

Strathbogie Shire Council

Council Meeting Agenda

21 October 2025

Agenda

Council Meeting

21 October 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 Claire Ewart-Kennedy
Deputy Mayor Cr Scott Jeffery
Cr Laura Binks
Cr Greg Carlson
Cr Vicki Halsall
Cr Clark Holloway
Cr Fiona Stevens

Municipal Monitor

Marg Allan

Officers

Rachelle Quattrocchi	Chief Executive Officer
Amanda Tingay	Director People and Governance
Shaun Langlands	Acting Director Sustainable Infrastructure
Rachael Frampton	Director Community and Planning
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 give 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 16 September 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 Application P2025-060 - 5 Odea's Road Wahring

AUTHOR Manager Planning and Investment

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director Community and Planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A planning permit application has been received for 5 O'Dea's Road Wahring. The purpose of this report is to provide a recommendation to Council to determine planning application P2025-060.

This is one application for:

- the use and development of the land for a gyroplane demonstration and training facility (hangar, airstrip)
- the use and development of the land for a dwelling
- the subdivision of the land into two lots that seeks to excise a small lot comprising the existing dwelling from the balance of the title.

The subject land is in the Farming Zone.

The application was advertised. Two (2) letters of support have been received to date.

Key issues to be considered relate to the impact of the proposal on the agricultural land, the genuine need for a dwelling and the subdivision of the land given the scale of agricultural use being proposed for the land and whether proposed agricultural use warrants a dwelling on site.

The application has been assessed against the Strathbogie Planning Scheme and is considered inappropriate. It is Officers' recommendation that a Notice of Decision to Refuse to Grant a Permit be issued.

The proposal is not in keeping with the purposes of the zone and is inconsistent with the objectives of State and Municipal planning policy. The information submitted with the application does not reasonably demonstrate the need for the subdivision and the new dwelling in particular.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolves to issue a Notice of Decision to Refuse to Grant a Permit under the provisions of the Strathbogie Planning Scheme for Planning Application P2025-060, for the use and development of the land at 5 Odea's Road, Wahring for a gyroplane facility, dwelling, and subdivision, on the following grounds:

- 1. The proposal does not adequately protect agricultural land. Clause 02.03-4 – (Natural Resource Management) The Farm Management Plan lacks context of a broader farming operation and proposes limited grazing activity, which does not justify the need for a new dwelling or subdivision**

- 2. The proposal is inconsistent with policy for agriculture at Clause 14.01-1S (Protection of agricultural land) and Clause 14.01-1L (Housing and house lot excisions in rural areas:**
 - a. The proposal would result in a rural-residential outcome that may constrain genuine agricultural activities on surrounding land**
 - b. It introduces the potential for additional dwellings in the Farming Zone, contributing to the spread of residential uses in the rural landscape.**
- 3. The proposal facilitates residential development outside existing settlements, contrary to strategic planning objectives Clause 16.01-3S and Clause 16.01-3L – Rural Residential Development**
- 4. The proposal would fragment existing farming land and holdings, remove land from agricultural use, and introduce a non-agricultural use (dwelling) that may be incompatible with and adversely affect adjoining and nearby agricultural land uses. Farming Zone – Clause 35.07 that would be incompatible with and adversely affect the adjoining and nearby land uses for agriculture.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of the report is to bring before Council a recommendation in response to an application for the use and development of the land for a gyroplane demonstration and training facility (hangar, airstrip), use and development of the land for a dwelling and the subdivision of the land into two lots (dwelling excision) within the Farming Zone for a decision.

The matter is being presented to Council for a decision in accordance with Council's Planning Permit Applications Referral to Council Policy as it has been 'called in' by a Councillor as it was identified as a matter of strategic significance.

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, amongst 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 as the matter was 'called in' by Council.

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND RELEVANT HISTORY

Subject land and Surrounds

The subject site comprises 56.6 hectares and is zoned Farming Zone, where the minimum lot size for an as-of right-use for a dwelling is 80 hectares and there are no overlays affecting the site.

The topography is generally flat, containing a mix of cleared pasture and scattered vegetation. The property fronts Warring-Euroa Road along its southern boundary, although no direct access is provided from this frontage. Vehicle access is instead obtained from Odea's Road.

Existing improvements include a dwelling, shearing shed, sheeyards, farm storage and associated outbuildings, all located in the southern portion of the site. The remainder of the land is largely undeveloped, with an airstrip evident in aerial imagery.

There is perimeter fencing and some internal fencing defining the paddocks. Vegetation is concentrated in the northwest corner of the property and around the fence lines of the dwelling in the southeast corner.

Immediate neighbouring properties are used predominantly for agriculture and some feature dwellings. The subject site is located in a rural area of Warring and is approximately 20 kilometres southwest of Nagambie.



Figure 1: Subject Site

Registered restrictive covenants and/or Section 173 Agreements affecting the site

The site is not encumbered by any restrictive covenants and/or Section 173 Agreements affecting the site.

Previous planning permit history

A search of Council’s records has found the following permit history:

Permit No.	Description
P2010/073	Extension to existing dwelling

PROPOSAL

This application proposes use and development of land for a gyroplane demonstration and training facility (hangar airstrip); use and development of land for a dwelling; two lot subdivision (dwelling excision). The details of the proposal are as follow:

Gyroplane Demonstration and Training Facility

This facility is intended to provide demonstration training for both recreational and commercial gyroplane pilots. Operations will be limited to daylight hours and restricted to gyroplane take-off and landing activities.

Airstrip and Hangar

A grassed, low-impact airstrip is proposed within a central cleared area of the site, together with a hangar to accommodate aircraft and associated equipment. The hangar will be 20m long and 6m wide with a pitched roof height of 3.57m.

Dwelling

A new dwelling is proposed in conjunction with the training facility, providing onsite accommodation for the operator to oversee aviation activities as well as the maintenance of the airstrip and broader farm operation.

The dwelling will comprise a double garage, master bedroom with ensuite, retreat area, living area, three bedrooms, laundry and linen room, study, family and meals area, kitchen with butler's pantry, verandah and portico. It will have a total area of 422.74m².

Two lot subdivision (Dwelling excision)

Lot 1 will have an area of 55.75-hectares and will accommodate the proposed gyroplane facility, including the hangar, airstrip and associated dwelling, while retaining existing rural infrastructure such as the shearing shed, sheep yards, farm storage and silo.

Lot 2 will have an area of 5308m² and will contain the existing dwelling along with several sheds situated to its north.

An Integrated Land Management Plan has been provided in support of the proposed Gyroplane facility which also associates itself with the development of the new dwelling.

The vegetation in the northwest corner of the site is identified for conservation purposes. Proposed Lot 1 will comprise approximately 5 hectares in the central cleared portion the grass runway, hangar apron, aircraft parking and a small manoeuvring area. Grazing and pasture production areas of approximately 31 hectares of open paddocks have been proposed surrounding the aviation precinct. The environmental management will involve protection of EVC 125 Plains Grassy Wetland (14 hectares of protected native vegetation located in the rear portion of the property).



Figure 2: Proposed Site plan

RELEVANT STRATHBOGIE PLANNING SCHEME CONTROLS

Municipal Planning Strategy

Clause No.	Clause name
02.01	Context
02.03-4	Natural Resource Management
02.03-6	Housing

Planning Policy Framework

Clause No.	Clause name
14.01-1S	Protection of agricultural land
14.01-1L	Housing and house lot excisions in rural areas
14.01-2S	Sustainable agricultural land use
16.01-3S	Rural residential development
16.01-3L	Rural residential development

Zoning

Clause No.	Clause name
35.07	Farming Zone

Overlay

Clause No.	Clause name
Nil	

Particular Provisions

Clause No.	Clause name
Nil	

General and Operational Provisions

Clause No.	Clause name
65	Decision Guidelines
66	Referral and Notice Provisions
71.02-3	Integrated decision making

CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT PLAN ASSESSMENT

	Assessment criteria	Assessment response
1	Is the subject property within an area of cultural heritage sensitivity as defined within the cultural heritage sensitivity mapping or as defined in Part 2 Division 3 or 4 of the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018</i> ?	No
2	Does the application proposal include significant ground disturbance as defined in Part 1 Regulation 5 <i>Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018</i> ?	N/A
3	Is the application proposal an exempt activity as defined in Part 2 Division 2 <i>Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018</i> ?	N/A
4	Is the application proposal a high impact activity as defined in Part 2 Division 5 <i>Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018</i> ?	N/A

Based on the above assessment, a Cultural Heritage Management Plan is not required in accordance with Part 2 Division 1 of *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018*.

REFERRAL

Authority (Section 55)	Response
Nil	

Authority (Section 52)	Response
CFA	No objection.
CASA	No response has been received.
Strathbogie Engineering Department	No objection.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The application was advertised pursuant to Section 52 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. Two (2) letters of support for the application have been received. The letters of support have not been received from any of the adjoining or surrounding properties. Letters of support have been received in relation to the gyroplane facility operation.

OFFICER ASSESSMENT

Planning Policies seek to support and enhance agricultural pursuits by ensuring future development, particularly residential development and subdivision, do not result in the permanent removal of productive agricultural land or inhibit the continuation and development of existing agricultural uses. These objectives are reiterated in the purpose of the Farming Zone.

The proposed use and development of the land for a gyroplane facility is considered an appropriate use of the site, having regard to its proximity to the Goulburn Valley Freeway and its location within approximately 3 kilometres of the Warring Field Airport. This component of the proposal is expected to generate economic development opportunities within the municipality and, given the location context, is regarded as a suitable use of the land.

In contrast, the proposed dwelling and subdivision are not considered appropriate forms of development for the site. These aspects of the application raise concerns that will be outlined later in this report, particularly in relation to the orderly planning of the area and the potential for further fragmentation of agricultural land. Accordingly, the assessment will focus on the elements of the proposal that are inconsistent with sound planning outcomes.

The proposed use of the land for a dwelling and the subdivision of the land to excise the existing dwelling is not in keeping with the purposes of the zone and is inconsistent with the objectives of Planning Policy. The information submitted with the application does not reasonably demonstrate the need for a dwelling and subdivision on the site to operate an agricultural use.

Municipal Planning Strategy

In both direct and indirect references, the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Planning Policy Framework (PPF) strongly discourages fragmentation and loss of productive agricultural land. The policies seek to protect Victoria's agricultural base as an important component of the State's economy. Throughout the MPS and PPF, preventing dispersed settlement in rural areas, limiting or reducing fragmentation of agricultural land, and discouraging incompatible land uses are the predominant themes in relation to agriculture.

Clause 02.03-4 (Natural Resource Management) of the MPS has following strategic directions that are relevant to the proposal:

- *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.*

Clause 02.03-6 (Housing) of the MPS states that urban expansion into agricultural areas can result in conflicts at the urban and rural interface and requires buffers and other measures to protect the amenity of residents and agricultural operations on adjoining land. It has following strategic directions that are relevant to the proposal:

- *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.*

It is considered the proposal is contrary to Clause 02.03-4 and Clause 02.03-6 of the MPS in relation to the protection of agricultural land. It will result in residential development as a priority for the land and it will not result in the protection of the agricultural land.

Planning Policy Framework

Clause 14.01-1S (Protection of agricultural land), relating to the protection of agricultural land aims "*to protect the state's agricultural base by preserving productive farmland.*" The clause states that in considering a proposal to develop agricultural land, the following factors must be considered:

- *Desirability and impacts of removing the land from primary production, given its agricultural productivity.*
- *Impacts on the continuation of primary production on adjacent land, with particular regard to land values and the viability of infrastructure for such production.*
- *Compatibility between the proposed or likely development and the existing use of the surrounding land.*
- *Land capability.*

Collectively, these policies place great emphasis on the importance of protecting existing agricultural land from inappropriate development, which will permanently remove the land from agricultural use. Clause 14.01-1S is particularly clear in requiring a nexus between development of farmland and ongoing productive use of agriculture, to protect against loss of agricultural land.

Clause 14.01-1L (Housing and house lot excisions in rural areas) aims “to discourage proliferation of dwellings on lots less than the minimum lot size specified in the Farming Zone.” The clause provides with the following strategies while dealing with the applications for subdivisions and dwellings under the Farming Zone:

- *Promote the clustering of co-dependant residential uses.*
- *Discourage dwellings not associated with the agricultural use of the land.*
- *Support the use and development of land for a dwelling where it will result in improved land management or rehabilitation for conservation purposes or improvements to degraded land.*
- *Support the use and development of land for a dwelling where multiple lots in the same ownership will be consolidated.*
- *Discourage non-agricultural uses, including dwellings, from locating or developing in a manner that will compromise the operation of nearby agricultural enterprises.*

Excision Strategies

- *It will support the ongoing viability of the farming enterprise.*
- *The lot size is capable of supporting a dwelling and farming enterprise.*
- *Ensure both lots created under dwelling excision are not able to be further subdivided to create smaller lots for further dwellings.*

Clause 16.01-3S and 16.01-3L (Rural residential development) aims “to identify land suitable for rural residential development.” The relevant strategies associated with this objective also aim to:

- *Manage development in rural areas to protect agriculture and avoid inappropriate rural residential development.*
- *Ensure planning for rural living avoids or significantly reduces adverse economic, social and environmental impacts by:*
 - *Maintaining the long-term sustainable use and management of existing natural resource attributes in activities including agricultural production, water, mineral and energy resources.*
- *Discourage development of small lots in rural zones for residential use or other incompatible uses.*
- *Prevent rural residential subdivision where it would:*
 - *Result in a loss of productive agriculture land.*
 - *Create the expectation of subdivision on adjoining rural land.*
 - *Encircle townships so as to prejudice their future urban growth.*
- *Ensure rural residential development provides a buffer to existing agricultural uses.*

- *Ensure rural residential development protects existing visual and environmental qualities of the area, such as landscape, water quality, native vegetation, habitat and biodiversity.*

The use of the subject site for a dwelling and the subdivision of the land cannot be said to be consistent with the planning policy in relation to rural and regional development, particularly where it is considered that the end result will be one which permanently removes land from agriculture and creates an outcome where the potential for surrounding land for agriculture would become further limited.

It is also the intent of Planning Policy to encourage consolidation of existing rural settlements rather than to facilitate dispersed and isolated development. The associated strategies are intended to protect land for agriculture and ensure that housing development is limited to that which is required to improve agricultural production. The submitted Farm Management Plan is not adequate to justify the need for a dwelling on the site. The proposal does not relate to a genuine need to facilitate agriculture and operation of proposed agricultural use.

The proposal cannot be considered as consistent with or supported by such policy in relation to rural and regional development, particularly where such development is explicitly discouraged. The subject land will result in a permanent change to the land use which will create an additional residential lot and a new dwelling which will limit the ability for agriculture to be facilitated in the context of the wider area. The proposal does not support the general principle to support the consolidation and enhancement of rural land.

Allowing a dwelling on the lot which is outside the designated township boundary area would result in an increase of land value and thus compromising the affordability and viability of agricultural activities in the Farming Zone.

The proposal (if approved) could encourage development of other vacant allotments, thereby impeding the potential for both the subject allotment and adjoining allotments to be effectively farmed especially as the potential to consolidate allotments would be removed.

The proposal does not demonstrate a nexus between agricultural land use and the necessity of a dwelling and subdivision. It is considered that the proposal is contrary to the relevant policies and vision within the MPS and PPF relating to protection and sustainable use of agricultural land.

Farming Zone

The purpose of the Farming Zone is to provide land for agriculture, retain productive agricultural land and to ensure non-agricultural uses, including dwellings, do not adversely affect the use of land for agriculture.

The agricultural use proposed is not sufficient to justify the need for a permanent dwelling on site and the subdivision of the land. This lack of justification is due to the relatively generic nature of the Farm Management Plan and the minor level of infrastructure proposed. This reflects small scale and low intensity rural use that appears to be more in line with a hobby farm or rural lifestyle block, rather than a substantial bona fide agricultural pursuit.

Dwelling

The subject site is located within an area where the planning scheme specifies a minimum lot size of 80 hectares for the development of a dwelling within the Farming Zone as of

right. The proposal seeks to establish a dwelling on a lot of less than 80 hectares. Approval of a dwelling on a sub-minimum lot size would be inconsistent with the intent of the Farming Zone and would contribute to further fragmentation of agricultural land in an area where the scheme seeks to maintain larger land holdings for productive agricultural purposes.

In *Dempster v Strathbogie SC* [2023] VCAT 901, Member Wimbush refused a caretakers dwelling in Earlston where the land was within 80 hectares minimum lot size area by making following comments:

".. the site is productive agricultural land was not in dispute, even if it is not of the highest quality such as for irrigated agriculture or horticulture. I consider the policy balance clearly lies in ensuring the agricultural landscape is kept in larger lots with a focus on consolidation and avoiding fragmentation by allowing new dwellings on smaller allotments.

In this area the planning scheme identifies that 80 hectares is the minimum land unit where a dwelling could be developed in the Farming Zone as of right. The application for the caretaker's house before me is on an allotment less than half that size and I cannot find significant support for such a dwelling in the zone controls or policy. 51 I accept that the applicant has a genuine desire for a dwelling to enable a family member to be able to live in proximity to the farming operation and to work on other holdings in the vicinity. 52 The alternative for the applicant is to maintain a residence elsewhere, either in an existing dwelling on one of the other properties or remotely in a township or rural living area; I accept that this is not the preferable outcome from the applicant's point of view."

Assessment of the Integrated Land Management Plan (P2025-060)

The Integrated Farm Management Plan provided with this application contends that a dwelling is required to support the management of the gyroplane facility, native vegetation, and grazing animal production. However, it is considered that the existing dwelling on the site is capable of fulfilling this function.

The plan does not provide adequate justification for the proposed excision of the existing dwelling. If a dwelling is genuinely required to manage the operations, the existing dwelling can reasonably be utilised for this purpose. Furthermore, many of the day-to-day tasks associated with the proposed activities could be undertaken through regular visitation and on-site work, rather than necessitating the excision and development of an additional dwelling.

In terms of the agricultural quality of the land, the Integrated Farm Management Plan states *"the loamy soils offer good fertility and workability, with no observed salinity, acidity, or sodicity constraints. Regular soil testing and responsible nutrient management will support long-term productivity."* The farm plan did acknowledge that the land offers good fertility which means it can be used in a more productive manner rather than for small scale agricultural use being proposed.

Although it is acknowledged that there are some existing dwellings and smaller lots within the local area, it is considered that another dwelling and excision of the existing dwelling will further contribute to a proliferation of dwellings within the area and will result in a loss of opportunity for smaller parcels to be consolidated with larger parcels. An additional dwelling is also a sensitive use, which may adversely impact the operation of future farming activities within the area. The proposal will result in having two dwellings on the land where the land in its current state only has one dwelling.

In a VCAT case *J and M Pulis v Macedon Ranges SC* [2012] VCAT 1457, the Tribunal Member addresses the need for dwellings when undertaking animal husbandry uses and

concludes that the uses do not require a permanent 24 hour presence on site and can be undertaken without a dwelling and made following comments:

“Further while I agree with the Council that the Farm Management Plan submitted with the application is light on substance, those activities that are identified as being necessary to support the breeding herd do not carry any imperative for a 24 hour presence on the site. Indeed many of the activities are seasonal rather than daily requirements and are consistent with general stock grazing and farmland management. Apart from the need to monitor cattle in late stages of pregnancy other aspects of breeding management appear to have no imperative for an ongoing 24 hour presence.

Apart from having to have a substantive connection or need to support the agricultural enterprises on the land, policy and the zone decision guidelines call for consideration on issue about the dwelling use being subsidiary to the agricultural use and the impact on the agricultural landscape.

The scale of the agricultural enterprise is small. As the Council helpfully and concisely puts it the dwelling ‘...will not support a substantial agricultural use but will simply be occupied by someone who runs a small scale agricultural enterprise’. The dwelling is not a use that will be secondary to or ancillary to the use. Rather it is a use of the land that in many ways will have equal if not more dominance over the agricultural use, being the primary place of residence for people who only undertake agricultural pursuits on a part time basis. In other aspects, the dwelling will convert the land into defacto residential land.”

The proposal P2025-060 (if approved) could encourage development of other vacant allotments, thereby impeding the potential for both the subject allotment and adjoining allotments to be effectively farmed especially as the potential to consolidate allotments would be removed.

In *Benca v Macedon Ranges Shire Council* [2010] VCAT 470, Member Rundell remarked on setting up a precedent and proliferation of dwellings on existing Farming Zoned lots in the shire:

“Some lots in the locality do not have dwellings. There also may be many small lots in the Macedon Ranges Farming Zone which do not have dwellings. Planning applications utilise previous decisions. I have no doubt that should planning approval be granted this case, it will be used to support planning applications for a dwelling on other lots less than 40 hectares. An approval in this situation will form part of the long established pattern of small lots being gradually removed from farming on an ad hoc, incremental basis.

Whilst each approval may have a minimal impact, over time the cumulative impact of many approvals is that areas once used for farming are no longer used for that purpose and transition to become rural living precincts. Planning policy is clearly indicating that this incremental process needs to cease.”

Subdivision (Dwelling Excision)

As discussed above no justification has been provided in the Integrated Farm Management Plan in relation to the excision of the dwelling. The excision will result in fragmentation of this land further by removing the dwelling which in its current form can be used for the operations proposed within the Farm Management Plan.

The subdivision component of the proposal will create a lot for ‘rural lifestyle’ purposes. The size of proposed Lot 2 demonstrates that the lot will not have an associated farming use. It is considered that the subdivision is not appropriate given the proposed size of the lots and would result in fragmentation of land. The proposal has not demonstrated that the

agricultural outcome after the subdivision would improve on the existing agricultural use and management of the land.

Keeping the land in one farming unit provides the best assurance that the subject land continues to provide for agriculture long term as supported by the purpose of the Farming Zone.

In *Niven v Greater Bendigo CC* [2023] VCAT 1133, Senior Member Pots made following comments to refuse a dwelling excision while considering the purpose and decision guidelines of the zone:

"The policies I have summarised earlier and the purposes and decision guidelines of the FZ all seek to address a mischief that may arise from small lot subdivisions or dwelling excisions. That mischief is the incremental loss of agricultural land, particularly high value land, the potential for sensitive non-farming residential land uses to encroach into such areas and become a source of reverse-amenity conflict. Such outcomes place pressure on valuable and important agricultural activity that supports Victoria's capability for growing and generating its own food and fibre and the wider economic and social benefit that arise from these activities. The high agricultural capability and value of this land reinforces and supports the need to protect it from such mischief..."

On balance, this proposed excision of the dwelling to create a small lot in this district is one that is counter to many of the purposes and objectives of planning and of limited benefit in advancing the agricultural outcomes sought under the planning scheme. I am therefore not persuaded that the granting of a planning permit in these circumstances would achieve an acceptable planning outcome."

In *Irrewarra Estate Ltd v Colac-Otway SC* [2021] VCAT 358, Member Djohan made following comments to refuse a dwelling excision in the Farming Zone while considering the policy:

"The subject land is productive agricultural land to which 14.01-1S applies and seeks to avoid the subdivision of productive agricultural land from diminishing the long term productive capacity of the land. I am not satisfied on the material before me that the excision of proposed Lot 1 containing the existing dwelling will not diminish the long term productive capacity of the land. In my view, as the strategy is directed specifically to the effects of subdivision on productive agricultural land, its object is directed to the effect of the subdivision on something other than merely the agricultural capacity of the soil on the land. As proposed Lot 1 will effectively be an isolated island of land within a balance lot of less than 80 hectares I am of the view that the creation of Lot 1 could make Lot 2 less desirable for agricultural use by anyone other than the respondents."

Approval of the proposed subdivision would create a rural lifestyle lot in the Farming Zone which is an outcome not preferred under the planning scheme. While the proposed subdivision will not adversely affect soil quality, it will remove an area of land (proposed Lot 1) permanently from agricultural production and while that area of land is relatively small, its removal constitutes the fragmentation of agricultural land sought to be avoided. Further, there is the potential for the use of proposed Lot 1 as a rural lifestyle block, or predominantly for the use of the dwelling, to limit the operation of nearby agricultural uses. I am not satisfied, given the particular and unavoidable shape and depth of proposed Lot 1, that there would not arise conflict regarding amenity issues between the owners/occupiers of proposed Lot 1 and the continued use of proposed Lot 2 and other nearby land used for agricultural purposes."

Previous decisions have consistently articulated that the primary reasons for not supporting dwelling excisions are that such proposals lead to the fragmentation of

agricultural land, irrespective of lot size, and give rise to potential land use conflicts and amenity impacts. A further key consideration is that approving such proposals creates expectations for future dwellings on the residual lot. This outcome is evident in the current application, which similarly seeks to have a dwelling on the excised land while leaving open the prospect of a dwelling on the remaining lot if approval were granted.

The proposal (P2025-060) would serve to permanently remove land from agricultural use, limit the expansion and operation of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses and is not reasonably required to support and enhance agricultural production. Overall, the proposal does not adequately address the provisions of the Farming Zone, and it is seen that:

- The land will not be primarily used for agriculture as a small-scale agricultural use has been proposed which can be achieved at present without the subdivision and a new dwelling.
- The subdivision and a new dwelling do not encourage the retention of productive agricultural land. Retaining the land in the larger single lot is a more effective way to achieve the purpose of the zone.
- It will result in having non-agricultural uses adversely affecting the use of land for agriculture. The excision of the dwelling and a new dwelling creates the opportunity for increased conflict.

Integrated Decision Making

Clause 71.02-3 (Integrated Decision Making) states that:

Society has 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.

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.

It is considered that the proposal will be unable to balance conflicting objectives and will not result in sustainable development of the land. The objectives in relation to the protection of agricultural land will outweigh the economic development objectives within the planning scheme.

The proposal will also be inconsistent with the objectives of planning in Victoria specified under Section 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* as it will not result in fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use, and development of land by proposing development in Farming Zone which will be unable to protect agricultural land.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following key strategic focus areas and or actions in the 2025-29 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.

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 applicant 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

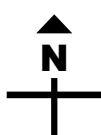
Future financial costs could be incurred by Council through a VCAT hearing process should the applicant choose to lodge an appeal.

