning objectives.

Conclusion

Strathbogie Shire is *Investing in Tomorrow*; but our businesses, residents, and emergency services need safe and reliable access to stay connected and thrive.

The Connecting Communities: Bridges and Drainage Infrastructure Renewal Program is a shovel-ready, region-shaping initiative that will deliver lasting safety, productivity and resilience. By addressing critical infrastructure gaps now, this program will secure long-term economic, social and environmental benefits for our region.

Council stands ready to partner with state and federal governments to make this program a reality. Funding this program is not just about fixing bridges; it is about investing in safer, stronger, and more connected communities for tomorrow.

Priority:

Equitable Digital and Telecommunications Infrastructure



Overview

Strathbogie Shire is *Investing in Tomorrow* – but to unlock future regional economic growth, industry attraction and community resilience, our digital and telecommunications infrastructure must match the expectations of modern life and commerce. Reliable connectivity is no longer a luxury; it is the foundation for safety, productivity, liveability, and economic participation.

We are calling on the state and federal governments to invest in targeted telecommunications upgrades across Strathbogie Shire that will close the connectivity gap between regional and metropolitan communities.

The Problem

Despite our region's strengths in agriculture, manufacturing, tourism and liveability, digital inequality continues to hold us back. Many areas in Strathbogie Shire suffer from unreliable internet, persistent mobile black spots, and insufficient infrastructure to support emergency response, remote work, and digital enterprise.

Key issues include:

- No mobile coverage in key areas like Mitchellstown and areas across the Shire
- Inadequate broadband access in towns such as Avenel and Violet Town
- Patchy service impacting emergency management, education, business, and telehealth access.

These gaps limit business growth, housing development, public safety, and social equity across the region.

The Solution

A staged, place-based infrastructure upgrade program backed by $2 million in state and federal investment will deliver:

- A new mobile phone tower in Mitchellstown and an additional tower in Nagambie
- Fibre broadband connection to Avenel and Violet Town as Stage 1 of a Shire-wide rollout
- Elimination of remaining mobile black spots across Strathbogie Shire

Council's role will be to advocate and develop partnerships between governments and private providers to deliver locally driven solutions.

The Benefit

Improved digital and telecommunications infrastructure will deliver immediate and long-term economic benefits to Strathbogie Shire. It will enable local businesses to operate more efficiently, reduce productivity losses caused by poor connectivity, and support the growth of high-value industries such as ag-tech, tourism, and remote professional services. Reliable connectivity is also a key factor in attracting new investment and unlocking the full potential of our housing and population growth corridors, particularly in currently under-served areas like Avenel and the Nagambie region.

Socially, better connectivity will help bridge the digital divide between metropolitan and rural communities. It will improve access to essential services such as education, healthcare (including telehealth), and enable residents to maintain strong personal and professional connections. This is especially important for vulnerable populations, young people, and older residents, who rely on reliable digital access to stay informed, engaged, and safe. Improved digital infrastructure will also support community cohesion and liveability by enabling more inclusive participation in civic and cultural life.

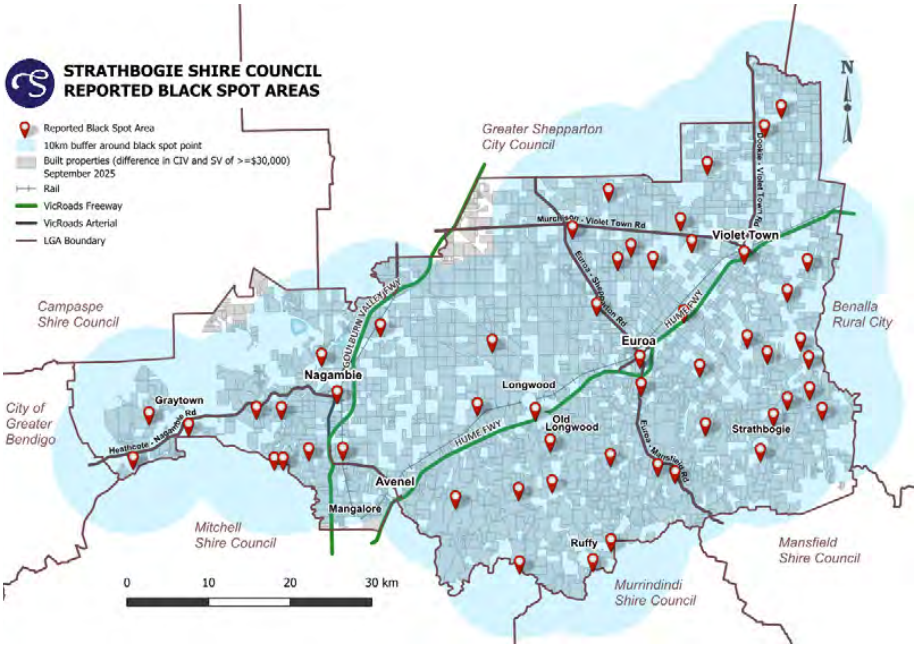
Environmentally, enhanced telecommunications can support remote and hybrid work models, reducing the need for long commutes and lowering emissions. It also paves the way for smarter infrastructure, more efficient land use planning, and better integration of sustainability technologies. By enabling data-driven decision-making and real-time monitoring across sectors, improved digital infrastructure becomes a foundational tool in building a greener, more resilient future for our communities.

Conclusion

To realise the full potential of Strathbogie Shire's economy and community, equitable digital infrastructure must be treated with the same urgency as roads, water, and power.

Reliable telecommunications are the bedrock of modern regional development. With strategic investment now, our region can become a place where businesses thrive, families stay connected, and emergency services function without fail.

We are ready to *Invest in Tomorrow* – we just need the tools to connect.



Priority:

Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan



Overview

The Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan is a community-driven blueprint to transform Euroa's rail corridor into a vibrant, connected, and future-ready hub that benefits not just Euroa, but the wider region. As the Federal Government's Inland Rail Project progresses, we have a rare opportunity to align this investment with local priorities—ensuring rail upgrades strengthen, rather than divide, our township.

This plan is more than transport infrastructure. It's about creating a place of shared benefit—where transport, commerce, and community life come together to build resilience, grow the economy, and improve liveability. By revitalising the heart of Euroa, we can create a precinct that honours our heritage while preparing for a connected, sustainable future.

The Problem

Without coordinated investment, the scale of infrastructure changes from Inland Rail works, risks leaving Euroa with disconnected spaces and lost potential.

Key challenges include:

- Limited connectivity between residential, commercial, and civic areas
- Underused public land that could be activated for community or commercial benefit
- Reduced amenity at Euroa's main gateway, impacting town identity and appeal
- Missed opportunities to align local upgrades with national infrastructure investment.

This is not simply a local issue—without strategic planning, the benefits of Inland Rail works will bypass smaller towns like Euroa, instead of integrating them into a stronger regional economy.

The Solution

The Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan sets out a clear, staged pathway to revitalise the town centre and leverage Commonwealth investment for long-term community gain. Supported by Victorian Government funding for its development, the plan proposes:

- A connected public precinct with safe, accessible links between the station, town centre, and surrounding areas
- Integrated transport solutions prioritising pedestrians, cyclists, and active travel, while supporting future-ready mobility options
- Activation of underutilised land to drive tourism, retail, and small business opportunities
- Streetscape and gateway upgrades that showcase Euroa's unique heritage and rural character
- Infrastructure to attract and retain investment, strengthen regional visitation, and reinforce Euroa's role as a key stop along the Inland Rail corridor.

Council has completed community engagement and scoped shovel-ready components on Council-managed land. We are now seeking Commonwealth co-investment to deliver the first stages through programs that support regional economic growth, place-based renewal, and transport-linked community infrastructure.