CONCLUSION

The protection of agricultural land is of paramount importance to the policy contained within the planning scheme and to the local and wider community. It is considered that this application does not justify a need for a dwelling and subdivision on this site and that the application should be refused.

ATTACHMENTS

1. P 2025-060 - 5 O Deas Road Warring - Plans



Site:	5 0'Deas Road, Wahring	Drawing:	25016-2	Project:	25016	Drawn:	TS	 PLANOGRAPHY PTY LTD 6 Binney St, Euroa VIC 3666 PO Box 366 0437620174 admin@planography.com.au
Title:	Site Plan - Proposed Dwelling, Airstrip & Gyroplane Training Facility	Scale:	1:600	Date:	15/07/2025	Rev:	D	



(DG) DENOTES DOUBLE GLAZING

PROVIDE LOCKS TO ALL OPENABLE WINDOWS

PORTICO COLORBOND ROOF @ 30 PITCH WITH SARKING (NON COMBUSTIBLE) RIDGES, VALLEYS AND GUTTER LINE TO BE FULLY SARKED WITH NON COMBUSTIBLE MATERIAL

CLEAR SAFETY GLAZING TO BATH

COLORBOND ROOF @ 5 PITCH MINIMUM (NO SARKING)

TIMBER BEAM TO VERANDAHS

GABLE END WITH SELECTED FC INFILL AND STRAPPING

2740 (CEILING HT.)
2100 (WINDOW HT.)
400
142

STEPDOWN TO PORTICO & GARAGE HOUSE SLAB REBATE

SELECTED GLAZED DOOR 35mm THICK WITH WEATHER STRIPPING

710 x 470 BRICK PIERS 1.0m HIGH WITH 2/150SQ. STEEL POSTS

350 SQ. BRICK PIERS 1.0m HIGH WITH 150SQ. STEEL POST

ALUMINIUM FRAME AWNING WINDOW WITH CORROSION RESISTANT SCREEN MESH

2400h x 5000w NON-COMBUSTIBLE PANEL LIFT DOOR WITH NYLON BRUSHES (WITH REMOTE CONTROL)

2882 (GARAGE CEILING HT.)

ELEVATION A (NORTH)

Scale 1:100

250 (VERGE)

COLORBOND ROOF @ 25 PITCH WITH SARKING (NON COMBUSTIBLE) RIDGES, VALLEYS AND GUTTER LINE TO BE FULLY SARKED WITH NON COMBUSTIBLE MATERIAL

CLEAR SAFETY GLAZING TO ENS

250 (VERGE)
250 (VERGE)

2740 (CEILING HT.)
2100 (WC WINDOW HT.)
400

HOUSE SLAB REBATE

ALUMINIUM FRAME FIXED WINDOW

LPG

350 SQ. BRICK PIERS 1.0m HIGH WITH 150SQ. STEEL POST

710 x 470 BRICK PIERS 1.0m HIGH WITH 2/150SQ. STEEL POSTS

STEPDOWN TO VERANDAH & PORTICO

142

ELEVATION B (EAST)

Scale 1:100

U7703BQG12 24 Apr 2024

6.1

NATIONWIDE HOUSE

192.7

www.nathers.gov.au

Assessor Michael Sullivan
Accreditation No. DMN/10/0129
Address Lot 12 (No.16) Jarram Way
Kallia VIC 3631
<https://www.fr5.com.au/QRCodeLanding?PublicId=U7703BQG12>

ON SIGN THESE PLAN I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I AM SATISFIED WITH WHAT HAS BEEN SHOWN ON THESE WORKING DRAWING AS CORRECT.

DATE

SIGNATURE

THIS DRAWING AND DESIGN IS THE PROPERTY OF SESSIONS BUILDERS IT MAY NOT BE USED FOR ANY PURPOSE OTHER THAN BY THE OWNER. SESSIONS BUILDERS DOES NOT AUTHORIZE THE REPRODUCTION OR CONVEYANCE OF ANY INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN WITHOUT PRIOR WRITTEN PERMISSION.

DESIGN: CUSTOM (2740)

FACADE: VISTA (RH)

REVISION C

BAL-12.5

- EMBER ATTACK

Sessions Builders

CDB-U 53291 CB-L 39675 NSW 157678 C

HIA MEMBER

34 Benalla Road

PO BOX 1151

SHEPPARTON, VIC 3630

PH: 03 5831 5226

PH: 03 5831 5646

ACN 105 505 164

ABN 25 105 505 164

DRAWN: P. CAIAFA

CHECKED: M. SULLIVAN

REG No.: CDB-U 53291

JOB NO: #1204

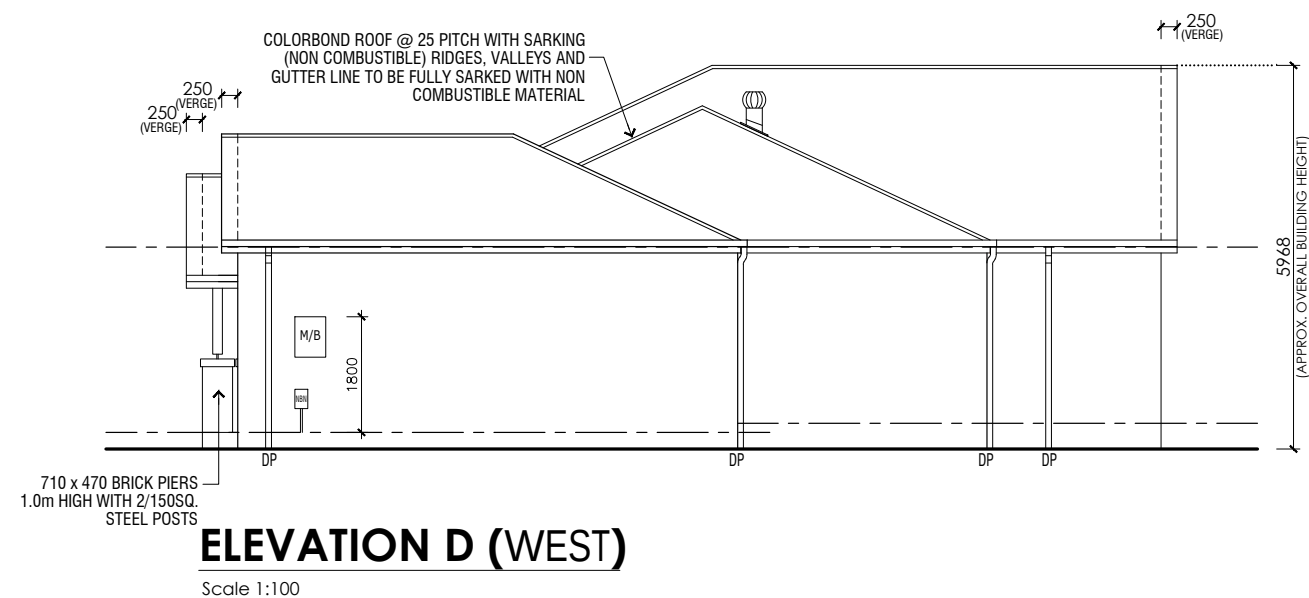
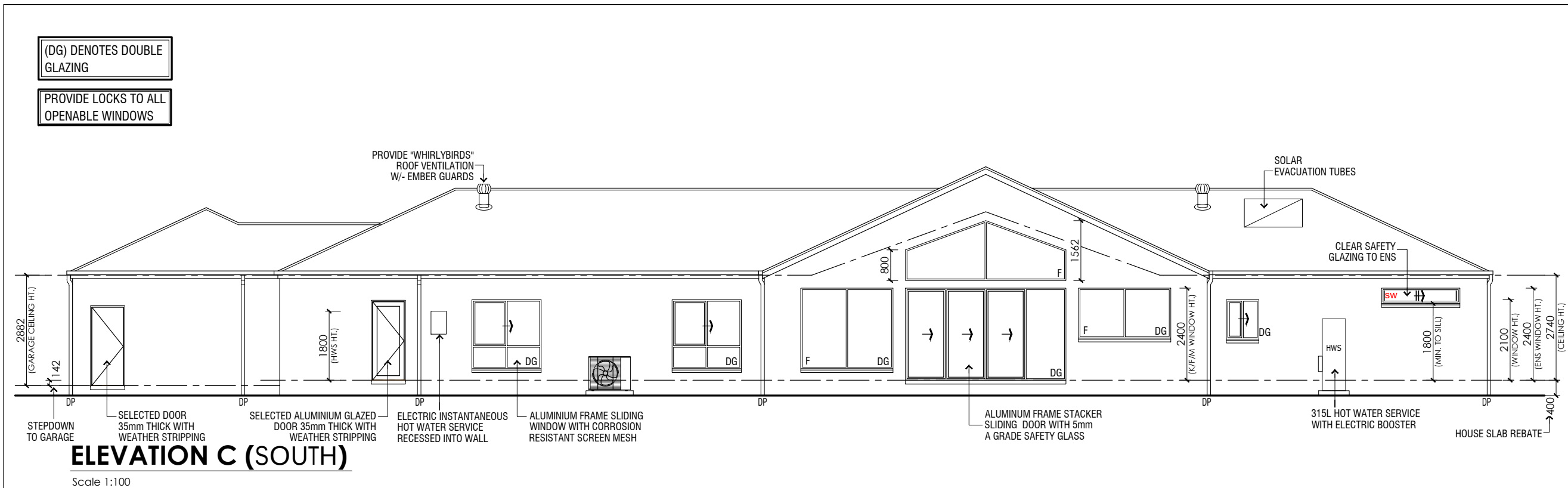
DATE: APRIL 23, 2024

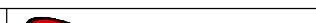
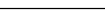
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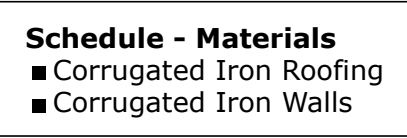
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CLIENT:

ADDRESS:



ON SIGN THESE PLAN I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I AM SATISFIED WITH WHAT HAS BEEN SHOWN ON THESE WORKING DRAWING AS CORRECT. DATE _____ SIGNATURE _____		THIS DRAWING AND DESIGN IS THE PROPERTY OF SESSIONS BUILDERS IT MAY NOT BE USED FOR ANY PURPOSE OTHER THAN BY THE OWNER. SESSIONS BUILDERS DOES NOT AUTHORIZE THE REPRODUCTION OR CONVEYANCE OF ANY INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN WITHOUT PRIOR WRITTEN PERMISSION. DESIGN: CUSTOM (2740) FACADE: VISTA (RH)	REVISION C BAL-12.5 - EMBER ATTACK	 CDB-U 53291 CB-L 39675 NSW 157678 C  MEMBER	34 Benalla Road PO BOX 1151 SHEPPARTON, VIC 3630 PH: 03 5831 5226 PH: 03 5831 5646 ACN 105 505 164 ABN 25 105 505 164	<table><tr><td>DRAWN: P. CAIAFA</td><td>CHECKED: M. SULLIVAN</td><td>REG No.: CDB-U 53291</td><td>JOB NO: #1204</td><td>DATE: APRIL 23, 2024</td><td>SCALE: 1:100</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td colspan="7">CLIENT:</td></tr><tr><td colspan="7">ADDRESS:</td></tr></table>	DRAWN: P. CAIAFA	CHECKED: M. SULLIVAN	REG No.: CDB-U 53291	JOB NO: #1204	DATE: APRIL 23, 2024	SCALE: 1:100	4	CLIENT:							ADDRESS:						
DRAWN: P. CAIAFA	CHECKED: M. SULLIVAN	REG No.: CDB-U 53291	JOB NO: #1204	DATE: APRIL 23, 2024	SCALE: 1:100	4																					
CLIENT:																											
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Landography

11.2 Community

11.2.1 Australia Day - Consultation Outcomes

AUTHOR Manager Community and Culture

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director Community and Planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Australia Day (January 26) is a federally recognised public holiday.

At the Council meeting held on 15 April 2025 Council passed a seven-part resolution authorising targeted and broad community engagement on Councils future support for events held on Australia Day.

In response to this, Council has engaged with key stakeholders and the community to better understand the role of Council in supporting community events held on Australia Day, the impact and significance of this day has on First Nations people and the impact and significance of this day for those who hold events.

Council also engaged with the community via two polls, an opt in community poll, and a randomised phone poll.

Overall, the results of both polls and this engagement, demonstrate that the majority of respondents, and stakeholders strongly support Council's participation in Australia Day events.

This report provides Council with the outcomes of this engagement and provides a recommendation to Council regarding future support of community events held on Australia Day.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Note that a targeted and broad community engagement process was undertaken**
- 2. Acknowledge and thank the representatives from Taungurung Land and Waters Council, and Australia Day committees for presenting to Council**
- 3. Note the results of the Opt in Community Poll and the Randomised Phone Poll as presented in the Australia Day Engagement Report October 2025**
- 4. Note that eligible organisations and groups can apply for funding through Council's existing community grants program**
- 5. Support community events held on Australia Day in the form of formal Councillor attendance by invitation, subject to availability and scheduling constraints.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

At the 15 April 2025 Council Meeting Council resolved to:

1. Approve the community engagement approach as outlined in the Community Engagement Section of this report, subject to Council refinement of engagement questions, to review Council's position on events that acknowledge Australia Day
2. Invite representatives from Taungurung Land and Waters Council and Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation to present to Council at a future Council Briefing
3. Invite representatives from each of the local Australia Day Committees or community groups that hold Australia Day events on Australia Day in the municipality to present to Council at a future collective Council Briefing
4. Undertake broad community engagement via a community poll in accordance with the approved community engagement approach, to include both randomised telephone polling and opt-in community polling
5. For the randomised telephone polling, authorise the Director Community and Planning to engage a suitably qualified company to undertake in line with the approved community engagement approach
6. For the opt-in community polling, ensure it is widely advertised and easily accessible to the broader community to provide their viewpoints by all practical means, to include being posted on the Shire's website and paper forms being made available, at a minimum
7. Receive a further report at a future Council Meeting upon completion of recommendations two, three, five, and six, with all streams of engagement reported individually (not commingled or combined), and the complete underlying data sets of responses made available to Council to accompany the summary report and recommendations.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the outcomes of the above items outlined in the resolution and provide a recommendation to Council regarding future support of community events held on Australia Day.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Australia Day (January 26) holds diverse and complex meanings for Australians. While it is a gazetted public holiday and a date upon which celebrations, awards and citizenships ceremonies occur, it is not a day of celebration for all, particularly for some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

Council's Previous Involvement

Previously Council has:

1. Provided support to community events on Australia day through:
 - Funding (direct and in-kind)
 - Facilitated formal Council attendance and representation at events
 - Assessment and coordination of Shire wide Australia Day Awards
 - Promotion and marketing of events.

2. Provided no support to community events that celebrate January 26 (beyond the legislated responsibility through event permits) acknowledging that the day has a significant impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

On Australia Day in 2025, Council provided support via funding, promotion, Councillor/ Mayoral attendance at local community events on the day, and through consideration of any event permits and support with event documentation.

Funding to a value of \$10,090 was provided to six township/ localities within the municipality, with one locality not requesting funding from Council to deliver their event. Event organisers indicated that they had strong attendance and that the event for those attending was a celebration of community pride and community spirit, led by the community, in a manner that was meaningful to that community.

Federal Government Support

The National Australia Day Council (NADC) is a not-for-profit, government-owned company based in Canberra. With the NADC, the Australia Day National Network (the Network), an affiliate group of state and territory organisations, helps facilitate the celebration of Australia Day and being Australian, and recognise inspirational Australians through the Australian of the Year Awards. The National Australia Day Council offers funding each year to help councils, not-for-profits and community groups hold accessible and inclusive Australia Day events.

Following the resolution on 15 April 2025, Council has:

1. Met with Taungurung Land and Waters Council
2. Invited Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation to brief Council to better understand the impact and significance of Australia Day
3. Met with or received a submission from representatives from various Australia Day committees to brief Council to better understand the impact and significance of Australia Day
4. Received a submission from two representatives of a group who held a reflective event on January 26 in Euroa
5. Undertaken broad community engagement via a randomised telephone poll with the aim of obtaining a statistically significant sample size to better understand the community sentiment regarding role of Council in supporting community events held on Australia Day
6. Undertaken broad community engagement via an Opt in Community Poll on Share Strathbogie and hard copies at various locations in the municipality, open to all in the municipality who wish to participate.

The same questions were used in both the randomised phone poll and the opt in Community Poll. The questions are outlined below Table 1.

Table 1

Preamble Australia Day (January 26) is a federally recognised public holiday. Decisions about changing the date or other political matters sit with Federal Government, not Council. Council is seeking your feedback regarding its future involvement in and support of local events and activities that acknowledge or celebrate Australia Day.	
Question 1 To what extent do you support Strathbogie Shire Council providing support to local	(Please select one) • Strongly support • Somewhat support • Neutral / No opinion

community groups for events that acknowledge or celebrate Australia Day?	• Somewhat oppose • Strongly oppose
Question 2 To what extent do you support Councillors and Council staff participating in an official capacity in community events that acknowledge or celebrate Australia Day?	(Please select one) • Strongly support • Somewhat support • Neutral / Leave it to individual Councillors • Somewhat oppose • Strongly oppose
Question 3 Do you have any other comments – either to expand on your answers above or about any other aspect of Council’s future involvement in Australia Day events?	Open text

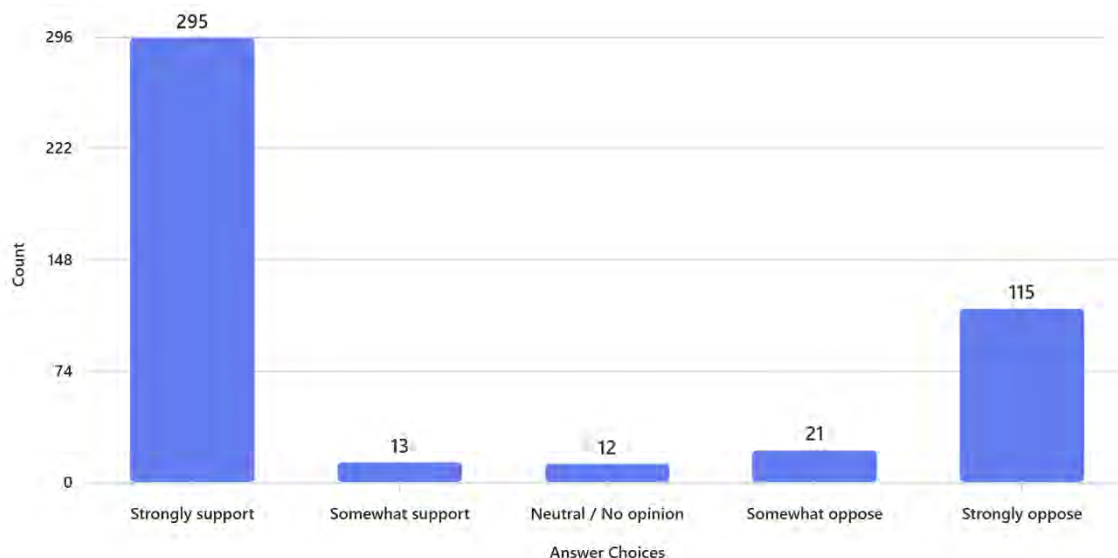
The opt-in community poll was made available to the community electronically on Share Strathbogie and in hard copies with reply paid post envelopes available at Council’s customer service centres and various locations in the municipality. A total of 456 responses were received through the Opt-in community poll.

The randomised phone poll was conducted by an independent third party. A sample size of 346 was reached, 26 short of the statistically significant sample size of 372 for the municipality, primarily due to a lack of willingness to engage in the phone survey.

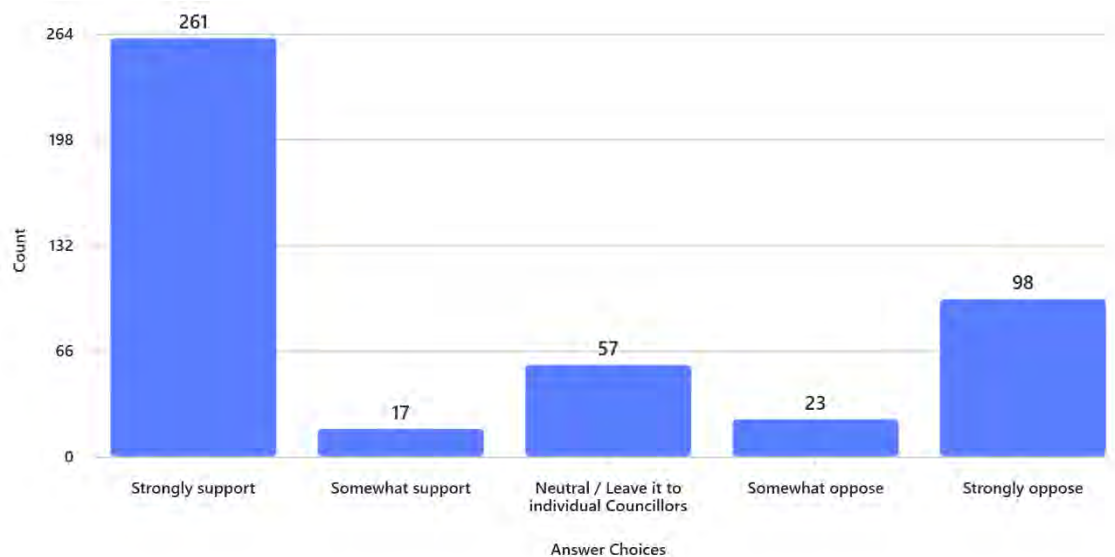
The results of the opt-in community poll and randomised phone poll are outlined below.

Opt-in Community Poll (n=456)

Q1. To what extent do you support Strathbogie Shire Council providing support to local community groups for events that acknowledge or celebrate Australia Day?



2. To what extent do you support Councillors and Council staff participating in an official capacity in community events that acknowledge or celebrate Australia Day?

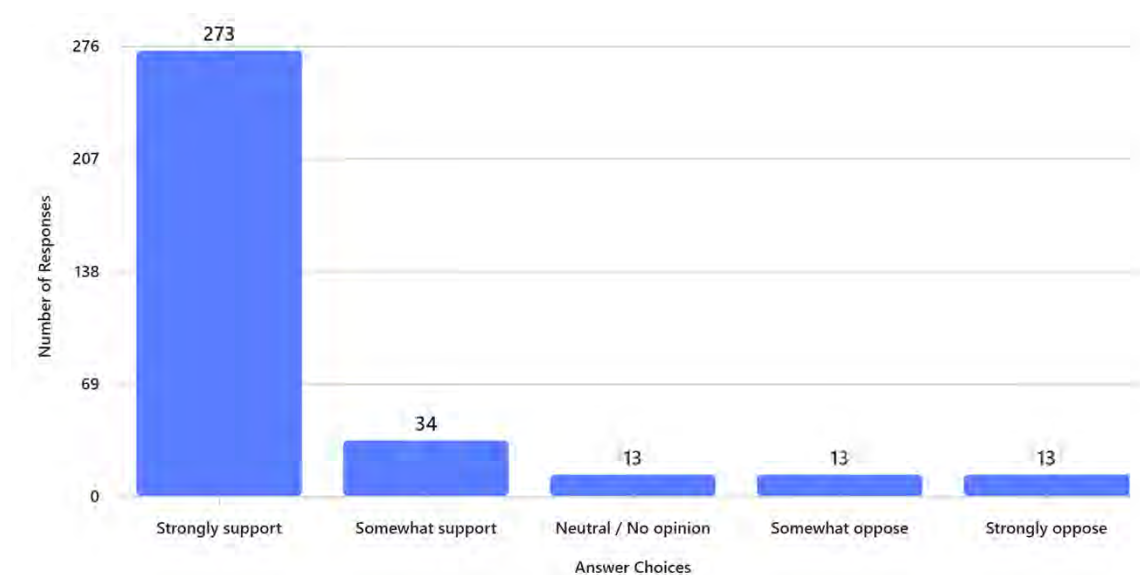


Q3. Key themes from community comments

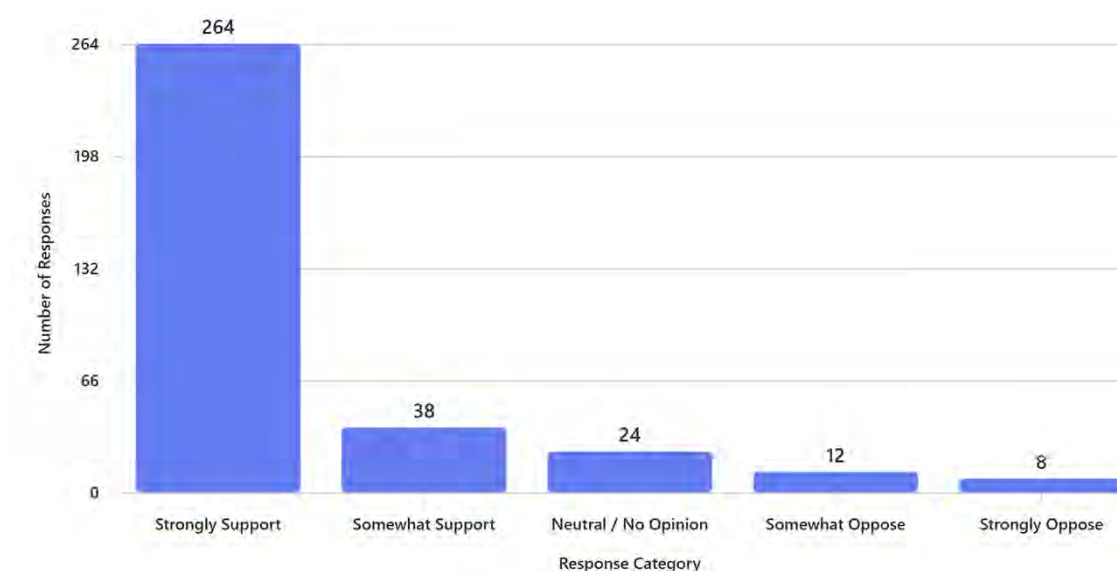
- **Support for Australia Day** was the prominent theme, with many (majority of) comments expressing pride in celebrating the national day. Respondents emphasised unity, tradition, and the importance of recognising community contributions through events like citizenship ceremonies.
- **Date Sensitivity:** Opposition to the Date of January 26 was indicated by some (a minority), with comments calling for a change due to its association with colonisation and historical trauma, with the feeling that the current date can be divisive and suggestions of alternatives that would be more inclusive.
- **Council Involvement** drew mixed reactions. Numerous comments discussed the role of Council, with the majority advocating for active participation and others urging neutrality or a focus on core responsibilities like infrastructure and services.
- **Indigenous Recognition:** Inclusivity was a recurring concern, mentioned frequently. Respondents stressed the need to acknowledge First Nations people, promote reconciliation, and ensure that celebrations reflect the diversity of the community.
- **Funding:** Concerns appeared in many comments, with residents questioning the use of ratepayer money for symbolic events. Many suggest that resources be allocated transparently and prioritised for essential services.