The Benefit

This project supports national priorities around regional development, transport connectivity, and liveable communities:

- **Economic Impact:** Increased foot traffic and improved access will stimulate local spending, attract private investment, and create jobs. Euroa's revitalised centre will become a stronger economic driver within Victoria's growing freight and passenger network.
- **Social Benefits:** A connected, people-focused precinct will bring residents, visitors, and businesses together. Enhanced public spaces will host events, encourage social interaction, and strengthen community cohesion.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Sustainable design—including green landscaping, water-sensitive infrastructure, active transport links, and EV charging—will reduce car reliance, enhance amenity, and build climate resilience.

This is an investment in community resilience and regional prosperity, ensuring the benefits of Inland Rail extend beyond freight to deliver tangible, place-based outcomes.

Conclusion

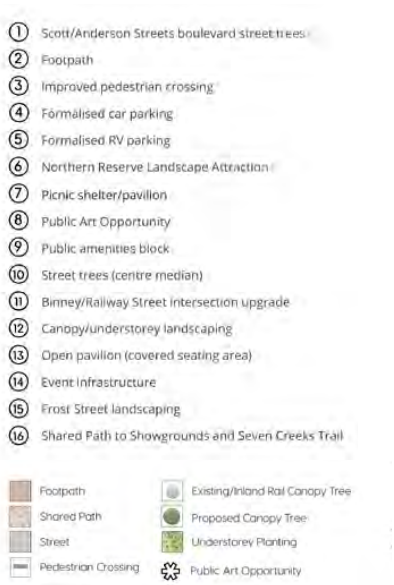
The Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan is a shovel-ready opportunity to align national infrastructure priorities with regional renewal. By partnering with the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments, Strathbogie Shire Council can deliver a precinct that strengthens Euroa, boosts regional productivity, and sets a benchmark for integrating rail infrastructure into thriving local communities.

This is a high-return, place-based investment: one that supports the common good, fosters stronger connections between people and places, and helps regional Victoria grow with confidence.

This is an investment in tomorrow:

- In stronger regions
- In connected communities.





Priority:

Greening Euroa – Recycling Water, Revitalising Community Spaces



Overview

Greening Euroa is a community-led project designed to deliver long-term economic, environmental, and social benefits for our town. By using recycled water from the Euroa Wastewater Treatment Plant to irrigate our parks, sporting grounds, school ovals, and public green spaces, we can futureproof Euroa against drought, improve liveability, and create spaces where our community can come together.

Greening Euroa is a shovel-ready, community-led initiative developed in partnership with Goulburn Valley Water. It has strong grassroots support from local schools, sporting clubs, environmental groups, and businesses—all of whom recognise its potential to transform Euroa's public spaces and climate resilience.

Together, Strathbogie Shire Council and Goulburn Valley Water are seeking $6 million in Victorian and/or Commonwealth Government funding to deliver the final stage of this cost-effective, climate-smart project.



This is more than a local solution—it's a replicable model for other regional towns across Victoria and Australia. It demonstrates how collaborative, sustainable infrastructure can deliver long-term benefits for communities, economies, and the environment.

The Problem

Like many regional towns, Euroa faces increasing water scarcity, with hotter, drier summers making it harder to maintain our open spaces. Currently, irrigating ovals, parks, and school grounds relies on expensive potable water, which is unsustainable and often restricted during dry periods—leaving our green spaces dry and inaccessible when we need them most.

At the same time, high-quality recycled water produced at the Euroa Wastewater Treatment Plant remains underused. Without the right infrastructure to capture and distribute it, we are missing a vital opportunity to reduce costs, protect our environment, and support the health and wellbeing of our community.





The Solution

The Greening Euroa Project will build the infrastructure needed to repurpose recycled water for irrigation across Euroa's major public green spaces. This includes installing a pipeline and standpipe system to supply water to key sites such as Euroa Secondary College, Memorial Oval, the Arboretum, and other sporting and education precincts.

Stages 1 and 2—technical assessments, site audits, stakeholder planning, and environmental approvals—are complete. More than $300,000 has already been invested by Council and Goulburn Valley Water. Now, we are ready to move to Stage 3: Construction and Delivery, with strong community support demonstrated through initiatives like the Standpipe Cup and the Euroa Youth Growers Festival.

The Benefit

This project delivers significant benefits for Euroa:

- **Economic Impact:** Lowering irrigation costs and improving green spaces will help attract tourism, events, and investment—boosting local businesses and jobs.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Greening Euroa promotes sustainable water use, reduces reliance on potable water, and creates cooler, greener public spaces that support biodiversity and urban cooling in a changing climate.
- **Social Benefits:** From sporting grounds to school ovals, these spaces are central to community life. Well-maintained green spaces promote health, social connection, civic pride, and provide safe, inclusive places for all ages to gather and participate.

Conclusion

Greening Euroa is a shovel-ready, community-powered project that addresses one of our region's greatest challenges—water security in a changing climate. With $6 million in funding support, we can deliver infrastructure that will transform Euroa, support our economy, and create a model of sustainable water use for other rural towns.

We are ready to work with Victorian and Commonwealth Governments to make Greening Euroa a reality—building greener spaces, stronger communities, and a brighter future for Euroa.

Priority:

The Nagambie Freight and Industry Connector



Overview

The Nagambie Freight and Industry Connector is a transformative infrastructure project that will enhance freight efficiency, community safety, and liveability across Strathbogie Shire.

It is designed to meet the region's growing industrial demands while preserving the character of Nagambie's residential and tourist areas by diverting heavy vehicles away from the town centre.

By leveraging existing brownfield corridors, the project minimises environmental impact and delivers a cost-effective, future-ready solution that balances growth with sustainability.

Council is seeking $250,000 in initial funding to complete concept and detailed designs, and a further $30 million to construct the bypass. This investment will unlock economic, social, and environmental benefits for the region and contribute to a more resilient and efficient Victorian freight network.

The Problem

Heavy vehicle traffic currently passes directly through Nagambie's town centre, creating significant challenges for residents, businesses, and visitors. Local roads—many of which remain unsealed or inadequate for high freight volumes—are experiencing increasing degradation, congestion, and safety concerns due to rising industrial activity and freight movement.

The town's popularity as a regional tourism destination, its proximity to the Hume Freeway, and its strategic location between Melbourne and Shepparton mean that the transport network is under growing pressure. Without intervention, heavy vehicle movement will continue to compromise pedestrian safety, reduce the appeal of the town centre, and hinder both tourism and residential development.

In addition, key roads such as Habel, McDonald, and Ballantynes require significant upgrades to support current and future freight needs. Many areas are subject to flooding risks, further compounding safety issues and complicating emergency access during extreme weather events.

The Solution

The proposed Nagambie Freight and Industry Connector will divert heavy vehicle traffic from residential streets and the town centre onto a designated freight corridor. This corridor will strengthen links between the Nagambie industrial area, regional farms, and arterial routes leading to Melbourne and northern Victoria.

The project will be delivered in two stages: an initial phase focused on preliminary design and stakeholder consultation—including engagement with the Taungurung Land and Waters Council and the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority—followed by a detailed design and delivery phase.



Wherever possible, existing transport corridors will be leveraged, ensuring that new construction is both efficient and environmentally responsible. Road widening, sealing, and intersection upgrades will be completed to support safe and effective freight movement, while new flood mitigation measures will enhance the resilience of the network.

The Benefit

The benefits of the Nagambie Freight and Industry Connector will be felt across the region. Economically, the project will improve freight reliability and logistics efficiency, supporting local producers, manufacturers, and businesses. It will help unlock land for industrial expansion, encouraging investment and job creation in Nagambie and the broader region. By improving connections to Melbourne and Shepparton, the project will enhance access to markets and reinforce the strategic value of the Hume corridor.