Randomised Phone Poll (346 responses)

Q1. To what extent do you support Strathbogie Shire Council providing support to local community groups for events that acknowledge or celebrate Australia Day?



Q2. To what extent do you support Councillors and Council staff participating in an official capacity in community events that acknowledge or celebrate Australia Day?



Q3. Key themes from community comments

- **Council Visibility and Leadership:** Many respondents (the majority) want Council to be more present and active during community events, seeing this as an opportunity to demonstrate leadership and build trust.
- **Date Sensitivity:** The January 26th date remains contentious. While some (the majority) strongly support retaining it, others advocate for change to promote inclusivity and reconciliation.
- **Funding and Prioritisation:** There is a clear desire for responsible spending, with some residents urging the Council to focus on core services rather than symbolic celebrations.

- **Indigenous Recognition:** Several comments called for greater acknowledgment of First Nations people, including suggestions for smoking ceremonies, flag raising, and moments of silence.
- **Community Engagement:** Respondents appreciated being consulted and encouraged the Council to continue seeking public input, especially closer to event dates.

The results of both polls demonstrate that the majority of respondents strongly support Council's participation in Australia Day events.

OPTIONS ASSESSMENT

The assessment of two options regarding future support for community events held on Australia Day is outlined in the below table.

Table 2

Option A Provide no support to community events held on Australia Day	Option B- Recommended Provide support to community events held on Australia Day in Strathbogie Shire, through Council's existing Community Grant Funding Program (Event Grants or Quick Response Grants), and in the form of formal Councillor attendance by invitation, subject to availability and scheduling constraints.
Summary of Considerations	
• The results of both polls demonstrate that the majority of respondents strongly support Council's participation in Australia Day events. • Throughout the engagement Council heard that community celebrations are very important to many members of the community • Council heard from the Australia Day Committee event organisers how important the day was to their community as a day of celebration and coming together as a community, to celebrate in a manner that is special to them, led by them. This varied between breakfasts, car shows, sausage sizzles through to awards and events. • Council recognise that the day is not a day of celebration for all. • Council received negative feedback regarding the previous decision to withdraw support of Australia Day 2024 • Council also received negative feedback regarding the decision to reinstate support in 2025. • Council heard from Taungurung Land and Waters Council (TLaWC) that this day causes significant trauma and holds meaning for members, noting it as a day of protest for many in the community, rather than celebration • Council acknowledges that Taungurung Land and Waters Council have an endorsed <i>Taungurung Statement on January 26</i>. Stating '<i>Taungurung people therefore continue to see January 26 as a day of mourning and reflection, and not a day of celebration</i>'. • Funding for community events was made available through the Federal Government through the National Australia Day Council • Council is required to perform its legislated role to consider events permits (if relevant) • Council has finite resources	

- Council could provide support in a range of ways; funding of the events, attendance, promotion, event application support, event permitting (required to provide this) and/or event organisation and attendance
- Australia Day is a public holiday, Councillor's and Staff are not required to work on public holidays. If Staff are requested to work there is a cost associated with this.
- Using an existing grant funding stream is an efficient mechanism to provide grant funding rather than a new standalone stream, which would be resource heavy
- Event or quick response grant funding enable eligible organisations or groups who hold both celebratory events, and events that recognise the day in a different way to apply.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Council undertook broad community engagement set at the level of Consult on the IAP2 Public participation spectrum.

Consult - To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions.

The results of the two community polls will be used to inform Council's decision.

Notice of the engagement on this matter was included in Council's print media columns, media release, website and Facebook.

An engagement report has been prepared and is attached to this report.

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.

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

This report considers the following legislation, Council Policies and key strategic documents:

- *Local Government Act 2020* – Council, in the performance of its role, is required to give effect to the overarching governance principles as described in section 9 of the Local Government Act 2020. Section 9(2)(b) states that 'priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations'.

Section 2 of the Act defines 'municipal community' as including: 9.3.1 people who live in the municipal district of the Council; and 9.3.2 people and bodies who are ratepayers of the Council and 9.3.3 traditional owners of land in the municipal district of the Council and 9.3.4 people and bodies who conduct activities in the municipal district of the Council.

- *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*: Section 19 of the Charter recognises the cultural rights of all persons, and Section 19(2) specifically

recognises the cultural rights of Aboriginal people. Councils are obliged to act in a non-discriminatory manner and uphold cultural inclusion and respect

- Victorian Aboriginal and Local Government Strategy 2021–2026 Pathway to Stronger Partnerships
- Council's Memorandum of Understanding with Taungurung Land and Waters Council.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Making a decision without due consideration	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium	The development and execution of a detailed engagement approach involving stakeholders and the public
Reputational risk to Council's brand	Probable	Moderate	Medium	Council has provided an equal opportunity for all stakeholders and the public to be heard and considered.
Disengagement of First Nations partners and damage to existing relationships	Probable	Moderate	Medium	Council has met with First Nations representatives and stakeholders.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

The *Local Government Act 2020* has at its core the aim of ensuring all Victorians can engage with their council on local priorities and the future of their community.

There is no statutory or legal requirement for Councils to hold ancillary Australia Day celebrations on Australia Day.

- *Local Government Act 2020* – outlines Council's responsibility to deliver a range of essential programs and services that are accessible, equitable and meet the needs of the Strathbogie community.
- *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* - including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural rights.

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

Financial support (in kind and direct) for events on Australia Day can be facilitated through Council's existing Event Funding Grant Program or Quick Response Grants.

The budget allocated to event grants in 2025-26 is \$50,000. The budget allocated to Quick Response Grants in 2025-26 is \$10,000.

An additional budget allocation may be required to facilitate event funding for events, which may include community events on Australia Day, or other eligible events, in the event that the budget allocation has been exhausted due to high demand.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Economic

There are no significant economic impacts associated with this report.

Social

The decision to be made by Council is one that is layered with socially and historically complex considerations. It is important the sensitivity and emotion of the report be considered carefully during this process.

This report and the results from this engagement demonstrate that the community feel strongly about Council supporting Australia Day. The majority of respondents indicate that the day represents community pride, connection and a celebration of community spirit.

This report also acknowledges the rights of all people to have choice about how they live and the means to make those choices including the ability for First Nations people to participate in Australian society as equals with a distinct status and culture that can be celebrated within the diversity of the nation.

This report does not inhibit an individuals' right to determine how, or if they acknowledge or celebrate Australia Day.

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

Australia Day (January 26) is a federally recognised public holiday. Council's support for community events held on this date has varied.

In line with the seven-part resolution passed on 15 April 2025, Council has engaged with key stakeholders and the community to better understand the role of Council in supporting community events held on Australia Day, the impact and significance of this day has on First Nations people and the impact and significance of this day for those who hold events.

Overall, the results of both polls and this engagement, demonstrate that the majority of respondents, and key stakeholders strongly support Council's participation in Australia Day events.

This report provides Council with the outcomes of this engagement and provides a recommendation to Council regarding future support of community events held on Australia Day.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 20250924 Australian Day Engagement Report (1)
2. 20251001 Appendix One Verbatim Comments (2)



Australia Day Involvement Poll

Engagement Report October 2025

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Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

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

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Executive Summary Overview

From 1 September to 30 September 2025 council sought feedback from the community regarding its future involvement in and support of local events and activities that acknowledge or celebrate Australia Day.

Engagement Activities

Engagement methods included:

- **Online opt-in community poll** hosted on the *Share Strathbogie* platform
- **Hardcopy opt-in community poll** available at council customer service centres
- **Randomised telephone polling** using Oracle Customer Management Solutions
- **Social media promotion** via Council's official channels

These activities provided residents the opportunity to share their views on council involvement in Australia Day

Reach and Participation

- **Opt-in Community Poll**
 - Share Strathbogie Page Views: **1,022**
 - Online Surveys Completed: **409**
 - Hardcopy Surveys Completed: **47**
- **Randomised Telephone Poll**
 - Total Calls sent out: **7,372**
 - Declined Survey: **1,825**
 - SMS Sent: **1,669**
 - Successful Surveys: **346**
- **Social Media**
 - Reach: **2,523**
 - Reactions: **6**
 - Comments: Comments were turned off on these posts

Key Community Insights

From the **802** surveys completed, several key themes emerged:

- **Support for Australia Day:** Many respondents expressed pride in celebrating Australia Day, highlighting its role in fostering unity, tradition, and community.
- **Council Visibility & Leadership:** There is a strong desire for Council to be more present and active during community events, using these opportunities to demonstrate leadership and build public trust.
- **Date Sensitivity:** The January 26 date remains divisive. While some support retaining it, others advocate for changing the date.

Australia Day Involvement 2025 Community Poll

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- **Funding & Prioritisation:** Concerns were raised about the use of public funds, with many urging the Council to prioritise essential services over symbolic celebrations and ensure transparent spending.
- **Indigenous Recognition:** Inclusivity and acknowledgment of First Nations people were recurring themes. Suggestions included incorporating smoking ceremonies, flag raising, and moments of silence to promote reconciliation and reflect community diversity.
- **Community Engagement:** Respondents appreciated being consulted and encouraged ongoing public input, especially in the lead-up to events.
- **Council Involvement:** Views were mixed, some supported active Council participation in celebrations, while others preferred a more neutral stance focused on core responsibilities like infrastructure and services.

Background

Australia Day (January 26) is a federally recognised public holiday. Council's support for community events held on this date has varied.

Council passed a seven-part resolution on 15 April 2025 authorising targeted and broad community engagement on Council's future support for events held on Australia Day. This included resolving to undertake broad community engagement via a community poll in accordance with the approved community engagement approach, to include both randomised telephone polling and opt-in community polling.

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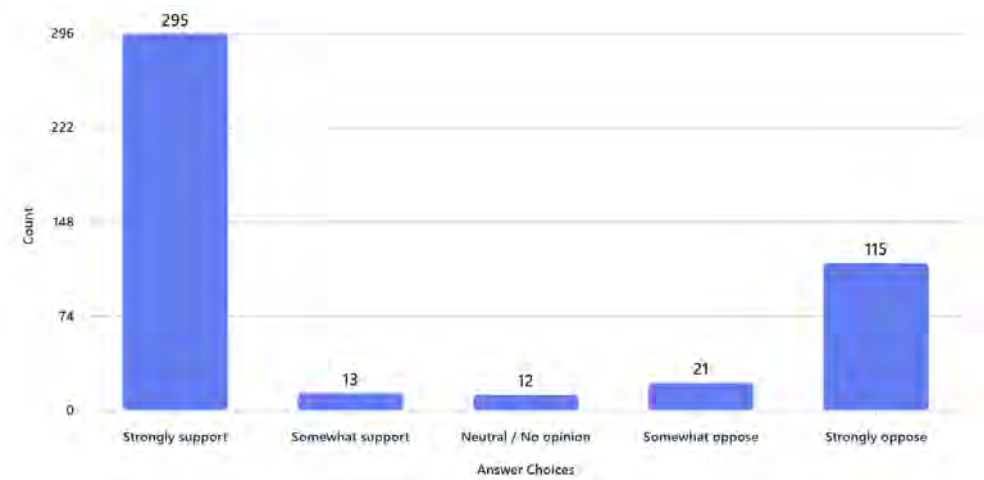
Opt-in Community Poll

Who We Heard From

- Online Surveys Completed: **409**
- Hardcopy Surveys Completed: **47**

What We Heard

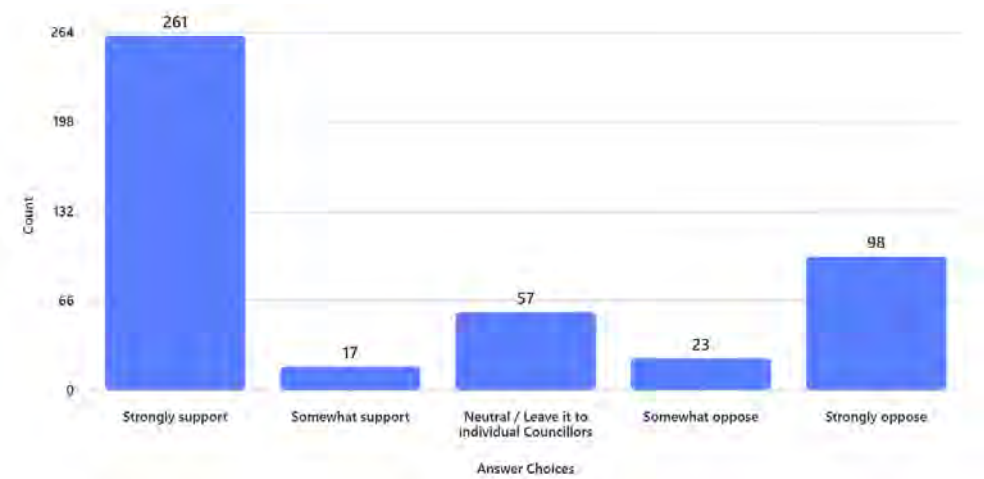
To what extent do you support Strathbogie Shire Council providing support to local community groups for events that acknowledge or celebrate Australia Day?



Answer Choices	Percent	Count
Strongly support	64.69%	295
Somewhat support	2.85%	13
Neutral / No opinion	2.63%	12
Somewhat oppose	4.61%	21
Strongly oppose	25.22%	115
Total	100%	456

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To what extent do you support Councillors and Council staff participating in an official capacity in community events that acknowledge or celebrate Australia Day?



Answer Choices	Percent	Count
Strongly support	57.24%	261
Somewhat support	3.56%	17
Neutral / Leave it to individual Councillors	12.50%	57
Somewhat oppose	5.04%	23
Strongly oppose	21.49%	98
Total	100%	456

Key Themes From Comments

297 further comments were received from the opt-in community poll.

- **Support for Australia Day** was the prominent theme, with many (majority of) comments expressing pride in celebrating the national day. Respondents emphasised unity, tradition, and the importance of recognising community contributions through events like citizenship ceremonies.
- **Date Sensitivity:** Opposition to the Date of January 26 was indicated by some (a minority), with comments calling for a change due to its association with colonisation and historical trauma, with the feeling that the current date can be divisive and suggestions of alternatives that would be more inclusive.
- **Council Involvement** drew mixed reactions. Numerous comments discussed the role of Council, with the majority advocating for active participation and others urging neutrality or a focus on core responsibilities like infrastructure and services.
- **Indigenous Recognition:** Inclusivity was a recurring concern, mentioned frequently. Respondents stressed the need to acknowledge First Nations people, promote reconciliation, and ensure that celebrations reflect the diversity of the community.
- **Funding:** Concerns appeared in many comments, with residents questioning the use of ratepayer money for symbolic events. Many suggest that resources be allocated transparently and prioritised for essential services.

Australia Day Involvement 2025 Community Poll

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The feedback reveals strong support for Australia Day among many respondents, who view it as a celebration of national pride, unity, and community spirit. These comments often emphasised the importance of recognising volunteers, hosting citizenship ceremonies, and maintaining traditions that bring people together. For these individuals, Council involvement is seen as a vital expression of civic leadership and community connection.

However, a significant number of comments expressed discomfort or outright opposition to celebrating Australia Day on January 26. These respondents highlighted the historical consequence associated with colonisation and the impact on First Nations communities. Many advocated for changing the date to foster inclusivity and reconciliation, suggesting that the current date is divisive and fails to reflect the values of a modern, multicultural Australia.

Council involvement was another prominent theme, with mixed views. While some respondents encouraged Council to actively participate in Australia Day events, others questioned whether it was appropriate for Council to take a formal role in what they saw as a politicised or symbolic occasion. There were calls for neutrality, professionalism, and a focus on core responsibilities such as infrastructure and essential services.

Funding concerns were frequently raised, with many respondents questioning the use of ratepayer money for Australia Day celebrations. Suggestions included relying on federal funding, ensuring transparency in budget decisions, and prioritising resources for more pressing community needs. Overall, the feedback underscores the need for Council to balance tradition with sensitivity, and to ensure its actions reflect the diverse values and priorities of the community it serves.

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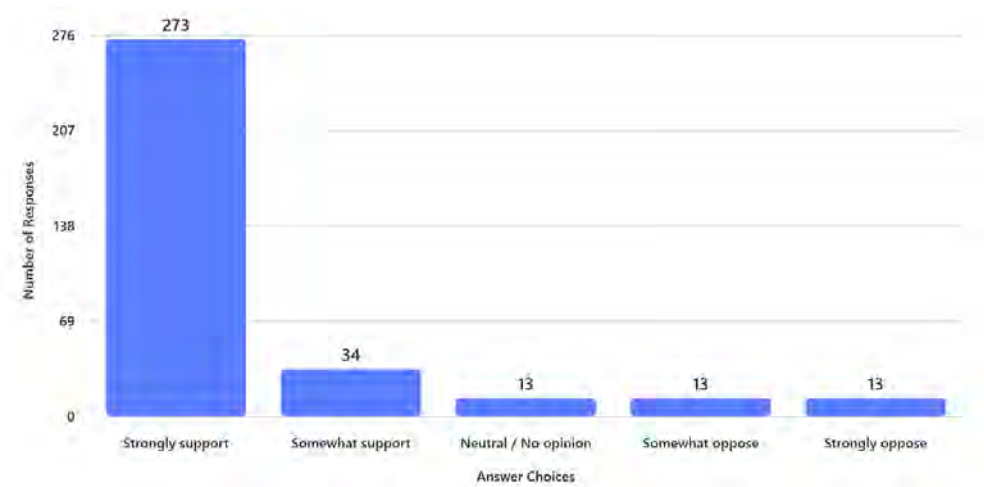
Randomised Telephone Polling

Who We Heard From

- o Successful Telephone Poll Surveys: **346**

What We Heard

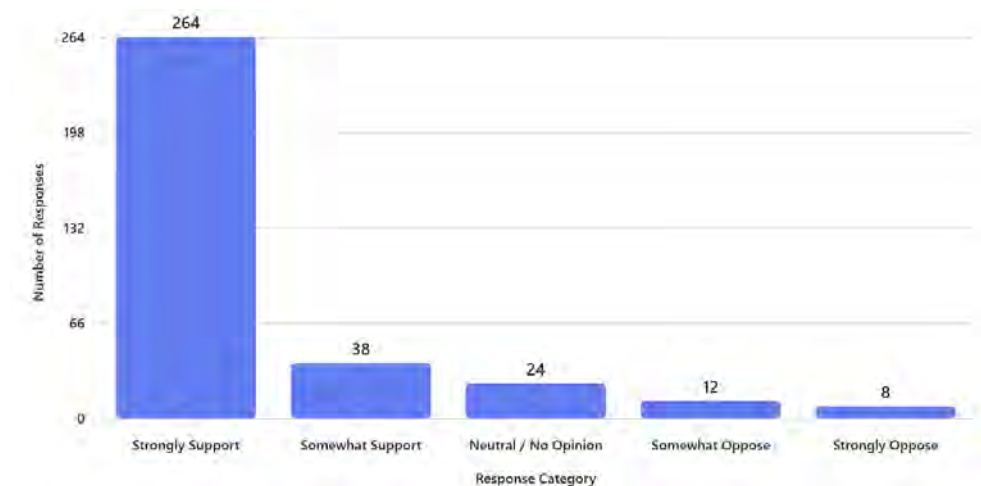
To what extent do you support Strathbogie Shire Council providing support to local community groups for events that acknowledge or celebrate Australia Day?



Answer Choices	Percent	Count
Strongly support	78.90%	273
Somewhat support	9.83%	34
Neutral / No opinion	3.76%	13
Somewhat oppose	3.76%	13
Strongly oppose	3.76%	13
Total	100%	346

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To what extent do you support Councillors and Council staff participating in an official capacity in community events that acknowledge or celebrate Australia Day?



Answer Choices	Percent	Count
Strongly support	76.3%	264
Somewhat support	10.98%	38
Neutral / No opinion	6.94%	24
Somewhat oppose	3.47%	12
Strongly oppose	2.31%	8
Total	100%	346

Key Themes From Comments

135 further comments were received during the telephone polling; many respondents chose not to leave further comments.

- **Council Visibility and Leadership:** Many respondents (the majority) want Council to be more present and active during community events, seeing this as an opportunity to demonstrate leadership and build trust.
- **Date Sensitivity:** The January 26th date remains contentious. While some (the majority) strongly support retaining it, others advocate for change to promote inclusivity and reconciliation.
- **Funding and Prioritisation:** There is a clear desire for responsible spending, with some residents urging the Council to focus on core services rather than symbolic celebrations.
- **Indigenous Recognition:** Several comments called for greater acknowledgment of First Nations people, including suggestions for smoking ceremonies, flag raising, and moments of silence.
- **Community Engagement:** Respondents appreciated being consulted and encouraged the Council to continue seeking public input, especially closer to event dates.

A significant portion of respondents expressed clear support for continuing Australia Day celebrations. Many emphasised the importance of tradition, national pride, and community.

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These individuals often viewed Council involvement as a positive force, helping to foster engagement and connection among residents. Comments highlighted appreciation for Council attending events, presenting awards, and being visible in the community. Some respondents noted that recent efforts were better than in previous years and encouraged the Council to maintain or increase its involvement.

The largest group of comments fell into a middle ground—supportive but with reservations. These respondents often agreed with celebrating Australia Day but raised concerns about specific aspects. A recurring theme was the date of the celebration, with several suggesting that January 26th is inappropriate due to its historical significance and proposing alternatives like Wattle Day. Others emphasized the need for inclusive celebrations, particularly acknowledging First Nations people through ceremonies or moments of reflection.

Funding was another common concern. Some respondents questioned whether ratepayer money should be used for Australia Day events, suggesting that Council resources would be better spent on essential services like road maintenance, waste collection, and community support programs. There were also calls for greater transparency around how events are funded and whether state or federal contributions are involved.

A smaller group of respondents opposed Council involvement in Australia Day altogether. These comments often reflected frustration with perceived political agendas, lack of neutrality, or a disconnect between Council actions and community needs. Some viewed Australia Day as a celebration of colonisation and expressed discomfort with its symbolism, especially in the absence of meaningful recognition of Indigenous communities.

Others criticised Council for spending money on symbolic events while neglecting practical issues like infrastructure and service delivery. There were also concerns about the Council's responsiveness, with some residents feeling unheard or excluded from decision-making processes.

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Verbatim Comments

Refer to Appendix One.

Australia Day Involvement 2025 Community Poll

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Appendix One. Verbatim Comments

Comments from Opt-In Community Survey	
1	You should have included a question about whether you would support it on a different day. It's the day that matters, not the event!!
2	You are asking the wrong person...I was adopted and raised by Aboriginals...who don't poison everything they touch Round-up being on everything for 50years just one of the deadly chemicals in the food ...vaxcines to keep population down .I have no interest in flags and wars to make money or government destroying the environment with global warming rubbish..wind turbines and panels replacing beautiful forests animal habitats and destroying farms and lives
3	You already know the answer
4	Yes this is our day
5	Yes I think Australia Day provides an event to bring us all together to celebrate what a wonderful country we live in.
6	Would like to see Strathbogie Shire Council support Australia Day celebrations in the future.
7	Would like to see on the day one of those welcoming and smoking ceremony without any pathos so we do not forget the traditional owners on this day
8	Why is this Council determined to ignore previous outcomes that indicate the locals want Australia Day? Stop wasting our time. Move on and do the job the Council exists for. Stop manufacturing opt outs.
9	Why is there no acknowledgment of Taungurung Country on this Shire communication? I would support he above if it was a day of mourning and acknowledgement of the dispossession of the original people of this country. But if a 'celebration' of Australia on this day then this is disrespectful
10	Why are we having this discussion in the first place? As a proud Australian I always look forward to celebrating the occasion with my fellow Australians..
11	Whilst I am unsure about continuing Australia Day on Jan 26th I am not opposed to continuing with it until it is changed. Personally. I favour it being on the final Monday in January to take the 'heat' out of it being on the 26th but allowing for acknowledgement of the country and its thousands of years of history.
12	While this date remains divisive I will not support it- or support rate money going towards it. If events are held I won't protest- I just won't attend.
13	While there is so much to celebrate on Australia day there is also so much to grieve on that same day. I feel allowances for council support should cover community groups that also wish to heal grief and groups working on rescuing ancient first nation culture and on reconciling a future together.
14	While I acknowledge this issue deeply divides the region, I don't agree with celebrations that are endorsed by council. If people want to celebrate privately then they should be allowed, but in terms of a public stance, I just can't see how celebrating on such a historical day of mourning would be okay. I strongly support changing the date.
15	While Australia Day remains as a public holiday on the 26th January - It is a difficult and divisive time. As a non-indigenous Australian (of Irish heritage). I feel deeply saddened that that particular day was chosen to bring us all

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	together to celebrate our country. I strong support the council working with indigenous communities in our area on how to approach the current situation. in our current political highly divided time with a rising intolerance for diversity - a role for council is even more important. I think the council is in a very key position to lead. - to allow space for bringing people together - to acknowledge the true and full history for indigenous people throughout time since the arrival of the first fleet - to acknowledge the often difficult and traumatic histories of the vast majority of non-indigenous Australians whose families now live here and had to leave their own homelands - to celebrate diversity, learning together, change, all the connections we now have and can have with people in this country from such different backgrounds and how we can be together and learn together
16	When the current Council voted to give our rate dollars to Australia Day committees, without any consultation, it seriously undermined the leadership and message of reconciliation that the previous Council group showed to local Indigenous people. I hope to see a Council group who are willing to be leaders in the important work of reconciliation and truth telling. I know that you all have the capacity to show empathy and respect to First Nations Australians, and I trust you have the bravery to once again formally step away from funding or having a formal role in celebrations on Australia Day, January 26, whilst it continues to be a day of mourning and sorrow for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
17	We want to keep Australia Day because it's a day to show respect thank you
18	We should celebrate Australia Day but not on the 26th of January. We know the history, the Yoorrook Justice Commission Report has been completed and tabled in Parliament. Surley the Strathbogie Shire Council do not wish to impose more pain by celebrating that day. Choose a more appropriate day. My understanding is that Federal Funding is available to any group who may wish to celebrate Australia Day. Most certainly i do not wish any of my Rates to be squandered on this. It is 2025, not 1825!
19	We should be celebrating all the positives that we enjoy about our country while being fully inclusive of all residents.
20	We should always recognise an Australia Day, every Australia citizen regardless of race, colour or religion should celebrate what a wonderful diverse and giving land we are fortunate enough to live in, regardless of our heritage or anything happening overseas..
21	We need to support and celebrate our great country and it's people.....ALL OF US.
22	We need to respect our Taungurung elders, people by not commemorating this day of horrendous violent colonialism. It is offensive to many as it represents loss, violence, racism and ethnic hatred. Thank you for this opportunity to

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	comment.
23	We need to reconcile with our real past. We can't just leave this issue hanging out there for the next generation to deal with - as has been done for far too many generations before us. The brutality that came with the British and European settlement of Australia is not something to be celebrated. Listening to our First Nation's people would be a good start on this issue.
24	We need to consult with the ratepayers of the shire to ascertain whether the present day is acceptable to all citizens in our community.
25	We need to change the date. I am aware this is not a council level decision
26	We live in Australia, you have to celebrate being an Australian and all its culture. Im disappointed in the shire to even have Australia day questioned.
27	We live in Australia, we should ALL support Australia, and it national day of recognition. Australia's residents both Born here, invited and/or accepted here in my opinion recognise this day not for anyother reason than to be Thankful. We are ONE and we are MANY - We are Australian and therefore in my opinion All Councils, their representatives, ALL Politicians across this country should 100% support both in encouragement and participation of AUSTRALIA DAY
28	We have a history to be proud of. Name one country with more to be proud of.
29	We cannot go back in time. Australia Day is the day to celebrate being Australian for all of us, not a political day for bleeding hearts to opinionated over and expect everyone to see their side only.
30	We can't change what happened before us. We can focus on bringing all peoples together on the day to celebrate how lucky we all are to live in this country. Togetherness not division
31	We are slowly losing our identity, need to get back the Australia i grew up with and love. Go woke Go broke
32	We are one but we are many , United like our anzacs
33	We are Australian!!! It really kind of says it all. People who come to this country do so for many reasons and chose to stay for just as many, you can't change the culture and what it stands for when you choose to live here. for me Australia Day means so much more then just raising our flag and I'll continue to celebrate loud and proud of everyone who chooses our amazing country as home
34	We are Australian!
35	We are all Australians and should celebrate this special with each other - with respect for everyone.
36	We are all Australian's; there should be no division!
37	Unless Councillors ARE supporters of Australia and the Australia Day celebrations, Not only should they NOT be part of the celebrations, they SHOULD NOT be on Council. Local Government, as they self proclaim to be. They should NOT interfere with a celebration for ALL Australians. Councils are NOT de jure office of government, but creatures of Statute (Source: High Court of Australia) that currently exist Ultra Vires. These very creatures of Statute should understand they are Public Servants originally formed to SERVE the ratepayers NOT do whatever they think in their world is right. Australians are waking up to the massive costs associated with a Un Constitutional Corporate Entity which as stated, acting Ultra Vires and needs to be the subject of intense scrutiny of ALL practices or dissolved.

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38	United wd stand, divided we fall. Let's all unite this one day of the year....no matter what the date...and celebrate being Australian....blooming politics aside. Give us one day of joy.... especially if we ever expect our young to defend our democratic freedom and borders
39	Unfortunately Oz day has taken on a nationalistic hue, celebrating white European settlement. While acknowledging the settlement we also need to embrace first nations & recognise their prior habitation & embrace reconciliation. Difficult but essential for a kind, purposeful nation.
40	To me Australia Day is about acknowledging the past, celebrating the present and lookinf forward to the future of our country.
41	Time to truly respect our Taungurung people. They have been treated appallingly since colonisation. They were transplanted and all land and way of life taken from them. Surely it's time to rebuild and demonstrate respect to our first Australians. We should be proud of them and acknowledge the pain celebrating Australia Day on 26/1 inflicts. I acknowledge that the date is in the hands of the Federal Govt but statements from Local Councils could be worthwhile.
42	This survey should not even be sent. It's a nationally recognised event!
43	This should never have been a question at shire level , Australia Day is a public holiday for a reason and should be celebrated the way we see fit . Now and into the future. Thanks
44	This poll must be better advertised to the residents/ ratepayers to gauge the support or not for Australia day
45	This issue should be past "discussion". I note that the council has revoked it's former stance, which showed contempt for Taungurung and the broader community. I am a sixth-generation white Australian, I am disgusted that we continue to chose to celebrate the day British penal colonialism began in this country, the day the first human cargo was landed in chains, the beginning of brutality in this Country. Our nation was not forged on January 26th 1788. The date is NOT a day to celebrate national unity. It is a day of remembrance of the wrongs of the past, that we learn from and repair the damage and trauma inflicted on peoples, particularly but not only Indigenous, and on the Country itself; so that we may build a better, equitable and sustainable future. Council should not utilise our rates and our representation to continue to promote a celebration of inequity, injustice and disunity. Regards, Hayley.
46	This is the set day to celebrate Australia Day and we should as a nation join together to celebrate what we as a nation have achieved and be proud of it,
47	This is such a difficult issue. In the right circumstances, it would be good to support community groups that celebrate Australia Day on January 26th in the right spirit; recognising its troubled history and fostering an inclusive and hopeful future. However, I feel that any attendance by council members in an official capacity would send the message that the date shouldn't be changed, when in fact changing the date would be the best possible course of action.
48	This is our day as Aussies to give thanks to all Australians past and present in our home country
49	This is an extremely divisive topic on which I strongly feel Council should remain neutral.

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	Please let this die a natural death which it's sure to do over time. Certainly continue new citizenship events on that date if you wish. Though I think it would show some courage to move the date (supported by Council & in collaboration with the first people of this land) to sometime less offensive.
50	This is a matter for each individual to decide for themselves.
51	This is a day to recognise all Australians
52	This has become a political issue in recent years, which is dividing the community. I believe that Council could take a strong leadership role by standing aside from celebrations on January 26th and adopting a neutral stand. This would allow for people in the community wishing to celebrate the day to do so, as this can be a vibrant event without Council involvement. As I know there are many shire residents who do not support celebrations on January 26th, I don't agree with such events being funded with ratepayer money. I am deeply offended by this course of action. I strongly believe that Council needs to display respectful support for First Nations People - namely Taungurung representatives - whose land has never been ceded. This could involve, at a minimum, taking a neutral stand on its role in Jan 26th events (as mentioned above).
53	There definitely should be an organised celebration of all that is good about australia, bit of fun ie australia day sports carnival and concert ,citizenship ceremony , acknowledgement of community service ,junior and senior , provision of a suitable native tree or shrub for residents to plant to symbolise growth , hope and unity . thankyou for the opportunity to have a say , those who choose to participate will have a great time , those who want to opt out can please themselves , others may choose to sit in a quiet spot and have their own day of reflection , whichever , none should interfere with the other , regards chris charles
54	There are many appalling events which darken the recounting of colonisation. To acknowledge & heal the injustices of the past we need to recognise the Jan 26th is a terrible day to celebrate as a National Day - despite it currently being named such Federally, we, in Strathbogie Shire, can make (& did make in 2023) a progressive decision to not blindly follow a system that oppresses First Nations culture. Instead, let us celebrate inclusively. I implore you to not just walk with our First Nations brothers and sisters BUT SUPPORT THEM TO LEAD US INTO A BRIGHTER FUTURE. Funding should not go towards this event celebrating British colonisation of this place we all call home. I strongly object to my rates being used to support 'celebrations' on Jan 26th, ever. Councillors - be brave, be wise, get educated, lead with compassion and understanding, and educate the ignorant on a better future. Jan 26th is not a day to celebrate.
55	The vast majority of Australians support the celebration of Australia Day on January 26. This has also been supported by the successful community led celebrations at the Lion's park. Councillor's are voted in to represent and act on behalf of the people and need to respect their choice's.
56	The value of celebrating a national day. Is that it is a day of unity. So pushing every year to not be Australian.

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	If you don't support the country, why are you in a position of authority for the country.
57	The name of the country we live in is called Australia - let's celebrate our country.
58	The Longwood event I attend is a community celebration. Celebrating our town and the wonderful people that contribute to making it a magnificent slice of the Strathbogie Shire and our country
59	The long standing tradition of community coming together to raise our national flag and acknowledge the importance of the country we live in and enjoy should be respected and continued with support for such events by local councils
60	The local Community bbq or events are a great way of bringing people together
61	The last two years this event was put on by an individual which was most unfair. The event was supported strongly and proudly. Look forward to the council's participation to make this event a proud day to remember
62	The event needs a more balanced and truth telling component which acknowledges the reality for First Nations peoples in our community rather than its current form. I also don't think the council should get involved in such events and should instead stick to its basic charter of fixing roads and managing things in its remit. Council should not have a place in such politicised events. Council money could be better spent on numerous other areas that would directly help residents and improve our region rather than an event which basically has become a political event in which people can grandstand and whitewash history. The events do not improve the lives of strathbogie residents.
63	The decision made in Dec 2024 by the current council to reverse the previous councils position, announced in May 2023, in regards to providing support and funding opportunities for local Australia Day celebrations is in breach of several guiding principles outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding that was agreed upon and signed by representatives from the Taungurung Land and Waters Council and the Strathbogie Shire Council on 28 October 2021. The above decision being the very first action made by the then newly elected Councillors was hugely disappointing and made with insufficient public engagement at the time. On the council website, the following explanation was made in the FAQ's for the May 2023 announcement: "We recognise January 26 is a day that causes great pain to First Nations people. Council supports inclusion and there is a portion of our community whose experiences of January 26 are a reminder of the dispossession and ongoing effects and impacts of colonisation." (https://www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au/things-to-do/events/january-26/) To hastily reverse the decision was to knowingly inflict potential harm on members of the first nations community. This decision appeared to be based in minority, ignorant and non-inclusive

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	ideology and the loud opinions of a select few, rather than based on what is best for the well being of the wider community. I urge to council to return to the position of not supporting local Australia Day celebrations and hope that this goes some way to repair the relationship with local mob and rebuild trust with the wider community.
64	The council should support an inclusive day for all to be able to celebrate. If local groups are supported then equally NAIDOC or cultural events should be supported. Council should support the voice of Aboriginal people in the shire by advocating for a change date to make Australia Day a day for all, while also supporting residents who want to celebrate a national day.
65	The council should be involved, they are part of the community, we are all Australians
66	The Australia Day council is quite capable of dispersing funds to community groups who apply to organise an Australia Day event. Strathbogie Shire, with its MOU with TLAWC, does not need to waste resources being involved, or get in the middle of a national issue. Councillors should be able to attend or not, as is their personal preference on this very contentious issue.
67	The 26th of January is NOT, in any way, a day relevant to Australia as a nation. At most, the date represents the date, in 1788, that NSW became a colony of the England. NSW did not, then or now, encompass the whole of the continent, let alone the modern nation, Australia. At its lowest point, the day represents the day, in 1788, when one group of migrants settled in one part of the continent - Botany Bay. That settlement is not a date for celebration once it is recognised, as the High Court did in the landmark decision of Mabo in 1992, (1992) 175 CLR 1 (3 June 1992) that the settlement was illegal in accordance with international law as it was accepted in 1788. As Mason C.J. and McHugh J. stated at [33]: - "International law recognised conquest, cession and occupation of terra nullius as three of the effective ways of acquiring sovereignty. No other way is presently relevant." There is no controversy that Australia was not "conquered" and certainly, at least until Victoria has very recently made a treaty, no part of Australia was ever ceded. As for occupation of terra nullius, at [34] of their joint judgment Mason C.J. and McHugh quoted Blackstone, the leading English scholar of the early 19th century who stated:- "sending colonies (of settlers) to find out new habitations", he wrote (34) Commentaries on the Laws of England, 17th ed. (1830), Bk II, ch 1, p 7- "so long as it was confined to the stocking and cultivation of desert uninhabited countries, it kept strictly within the limits of the law of nature. But how far the seising on countries already peopled, and driving out or massacring

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the innocent and defenceless natives, merely because they differed from their invaders in language, in religion, in customs, in government, or in colour; how far such a conduct was consonant to nature, to reason, or to christianity, deserved well to be considered by those, who have rendered their names immortal by thus civilising mankind.” At [37] of their leading judgment, after analysing the history of the settlement of Australia, Mason C.J. and McHugh J concluded:- “Thus the theory which underpins the application of English law to the Colony of New South Wales is that English settlers brought with them the law of England and that, as the indigenous inhabitants were regarded as barbarous or unsettled and without a settled law, the law of England including the common law became the law of the Colony (so far as it was locally applicable) as though New South Wales were “an uninhabited country ... discovered and planted by English subjects” Finally, Mason C.J. and McHugh J, forming the majority view of this landmark decision, considered both the evidence of customary laws and traditions we as a Nation had been largely deliberately ignorant of, and current notions of international law to state:- “If the international law notion that inhabited land may be classified as terra nullius no longer commands general support, the doctrines of the common law which depend on the notion that native peoples may be “so low in the scale of social organization” that it is “idle to impute to such people some shadow of the rights known to our law” (65) In re Southern Rhodesia (1919) AC, at pp 233-234 can hardly be retained. If it were permissible in past centuries to keep the common law in step with international law, it is imperative in today’s world that the common law should neither be nor be seen to be frozen in an age of racial discrimination.” The relevance of the above parse of the decision of Mason C.J. and McHugh J is to illuminate why the 26th of January, far from being a day to be proud of as a Nation, is now recognised by our system of laws as being a day, insofar as sovereignty of NSW vested in the Crown of England, on which racial discrimination stole sovereignty from the pre-existing peoples of Australia living in NSW. I don’t imagine current inhabitants of Australia, having been “settled” by say the Chinese on the basis we were mere barbarians (perhaps who were so uncivilised we didn’t even accept our highest law makers), would think much of celebrating New South Canton Day as being the day we “barbarians” we were settled by the civilised Cantonese. But that is EXACTLY what we seek to impose on our pre-existing indigenous peoples. Until the High Court decided Mabo (1992) 175 CLR 1 (3 June 1992), we could

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	pretend that Australia(NSW) was legally settled on 26 January 1788. Since that decision, if we accept the rule of law, we must accept that our High Court accepts that NSW, and subsequently Australia, was settled on a racially discriminatory myth on that date. Finally, it might be argued that councils should simply accept the Commonwealth of Australia's pronouncement that the day is Australia Day. That the Commonwealth of Australia is there to govern the federation of States which are there to govern the coouncils, including our Shire. The response to this argument is that the Shire is empowered to govern for the good of all who live within it. Our Shire has an obligation, within the permits of the law that empowers it, to make decisions that properly balance the interests of those governed. There is no doubt the Shire is legally entitled to refuse to assist in the celebration of Australia Day, as this poll recognises. The question is "should it?". Once one makes the effort to understand the legal history, except those who are comfortable racists, a date less appropriate could hardly be considered. But hey, who said we can't have a public holiday to respectfully mark that occasion and learn from it. Just don't call it AUSTRALIA DAY.
68	The 26 January is a divisive day. Find another one.
70	Support or don't support as you wish just don't contribute funding
71	Support Australia Day not Welcome to Country. I was born her
72	Suggest that the older members of the community value this day but I doubt that media reach to many of these folk is not practical. If you would like responses from the broader community it should be door to door or ideally a vote.
73	Straya AU
74	Strathbogie Shire Council should be involved in Australia Day. In past years they haven't and this was discusting to ALL Australians. We are all, we are one
75	Strathbogie Shire as the representative body for all people living in the shire or ratepayers should work toward reconciliation with the history of colonialism in this country and seek all opportunities to acknowledge the First Nations people as the original custodians of this land. The involvement of councillors in Aus Day events and acknowledge this history would be appropriate.
76	Stop pandering to the idiots who have no idea about Australia day ffs
77	Should Council contemplate participating in 26 January activities it would demonstrate ignorance about our nation's history. Council is obliged to spend rate payer fees appropriately. This matter must not rest with an "opinion" poll because January 26 is irrelevant to Australia as a nation. This matter must be informed by facts and be evidenced based. In 1788 the English settled illegally (under international law) in a colony in NSW. Please inform yourselves of the history of occupation and abandon this offensive and hurtful proposal.
78	Should always support Australia Day
79	Racial division is for retards, why would you support it? We're all Australian and should be encouraged to unite and enjoy this land together. The only

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	people who benefit from scrapping Australia Day are those who wish to divide and conquer, don't be those people, nothing good is coming to them.
80	Quite frankly it's a disgrace that we have to have this discussion - I am a proud Australian and, as such, enjoy the opportunity to celebrate the occasion with all my fellow Australians.
81	Public funds should not be used to celebrate a day that has been protested by First Nations peoples since its inception in 1935
82	Proud to be an Australian
83	Please keep the community discussion going.
84	Please hold citizenship ceremonies on that day.
85	Please choose another date that does not clash with the colonisation of this country and is insulting and hurtful to the First Nations peoples. Furthermore, let's make it more of a regional celebration of everything that our Shire has to offer.
86	Please celebrate Australia day on a date that does not cause trauma to Indigenous Australians
87	Personally i dont think the shire should support a day that is just bringing diversity to the community. If the shire wants to support Australia day they need to support more Indigenous groups on this day
88	Perhaps council should focus on inclusivity, prosperity and getting the job of council done rather than this embarrassing back and forth over council involvement in January 26 celebrations. Waste of money and driving up hate and division. Do better it's beyond cringe.
89	Overt nationalism is the scourge of humanity.... fine to be appreciative that you happened (by luck) to be born here. I too am grateful. But why the need to celebrate at the electorates expense, especially given it makes some people in the community miserable? I thought this issue was put to bed with the last council?....seems it has been reignited by some bored retirees who enjoy wading into the culture wars.
90	One flag only the Australian flag at all events
91	Obviously a polarising subject however both sides of the fence need to be recognised as we embrace a growing groundswell for indigenous voices to guide us as towards a day that all of us can rejoice in celebrating.
92	Note the phone survey by third party. Councillor must know copper wire phone connections are out of date. Old phones have become expensive Most people have ditched old phone numbers Councillor must also know a nation wide referendum on the substances of current waste of funds No vote lost nation wide. Stop this attack on our heritage and history
93	Not a day to celebrate. Supporting this day with ratepayers money/taxpayers money and councillors or staff is disrespectful and probably racist. The 9th of May would be a good day for celebrating Australia Day given it was the opening of the first Parliament. I understand a different date is not up to Council but the current date is inappropriate to support. Also three clicks to get to the survey is too many, discourages participation.

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	The Lead ie the survey link, is buried at the bottom of this page https://www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au/council-launches-community-poll-on-australia-day-support/ - suggest moving the link to the top as nobody wants to read all that blah blah blah. It's classic TLDR (too long didn't read). Suggest a brief explanatory para then an accordion to read more should you want to bore yourself to sleep. Also the link at the bottom of the TLDR should go straight to the survey not via the project page which is just another click and adds zero but does make it one step harder for the user. I'm happy to chat if you want any help with this. Also on the markets page under the Violet Town accordion there is the below list. Apart from the fact it is Geocaching not Geocoaching these all need to be deleted - links are all broken and the actual list is below the inserted image of VT market dates (not better practice for accessibility to insert an image unless alternative text is added) and the link should be on the image as well. TOURISM Food and Wine GeoCoaching Markets Our History Our Natural Attractions Visitor Information Centres And finally, date formats! DD Month Year ie 26 January 1901 is the government standard. Most dates on the site are ok but there are a few January 26 and 26th January formats. Yes I was a bit bored this morning lol. Happy to help if you need to chat. The Australian government style guide is the bible https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/ Virginia 0418499527
94	No welcome to puntry
97	Needs to stay "Jan 26"
98	My comments relate to Australia Day and council involvement being on January 26. If the Australia Day celebrations were held on another date like July 14 then my answer would be different
99	Must be celebrated by everyone ON 26th January
100	Move the date so that it is acceptable for indigenous Australians. Spend the money it would cost for putting in an official Council participation into people with financial hardship, and tell the community that you are doing

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	this.
101	Local gov exists because of the settlement of Australia, without it, we would not be here. I support the right of all Australia's to celebrate Australia Day and the celebrations should be led by our local gov. I would like to know my history, the real history of Australia, the land I call home. And I am open to a federal gov decision to shift the date.
102	Let's start supporting the majority rather than changing EVERYTHING for the few that oppose things.
103	Let's celebrate on a different date. I support celebrating Australia Day but not on a day that hurts our indigenous people.
104	Let's be proud of our national day. Let's celebrate our indigenous brothers and sisters on there special days and Australia Day is for all Australians
105	Let's all celebrate together as a community on a day set aside for all Australians
106	It's time to come together again
107	It's our National day and should be celebrated in our town of Euroa And i look forward to attending the celebration as I normally do
108	It's my understanding that the federal government provide funding for Australia Day events . I do not want to double up and have my rates paying for this as well. You should actually make this clearer in your questionnaire
109	It's Australia Day,let's celebrate it
110	It's about the community to celebrate, not for councillors to feel good. Sure join in but as a rate payer. I respect our indigenous people and we should move the date but no welcome to country . Let them create their day for all of us to celebrate, they have a powerful story to share.
111	It's a deeply divisive and inconsiderate public holiday that shouldn't be a day of celebration. Australia's continual disrespect of the traditional owners of the land is a national shame and this day is salt in the wounds.
112	It is very important that our Shire take part in these events. I would also like to see the New Australian citizens event return to being a part of the Australia Day ceremony rather than a separate isolated event in a shire hall, somewhere. We are all Australians and we should value our allegiance to this great country. At the same time, we need to recognize the amazing contributions that are made by locals, usually in volunteering positions.
113	It is sad that this question has to be asked about our national day. I hope we never have a survey asking if you can still fly the Australian flag in our area. I love that Nagambie flies the flag and while the flag pole was being fixed the flag was carefully tended to daily until it could fly again. We should show pride in our country and love the country that we live in no matter where we are from.
114	It is part of us as Australians to promote Australia as one country that we all belong to
115	It is our National Day for ALL Australians
116	It is not your place to override a 'national' holiday, or, frankly, to even question it with a survey like this. Australia Day is still vehemently supported by the majority of people. Perhaps you could consider a change to policy if/when there's a 50/50 split of national

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	opinion. In the meantime, stick to fixing potholes and helping farmers.
117	It is Invasion Day. It isn't even the correct date.
118	It is important that local people are recognised for their contribution to the community.
119	It is absolutely necessary to support Australia Day at the highest level, more than ever before.
120	Incredibly important that council continue to recognise and support Australia Day activities in a measured responsible way that allows the community to observe the day and be aware that council has supported the various activities it has determined appropriate.
121	In Violet Town we have celebrated Australia Day on the 26th Jan - Shire funding has assisted with Lion's Club BBQ breakfast as and music - it's a day to gather; our national day in Australia - I would like to have our local community awards to happen on Australia Day.
122	In the event of a future change in dates to celebrate Australia Day I would support council's involvement.
123	If the federal government is providing money for the events then just use that money and don't spend rate payers money as it's fair to say the roads need more funding than Aus day :)
124	If a more appropriate date was chosen I probably would not oppose in the same way. If a national respect day was introduced honouring the importance of Australia's first nations I would not oppose council participation.
125	I'm uncomfortable with Australia Day being divisive. There should be an acknowledgement to indigenous Australians of their significant trauma. We should aim at collaborating with and including them in significant days and not support racism which charades as nationalism. Maybe we could share stories of when people arrived in Australia and how they came here as a shared journey and experience. Learning to share the country with each other and respecting our natural environment
126	I'm disappointed the council went back to supporting Aus Day events last year. all this back a forth feels like the a waste of rate payers Money. The Aus Day committee did a great job if organising the event the year the council was not involved and it didn't cost rate payers anything, which clearly proves the council does not need to be involved in Aus Day events.
127	I would support council involvement IF Council supported all community events that represent this day. It's plainly obvious that this day means many things too many people, so support all occasions equally.. meaning: * support indigenous people who want to gather and grieve, *support all who want to celebrate australia, *support those who are gathering to question our complex situation, and hear each other's personal stories. It is not councils role to decide who is valid to support and who isn't. If Council is not prepared to support indigenous ways of marking this day, then Council should not be funding celebrations either. It is totally possible to hold all perspectives in equal value, simultaneously. If that can't be done, then I strongly oppose Council involvement in only

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	supporting one idea... the celebration, because that is not inclusive. For me it's very easy to see a way of grieving and celebrating as a combined truth. I personally want to do both. Why are we fed these crazy polarities?.. as if they are the only option! All groups should be able to apply for funding or all groups should not be able to apply for funding. It's called Equality.
128	I would like to see a set of days to set aside to celebrate Australia. I think there should be a day to welcome new Australian citizens and celebrate the wealth of diversity they bring. I think there should be a day that celebrates the people who were here before colonisation. I think there should be a day to celebrate Australia as a whole and the country we have become. Whatever day/s is selected, it should not be a day that coincides with a date that inflicts trauma on any group of Australians.
129	I was scandalised by the January 26 motion passed by the current councillors at their first sitting in response to a letter penned by one person who had a clear relationship with those councillors. He had been a candidate for council and attended many meetings with them which clearly gave him a personal relationship. Not one councillor sought to explain their relationship to the letter writer. Apart from this the issue addressed by council at that meeting had been dealt with by a previous council after community consultation which should have finalised the matter. I am fully aware that council funds - my rates - are not needed for these events as a simple application to the federal government is available to support them.
130	I was appalled when the new council overturned the decision of the previous council without community involvement and without any discussion with our indigenous community. This form of community engagement is nothing more than an effort to justify that decision. In Avenel, there is a significant problem with aggressive abuse of the indigenous community, other people of colour and minority groups. This aggressive behaviour has become more prominent and emboldened since the council changes to Australia day celebrations. I am not sure how you can recover from this situation you have contributed to, but the council needs to have a strong plan focused on bringing the community together, not divided on race, religion, or personal choice.
131	I understand there is a lot of discussion about whether Australia Day should be on the 26th January. Until the federal government says any different, Australia Day is the 26th January and needs to be supported. Whether it is an appropriate day or not is not a local govt issue. Stick to what are local issues and leave the politics to the Federal and State clowns.
132	I understand Council does not control the date, but it needs to change and I would support Council's involvement in an alternative date that respected ALL members of our community, if this occurred in the future.
133	I totally support Strathbogie's involvement in supporting Australia Day.
134	I think we are all proud Australians and we should embrace it. We should also recognise the wrong of the past. And recognise our indigenous brothers and sisters at nadoc week. We are the lucky country

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135	I think Strathbogie Shire should celebrate Australia Day on January 26th.
136	I think it's silly we have to do these surveys! It's Australia Day and we live in Australia! Let's celebrate
137	I think it is very important for local councils and their communities to celebrate and acknowledge Australia Day
138	I think Council should stick to only providing support, maybe in the way of assisting with grant applications, to Australia Day activities/celebrations. If communities really want to celebrate Australia Day, individual committees for each town should be the ones organising everything, not council staff or councillors; there are much more important things that council should be focused on than Australia Day.
139	I support holding Australia Day on 26 January until/unless the Federal Government changes the date. It should be a celebration of all who have built our great country and our local community.
140	I support Council and Councillors being involved, but predicated on the notion that it is moved to another date . Australian Day celebrated on 26th is an affront to our indigenous people and out of respect should be moved to maybe our formation as a Federation. There should be general acceptance that the 26th is the wrong day and public discussion on an alternative
141	I support community members being recognised for their volunteer work and strongly support the local community and shire coming together to celebrate the great place and country in which we live. However I strongly oppose this to occur on the current day set- January 26th as the date is not inclusive of all Australians especially of our traditional custodians of the land on which we occupy. I was born and grew up in Euroa and am the custodian of land selected by my great, great grandparents so it saddens me greatly that as a community we cannot show respect for those before us by not finding an alternative time to celebrate what is wonderful about our country and inclusive to all.
142	I support celebrating Australia Day. I don't mind what date it is celebrated.
143	I strongly support councillors and council staff participating in an official capacity, but only if this is done professionally, [...]
144	I strongly oppose supporting Australia Day. Particularly on 26th January.
145	I strongly oppose our National (Australia) Day being on 26th January which is the day James Cook landed and claimed Australia for England. I support having a National (Australia) Day on another date.
146	I sometimes question the need for Citizens Awards.....
147	I say go for it, we need much much more national pride!
148	I respect the tradition of Australia Day and support those who invest effort in it. I also support the date.
149	I respect that everyone is entitled to acknowledge this day as they see fit, however, with the tight budget the council has, funds and time could be better spent on events/projects that do not offend people or divide the community.
150	I oppose Australia Day activities as they stand. I know that Council has no say in changing the date, but I would like involvement of Aboriginal culture and traditions and acknowledgement of Aboriginal history to be a big part of the day.
151	I honestly wonder why we need to have a poll, We live in Australia so it's our day why shouldn't we celebrate it, all this woke crap is just bringing unwanted division.