Socially, the bypass will dramatically improve safety for residents and visitors. By removing heavy trucks from residential streets, the project will reduce the risk of accidents, lower noise levels, and make the town centre more accessible for pedestrians, cyclists, and tourists. This will significantly enhance liveability, support the growth of local tourism, and increase community satisfaction and wellbeing.

Environmentally, the use of brownfield alignments minimises land disturbance and preserves the Shire's natural landscapes. The removal of trucks from the town centre will reduce local air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, while road upgrades will improve stormwater management and flood resilience.

Conclusion

The Nagambie Freight and Industry Connector is a vital investment in the future of Strathbogie Shire and the broader region. It responds to immediate infrastructure pressures while unlocking long-term economic and community benefits.

By separating freight from residential traffic, this project delivers safer roads, supports regional productivity, and strengthens the liveability of one of Victoria's most picturesque towns. With planning ready to proceed and strong alignment with state and federal infrastructure goals, this is a shovel-ready opportunity that will deliver lasting returns for government, industry, and community alike.

Strathbogie Shire is *Investing in Tomorrow* — and we are ready to connect.

Priority:

Reliable Power Supply Infrastructure



Overview

Strathbogie Shire is on the brink of a new wave of economic growth. With population increases, investment interest, and the growing need for renewable and resilient infrastructure, the time is right to invest in the systems that underpin a growing regional economy. One of the most critical - and limiting - of these systems is our power infrastructure.

To ensure our region is ready for business, Council is calling for urgent and strategic investment in energy reliability, sustainability, and equity for rural communities. Whether it is keeping our towns connected during emergencies, supporting new businesses, or providing certainty for housing development and industry, reliable power is essential.

The Problem

Strathbogie Shire's potential is being held back by outdated and unreliable power infrastructure. The current system is not fit-for-purpose to support growing towns such as Nagambie, Avenel, and Euroa, nor to meet the demands of future housing, agricultural expansion, industry attraction, or emergency resilience.

Due to the current regulatory environment, regional and rural areas like ours are not receiving equitable consideration. Our sparse population and vast land area mean essential infrastructure upgrades struggle to meet cost-benefit thresholds, despite the critical importance of energy security for community safety and regional development.

The Solution

The Solution: A Four-Pronged, Government-Supported Approach to Energy Reliability. To achieve long-term energy reliability for rural and regional communities, we are advocating for a coordinated, four-part strategy:

- **Policy Reform**

  We call on the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) to reform its Regulatory Investment Test for Distribution (RIT-D) process to better reflect the needs of rural and geographically dispersed communities—not just urban density—when assessing distribution network upgrades.

- **State Support for Regional Renewables**

  We urge the Victorian Government to continue supporting regional renewable energy programs, enabling the rollout of microgrids and stand-alone power systems that enhance emergency resilience and support long-term sustainability.





- **Federal Investment in Microgrids**

  We seek Australian Government funding for renewable energy solutions—particularly microgrids—along critical rural transport corridors such as the Seymour–Nagambie and Benalla–Euroa lines, where reliability is essential for both residents and industry.

The Benefit

A reliable modern power supply will transform Strathbogie Shire's economy and resilience:

- **Economic Growth**

  Supports business investment, housing development, and regional industry attraction — key drivers of jobs and population growth.

- **Community Resilience**

  Builds the community's capacity to prepare for, adapt to, and recover from sustained power outages, minimising negative impacts and ensuring essential services and well-being are maintained, along with keeping the direct cost of such outages to individuals and business who rely on power.

- **Equity**

  Level the playing field for rural communities, ensuring they are not left behind in national and state energy planning.

Reliable energy is the foundation of a competitive, investable regional economy, and essential to the liveability and safety of our growing communities.

Conclusion

Strathbogie Shire is *Investing in Tomorrow*; but we need the right infrastructure in place to support our future. Reliable, renewable, and resilient power supply is not a luxury; it is a necessity.

With $30 million in federal and state investment and the right regulatory reform, Strathbogie Shire can unlock its potential and confidently welcome new residents, businesses, and industries. Council stands ready to partner with all levels of government to deliver this critical infrastructure for our communities.

Priority:

Kirwans Bridge Restoration



Overview

Strathbogie Shire Council is seeking $7.5 million in funding to restore the iconic Kirwans Bridge, which has remained closed since the October 2022 floods. The project proposes two viable future options: building a new replica bridge with pedestrian and cycling access or undertaking extensive structural repairs and strengthening works on the existing bridge.

Council has committed $500,000 towards the project, subject to the receipt of external funding, and continues to explore both state and federal grant opportunities, including the Bridges and Drainage Infrastructure Renewal Program and Heritage Victoria's Living Heritage Grant.

This project aligns with Council Plan Objective 2 – Sustain, specifically Initiative 2.1, which prioritises investment in essential infrastructure such as roads, telecommunications, transport, and water services to build a stronger, more connected and resilient region.

The Problem

Kirwans Bridge, a heritage-listed timber bridge and vital local connector, was significantly damaged in the 2022 floods and remains closed. This ongoing closure has disrupted daily life for residents, delayed emergency response times, and negatively affected local tourism and agribusiness.

The bridge acts as a critical link for both the local community and the broader region; supporting tourism, agricultural supply chains, and emergency access. Its closure is more than an inconvenience; it severs economic, social and cultural ties.

Despite strong community advocacy and Council's continued efforts, funding to fully repair or rebuild the bridge has not yet been secured. The absence of a clear commitment from all levels of government has left this vital infrastructure in limbo.

The Solution

Strathbogie Shire Council is advocating for $7.5 million in funding to deliver the following:

- Major structural repairs and upgrades to the existing bridge that restore functionality while increasing flood resilience and reducing long-term maintenance.

This solution would ensure the bridge can once again support local traffic, active transport, and emergency and service vehicles.

Council has already invested $500,000 and secured a further $140,000 to advance planning and design. With engineering reports, concept plans, and specialist heritage assessments now complete, this project is ready to move forward – subject only to final approvals.



The Benefit

Restoring Kirwans Bridge will deliver significant economic benefits to the region. The bridge is a key link in local transport and tourism routes, supporting businesses in the Nagambie wine region, farmgate producers, and regional accommodation providers. Reopening the bridge will improve connectivity for residents, visitors, and freight operators, helping to strengthen local supply chains and unlock future tourism growth. It also adds value to the regional visitor economy by preserving a unique heritage asset that sets the Strathbogie Shire apart.

The bridge holds deep cultural and historical importance for the local community, serving as both a physical and symbolic connection across the region. Its restoration would help restore community pride and support social cohesion, particularly in smaller, more isolated settlements that have been directly affected by its closure.

This project also responds to long-standing community advocacy, ensuring that residents are heard and their history respected. A restored Kirwans Bridge would once again serve as a shared space, bringing people together and reinforcing the Shire's identity.

There is a clear opportunity to incorporate improved environmental outcomes through the bridge's restoration. Design enhancements can improve flood resilience and reduce future maintenance demands, helping to future-proof the asset. Incorporating pedestrian and cycling infrastructure promotes active transport and reduces reliance on car travel for local trips. With careful planning and modern materials, the project can meet current sustainability standards while preserving the character of the original bridge.

Conclusion

Strathbogie Shire is *Investing in Tomorrow*; but to make that happen we need strong, resilient infrastructure.

The restoration of Kirwans Bridge is not only about preserving a treasured historical asset; it is about reconnecting a region, supporting industries, and future-proofing a community. We welcome the Coalition's $6.3 million commitment and now call on all parties to match this support and help deliver a bipartisan solution for a project that transcends politics.

Council is ready to work in partnership with state and federal governments to bring Kirwans Bridge back to life. The community has waited long enough. Let us honour their advocacy and invest in a solution that delivers regional benefit, economic value, and long-term resilience.

Priority:

Avenel Pedestrian Rail Crossing



Overview

Avenel is growing – and it's time that local infrastructure kept pace.