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152	I have personal feelings around this topic. Changing the date would be a powerful symbolic act, signalling a deeper commitment to acknowledging Indigenous rights, histories, and ongoing struggles. It would demonstrate a will to move forward from a difficult colonial past and work towards a more harmonious future grounded in truth. I understand that Strathbogie Shire cannot alone change the date. I think not enough time was given for educating the community that they can celebrate Australia Day and receive funding outside Strathbogie Shire (SS) for events as they did while SS had the decision in place not to celebrate Australia Day.
153	I have no problem with council or councillors being involved with Australia Day events IF IT IS ON A DIFFERENT DAY that is not commemorating invasion, colonisation and attempted genocide ☹️
154	I have always supported Australia Day as being a designated day that all Australians can share their lives in a beautiful country and be united was one nation of Australians
155	I have always seen Australia Day as important day to recognise members and groups for their dedication to the community.
156	I fully understand that the date of January 26 as the official Australia Day is a Federal Government issue, however, I do not support Council being involved in funding or representation at any events on this date. I believe this to be a shameful insult to our First Nations people and a perpetuation of inter generational trauma.
157	i find it sad that New Australians are not getting their certificates on Australia day . I acknowledge that much is still remiss about the situations and travails of the Indigenous community and the systematic problems that impact on them. However i do not feel that denying the Celebration of Australia and renaming it explicitly or implicitly as some other term, either about British/other colonization/invasion benefits us as people or a nation. The historical facts need to be out there and acknowledged that the First People were attacked and that atrocities happened and some values and systems are still impacting thus needing others to be aware and then gaining understanding and change in their intended or inadvertent results. We are a Nation and having a National Day is both important and significant. Historically it is noted on Captain Cook's arrival Day but denying this historical link with a New Modern Nation does not make sense. another Day may be possible and/or A Day. of Sorrow and Change and Conciliation. It is a complex matter with no easy solution and not dependent really on the issue of Australia Day., BEST WISHES
158	I feel the council should continue to support Australia Day celebrations on the 26th January. It's a day to proudly celebrate the wonderful achievements of this truly multicultural society since Federation.
159	I feel that 26th of January is an inappropriate day to hold a celebration of Australia. I look forward to a time when we can all celebrate this great country together ❤️🇦🇺
160	I feel passionately, as an immigrant, that the council celebrates Australia day as a day of reflection and gratitude and to recognise the volunteers and groups and individuals that give of themselves, embody the Australian spirit and contribute to make Strathbogie shire the place that it is

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161	I feel Australia Day celebrations, being a gazetted public holiday set by the Federal government, are an excellent opportunity for Strathbogie Shire to support the community and strengthen the connexion between the Council and its residents.
162	I feel as some do not want Australia Day to go ahead, then they do not attend
163	I don't think the 26 January is a date to be celebrated by all Australians. An alternative date that is more inclusive and respectful of our First Nations people would be appropriate.
164	I don't believe it's council role to rule on Australia Day. If it is ever to be changed it has to be federal
165	I don't believe it is Councils role to support Australia events. For some members of our community, in particular First Nations peoples this is not a day of celebration.
166	I do not support the celebration of Australia day on 26th January. However, Strathbogie Shire can have an important role in balancing the communication on that day, acknowledging that it is not a day that all Australians embrace, and welcoming new Australians through permanent residency celebrations. Finding a middle path where we can acknowledge the pain and suffering that day brings to Traditional Owners, as well as celebrating our multicultural community are important roles of council.
167	I do not believe our council should fund or support Australia Day celebrations as funding for these events is available from other dedicated sources.
168	I do not believe Local Government needs to be involved in Australia Day nor do I want any of my rates spent on Australia events when it is already funded Federally. I also don't want my rates spent on council staff wages working at events which will be overtime and at penalty rates. The community can celebrate in any manner they wish as long as it is respectful and my rates are not used to fund it.
169	I congratulate council for getting community feedback on this issue. Hopefully this democratic procedure will see the shire move ahead in a positive manner.
170	I cannot see any positive reason for Councillors and Council Staff to not participate & celebrate Australia Day
171	I cannot believe that our local council is holding a popularity poll for our National Day. If our National Day needs to be changed it is a Federal issue. Until then it is Council's duty to support our National Day.
172	I believe we should be consulting traditional owners on how they would like us to celebrate Australia day in a respectful way that acknowledges the violence of colonisation.
173	I believe we need to continue to have Australia Day events every year. This is our country Australia. We should not stop celebrating and all new comers to Australia should blend in with us and enjoy the freedom we have in this wonderful country.
174	I believe that the council should not be using our rates on our elected councillors to support a celebration that is not Australian. Move it to another day. The council could celebrate the SSC on another day that is not a cumulation of such sadness
175	I believe that Council should NOT fund this. I will not be celebrating that particular day however as I feel it is hurtful to First Nations people. We need to

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	find another day and our Council needs to think deeply a out the significance of this day and how it affects First Nations. If people want to celebrate, they can. Council should NOT fund it however.
176	I believe that Australia Day, whilst a reminder of our history and the terrible things that happened with colonisation, is a time of renewal and connection with indigenous and non indigenous Australians. We can't change the past but we can learn from it to change and shape the future. We are all Australians and can use Australia Day go come together.
177	I believe Councillors and Council staff should very much support Australia Day. What happened when Australia was settled by the English is history. They didn't know any better at the time. Look at the way they treated their own people. Since European settlement, many soldiers, sailors and aircrew have given their lives to keep Australia a free country. I believe wholeheartedly that everyone should celebrate Australia Day.
178	I believe Australia Day should always be celebrated by the community
179	I am not against people celebrating Australia Day with family and/or friends, however, I don't believe the local council or councillors should host, fund or participate in any public events as they represent the whole community and not all community members support Australia Day celebrations on January 26.
180	I am happy to support Australia day but change the date to another day which all Australians, including our indigenous Australians will want to take part in.
181	I am happy for council to support community events for Australia Day ONLY on a date other than 26th January. I have no interest in or support for council supporting events on 26th January.
182	I am a strong supporter of Australia Day and the events that are conducted to celebrate it. If fully support the Shire giving financial backing for events
183	I acknowledge that this is a very challenging topic for Council. I would like to see Council acknowledging the 26 Jan as an important day for indigenous Australians and a difficult day in Australian history. If there are other ceremonies or events organised on that day, I think Councillors should avoid attending them.
184	Hope to see the Council support Australia Day January 26th 2026!
185	Having spent Aust day in Darwin which has the largest indigenous population, they do this right. The theme is Reflect, respect, celebrate. A fun run, Yothu Yindi performed a smoking ceremony, inclusive and unifying without hate or anger. "Australia Day in Darwin includes significant community events such as the Hot 100 Australia Day Ute Run, a family-friendly event with decorated utes, and the Oz Run & Smoking Ceremony at the Darwin Waterfront Precinct, a free event for runners and walkers of all ages. Other celebrations highlight the region's vibrant multiculturalism through festivals and activities, reflecting on Australia's history and community spirit on January 26th. Reflect, Respect, Celebrate: The overarching theme for Australia Day events in Darwin, encouraging people to reflect on Australia's history, respect its diverse communities, and celebrate its cultural achievements. Community Engagement: The celebrations aim to foster community spirit, promote inclusion, and provide a platform for people from all backgrounds to come together"
186	Having Australia Day on January 26th is hurtful and disrespectful, if the date

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	was changed I would strongly support all celebrations.
187	Have appreciated the recognition and awards in past years and hope it continues
188	Happy for community to run events but I dont think council should. Eventually I think Australia will move the day to better support First Nations but for now councillors deciding to attend is a good comprise between the two sides.
189	God help us!
190	Funding and support should go to diverse community groups to celebrate in what ever way they wish.
191	Fly the Australian national flag alone. Return shire awards and citizenship ceremonies to Australia Day. Support local towns or organisations conducting Australia Day events. No need for Welcome to Country. We celebrate as one
192	First up, I recognise that the declaration of "Australia Day" on 26 January is set by the Federal Government, and is completely beyond Council's control. Second, I recognise and support the commemoration of 26 January 1788 - it is one of the most significant events in our continent's history and is fully deserving of remembrance / celebration / recognition of European settlement (or invasion if you prefer to think such). And as such, local government can and should recognise the date. However, I also think that it's insulting and insensitive for government at all level to commemorate 26 January 1788 as a celebration titled "Australia Day" - to do such on the same day that European colonisers / settlers / invaders (whatever the term you use) claimed a settlement and thus ignored / erased Indigenous sovereignty is something that needs addressing. By all means, celebrate 26 January 1788 - but with the day renamed as "First Fleet Day", "Settlement Day" or something more appropriate. This should also apply to Strathbogie Shire commemorations / celebrations. Therefore, if Strathbogie Shire councillors / staff are to be involved in funding / recognising / taking part in 'Australia Day' ceremonies, I would request the the Shire: 1) Avoids using the phrase "Australia Day" in any such funding / event / speeches etc - '26 January celebrations' would be more appropriate. 2) Wherever possible, Shire ceremonies should include recognition of the implications of the events of 26 January 1788 for Indigenous Australians 3) Such recognition as in (2) should be a condition of Shire funding for such events. 4) Shire support for Welcome to Country and other Indigenous participation

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	should be advertised and sought. 5) Shire Councillors and staff should have the right to take part or refuse participation in such events without negative consequences for them. 6) Shire should, wherever possible, also celebrate / commemorate / advertise the 'national' and cultural days of the various nationalities / ethnicities etc of individuals in the region wherever possible so as to communicate the fact that all national / cultural days are equally important. Thank you for this opportunity to contribute. More than happy to contribute to any other forum / activities regarding this topic. Regards Brendan Paterson 0416159997
193	Expand Australia Day for Australian We to support
194	Everyone has a right to do what they think
195	Each Australia Day I go to the Euroa Newsagency for the breakfast provided by Neville and Lorraine Mawson and the entertainment by Greg Dudley. It is a great way of celebrating our special day and there are always plenty of people there. After that I also attend the lunch time ceremony and awards being given out. It is a great day and everyone enjoys themselves.
196	Do not divide this brilliant town. Australia day is about celebrating this great country
197	Do not change the day or allow activist groups to change its meaning. It has always been an opportunity to celebrate being an Australian and I always remember the proud citizens of Australia holding high their certificates on that day. It was always a public holiday and formally celebrated on the Monday of a long weekend. I wish it was still the same instead of a disruptive day for business on any day of the week.
198	Disappointed to hear that Councillors are lobbying community members to fill the survey in negatively because that is their slant on Council's involvement in Australia Day events. I have no problem with people voting one way or the other but these decisions should be made without the influence of others.
199	Date should be the last Monday in January (not specifically 26 January) Union Jack should be removed from the flag (leave southern cross)
200	Councils represent for the majority of their constituents in their area(Democracy), not the noisy minority. The majority support Australia Day celebrations.
201	Councils and Councillors, and shire staff were originally formed to serve the regional public, not lead it, not try and influence it or impose individual or social ideological trends. That is still their role, and it is now being widely recognised that as public servants they are stepping over their boundaries. (Not just Strathbogie council). This will bring about change, as individuals who as public servants are supposed to remain apolitical, have incessantly pushed

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	anti Australian or divisional politics within the shire. Those people need to be removed if they cannot remain apolitical. If a councillor or senior staff member wished to oppose Australia Day, or hinder it, they show that they are not of the right mindset to serve the Australian public and should be removed from the role.
202	Councillors represent the community so should be there representing regardless of there own beliefs
203	Councillors attending events represent their constituents, not their personal views. While I do not propose preventing other ratepayers from celebrating the holiday in the way they choose, I am entirely opposed to the expenditure of SB Council funds or the official representation of our Council at celebrations or other events which support the idea of Australia Day as a good thing. For so many, it clearly was and is quite the opposite.
204	Councillors are elected on the basis that they will be the representative of residents' of Strathbogie Shire. The majority of residents of Strathbogie Shire support Australia Day. Councillors have an obligation to support and participate in community events on Australia Day, irrespective of their own beliefs.
205	Councillors and council staff are supposed to represent the WHOLE community. They are entitled to their own opinions on things and may not always agree but they have a professional responsibility to work for and respresent the whole community. If they cannot separate their personal views and opinions then they need to do some accurate reflection on their motives and agendas and step away if they cant remain professional and objective. Australia day isnt just a racial issue - it is also about community and coming together. In recent years there have been councillors and council staff pushing their own agendas - some of them quite woke - and contributing to community divide. It is toxic and disgusting to have this behaviour happening in an organisation which is supposed to be leading and supporting the community. The WHOLE community. There has been too much focus on national issues - focus on what local government is supposed to focus on - fix the roads! Build the community in a positive manner rather than continuing to.push the divide. There should be opportunities for people to celebrate if they choose to - and for those who want to do something else. It shouldnt always be about who is right and who is wrong - and within that councillors and council staff need to be objective in their roles and participation. It is sickening to hear community conversations about specific councillors campaigning and canvasing the community to get people on side for their anti-australia day agenda. What a disgrace. We need to do better - THEY need to do better. Its tiresome that this continues. If they cant remain fair and objective they need to step away.

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206	Council will undoubtedly be rewarded with answers which support its current position on the Australia Day Survey Questions. This is because it fails to explain WHAT kind of support is being sought/ given, and WHY it is being sought/given. Those who take seriously the preamble that accompanies all formal gatherings, ie. the acknowledgment “of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of the land and the respect to their Elders, past, present and future” will continue to advocate for an appropriate date on which to hold our national celebration. It is however disappointing that Council has avoided an opportunity to address growing injustice and racism, that continues to impact (and diminish) us all. It also would have been useful if Council had shared what they had heard/learned from Taungurung and Yorta Yorta people. It is not the event; we all want to celebrate Australia Day; it is the inappropriate date. It's not that a better date can't be found ... it's that a worse date can't be found.
207	Council staff and councillors support many local community groups and events and Australia Day celebrations should be included. Support the silent majority and support Australians. There is enough division going on in this country without council staff and councillors choosing to only support the loud minority. We're Australian's, support Australia Day
208	Council should, and presumably does, support a diverse range of community groups and events. One would hope that the decision making process regarding allocation of funding, or allocation of other forms of 'support', to such events is done in a consistent and transparent manner. What criteria would normally be applied, when assessing any community groups funding request? Do the proposed Australia Day event/s meet these baseline criteria? However, while I support community focused events that bring people together, I do not support events that are divisive and promote hurtful rhetoric. If Council is to support Australia Day events, it should not be supporting groups or events that participate in or promote racist discussions in public forums. I would be disappointed to see Council 'provide support' to any potentially divisive events, simply because such events are being pushed by loud and angry voices. I do, however, see value in Council proactively addressing the harmful rhetoric that does rear it's head around this issue. For example, any funding that goes to an event that only aligns with recent (i.e. as per the last ~30 years) approaches to 'celebrating' 26 Jan, should be matched with funding that supports events that focus on the indigenous community (and which acknowledge the full complexity of Australian history).
209	Council should not be involved.
210	Council should always support Australia day. Initiate and support activities throughout the Shire. Decorate main street and fly the Australian flag.
211	Council is starved of money, its a gratuitous waste of money.
212	Council as elected by the ratepayers of all nationalities need to acknowledge we are all Australians irrespective of nationalities so I strongly support Council support Australia day as it is .

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213	Continue to celebrate Aust day on 26th Jan, the council are only there to represent ratepayers & not their own opinions. We need our town on full support of this beautiful country we live in today & let history be just that - history. Celebrate everything Australian AUUAUUAUUAUUAUUAU 🇺🇸 🦘 AUUAUUAUUAU
214	Community leadership and direct involvement is required from Council and all it represents
215	Community Groups can continue to celebrate Australia by managing their own events and seeking funding via federal funding available
216	Community events celebrating this beautiful country help to connect people from all walks of life. I believe the quiet majority need to start to make an effort to enable unity in a safe supportive environment. As we know the squeaky wheel gets the oil - time to cut off the oil ☺️
217	Change the date.
218	Change the date!
219	Change the Date!
220	Change the date of Australia Day and I will change my position to support of funding. 26 January is inappropriate because of the historic hurt it represents.
221	Change the date - perhaps to Federation Day, Wattle day
222	Celebrations are important but we've heard that it that date reflects a day of pain, and causes division. It may be out of step with councils support for the Statement form the heart and the Mou with the traditional owners. Does council have a reconciliation action plan? Perhaps that process might empower council to allocate resources in a way that advances the future of Australia and celebrations for all, without the pain and antagonism of that date.
223	Celebrating the excellent efforts of local residents is a special and integral part of a strong and cohesive local community. I love that. However, I don't think that needs to be conflated with a type of nationalism that excludes many members of the community, and which Australia Day has come to represent. Its promotion by the Howard government as part of the History Wars of the 90s is often overlooked. It is a relatively new event in Australian history. I have many indigenous friends who struggle on this day, and many migrant friends for whom this day is so special and filled with pride. I think a community celebration day that is one Strathbogie chooses (not associated with another national day) would send a lovely message that we are a council that rewards residents for their good will and community service, and would lead the way in how we honour and include everyone in the LGA. For those who would like to celebrate Australia Day, they are welcome to do that in their own time and with their own resources. I would warn against Harmony Day as an option for our local day of community celebration, as it is actually the International Day for the End of Racial Discrimination - Australia has chosen to avoid difficult discussions on this day (the original intent) as labelling it Harmony Day. I would like to see is all come together
224	Celebrating our great country is of paramount importance. And should be encouraged by all for all in every level of government. Advocating for a date change, to one that does not commemorate the colonisation of Australia, but perhaps the date when both black and white

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	Australians were recognised as Australians.
225	Celebrating being Australian should not even be a question.
226	Celebrating Australia Day means a lot to many in Euroa, especially the older and veterans community. It is set up as an inclusive event and all would be welcome. Of course the council should be supporting it.
227	Celebrating an Australia Day is fine BUT not on January 26th. As most Australians are finally acknowledging the Indigenous peoples of Australia, January 26 is a most unhappy day, being the start of the invasion of their Country. Another date would enable ALL Australians to celebrate an Australia Day.
228	Celebrate with the old folks and the homeless. Can you make your questions easy to understand please
229	Being a veteran Australian day means just as much to me as Anzac Day changing the date is unaustralian and I do not support it.
230	Because it causes problems in the community, I believe we should re-schedule, maybe combine with ANZAC day.
231	Bearing in mind that celebrating the arrival of the first fleet and the beginning of British imperial rule is (1) hurtful to and differentiates First Australians from those of migrant descent even though in my case that was in the 1850s, (2) that the 26th January has only tenuous historical links to the establishment of Victoria or the Federation and contradicts the council's claim to support reconciliation, staff and councillors should not be asked nor permitted to participate officially in January 26 events.
232	Be good to have the citizenship ceremony on this day among people celebrating Australia Day
233	Australia is about the here and now. Celebrate Australia Day
234	Australia is a magnificent country worth celebrating, but 26 January is a painful day for many First Nations peoples and those who stand with them. I believe we need to find a more inclusive date. I understand this is a complex issue with many perspectives, which is why I have marked 'somewhat oppose' to support a transition toward a new national day.
235	Australia Day should not be held on January 26th. It needs to be moved to a neutral date. And Council should support this and recognise this land we live on was stolen from the Taungurung people's.
236	Australia Day should continue, on the traditional date, to celebrate the achievements of ALL Australian citizens. As such, it should be recognised and supported by our local, elected Councillors and paid employees, all of whom (especially the CEO) should be local residents anyway.
237	Australia Day should be supported by every Australian no matter what their race origins, age, gender or religious beliefs. We should all be proud to be Australian and should celebrate this day January 26th together.
238	Australia Day should be inclusive of all Australians. Currently it is offensive to indigenous Australians. We need a day that is acceptable to all Australians.
239	Australia Day should be celebrated, because all Australians come together and we are all stronger together - There is no divide. Don't be weak!
240	Australia Day should be celebrated on a different date because January 26 is a painful reminder for many First Nations people, marking the beginning of

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	dispossession and loss of culture. A national day should be something that brings all Australians together in unity and pride, not one that divides or causes hurt. By choosing a new date, we have the opportunity to create a celebration that truly includes and respects everyone.
241	Australia day should always be celebrated
242	Australia Day on the 26th of Jan is widely deemed as offensive, hurtful and ignorant of the bloodshed, rape and murder that occurred when white settlers arrived. The long dark shadow of colonialism in this country and all countries around the world where the native people and rightful land 'owners' / custodians were swindled, decimated and continue to live in sub standard conditions because of intergenerational trauma, should NOT be celebrated, let alone funded by our council money. Change the date.
243	Australia Day matters—and so should Council's involvement. This is the country we live in, and many have fought and died to protect the freedoms we enjoy today. Australia Day is a chance for all of us to come together and celebrate what is uniquely Australian—our shared values, our resilience, and our community spirit. Other nationalities proudly celebrate their heritage here in Australia, and rightly so. But it's disheartening that we, as Australians, often feel shamed or hesitant to do the same. The fact that we have to vote or campaign for our own council to participate in this national event is deeply disappointing. I strongly believe Strathbogie Council and its elected members should be front and centre in supporting and participating in Australia Day events. It's not just about tradition—it's about unity, pride, and respect for those who came before us.
244	Australia Day is to celebrate this country. Everyone should celebrate
245	Australia Day is the one day that Australians of any nationality can get to have a celebration. Not forced on anyone but to those who wish to participate.
246	Australia Day is sacred to regard our home & history
247	Australia Day is our day to celebrate community achievements
248	Australia Day is on 26th January and NO other day
249	Australia Day is not a day of celebration for all community groups and marks a day of trauma and mourning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people - this has become a day of division rather than unity. Council involvement and support should be for events that are inclusive for ALL Australians (and not just in a token way), and not just for the majority, more powerful group. Council should be working on building trust rather than re-traumatising indigenous people. I think those that want to celebrate Australia Day by the overconsumption of sausages and alcohol can raise their own funds and provide their own leadership.
250	Australia Day is important to those who developed Australia into a strong democracy where freedoms and coordination are more developed than in any other country. Those opposed to this occasion oppose the concept so any date will be challenged, therefore no point changing it. All Australians need to embrace such events and use them to grow ourselves as people. This means we embrace important First Nation events as well as important emerging events from the increasing numbers of cultures that have arrived in recent decades.
251	Australia Day is for everybody to be involved in and be proud of
252	Australia Day is for all Australian and not 0.005% of the population.