Strathbogie Shire Council is calling on the Victorian Government to invest $3.1 million in urgent safety upgrades at two pedestrian rail crossings in Avenel – Bank Street and Ewings Road – to support a safer, more connected and accessible township.

New developments continue to bring young families and visitors to the area. But without a modern, safe, and accessible pedestrian crossings near the train station – a key gateway to the town –lives are being placed at risk and we are missing opportunities to support inclusive growth.

This *Investment in Tomorrow* will improve safety, enhance accessibility, and reinforce Avenel as a well-planned, future-ready destination for residents, businesses, and visitors alike.

Strathbogie Shire Council is urgently seeking $3.1 million in funding from the State Government to deliver critical safety upgrades at two pedestrian rail crossings in Avenel: Bank Street and Ewings Road. These crossings are essential access points near the Avenel train station and serve as vital pedestrian links for schoolchildren, families, older residents, and the wider community.

In 2022, Council worked with the community to develop draft streetscape plans, which included a new carpark and road safety enhancements adjacent to the intersection of Banks Street and Saleyard Road. Discussions are ongoing with the Department of Transport and planning and VicTrack to determine a mechanism for progressing these works.

There is currently no formal pedestrian crossing at Ewings Road, and a recent serious incident involving a school-aged child and a freight train, at the Banks Street crossing, has reinforced the immediate need for investment in infrastructure that prioritises safety and accessibility.

The Problem

Avenel's population is steadily growing, supported by new housing developments to the west and north-west of town. These areas are predominantly home to young families, meaning more children and pedestrians are crossing the railway daily to reach essential services like the school, post office, pharmacy, medical clinic, and community facilities.



However, the current crossings at Bank Street and Ewings Road are outdated and present significant safety risks:

- No active pedestrian gates or signal integration
- Non-compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)
- Ewings Road lacks a formal footpath, forcing pedestrians to walk along unsafe road shoulders
- Bank Street crossing lacks a formal pedestrian path on the southern end and requires pedestrians to cross an arterial road from the northern side
- A recent near-fatal incident at this location involving a 9-year-old girl and a train has exposed the urgency of these hazards

In addition to pedestrian issues, the complex intersection where Queen Street and Bank Street meet the rail line has been the focus of over four years of community advocacy calling for both safety and amenity improvements.

While the installation of controlled pedestrian gates would significantly reduce risk, complementary streetscape and traffic treatments identified in the 2022 concept designs would deliver a safer, integrated solution for both pedestrians and road users.

This is also an opportunity to resolve longstanding land management and access issues between Bank Street and Ewings Road, providing a safer and more connected transport corridor through the heart of Avenel.

Without urgent intervention, these outdated and unsafe crossings will continue to place lives at risk—particularly those of children and vulnerable residents.

The Solution

Strathbogie Shire Council proposes comprehensive upgrades to both crossings to improve pedestrian safety and ensure full compliance with accessibility standards.

Proposed Infrastructure Enhancements (both crossings):

- Installation of active pedestrian maze gates linked to train signals
- Tactile Ground Surface Indicators (TGSIs) to AS1428.1 standards
- Automatic swing gates and escape gates
- New and upgraded footpaths connecting to existing infrastructure (especially critical at Ewings Road).



Crossing-Specific Details:

Bank Street Crossing:

- Four pedestrian mazes with active swing gates and four escape gates
- Likely requires full replacement to achieve DDA compliance
- Estimated cost: $900,000–$1,200,000

Ewings Road Crossing:

- Two pedestrian mazes with active swing gates and two escape gates
- New footpath links to improve access and visibility
- Estimated cost: $750,000–$900,000

Estimated Pedestrian Safety Project Cost: $1.65M–$2.1M

Road Safety improvements Car Parking and linear Park landscaping cost: $1M

Total Project Cost: $3.1M

Community Benefits

- Significantly improved safety at two high-risk rail crossings
- Full DDA accessibility compliance
- Safer access to schools, health services, and community infrastructure
- Alignment with broader regional transport and infrastructure goals
- Addresses long-term community priorities for the Queen/Bank Street intersection

Conclusion

Avenel is ready for future opportunities – but safety must come first. The most recent near fatality incident involving a child must serve as a catalyst for action. With concept plans already developed and community support firmly in place, Council is ready to move quickly into detailed design and delivery with the support of the State Government, VicTrack, and the Department of Transport.