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253	Australia Day is for all Australians. If you don't like it, pack your bags and leave. So sick of all this "woke" stuff. We are one and all!!! We are free because of both my parents who fought for us in WW2.
254	Australia Day is every one's day celebration respectfully unites community not decide it. Please don't put a wedge between divergent views. Australia Day matters and it can be done respectfully and honour heritage as a nation. Thanks
255	Australia Day is Australia Day. I grew up with it on that day and it was never an issue then and it shouldn't be now. Other community groups celebrate their own days/weeks without protest from me, such as NAIDOC week. We should all be able to celebrate what's relevant to us, even if it upsets some. Let them create a day for their own celebration but not spoil mine
256	Australia Day is an extremely important day and should remain so. 26 January should be left intact for ever and not be changed by the minority. For those of us who have supported it for decades love our country!!
257	Australia Day is about Australians coming together as one nation to celebrate living in this country. It recognises all people and nationalities. We are one we are Australian. Council should support the Day and keep in mind its core duties to the whole Shire.
258	Australia day is a sharing day, where all people are celebrating the Australian freedoms and lifestyle.
259	Australia Day is a recognised Australian celebration of our nation, and until such a time as it is legally legislated against it needs to be fully supported by our elected councillors. Far too often, these important occasions are downplayed. Australia Day should not be one of them
260	Australia Day is a proud day to be an Australian no matter what culture you come from We must unite as one Stop causing division
261	Australia Day is a nationally gazetted day and is the day when all Australians can come together to celebrate our good fortune. Our Council can play a leading role in recognising the day, supporting the day, and participating in the day. Its all about inclusivity and leadership.
262	Australia Day is a national holiday and therefore any funding and support should be provided by the federal government. Any local Australia Day committees should apply to the federal government for any financial support to run their local events and not rely on a handout from the local shire. I believe it would be a wise move for the Shire Council to back away from being involved in Australia Day activities because it is becoming a contentious day, particularly if it is held on the current date, and will continue to be for years to come. Currently there are some groups boycotting it because it is regarded as Invasion Day and these groups have a strong point. They want the day changed

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	to a more suitable and less contentious date. If the day is changed to another date, there would be groups who have supported it on January 26, protesting about the day being changed and wanting it back. This group has a weaker argument and if the day is changed to a more suitable date in the future I believe their protests would wane over the next few years. I believe it is not the Shire Councils role to provide support for holding Australia Day activities on whichever date it is held and should not be involved in any official capacity.
263	Australia Day is a national event, it is not a local event
264	Australia Day is a great way to say thank you to people that give so much to our community
265	Australia Day is a great opportunity for Council to facilitate a good day out for the entire community. I strongly support Council being involved and would like to see citizenship ceremonies brought back for Australia Day celebrations to welcome new Australians in a group celebration environment.
266	Australia Day is a gazetted federal public holiday to be held yearly on the 26th January. Events held on this day are supported by the Australia Day Council. However for me, in respect and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples whom for many and for decades regarded 26th January as a Day of Mourning, the 26th January is a day to commemorate rather than a day to celebrate being Australian. I support the ability of communities to hold events on this day, but in respect for First Nations Peoples, in this case the wishes of the Taungurung Peoples, I do not believe the Shire of Strathbogie Council needs to hold or financially support these events. It would be wonderful if we could have a day to celebrate Australia that was not a divisive date.
267	Australia Day is a Federal Government responsibility. Local councils should not be concerning themselves in Federal issues. To be trying to divide the community by having a poll for a National Day is appalling.
268	Australia Day is a day to celebrate our beautiful country as one .
269	Australia Day is a day that everybody is able to celebrate the wonderful country and people who makeup Australia. It is significant that all those who support and contribute are able to be recognized on this day by all those in our communities It is a day that makes us proud to be Australian
270	Australia Day is a dated and insensitive holiday that should be carefully reviewed by public groups and figures.
271	Australia Day is a dated and divisive event that has been rejected by many councils as well as this one. I find it offensive that the council would support an event that causes distress to many in the community. The fact that the community is divided on this matter indicates that the council should not support it. Individuals can still do whatever they want, council is not required. If Council supports the community groups who support Australia day will they also support the day of mourning? The date will be changed and Strathbogie council will look very backwards if they are not already on board. I hope you make a decision that is fair and just.
272	Australia Day is a celebration that cannot be reversed. We can always (& should) recognise the nation's indigenous people as being the original settlers - but those who came after, become part of the "Australia"

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	story. It is a day to be celebrated by all who are citizens with a warm welcome invitation for indigenous persons to join in if they wish to.
273	Australia Day is a appropriate day to celebrate groups and citizens in the individual towns
274	Australia Day in its current form is not inclusive and does not acknowledge the harm done to the aboriginal peoples. It is having a tendency to become a jingoistic nationalistic event with echoes of American political division.
275	Australia Day events exclude members of our community. I don't think council should support events that's are not inclusive. Support for Australia days has become political but putting politics aside the facts are that this country was founded on genocide and invasion and cerebrating it on the day that the first feel arrived is insensitive to say the least.
276	Australia Day could do with rebranding national, eg that a change of date could be inclusive and appropriate and a discussion about what we are celebrating.
277	Australia Day celebrations on Australia Day - January 26th.
278	Australia Day celebrations on 26 January are insulting to First Nations people. Acknowledge it on another day.
279	Australia Day celebrations are profoundly hurtful to our First Nations communities. We need to be better. Let's be better Strathbogie. Treaty is just around the corner. You can be at the forefront of profound change :)
280	Australia Day celebrations all Australians
281	australia certainly deserves to be celebrated, but this isn't the day. please don't give in to the minority with loud voices.
282	Australia became a nation on 1 January 1901 when 6 British colonies became a federation (I cannot believe I have to type these words). To celebrate the day we invaded this country rather than the day we became a nation is insensitive, irrelevant and a historical. It panders to some base instinct in a part of the population and I will not participate until the date is changed. I think it is a bit intimidating to insist on people identifying themselves in this poll. But there you go.
283	At some stage we as a country will have to reconcile with our factual past. Will it be us or our children
284	At our most recent elections, it became evident many of our councilors were elected based on their support for Australia Day January 26th. Our community voted strongly NO in the referendum. Despite the previous council vigorously supporting the YES vote. This community has spoken, and their vote deserves respect. It indicates the desire to be as one, together, united and showing, this community want to be proud to be Australian. Celebrating Australia Day is a strong part of building and holding that pride. January 26th is our National Day. We have a right to celebrate our National Day without fear. Our National Day is for all Australians to unite, no matter ethnicity, religion, gender or ability.

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	Strathbogie Tableland Australia Day Committee
285	As this is a federal public holiday not the business of local government, and a day of mourning for our First Nations community, it makes little sense to enable or promote Australia Day. If community groups wish to access federal funding for their events, that's fine but it should not use local government funds, resources or staff time. Councillors have already politicised this day more than necessary and caused hurt to First Nations community and allies. Think about your role as councillors and have some respect for what this day signifies to First Nations people. Stay out of it and don't let it be a platform for racism.
286	As the representatives of the great people of Strathbogie, I expect the cllrs, and the council to attend and support the various local groups in their celebration of our national day. This incarnation of the Strathbogie Council has shown it is proudly Australian, with the national flag flying at the world headquarters, and the regional headquarters. Thank you. I also see that is flying in the centre of euroa. Thanks again. Now let us continue to celebrate our national day, with unswerving, and unending support and funding from our council. Proudly Australian. Thanks for the opportunity to comment. If you have any questions, just ask. Best wishes, graeme pollard.
287	As any changes to Australia Day sits with the Federal Government, council should participate in and support Australia Day as years past until then
288	As a material beneficiary of of the colonisation and use of lands in the Strathbogie Ranges by my family who came across from Ireland in the 1850s to escape their own experience of dispossession, I feel strongly that the legacies of traumatic occupation not be celebrated. As a rate payer, I would prefer to see council resources spent on events that celebrate and include first nations perspectives as well as the efforts of white Australians to define their own cultures. I love festivals and events, just ones where everyone is invited.
289	Although I support the celebration of a national day, it should be a day when indigenous people are not in mourning. On Australia Day, it would be great if councillors acknowledge that the date is a painful one for indigenous people. Strathbogie Shire should write to the federal government asking that they change the date.
290	Albanese and inner-city Melbourne councils started a trend of downplaying the Australian flag and Australia Day. It is not aligned with the conservative voting patterns of Strathbogie Shire.
291	AD should not be held on January 26, in deference to the wishes of our First Nations people
292	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people should be acknowledged more on the day - January 26th. This day should not be an Australia Day celebration if should be an acknowledgement of the truth of "occupation, murder and displacement of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people.

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	Australia day date should be changed out of respect and empathy for Aboriginal & Torres Straight Islander people.
293	A good way for the council to put back into and support the community. Australia Day is becoming more popular not less.
294	A critical date in Australian history that we should acknowledge and celebrate locally. It's also the perfect time to celebrate the contribution local citizens have made to their community.
295	26th January is Australia Day. Stop try to change history
296	"What, to the [first Australians], is your [26th of January]? I answer; a day that reveals to him, more than. all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which lie is the constant victim. To him, your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy license; your national greatness, swelling vanity; your sounds of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your denunciations of tyrants, brass fronted impudence; your shouts of liberty and equality, hollow mockery; your prayers and hymns, your sermons and thanksgivings, with all your religious parade, and solemnity, are, to him, mere bombast, fraud, deception, impiety, and hypocrisy—a thin veil to cover up crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages. There is not a nation on the earth guilty of practices, more shocking and bloody, than are the people of [white Australia], at this very hour." Frederick Douglass
297	- Has the Council consulted with the Taungurung and Yorta Yorta peoples about their sentiments re the January 26 date? Our council supposedly has an MoU with the Taungurung so it is important to have their perspective - after all, they were the first people in this area. - This January 26 holiday is a relative recent date (only being a designated national holiday since 1994) and actually 'recognises' events that occurred in NSW in 1788 before 'Australia' (as a nation) existed - January 26 is not - and will never be - a nation 'unifying' date - This is a Federal Government sanctioned date so let the money come from the Federal Government (ie the Australia Day Council). Groups can apply directly to that body. - Ratepayers money should NOT be used to acknowledge January 26. Ratepayers money is already stretched thinly. - Councillors and Council staff in their 'official' capacity should not attend any events on January 26, but as individual citizens they can of course take whatever actions they so choose. - In these days of scams and nuisance calls, many people do not answer unknown phone numbers, so the effectiveness (and expense) of phone polls is questionable.

Comments from Randomised Phone Survey

1.	I expect council staff to be celebrating Australia Day and to be visible. Up until now, they were doing visits to different towns to see what people wanted, but that has been their first meeting of the people. You can't have contact with them, there is no avenue, you cannot speak to a councillor about what is happening. I am very disappointed.

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2.	Extremely disappointed in past councillors not having it and independent celebrations not supported by council.
3.	Caller would like to say the involvement this year was better than most and should keep getting involved. Council are doing a good a job and it is good chance to engage and connect with the community.
4.	Think the councils walked away from a few crack pot ideas, Council should be there, needs everybody to fully support Australia day events. Council officers should present the young Australian of the year out of the students young and the elder Australian award too. Community more involved in voting too would be great.
5.	Somewhat support events and also feels events could be problematic and events could happen.
6.	If they're not Australian and have to come to Australia and don't wish to join in our celebration, it is their choice, but do not try and change our day. I'm very strongly opposed to not celebrating Australia Day and feel that it should be celebrated.
7.	The council should be supporting Australia day directly celebrations and all the callers did the survey years ago and then the next year it was taken away with no reasons why.
8.	Just don't go woke.
9.	I believe it should be continuing because we are Australians.
10.	She thinks it is important and understand the integrity about it.
11.	Caller finds them alright.
12.	No further comments but thinks this is a great idea as we've done in the past.
13.	Caller believes council staff should do more to support and celebrate Australia day.
14.	I am quite happy with the community running events for Australia Day.
15.	Prefer them not to celebrate the Australia date on the day of invasion, would recommend to find another day so that all the Australian residents can celebrate.
16.	Caller believes that the council has acknowledgment of First Nation's People and then making events to celebrate Australia Day hypocritical. Change the Australia Day date.

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17.	Politicians pushing their own agendas and these people telling others that these celebrations are wrong. Politician's not remaining neutral. Loss of focus on what the responsibilities of local council are for the local community. Should focus on local issues. Ex: AUS Day celebration opposed by anti-AUS function, who tied ribbons, individuals on council had vocal support for the anti.
18.	The caller expresses Australia Day's continuity
19.	Supporting council members participating in line with the support and consensus of the community. Aus Day being on 26th Jan isn't appropriate given the date's history, but another date would be fine.
20.	I have nothing against Australia Day but oppose spending rates money on stuff like this, they are meant to provide essential services and beyond that they should give rate relief.
21.	The customer is all for it, that is acknowledged and celebrated. Like it used to be
22.	There should be a lot more consultation and debates for celebrating the day itself and there should be more acknowledgement for first nation people and their feelings for the day.
23.	Would like to know how the funding will be sourced for this. Does not believe that rate payers should have to pay for this. Wants to know if it will be from a federal or state source.
24.	Would like to celebrate with them for Australia Day. Would love to participate in any local Australia day activities
25.	No additional comments.
26.	Very much Australia orientated, and wants to celebrate
27.	No additional comments.
28.	I really like Australia Day and want to make it a habit. I want the Shire to support it.
29.	The majority of people in the shire want this. Caller would like the council to take the time to listen to and genuinely consider the opinions of others, rather than prioritizing their own.
30.	Why does the council big stone metal construction instead of just a sign (as no need for it) and waste money this way instead of doing sensible things with the

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	money.
31.	Caller wants better services and a more frequent schedule for the bin collection.
32.	I think we should have Australia day totally.
33.	The caller believes that the council should be impartial in the sense that opportunities should be able for all groups and not just one section of the community. This should be provided and if a person chooses to participate that is upto them. It doesn't matter on the event specifically
34.	I think they should always participate because there are few opportunities in the Shire to show true leadership to ratepayers and residents.
35.	As long as we are notified of what they will be doing
36.	don't want the celebration to be discontinued.
37.	The caller only believes that Australia day has been hijacked to cause division in the community. They are concerned by this
38.	Its nice that the council is asking people, best to do what the community want
39.	No additional comments but I do believe Australia Day is extremely important.
40.	If it goes against the current agreement that staff are aware of then this is strongly opposed
41.	Caller does not see very much of their rates going to good use. Would prefer officers to be in the office or out and about doing things that need to be done, then waving banners in the middle of Australia day.
42.	Caller would like to include Taungurung people in the event.
43.	Find it is ridiculous that people do not want to celebrate Australia day.
44.	We're all Australian regardless of background and should celebrate together.
45.	Any Australia day event should include the importance and acknowledge the nation's history.
46.	Keep it as Australia Day on January 26th
47.	The caller believes it is ridiculous for the Australian government to get involved. The caller believes it is up to the shire to celebrate Australia day or not
48.	The caller thinks that they should participate and be involved in events

OFFICIAL

49.	Only that it should be.
50.	Never heard of them doing anything for Australia day in Strathbogie. No message or notices showing that they do anything.
51.	Just that she certainty hopes that the council does support Australia day events.
52.	Would support this day if it was on a different day. Would support the involvement of the day was a different day. Caller would like to thank us about reaching out and asking about this matter. Would also like to say until the date changes and acknowledge the day it won't be appropriate that the council washes their hands of Australia day and would like the date to be moved.
53.	No comment need to be made, they stated that we're all equal.
54.	Maybe change the day celebration / ceremony of another day
55.	I am anti-Australia Day, as it is a celebration of white British colonialism, I oppose council involvement to a degree as it celebrates genocide, and Strathbogie rarely recognises the Indigenous Community and their loss. I would suggest a moment or minute of silence to commemorate the Taungarung people, past and present, and a smoking ceremony or something similar, and some other raising of flag for our nation's indigenous community.
56.	They just want to keep of Australia Day.
57.	As long as the council don't go spending money beyond their own affordability or on things they don't need.
58.	The caller advised, no they should continue celebrating it
59.	No additional comments.
60.	I just think we are getting too devoted. We should be allowed to celebrate Australia if we want to or if we do not want to. I am an Irish migrant that just got citizenship and am happy to be part of this beautiful country. I feel the Shire shouldn't be focusing so much on this issue and more on local issues such as rates increases, elderly and children, more active services to make the community more active. We need to step away from the political side of Australia Day.
61.	The caller believes it to be time for the majority of people should stop listening to the 1 or 2% and act upon the majority opinion. There is the story of squeaky wheel and that is what the 1 or 2 % are
62.	Why is the council acting as a tax collector for Victorian government why don't

OFFICIAL

	they appose it?
63.	Get rid of it and we are all equal.
64.	Stated only thing would like to expand on is that think should be a thing that's not obligated and should be so that people can celebrate if want to celebrate however should not be obligated. Said think a very neutral thing-as long as not considered mandatory thing and optional
65.	Stop worrying about the parties and fix all the drainage.
66.	No further comments
67.	The council does not support Australia day in violet town they don't fund or attend any Australia day event because the councils choose to cancel it based on being politically correct. The community run their own Australia day functions, and it is support with 500 people attending. He thinks the Strathbogie council is missing out on having any contribution to this.
68.	No I think my answers are enough
69.	Said comfortable with council representing themselves in the community through events locally and think unfortunate funding put towards survey. Said comfortable for council to represent community at all events of recognition or celebration and said think disappointing survey necessary to gain people's views on Australia day
70.	No comments
71.	No further comments
72.	She thinks it is a touchy subject, but feels changing the date is not the way to go to help the community.
73.	Opposed unless reference/acknowledgement made to First Nation's population
74.	Abstaining from commenting.
75.	Strongly opposed unless the day is moved from the current date, there is no reason for it to be retained on the 26th of January.
76.	No further comment to give other than they support and are happy with council participating and supporting Australia Day.
77.	If council does not celebrate or do anything for Australia day then I would complain

OFFICIAL

78.	Just support it
79.	Caller would like speed of the roads to be reduced to 50 km/h to avoid collisions
80.	Wants the event to continue and continue to support and value Australia day
81.	I strongly support Council's future involvement in Australia Day events
82.	Don't really mind, I don't have any issues with it
83.	Council should definitely be involved in Australia
84.	Would like to know the council opinions on the indigenous groups/aspects as they have feel that they are being ignored or not noticed.
85.	Not a fan
86.	It would be good of the council come out and do stuff, we've asked them to come out and fix up driveways and they're still neglected. We don't want these purple bins, and we've forced to have them and were probably going to be charged to our rates. Keep the Greenies out of our council, having too much to say.
87.	Need full backing of council and every councilor.
88.	Not really bothered about it to be honest, just do what you have always done
89.	Would like to say the council needs to fix up a road before they spend money on Australia day and the road cannot get trucks past it and the road needs to be fixed as soon as possible as it's a main road. The road is Paris Creek Rd South Australia. Australia day is the least of the council's worry's there is a main road that needs fixing as it's been almost three years.
90.	Caller advises council should 100% be involved in community Australia Day Events. Was rather annoyed when council was uninvolved a few years ago.
91.	Australia day events should not occur on January 26th. It is a day representing white invasion
92.	It would be disappointing if Council involvement stopped.
93.	No further comment
94.	Happy for council to support Australia day on January 26th
95.	Keep doing what you are doing.
96.	"No welcome to country as we all are Australian"

OFFICIAL

97.	No comments. Happy with the council's involvement.
98.	Think they should stop Australia Day if other councils/areas stop as well.
99.	Hope they do not change the day.
100	Council does not need to be involved in this.
101	Honestly doesn't really bother me
102	Council can be involved, as long as its not taking funds away from more important things.
103	Wants the council to participate in all events.
104	I'd Rather they change the date.
105	Continue to celebrate it.
106	The caller would suggest that Australians should support one another whatever that means, show some kindness and good will to each other
107	I don't think the shire themselves should be involved in anything to do with Australia day and focus on shire related work.
108	Not in shire personally, however Somewhat support for both in general.
109	No further comments
110	Would like to encourage the community to participate Australia events but not necessarily the council.
111	No. He satisfied in what they are doing and as ex service man he is happy that it is celebrated.
112	They should advertise it more as I never really noticed what they were doing
113	They should definitely Australia day
114	Happy for council to promote Australia day
115	No, not sure why this is a topic
116	I think the council should change the date for Australia Day as the current date is on a different day.
117	It's important for us all to participate the Australia day for the country we live in no matter what colours we are.

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118	It totally depends on the date. Caller doesn't support the week before or after. Again, the second question is about the date. Caller is not supporting change the date.
119	I think that Australia day should be on Wattle Day
120	Fully support Australia Day as it is a national issue
121	Australia Day is a very important celebration to have.
122	The caller hopes that the council that does support Australia day events
123	Happy for council to involve themselves with Australia day
124	Ridiculous we even have to ask these questions
125	Council should be involved in Australia
126	Need to support Australia day we are one caller stated.
127	Council probably should get more feedback closer to the day and ask what the community wants to do for the day
128	Council should support Australia day, it is up to everyone to choose if they want to support or not.
129	I would be very disappointed if the council did not celebrate Australia day
130	Council shouldn't waste so much money on the celebrations, but no issue with it being celebrated, just spend money better elsewhere
131	Council shouldn't need to be involved in Australia day unless its inclusive
132	Council should definitely be involved and support Australia day
133	Only if the council doesn't waste money on it
134	Don't really care what the council does
135	I would prefer the council to be at least acknowledge peoples issues with Australia day, I think we should celebrate but need more acknowledgment of why people might be against it

11.2.2 Strategic Partnership Funding Agreement Request: Victorian Wine Show Incorporated

AUTHOR Director Community and Planning

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director Community and Planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council has received a request from the Victorian Wine Show Incorporated, a not-profit organisation, to enter into a strategic partnership funding agreement to support the delivery of the 2025 Victorian Wine Show, recognising the significance of the event in promoting the destination brand of Strathbogie Shire and the economic uplift associated with hosting this Statewide event in the municipality.

This report outlines the terms and conditions of a draft Strategic Partnership Funding Agreement between Strathbogie Shire Council ("Council") and the Victorian Wine Show Incorporated and provides a recommendation to Council for consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council authorise the Chief Executive Officer to make any minor amendments to the draft Strategic Partnership Funding Agreement and to execute the Strategic Partnership Funding Agreement with the Victorian Wine Show Incorporated for a period of one year, to support the delivery of the Victorian Wine Show 2025 to be held in Nagambie, to the value of \$1,500 excluding GST.

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to consider a request for sponsorship through a strategic partnership funding agreement between Council and the Victorian Wine Show Incorporated.

Council recognises the importance of events and tourism. Events can provide significant economic uplift and promote Strathbogie Shire as a destination. Council has for many years provided Community Funding through various grants and sponsorships for events and initiatives that support tourism, visitation, and those that have social and economic benefit to the municipality. Council has a range of mechanisms to support events and initiatives including the ability to enter into a strategic partnership funding agreement.

Council's Community Funding Policy allows Council to enter into a strategic partnership funding agreement. A Strategic Partnership is defined as 'A partnership that has been entered into between Council and a community organisation so they can work collaboratively to achieve common outcomes. Strategic partnerships include the provision of funding to deliver on an idea that will strengthen the community and is aligned with Council's strategic priorities'.

Council has two current Strategic Partnership Funding Agreements with Rowing Victoria, and the Euroa Show and Shine for the delivery of various initiatives, events or programs that align with the Council's strategic objectives and the Council Plan 2025-29.

Council has received a request from the Victorian Wine Show Incorporated, a not-profit organisation, to enter into a strategic funding agreement to support the delivery of the 2025 Victorian Wine Show, recognising the significance of the event in promoting the destination brand of Strathbogie Shire and the economic uplift associated with hosting this Statewide event in the municipality.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

The Victorian Wine Show plays a pivotal role in supporting Victoria's \$9.5 billion wine industry, which is a cornerstone of the state's regional economy. The event not only celebrates excellence in winemaking but also delivers tangible economic benefits through:

Industry Growth and Recognition

- The show benchmarks the best wines across Victoria, enhancing the reputation of local producers and increasing demand for their products.
- It supports emerging winemakers through scholarships funded by event profits, reinvesting directly into the industry.
- Wine is Australia's 5th largest agricultural export industry and the wine industry contributes \$51 Billion to Australia's national economy.

Tourism and Regional Development

- Wine-related tourism is a major contributor to Victoria's visitor economy, which is valued at over \$21.7 billion and supports more than 210,000 jobs
- Events like the Victorian Wine Show attract visitors to regional areas, boosting local hospitality, accommodation, and retail sectors.
- Hosting the Victorian Wine Awards in Nagambie showcases the region as a regional leader in viticulture and as a key destination.

Job Creation and Local Spending

- Wine events stimulate local economies by increasing visitor spending on food, wine, lodging, and experiences.
- For every \$1 million in wine sector output, the broader economy gains \$2.16 million, and each job in the sector supports an additional 1.42 jobs in related industries

Strategic Government Support

- The Victorian Government backs the wine industry through initiatives like the Wine to World export program and the upcoming Victorian Wine Strategy, aimed at expanding market access and boosting regional prosperity, and the Victorian Wine Industry Strategy 2025-2030.

Long-Term Regional Impact

- Hosting wine events fosters repeat visitation, diversifies visitor demographics, and creates a reputation for the region.

The Victorian Wine Show 2025 is to be held in Nagambie, at Discovery Parks on 28-30 October 2025 (judging), and celebrated on 13 November through the Exhibitors Tasting and a Presentation Lunch.

A direct contribution to the local economy through the delivery of the event is estimated at \$155,000. This does not capture the visitation spend that is a flow on effect of staging an event of this nature, positioning Nagambie and Strathbogie as a tourism destination, and regional food and wine hub.

A draft Strategic Partnership Funding Agreement can be found in Attachment 1.

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 Two: Sustain

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

This objective has a focus on fostering a thriving economy, visitation and tourism.

Regional, State and National Plans, Policies and Legislation

Economic Growth Statement Victoria: Open for Business

- identifies the significance of regional Victoria for agriculture and agribusiness, and Victoria as an events, culture, creatives and sports hub.

Victorian Wine Industry Strategy 2025 – 2030

- acknowledges the importance of wine shows to regional economies and the influence that major wine shows such as the Victorian Wine Show have on the success and continued sustainability of the Victorian Wine Industry.

Goulburn Region Destination Management Plan

- Identifies food and wine as a core export and attractor of visitors to our region, clear alignment with the destination brand and regional reputation

Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2027

- Theme 4: A thriving Visitor Economy

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Perception of reputational risk associated with supporting a wine event	Possible	Moderate	Medium	The matter is allowable within Council's adopted policy and is being considered in a Council Meeting open to the public and on the public record.

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 costs for 2025-26 Strategic Partnership Funding Agreements will be incurred through the Community Funding Model event grants stream.

The budget allocation for event grants is \$50,000. The financial costs associated with this agreement are \$1500. There is currently \$11,539 remaining in the 2025-26 budget for event grants.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Economic

There are significant positive economic impacts associated with this report. These have been outlined in detail in the earlier sections of this report.

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

Council has received a request from the Victorian Wine Show Incorporated, a not-profit organisation, to enter into a strategic partnership funding agreement to support the delivery of the 2025 Victorian Wine Show, recognising the significance of the event in promoting the destination brand of Strathbogie Shire and the economic uplift associated with hosting this Statewide event in the municipality.

The purpose of this report is to consider a request for sponsorship through a strategic funding agreement between Council and the Victorian Wine Show Incorporated.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 20251001 Strategic Funding Agreement Victorian Wine Show DRAFT

Strathbogie Shire Council
Strategic Funding Agreement –
Victorian Wine Show
October 2025

Strathbogie
SHIRE COUNCIL

OFFICIAL**Acknowledgement of Country**

Strathbogie Shire Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands on which we strive, the peoples of the rivers and the hills of the Strathbogie Shire region who walked these lands for generations.

We pay our respects to the elders of the past, and the speakers of the first words, who lived in harmony with this country.

We acknowledge the elders of the present, who seek to regain their culture, and to teach the elders of the future their law, their history and their language.

We pay our respects to them and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

We honour their spirit – and the memory, culture, art and science of the world's oldest living culture through 60,000 years.

Document ID	SSCEDOC-1822705906-491
Last review	N/A
Current review	
Adopted by Council	
Next review	
Responsible officer/s	Manager Community and Culture

OFFICIAL**STRATEGIC FUNDING AGREEMENT FOR WAIVER OF FEES**

This strategic funding agreement will outline the terms and conditions under which Strathbogie Shire Council will provide funding to Victorian Wine Show for strategic purposes.

This Strategic Funding Agreement ("**Agreement**") is made and entered into as of **XX** October 2025, by and between:

Strathbogie Shire Council ("**Council**") (hereinafter referred to as the "Investor").

and

Victorian Wine Show (hereinafter referred to as the "**Recipient**").

Background

The **Victorian Wine Show (VWS)** has a strong and enduring presence in **Strathbogie Shire**, having been hosted locally for the past 30 consecutive years. As a flagship event for Victoria's wine industry, the VWS plays a vital role in promoting regional excellence, supporting economic development, and enhancing the cultural identity of the shire.

Economic and Cultural Contributions

- The wine industry is a key sector within Strathbogie Shire, and the VWS significantly enhances its visibility and reputation across the state.
- The event generates direct economic benefits through accommodation, catering, and tourism, particularly during two peak visitation periods:
 - **Judging Days (October 28–30)**: Judges, associate judges, and stewards are accommodated and catered for at local venues, supporting hospitality and tourism operators.
 - **Exhibitors Tasting & Presentation Lunch (November 13)**: Held at a local winery, this full-day event attracts wine industry leaders from across Victoria, many of whom stay overnight and visit local wineries.

Broader Industry Impact

VWS delivers substantial value through:

- **Public awareness** of Victorian wine quality.
- **Industry benchmarking and improvement.**
- **Recognition of individual wineries**, leading to increased sales and brand value.
- **Advocacy at state and federal levels**, reinforcing the strategic importance of the wine sector.

Positive Impacts of the Victorian Wine Show

- 21 trophies are awarded across various classes, with trophy-winning wines experiencing significant boosts in sales and market value.

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- Up to 50% of entries receive medals (gold, silver, bronze), enhancing the credibility of participating wineries and wine regions in both domestic and international markets.
- Hosting the VWS locally positions Strathbogie Shire as a leader in showcasing Victoria's wine industry.
- The event has received ministerial recognition, with the Hon. Nick Staikos, Minister for Local Government, confirming attendance at the 2025 Presentation Awards Lunch.
- The Exhibitors Lunch attracts a high calibre of industry leaders and suppliers, fostering networking and regional engagement.
- The judging panel includes winemakers, retailers, sommeliers, media representatives, and an international judge, all of whom gain exposure to the region's wineries and hospitality offerings.
- The show provides professional development opportunities for local wine professionals through stewarding and associate judging.
- Strathbogie Shire encompasses parts of the Nagambie Lakes, Strathbogie Ranges, Goulburn Valley, and Heathcote Wine Regions, making it a strategic location for industry development.
- Local community members benefit from mentorship and involvement in event administration and support roles.
- Since 2017, the VWS has managed the Premier's Trophy, awarded at Parliament House to the best wine from Victoria's regional shows.
- Since 2021, the VWS has awarded a \$5,000 annual bursary to a student of Melbourne Polytechnic's Viticulture and Winemaking program.
- The VWS has developed a growing online presence, including:
 - o 556 email subscribers
 - o 273 Facebook followers
 - o 1,317 Instagram followers

National Context

Wine is Australia's 5th largest agricultural export industry, contributing \$51 billion to the national economy (source: Ag Econ Plus). Events like the Victorian Wine Show play a critical role in sustaining and growing this contribution through regional engagement, industry development, and public promotion.

As a strategic partner of the Victorian Wine Show, **Strathbogie Shire Council** would receive the following benefits:

- **Trophy naming rights** for the *Best Iberian White or Red Wine* category.
- **Acknowledgement and listing** on the official VWS website: www.victorianwineshow.com.
- **Inclusion in the official catalogue of results**, distributed to industry stakeholders.
- **Promotion across VWS social media platforms** in the lead-up to the show and the Presentation Lunch.
- **Two complimentary tickets** to the Exhibitors Tasting and Presentation Lunch at **Tahbilk Wetlands Restaurant** on **Thursday, 13th November**.

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- **Display of Strathbogie Shire Council pull-up banners** at the VWS Awards Lunch, ensuring strong visual presence.

1. FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION

1.1 Council agrees to provide \$1,500 financial contribution annually to support costs in running the event.

2. TERM AND TERMINATION

2.1 This Agreement shall commence on the date first written above and shall continue for an initial period of 12 months.

2.2 Either party may terminate this Agreement by giving 30 days written notice to the other party if the other party is in material breach of this Agreement and fails to cure such breach within 30 days after receipt of notice specifying the breach.

3. CONFIDENTIALITY

3.1 Both parties agree to keep confidential all non-public information obtained from the other party in connection with this Agreement.

3.2 The obligation of confidentiality shall not apply to information that is (a) in the public domain, (b) known to the receiving party prior to disclosure, or (c) required to be disclosed by law.

5. NOMINATION OF AUTHORISED REPRESENTATIVES

5.1 The Parties must each appoint one or more authorised representatives to function as a contact point for the purposes of this agreement and carry out any of that party's functions or obligations under this agreement.

6. ENTIRE AGREEMENT

6.1 This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the parties with respect to the subject matter hereof and supersedes all prior agreements and understandings.

7. VARIATION OF THIS AGREEMENT

7.1 This Agreement may be varied by agreement in writing signed by the parties.

8. COSTS OF PREPARING THIS AGREEMENT

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8.1 Each party must bear its own costs of preparing, negotiating, executing, and implementing this agreement.

9. REVIEW

9.1 This agreement will be reviewed after the initial 12 month period.

9.2 An option of further years will be offered subject to Council's strategic direction and subsequent approval at a relevant Council meeting.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have executed this Strategic Funding Agreement for Waiver of Fees as of the day and year first above written.

STRATHBOGIE SHIRE COUNCIL

By: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

VICTORIAN WINE SHOW

By: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

11.2.3 Variations and Grants awarded under delegation September 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 September to 30 September 2025.

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 were three event grants and two quick response grants awarded to the total value of \$14,000 by the Chief Executive Officer between 1 September to 30 September 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	Violet Town Football Netball Club as auspice for the Violet	Violet Town Halloween Parade	Violet Town Halloween Parade is a free community event with music, lights, a costume parade for everybody, food catering vans	\$2,000

	Town Halloween Parade group		and ends with fireworks at the Violet Town Recreation Reserve.	
Event Grant	Strathbogie Tableland Action Group as auspice for their sub-committee - Strathbogie Cup Festival Committee	Strathbogie Melbourne Cup Weekend Festival	The festival is a four-day event over the Melbourne Cup Weekend in Strathbogie township. It includes Croquet, Bush Dance, Tennis Tournament, Face Painting, Kids Sports, Bar and BBQ, Market Stalls, Live Bands, Art Exhibition, Heritage Walk, Golf Tournament and Cup Day function at the golf club.	\$5,000
Event Grant	Euroa Rotary Club	RAGE Recycled Art Exhibition	The RAGE Recycled Art Exhibition is an inaugural event from 2–8 April 2026 in Euroa. Designed as an annual festival showcasing artists who have exhibited nationally and internationally, RAGE will showcase artworks made from recycled materials, highlighting innovation, sustainability, and creativity.	\$5,000
Quick Response Grant	Avenel Jubilee Park Association Inc as auspice for the Avenel Market Committee	Music for the Avenel Twilight Market 2025	The project is to provide live, local music for the Avenel Annual Twilight Christmas Market to be held on 13 December 2025. This will give the local community the opportunity to be entertained by local artists in a relaxed and inclusive setting in Jubilee Park and celebrate the past year.	\$1,000
Quick Response Grant	Avenel Jubilee Park Association Inc	Avenel Jubilee Park Christmas tree	This project will create a Community Christmas Tree structure in Avenel Jubilee Park, a DEECA managed reserve. A local metal work builder will create and install a sturdy metal structure in the shape of a Christmas tree in the heart of the Avenel township in Jubilee Park which will be decorated with lights to create a festive ambience within the town over the Christmas holiday period.	\$1,000
TOTAL				\$14,000

In accordance with the 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 event grants, the remaining Event Grant budget is \$11,539.

Following the award of these quick response grants, the remaining funds in the Quick Response Grant budget is \$5,000.

Variations Awarded under delegation

Nil.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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

This report is aligned to the Community Funding Model and associated Grant Guidelines

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	Possible	Moderate	Low	Delegations in place and regular reporting to Council and the community on grants and variations awarded under delegation.

projects in a timely manner				

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 Chief Executive Officer or Director delegation in accordance with Council's adopted Community Funding Model.

There were three event grants and two quick response grants awarded under CEO delegation during the reporting period from 1 to 30 September 2025.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

11.3 Infrastructure

11.3.1 Road Management Plan

AUTHOR Director Sustainable Infrastructure

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director Sustainable Infrastructure

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council prepared a draft Road Management Plan 2025 which was endorsed by Council for public exhibition at its July meeting. The draft Road Management Plan report was made available for community feedback purposes.

The Road Management Plan 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 *Road Management Act 2004* mandates that the Road Management Plan must be reviewed every four years in line with Council elections and the Council Plan.

In summary, the changes from the Last Road Management Plan (2021) are:

- Content and layout moved to the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) standard template for rural Councils
- Clarification around assets which we inspect and maintain
- Maps outlining which pathways are covered by the plan
- A review of inspection times and response times across all road and road related infrastructure assets

A more detailed summary of all the changes can be found within the Road Management Plan.

The Road Management Plan 2025 was exhibited for public consultation, in line with the requirements set out in the *Road Management Act 2004* and Section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989*. Council received six submissions through this process however the issues raised did not relate to the matters covered by the plan. In summary:

- One relates to the poor condition of a specific boundary road with Mansfield Shire and is effectively seeking to have it added to the Road Register to be maintained by Council,
- One is seeking improved maintenance methods to a floodway in Leos Road
- One relates to road grading and drain clearing methods employed by Council.
- One is seeking a speed change on a specific road, banning of airbrakes and improved litter management
- Two requested a specific boundary road with the Rural City of Benalla be added to the Public Road Register

Each submitter had the opportunity to request a formal hearing of their submission. Three of the submitters took this opportunity and presented to Council on 7 October 2025.

The two submissions seeking the addition of a specific boundary road with Rural City of Benalla to the Public Road Register and the one seeking the same with a boundary road with Mansfield Shire will be subject to a separate report to Council. The remaining submissions relate to operational matters for review and action by the Director Sustainable Infrastructure as required.

As a result of the submission process there were no changes to the draft Road Management Plan.

It is concluded the draft Road Management Plan 2025 does not require further review and may be adopted by Council and implemented.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Having considered the submissions received in response to advertising of the Draft Road Management Plan, adopt the Draft Road Management Plan 2025 (and associated appendices) without amendment, in accordance with the requirements of Division 5 of the *Road Management Act 2004***
- 2. Adopt the Road Management Plan Review Report as set out in part 3 of the Road Management (General) Regulations 2005-part 3 Division 1 – Review of Road Management Plan**
- 3. Publish a Notice of the amendment of the Road Management Plan in the Government Gazette and local newspapers stating the following as required by section 55 of the *Road Management Act 2004***
 - a. The Road Management Plan has been amended**
 - b. That the Road Management Plan may be inspected or obtained from the Strathbogie Shire Service Centres or downloaded from Council's website**
- 4. Distribute copies of the adopted Road Management Plan (and associated appendices) to all Council Service Centres and to publish the Road Management Plan, appendices and Road Management Plan Review Report on Council's website**
- 5. Note the requests to add two boundary roads to the Strathbogie Shire Road Register and that a further report will be presented to Council in relation to these requests at a future Council meeting**
- 6. Note the remaining submissions relate to operational matters that are not within the scope of the Road Management Plan and that the Director of Sustainable Infrastructure has contacted each of the submitters to respond to the matters raised.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

To report to Council on submissions received following advertising of the draft Road Management Plan pursuant to Section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

To seek Council's determination of those submissions and decision on the formal adoption of the draft Road Management Plan 2025 in line with the requirements as set out within the *Road Management Act 2004* and Road Management Regulations 2016.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

The Road Management Plan informs the community about the level of service provided in maintaining the road infrastructure assets Council manages. It sets out the inspection regime and intervention and service standards Council will apply in managing its roads and road

related infrastructure considering available resources and competing priorities for those resources.

The *Road Management Act 2004* and the Road Management (General) Regulations 2005 are very prescriptive in relation to the process for adoption and review of a Road Management Plan:

- Section 49 of the Act outlines that a road authority may publish a road management plan
- Section 50 specifies the purpose of a road management plan
- Section 54 of the *Road Management Act 2004* outlines the procedure for making or amending a Road Management Plan. As part of this process Council must give a notice stating:
 - the purpose and general meaning of the proposed road management plan
 - where a copy of the proposed road management plan can be obtained or inspected
 - that any person aggrieved by the proposed road management plan may make a submission on the proposed road management plan to the road authority within the period specified in the notice.

The Road Management Plan has been developed in consultation with the Director Sustainable Infrastructure, Manager Operations, Operations Coordinator, Principal Property Officer, Services Inspector and Assets Officers. The Road Management Plan and the inspection frequencies and defect intervention levels and repair timeframes outlined in the plan reflect the capacity of current staffing and budget.

At its meeting on 15 July 2025, Council resolved to:

1. Endorse the draft Road Management Plan 2025-2029 for the purpose of public exhibition
2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to give public notice of the preparation of the draft Road Management Plan 2025-2029 and place the document on public exhibition for a minimum period of 28 days and invite public submissions
3. Consider the adoption of a final Road Management Plan 2025-2029 at a future meeting of Council
4. Note that the Register of Public Roads will be made available for inspection by the community as part of this process.

The draft Road Management Plan was placed on public exhibition and public notification of Council's intention to amend its current Road Management Plan was Gazetted on the 7 August 2025 inviting submissions until 11.59pm Thursday 4 September 2025.

The notice was also published in:

- (a) The Euroa Gazette on several occasions from the 23 July 2025 as a newspaper generally circulating in the area in which the roads to which the Road Management Plan applies; and
- (b) Council's website and social media outlets.

Council is required to consider any submissions that are received under Section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Issues: Community Submissions

Six submissions were received from community members and are attached as Attachment 6 for Council's consideration. All submissions have been summarised and redacted to remove personal or identifying information to protect privacy. The full content of the submission is attached to this report.

In summary, the issues raised in those submissions are:

Submission 1 – Ridge Road, Gooram is hazardous and requires inspection and maintaining under the Road Management Plan.

Ridge Road is not on the Road Register of roads maintained by Council. It is a public Highway leased by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action to adjoining landowners. This submission is effectively seeking to have the road added to the Road Register and maintained by Council. This is an issue that is not directly relevant to the Road Management Plan which deals with inspection frequencies, response times and standards of maintenance for roads on the Road Register.

The issues raised in that submission will be subject to a future separate report to Council.

Submission 2 – The floodway on Leos Road, Violet Town is frequently washed out as it is not properly maintained. The submitter has requested to be heard in support of their submission.

The issue of how floodways are repaired is not within the scope of the Road Management Plan and is an operational matter. This will be followed up with the Director Sustainable Infrastructure and considered as part of discussions for future funding opportunities.

Submissions 3 and 4 - The southern extension of McEwan Lane, Baddaginnie is reasonably required for public access and should be included in the Road Register to be inspected and maintained by Council. The submitters have requested to be heard in support of their submissions.

As with Submission 1, consideration of inclusion of a road on the Road Register is not within the scope or relevant to the Road Management Plan which deals with inspection frequencies, response times and standards of maintenance for roads on the Road Register. The issues raised in that submission will be subject to a separate report to Council at a future date.

Submission 5 – The Shire does not apply the right methods in maintaining its roads or the right equipment to clear its drains.

These are operational issues outside the scope of the Road Management Plan followed up with the Director Sustainable Infrastructure.

Submission 6 – The speed limit on Euroa Strathbogie Road should be reduced, and road grading is damaging the road edges and guideposts and creating an untidy roadside.

The matters raised in this submission are not within the scope of the Road Management Plan. They are operational and will be followed by the Director Sustainable Infrastructure.

Discussion

As no submissions received were relevant to the Road Management Plan, the document is considered appropriate as exhibited and no changes are proposed.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Under the *Road Management Act 2004*, when changing the Road Management Plan, Council must give notice via the Government Gazette and in local daily newspapers providing 28 days for community members to make submissions regarding the plan.

Deliberative engagement undertaken in accordance with Section 55 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Council's Community Engagement Policy is required for many of these plans. Council has implemented a three-stage engagement process aimed at involving community members from across the Shire.

The depth of engagement was based at the 'consult' level. We commit to keep the public informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the final plan.

The community feedback period commenced on 23 July 2025 and closed at 11:59pm on Thursday 4 September 2025.

The request for feedback was advertised in the Euroa Gazette on 23 July 2025 and the Victoria Government Gazette on 7 August 2025 and in the Strathbogie Community Information entry in the Euroa Gazette on 30 July, 6 August, 13 August, 20 August, 27 August and 3 September.

From 23 July 2025 the Road Management Plan and supporting documents were exhibited on the Share Strathbogie page and printed copies were available for viewing at the Euroa and Nagambie Customer Service Centres.

Submissions could be made in writing and submitted online, via email or by post. Six submissions were received. These are summarised above and the full submissions are attached to the 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:

- *Road Management Act 2004*
- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Local Government Act 1989*
- Ministerial Codes of Practice
- Road Management (General) Regulations 2016
- Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2015
- *Road Safety Act 1986*

- *Wrongs Act 1958*
- Asset Management Strategy.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Exposure to liability claims due to failure to meet service standards as set out in the Road Management Plan	Possible	Catastrophic	High	Ensure resources are available to adhere to the Road Management Plan Requirements

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Road Management Act 2004

The *Road Management Act 2004* lists the roles and responsibilities of different authorities across Victoria's road networks. It establishes the functions and powers of councils as the road authority for local roads.

Section 17 requires Council to maintain a register of public roads (Road Register) that it determines are reasonably required for general public use.

Under section 40, councils have a statutory duty to inspect, maintain and repair all roads on their Road Register to the standards specified in their respective Road Management Plans.

Under the *Road Management Act 2004*, councils can choose to develop a Road Management Plan that details standards or policies on how they will perform their road management duties. This includes:

- Service levels
- Criteria on what defects to repair
- What type of response the council will use for different defects.

Whilst not compulsory for councils to develop a Road Management Plan, it can provide a 'policy defence' to civil cases brought against a council for damages related to their roads. To effect that defence, Councils must comply with the standards set out in their Road Management Plan and maintain records of compliance. Councils that choose to have a Road Management Plan must consult their community on it.

Local Government Act 1989

The following provisions of the *Local Government Act 1989* are relevant:

- Section 206(1) (Power of Councils over Roads)
- Clause 2 (Power to deviate Roads) of Schedule 10 (Powers of Councils over Roads)
- Section 207A (Submissions under section 223)
- Section 223 (Right to make submissions)
- Section 207B (Certain land used, or to be used for Roads to vest in Council)
- Section 207D(1)(b) (Registration of titles of land affected by action concerning roads)

- Section 207E Alterations to titles if land exchanged).

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 current capital works and operational budgets and forward budget projections are sufficient to maintain the standards established in the Road Management Plan. The current Long Term Financial Plan contains forecasts for the capital investment required to maintain roads, footpaths and road related assets to the required standards.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Economic

There are no economic implications of the Road Management Plan.

Social

The proposed amendments to the Road Management Plan maintain the existing service levels and standards for the maintenance of Council's road and pathway infrastructure. The proposed amendments should result in positive social impacts.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The Road Management Plan has been updated based on a template developed by the Municipal Association of Victoria for use by Regional/Rural Councils in Victoria, with the following objectives:

- Provide an option for Members reviewing/updating their Plan that ensures all important content/information is included and wording of key content/information is in line with current best practice and legal advice
- Enable Councils to adopt, where practicable, a common, reasonable set of standards to prevent the risk of Council Plan standards being viewed as *unreasonable* when compared to peers
- Ensure Councils remain able to determine their own standards for inspections, intervention levels and repair timeframes respective of resources while also maintaining, where necessary, consistency with other councils.

COLLABORATION

The proposed Road Management Plan has been developed in consultation with the Director Sustainable Infrastructure, Manager Operations, Operations Coordinator, Principal Property Officer, Services Inspector and Assets Officers. The Road Management Plan and the

inspection frequencies and defect intervention levels and repair timeframes outlined in the plan reflect the capacity of current staffing and budget.

The plan was placed on public exhibition for over 28 days inviting submissions by community members. Six submissions were received however none relate directly to the Road Management Plan.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

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

CONCLUSION

Council is required to update its Road Management Plan every four years, following local government elections.

The content and layout of the Road Management Plan 2025 is set out in the Municipal Association of Victoria template, the assets which we inspect and maintain have been clarified and inspection times and response times across all road and road related infrastructure assets have been reviewed and updated to reflect the capacity of current staffing and budget.

The draft Road Management Plan 2025 was placed on public exhibition inviting formal submissions from community members from 23 July 2025 to 4 September 2025.

Six submissions were received, however, as none related to the content of the Road Management Plan, no amendment to the plan is proposed. These submissions will be reviewed by the Director Sustainable Infrastructure and actioned as appropriate.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 20250710 DRAFT Road Management Plan 2025-2029 - for Community Consultation
2. 20250925 Draft Road Management Plan Review 2025
3. Road Management Plan Submissions

Strathbogie Shire Council

Road Management Plan

Strathbogie
SHIRE COUNCIL

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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 land and waters, and we pay respects to the Elders past, present and emerging.