Strathbogie Shire Council has a clear plan and strong community backing to deliver safer, more accessible rail crossings at Bank Street and Ewings Road. This plan has been discussed with and is support by key State Stakeholders. The time to act is now.

We urge the State Government to fund this critical $3 million project and partner with us to deliver infrastructure that protects our most vulnerable, unlocks economic opportunity, and strengthens the liveability of a town on the rise.

By investing in a safe tomorrow, the State Government can help prevent future tragedies and deliver the infrastructure that Avenel's growing and engaged community deserves and has long been advocating for.

Let's work together to build a safer, more connected Avenel — one that's ready for the future.

Evaluation

Advocacy priorities within Strathbogie Shire Council are designed to support long-term, strategic outcomes—such as funding, project collaboration, and enhanced service delivery—that often extend beyond Council's direct control.

Not every priority will result in a formal campaign; however, meaningful progress can still be tracked through a range of indicators that reflect both community impact and strategic alignment.

A key measure of success is alignment with the Council Plan 2025-2029, which outlines the areas where the community expects Council to lead change. In addition, economic drivers offer a valuable framework for evaluating advocacy impact, particularly where direct campaign activity is not undertaken.

Evaluation will be guided by the following tools and indicators:

- Biannual Community Report - providing updates on advocacy progress, community engagement, and emerging priorities.
- Partnerships Report - highlighting outputs from regional collaborations such as Goulburn Regional Tourism Incorporated and Regional Partnerships, even where Council's role is supportive rather than leading.
- Funding Outcomes - tracking financial contributions, grants, and support secured through advocacy efforts, whether through formal campaigns or strategic engagement.
- Annual Economic Development and Tourism Report – including key economic development indicators.

Additional Indicators:

- Evidence of community support (e.g. petitions)
- Media coverage and public visibility
- Register of correspondence and stakeholder engagement

Evaluation is also supported by the Local Government Victoria Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey, conducted by independent market researchers.

Conclusion

Strathbogie Shire Council is Investing in Tomorrow; and this advocacy strategy reinforces our commitment to unlocking opportunities, driving investment, and delivering outcomes for our community.

Advocacy is a vital tool to support the region's economic growth, social wellbeing, and long-term sustainability. By taking a proactive, collaborative, and evidence-based approach, Council is positioning the Shire as a ready and willing partner—whether in infrastructure delivery, policy reform, or regional development.

Aligned with the strategic objectives of Connect, Sustain, and Deliver, this strategy ensures our advocacy is grounded in community aspirations, backed by strong relationships, and focused on achieving tangible results.

It outlines how Councillors, staff, stakeholders, and the wider community can contribute to a united voice that strengthens our influence and secures real outcomes.

Strathbogie Shire is ready to grow, ready to partner, and ready to act. Through this strategy, we will continue to demonstrate that we are committed to *Investing in Tomorrow*; and ready to deliver for our community.

For further information on Strathbogie Shire Council's advocacy program, contact 1800 065 993 or info@strathbogie.vic.gov.au



strathbogie.vic.gov.au

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109A Binney Street, Euroa
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Open Monday to Friday
9am to 4pm

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info@strathbogie.vic.gov.au
PO Box 177, Euroa VIC 3666

12 Notice of Motion

Nil

13 Notice of Rescission

Nil

14 Confidential Business

Nil

15 Urgent Business

Nil

16 Next Meeting

The next meeting of Strathbogie Shire Council will be held on 21 October 2025 at the Euroa Community Conference Centre commencing at 4:00 pm.

17 Close of Meeting

There being no further business the meeting closed at …….pm.