Guideline Governance

Responsible Department:	Sustainable Infrastructure
Adoption authorised:	Council
Date of adoption:	<<date>>
Date of effective from:	<<date>>
Enterprise Content Manager Ref:	
Document Set ID:	
Endorsed CEO or ELT member or department manager to make and approve document editorial amendments:	Director Sustainable Infrastructure
Annual desktop review date:	<<date>>
Review date:	<<date>>
Completion date:	<<date>>
Version number:	8.00
Stakeholder review and engagement:	
Relevant Legislation:	
Associated Strategic Direction #:	
Associated instruments:	
Supersedes:	

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Review history 2008 to 2025

Document Control		
Revision No.	Date	Revision Details
Draft	31/08/04	
Ver 1.0	10/09/04	Version 1: Public exhibition
Ver 1.0	16/11/04	Version 1: Adopted
Ver 2.0	11/07/05	Version 2: Public exhibition
Ver 2.0	20/09/05	Version 2: Adopted
Ver 3.0	04/08/06	Version 3: Public exhibition
Ver 3.0	15/05/07	Version 3: Adopted
Ver 4.0	19/06/12	Version 4: Adopted
Ver 5.0	Feb 2014	Version 5: Adopted
Ver 6.0	April 2017	Version 6: Adopted
Ver 7.0	June 2021	Version 7: Public exhibition
Ver 7.0	September 2021	Version 7: Adopted
Ver 8.0	May 2023	Version 8: Draft after review of AMCP - Transport
Ver 8.0	March 2024	Version 8: Draft for Council approval for Community consultation.
Ver 8.00	June 2025	Version 8: Draft Updated to new MAV template – see detailed amendment list below

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Amendments from Previous Road Management Plan (RMP)

Serial	Description	Author	Date
1	Integration of previous RMP format to the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) preferred template	APAO	June 2025
2	"Guideline Governance" table added	MAV	June 2025
3	Added Acknowledgement of Country	APAO	June 2025
4	2.6.2 Removed investigation'	KT	June 2025
5	2.6.3 Added Council's process for permits for working in a road reserve	LU	June 2025
6	Section 2.6.4 Figure 2 and 3 added	APAO	June 2025
7	Section 3.2 Removed Urban Roads and included our Road and Footpath Hierarchies	AO	June 2025
8	Removed details of condition inspections as these are not conducted for roads in Strathbogie Shire	DSI, APAO	June 2025
9	3.4.4 Updated to refer to Council's Customer Service Charter	DSI	June 2025
10	Section 4. – Added Register of Public Road details	APAO	June 2025
11	Section 4.1 – Maintenance Demarcation (Boundary) Agreement with neighboring Councils added	APAO	June 2025
12	Section 5. Force Majeur added	APAO	June 2025
13	MAV Attachment 1 deleted	APAO	June 2025
14	MAV Attachment 2 renamed to Attachment 1: Road Hierarchy	APAO	June 2025
15	Attachment 1: added detail of categories in our Asset Register incorporated in RMP road hierarchy categories – removed road classes	APAO	June 2025
16	MAV Attachment 3 renamed to Attachment 2: Pathway Hierarchy	APAO	June 2025
17	Attachment 2: added detail of categories for Priority 1 and 2 footpaths and deleted all reference to Shared & Bicycle Pathways as we currently do not have any that are part of the road infrastructure	APAO	June 2025
18	MAV Attachment 4 renamed to Attachment 3: Inspection Requirements	APAO	June 2025
19	Attachment 3: removed reference to 'Road Asset Inspectors Manual' and 'performed by a dedicated Plan inspector'	APAO	June 2025
20	MAV Attachment 5 renamed to Attachment 4: Inspection Frequencies	APAO	June 2025
21	Attachment 4: updated hierarchy categories	APAO	June 2025
22	Attachment 4: Inspection timeframes on reactive inspections now defined, between 5 and 12 working days	APAO	June 2025
23	Attachment 4: Proactive Inspection frequencies - Collector roads changed from 3 monthly to 4 monthly	APAO	June 2025
24	Attachment 4: Proactive Inspection frequencies - Access roads changed from 6 monthly to 12 monthly	APAO	June 2025
25	Attachment 4: Bridges - Reactive Inspections set at 5WD	APAO	June 2025
26	Attachment 4 – Inspection frequencies – Kerb and Channel has been added to inspections table	APAO	June 2025
27	Attachment 4 – Emergency Response now added – 12H	APAO	June 2025
28	MAV Attachment 6 renamed to Attachment 5: Defect Intervention Levels and Repair Timeframes	APAO	June 2025

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Serial	Description	Author	Date
29	Attachment 5 – road classes removed and intervention levels made consistent across all categories.	APAO	June 2025
30	Attachment 5 – Sealed Roads pothole defect on bicycle lane added	APAO	June 2025
31	Attachment 5 – Sealed Roads pothole for collector roads changed from 2 weeks to 1 month	APAO	June 2025
32	Attachment 5 – Sealed Roads pothole for access roads changed from 1 to 3 months	APAO	June 2025
33	Attachment 5 – Sealed Roads deformations for link roads changed from 2 weeks to 1 month	APAO	June 2025
34	Attachment 5 – Sealed Roads deformations for collector roads changed from 2 weeks to 2 months	APAO	June 2025
35	Attachment 5 – Sealed Roads deformations for access roads changed from 1 month to 3 months	APAO	June 2025
36	Attachment 5 – Sealed Roads – rutting and shoulder rutting not included	APAO	June 2025
37	Attachment 5 – Sealed Roads edge break for link roads changed from 2 weeks to 1 month	APAO	June 2025
38	Attachment 5 – Sealed Roads edge break for collector roads changed from 2 weeks to 3 months	APAO	June 2025
39	Attachment 5 – Sealed Roads edge break for access roads changed from 2 months to 3 months	APAO	June 2025
40	Attachment 5 – Sealed Roads edge/shoulder drop for link roads changed from 2 weeks to 1 month	APAO	June 2025
41	Attachment 5 – Sealed Roads edge/shoulder drop for collector roads changed from 2 weeks to 2 months	APAO	June 2025
42	Attachment 5 – Sealed Roads edge/shoulder drop for access roads changed from 2 months to 3 months	APAO	June 2025
43	Attachment 5 – Sealed Roads missing pit lid and damaged pit lids added	APAO	June 2025
44	Attachment 5 – Sealed Roads roadside vegetation – obstructing sightlines added	APAO	June 2025
45	Attachment 5 – Sealed Roads roadside vegetation – response times set at 1 month for link from 6 months and 3 months for collector and access roads from as resources allow	APAO	June 2025
46	Attachment 5 – Unsealed Roads missing pit lid and damaged pit lids added	APAO	June 2025
47	Attachment 5 – Unsealed Roads pothole for link roads changed from 2 months to n/a	APAO	June 2025
48	Attachment 5 – Unsealed Roads pothole for collector roads changed from 3 months to 1 month	APAO	June 2025
49	Attachment 5 – Unsealed Roads pothole for access roads changed from 3 months to 2 months	APAO	June 2025
50	Attachment 5 – Unsealed Roads pothole for limited access roads changed from 6 months to 4 months	APAO	June 2025
51	Attachment 5 – Unsealed Roads corrugations for link roads changed from 3 months to n/a	APAO	June 2025
52	Attachment 5 – Unsealed Roads corrugations for collector roads changed from 3 months to 1 month	APAO	June 2025
53	Attachment 5 – Unsealed Roads corrugations for access roads changed from 6 months to 2 months	APAO	June 2025
54	Attachment 5 – Unsealed Roads pothole for access roads changed from 3 months to 2 months	APAO	June 2025
55	Attachment 5 – Unsealed Roads crossfall deleted	APAO	June 2025
56	Attachment 5 – Unsealed Roads rutting for link	APAO	June 2025

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Serial	Description	Author	Date
	roads changed from 3 months to n/a		
57	Attachment 5 – Unsealed Roads rutting for collector roads changed from 3 months to 1 month	APAO	June 2025
58	Attachment 5 – Unsealed Roads rutting for access roads changed from 6 months to 2 months	APAO	June 2025
59	Attachment 5 – Unsealed Roads roadside vegetation – obstructing sightlines add Roadside Vegetation Overhead Clearance added	APAO	June 2025
60	Attachment 5 – Traffic Control Devices – regulatory and hazard signs – changed from 1 month for all roads to link-1 month, collector – 2 months, access-3 months and limited access tracks – 4 months	APAO	June 2025
61	Attachment 5 – Traffic Control Devices – missing/damaged guard rail or fencing added	APAO	June 2025
62	Attachment 5 – Guideposts not included	APAO	June 2025
63	Attachment 5 – Traffic Control Devices – missing/damaged pavement markings now set to link-1 month, collector – 3 months, access-4 months and limited access tracks – n/a	APAO	June 2025
64	Attachment 5 – Pathways – vertical displacement reduced from > 20mm abrupt step to >25mm with priority 2 paths set to 1 month	APAO	June 2025
65	Attachment 5 – Pathways – Loose or segmented pavers added	APAO	June 2025
66	Attachment 5 – Pathways – Cracking in pathways added	APAO	June 2025
67	Attachment 5 – Pathways – undulations added	APAO	June 2025
68	Attachment 5 – Pathways – Dislodged / missing pieces / potholes added	APAO	June 2025
69	Attachment 5 – Pathways – missing pit lids added	APAO	June 2025
70	Attachment 5 – Pathways – damaged pit lids added	APAO	June 2025
71	Attachment 5 – Pathways – vegetation overhead clearance added	APAO	June 2025
72	Attachment 5 – Pathways – dislodged/missing tactile indicator added	APAO	June 2025
73	Attachment 5 – Kerb and Channel added		
74	Attachment 5 – Bridges and Culverts - culverts for link roads changed from 3 months to 2 weeks		
75	Attachment 5 – Bridges and Culverts - culverts for collector roads changed from 3 months to 1 month		
76	Attachment 5 – Bridges and Culverts - culverts for access roads changed from 6 months to 2 months		
77	Attachment 5 – Bridges and Culverts - culverts for limited access roads changed from 6 months to 3 months		

DSI – Director Sustainable Infrastructure

MO – Manager Operations

AO – Assets Officer

APAO - Asset Planning Admin Officer

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Definitions

Arterial Road	Refers to freeways, highways and declared main roads, which are managed by the Victorian Government, through Head Transport for Victoria (as the co-ordinating road authority).
Co-ordinating road authority	The organisation which has the responsibility to co-ordinate works. Generally, if the road is a freeway or arterial road, this will be Head Transport for Victoria. Generally, if the road is a municipal road, this will be Council.
Council	Refers to Strathbogie Shire Council
Demarcation agreement	A formal agreement between Council and another organisation that defines areas of responsibility.
Motor vehicle	Refers to a vehicle that is propelled by an in-built motor and is intended to be used on a roadway. This does not include a motorised wheelchair or mobility scooter which is incapable of travelling at a speed greater than 10 km/h and is solely used for the conveyance of an injured or disabled person.
Municipal road(s)	Road for which the municipal council is the co-ordinating road authority. The Road Management Act 2004 imposes specific duties on the municipal council with respect to the inspection, repair and maintenance of these roads and associated road-related infrastructure.
Non-road infrastructure	Refers to infrastructure in, on, under or over a road, which is not road infrastructure. This includes (but is not limited to) such items as gas pipes, water and sewerage pipes, cables, electricity poles and cables, tram wires, rail infrastructure, bus shelters, public telephones, mail boxes, roadside furniture and fences erected by utilities, or providers of public transport.
Other roads	Include roads in state forests and reserves, and roads on private property. Municipal councils are not responsible for the inspection, repair or maintenance of these roads.
Pathway	Refers to a footpath, bicycle path, shared path or other area that is constructed or developed by Council for members of the public (not motor vehicles) to use.
Plan	Refers to this Road Management Plan.
Public Road	As defined by the Road Management Act 2004 and includes a freeway, an arterial road, a municipal road declared under section 14(1) of the Act and a road in respect of which Council has made a decision that it is reasonably required for general public use and is included on the Register of Public Roads.
Road	Has the same meaning as in the Road Management Act 2004, being inclusive of any public highway, any ancillary area and any land declared to be a road under section 11 of that Act or forming part of a public highway or ancillary area.
Road infrastructure	Refers to infrastructure which forms part of a roadway, pathway or shoulder, which includes structures and materials.
Road-related infrastructure	Refers to infrastructure installed or constructed by the relevant road authority to either facilitate the operation or use of the roadway or pathway, or support or protect the roadway or pathway.
Road Reserve	Refers to the area of land that is within the boundaries of a road. Example: any nature strip, forest, bushland, grassland or landscaped area within the road reserve would be roadside.
Roadside	Refers to any land that is within the boundaries of the road (other than shoulders) which is not a roadway or pathway. This includes land on

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	which any vehicle crossing or pathway, which connects from a roadway or pathway on a road to other land, has been constructed. Example: any nature strip, forest, bushland, grassland or landscaped area within the road reserve would be roadside
Roadway	Refers to the area of a public road that is open to, or used by, the public, and has been developed by a road authority for the driving or riding of motor vehicles. This does not include a driveway providing access to a public road, or other road, from adjoining land.
Shoulder	Refers to the cleared area, whether constructed or not, that adjoins a roadway to provide clearance between the roadway and roadside. This does not refer to any area that is not in the road reserve.

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1. Introduction

1.1 What is the purpose of this Plan

Section 50 of the *Road Management Act 2004* sets the following objectives for a municipal road management plan:

- 1) To establish a system for Council's road management functions, which is based on policy, operational objectives and available resources.
- 2) To set a performance standard for Council's road management functions.

Although it is termed a 'plan' in the legislation, it is functionally an operational protocol document, describing the systems and rules Council use to make decisions and meet obligations within Council's available resources. The plan forms part of a larger Asset Management Framework related to maintenance and operations.

For the avoidance of doubt, this Plan is a road management plan for the purposes of s.39 of the *Road Management Act 2004*.

1.2 Legislation guiding this Plan

In addition to the *Road Management Act 2004*, the plan also considers the following Acts, regulations and codes of practice:

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Local Government Act 1989*
- Ministerial Codes of Practice
- Road Management (General) Regulations 2016
- Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2015
- *Road Safety Act 1986*
- *Wrongs Act 1958*

1.3 What is covered in this Plan?

The Plan is divided into six sections:

1. Introduction.
2. Rights and Responsibilities – covers legislation and local laws relevant to road management.
3. Road Management Systems - how Council classifies roads, streets and pathways – known as Council's asset hierarchy – and the plans and processes Council uses to maintain roads and road-related infrastructure.
4. Public Roads Register – what's in it, how to access it and the process for making changes.
5. Technical References.
6. Attachments:
 - a. Attachment 1, Road Hierarchy
 - b. Attachment 2, Pathway Hierarchy
 - c. Attachment 3, Inspection Requirements
 - d. Attachment 4, Inspection Frequencies
 - e. Attachment 5, Defect Intervention Levels and Repair Timeframes

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1.4 Updating the Plan

This Plan must be updated within a set period following a Council election. Outside of this cycle, changes may be required from time to time.

The following process will be used to manage these changes:

- If material changes are made to standards and specifications, a report will be presented to Council, along with a brief explanation as to why such changes are necessary. The review process must follow the steps as set out in the Road Management (General) Regulations 2016 Part 3 – Road Management Plans.
- When changes do not alter these technical aspects of road management, changes will be approved by the Director Sustainable Infrastructure.

These changes will be made in accordance with the processes prescribed by the *Road Management Act 2004*. To assist with version control, these changes will be numbered as follows:

- Versions presented to Council will be renumbered by whole numbers – for example, from Version 1.00 to 2.00.
- Those approved by the Director will be renumbered by decimals – for example, from Version 1.00 to 1.01.

1.5 Exceptional Circumstances

Council will make every effort to meet its commitments under its Plan.

However, there may be situations or circumstances that affect Council's business activities to the extent that it cannot deliver on the service levels of the Plan. These include but are not limited to: natural disasters, such as fires, floods, or storms, or a prolonged labour or resource shortage, due to a need to commit or redeploy Council staff and/or equipment elsewhere or due to the effects of pandemic and/or government intervention.

1.5.1 Suspension of the Plan

In the event that the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Council has considered the impact of such an event on the limited financial resources of Council and its other conflicting priorities, and determined that the Plan cannot be met, then pursuant to Section 83 of the *Wrongs Act 1958*, the CEO will write to Council's Officer in charge of the Plan and inform them that some, or all, of the timeframes and responses in Council's Plan are to be suspended.

1.5.2 Reinstatement of the Plan

Once the scope of the event/s have been determined, and the resources committed to the event response have been identified, then there will be an ongoing consultation between Council's CEO and Council's Officer responsible for the Plan, to determine which parts of Council's Plan are to be reactivated and when.

1.5.3 Communication and documentation around Plan suspension

Council will provide information/statements to the public about the suspension or reduction

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of the services under its Plan, including:

- How the work that will be done has been prioritised; and
- The period for which it is likely to be affected.

This information will be provided by the Council on its website where its Plan is located and other channels as appropriate such as press releases or social media.

Where Council has suspended, in part or whole, its Plan, associated documents (e.g. communications, meeting minutes, schedules, etc.) will be recorded and stored.

1.5.4 Inspections and repairs during suspension of Plan

The suspension of the Plan will not necessarily mean that all inspections and repairs halt. However, it may mean that only certain categories of inspections and repairs are undertaken. These will be based on a risk assessment and resources available to the Council, considering the resources needed to address the impact of the trigger event. For example, some reactive inspections may take place and repair (temporary or permanent) of roads/pathways which pose a high risk may be undertaken, depending on the resources available to the council and the accessibility of each asset.

1.6 Responsibility for the Plan

Overall responsibility for administering and implementing the Road Management Plan rests with the Council's Director Sustainable Infrastructure.

2. Rights and Responsibilities

2.1 Public Roads

Public roads are defined in the Road Management Act 2004 as including:

- a freeway
- an arterial road
- a road declared under section 204(1) of the *Local Government Act 1989*
- a municipal road declared under section 14(1) of the *Road Management Act 2004*
- a road in respect of which Council has decided that it is reasonably required for general public use and is included on the Public Roads Register.

2.2 Key stakeholders

The key stakeholders impacted by this Plan include:

- the general community (for recreation, sport, leisure and business)
- residents and businesses adjoining the road network
- pedestrians
- vehicle users with motorised vehicles, such as trucks, buses, commercial vehicles, cars and motorcycles
- users of smaller, lightweight vehicles, such as pedal-powered bicycles, motorised buggies, wheelchairs, prams and so on

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- tourists and visitors to the area
- emergency agencies (Victoria Police, Country Fire Authority, Ambulance Victoria, State Emergency Services)
- the military (in times of conflict and emergency)
- traffic and transportation managers
- managers of the road network asset
- construction and maintenance personnel, who build and maintain asset components
- utility agencies using the road reserve for infrastructure (water, sewerage, gas, electricity, telecommunications)
- state and federal governments, who periodically provide funding for roads.

2.3 Coordinating and Responsible Road Authority

Section 35 of the *Road Management Act 2004* provides that a road authority has power to do all things necessary or convenient to be done for or in connection with the performance of its functions under the Act.

Section 36 of the *Road Management Act 2004* outlines which road authority is the coordinating road authority. According to subsection (c), the coordinating road authority is:

If the road is a municipal road, the municipal council of the municipal district in which the road or part of the road is situated.

However, there are instances where several authorities are responsible for components of the road within the road reserve. Section 37 of the *Road Management Act 2004* identifies who is the responsible road authority in particular circumstances.

2.4 General Functions of a Road Authority

The general functions of a road authority are described within Section 34 of the *Road Management Act 2004*.

2.5 Rights of the Road User

The rights of public road users, which are legally enforceable, are set out in Sections 8 to 10 of the *Road Management Act 2004*.

2.6 Obligations of Road Users

2.6.1 General Usage

The common law requires that a road user must take reasonable care for their own safety (see *Ghantous v Hawkesbury City Council*)

The *Road Safety Act 1986* sets out obligations on road users, including section 17A which requires that a person who drives a motor vehicle on, or uses, a highway must drive in a safe manner and have regard for all relevant factors, including without limiting their generality, the following:

- (a) physical characteristics of the road
- (b) prevailing weather conditions
- (c) level of visibility
- (d) the condition of any vehicle the person is driving or riding on the highway

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- (e) prevailing traffic conditions
- (f) the relevant road laws and advisory signs
- (g) the physical and mental condition of the driver or road user.

Section 17A of the *Road Safety Act 1986* also requires that a road user must take reasonable care:

- (a) to avoid any conduct that may endanger the safety or welfare of other road users.
- (b) to avoid any conduct that may damage road infrastructure and non-road infrastructure on the road reserve.
- (c) to avoid conduct that may harm the environment of the road reserve.

2.6.2 Incident Claims

If a person proposes to make a claim in relation to a public road or infrastructure for which Council is the responsible road authority, that person should contact Council and Council will initiate respective insurance reporting processes.

In accordance with Section 110 of the *Road Management Act 2004*, Council is not legally liable for property damages where the value of the damage is equal to or less than the threshold amount.

In cases where the claim relates to assets Council does not own or is not responsible for on the road reserve, the person who proposes to make a claim must refer the claim to the other authority or person responsible for those assets.

2.6.3 Permits for work within a road reserve

In cases where an individual or organisation proposes to carry out works within the road reserve that may impede public access, or interfere with road infrastructure, such as any works relating to a crossover (driveway) or stormwater connection, they must apply for a 'Minor Works Within Road Reserve' Permit. There are some exemptions, as noted in the Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2015.

A copy of the individuals or organisations public liability insurance is required upon submission and depending on the impact of the planned works, a Traffic Management Plan may also be required.

If the planned works are considered 'other than minor', this application should still be used, however a different fee will apply. These details can be found on page three of the application form.

For further details see *Apply for a Permit* on our website www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au

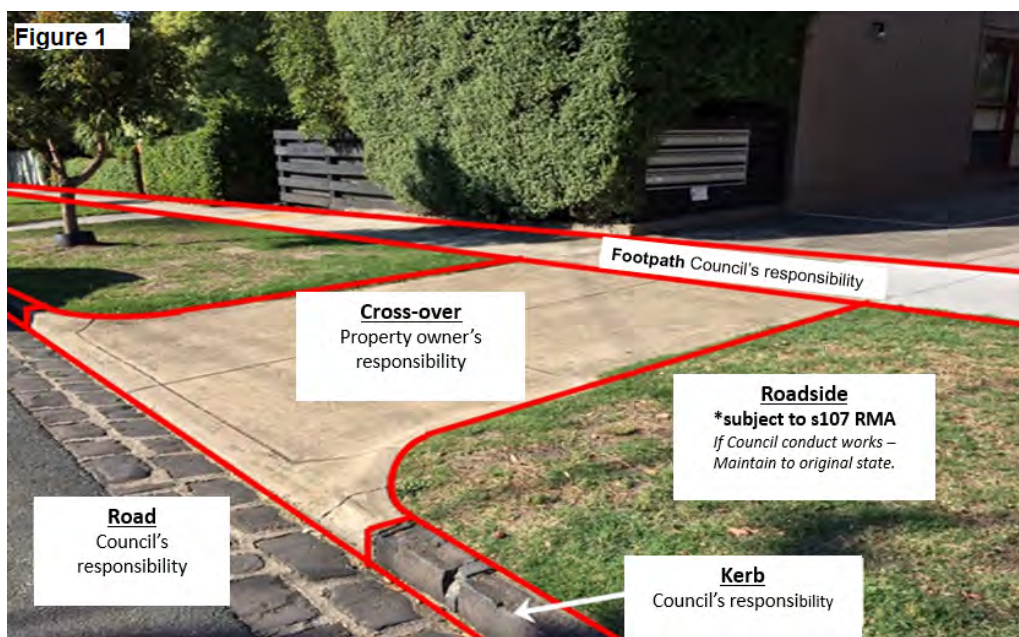
2.6.4 Obligation of others

There are several assets within the road reserve that Council do not have an obligation to inspect and/or maintain. These include:

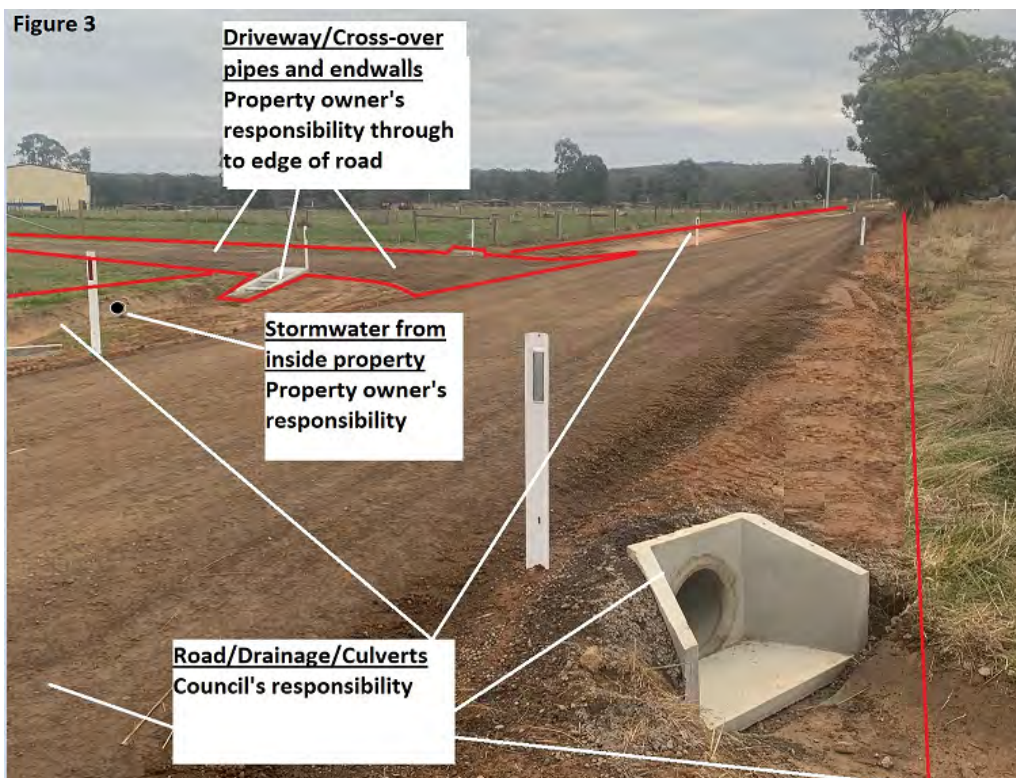
- **Non-road infrastructure** – This includes (but is not limited to) such items as gas pipes, water and sewerage pipes, cables, electricity poles and cables, tram wires, rail infrastructure, bus shelters, public telephones, mail boxes, roadside furniture and fences erected by utilities, or providers of public transport.

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- **Vehicle driveways** – the vehicle crossing (including Cross-over), located between the carriageway and the property boundary, must be maintained by the adjoining property owner. However, Council is responsible for the portion of the driveway where a constructed pathway is reasonably required by the public. Refer to Figure 1,2 and 3 for different driveway types and responsibilities.



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- **Single property stormwater drains** – for drains constructed within the reserve that carry water from a single property to an outlet in the kerb, or other drain.
- **Utilities** – including, but not limited to; telecommunication, power, water, gas and rail authority assets.
- **Roadside** – as per Section 107 of the Road Management Act, Council has no “*statutory duty or a common law duty to perform road management functions in respect of a public highway which is not a public road or to maintain, inspect or repair the roadside*”, described as “*any land that is within the boundaries of the road (other than shoulders) which is not a roadway or pathway*”. This includes landscaped tree plots within the pathway/pathway where the surface of the tree plot is not constructed with the intention of providing a trafficable pedestrian surface.

Where Council becomes aware of a hazard created by the defective condition of assets / infrastructure owned by another party, Council may at its absolute discretion:

- If located within assets / infrastructure for which Council is responsible (e.g. pathways, road surfaces, etc.), or otherwise presents an immediate and significant risk to members of the public, undertake temporary measures to reduce the risk to members of the public until such time as the respective owner can implement permanent repairs (subject also to Council's available resources).
- Report in writing (e.g. email or letter) the presence of the hazard to the responsible party and request that repairs be implemented within a reasonable timeframe.

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- Where repairs are not completed by the responsible party within the respective timeframe, Council may complete necessary repairs and invoice the responsible party for the costs.

However, where another party has a duty in relation to the asset / infrastructure, and Council has a discretionary power to take remedial action in relation to that matter, only that other party with the duty is liable in a subsequent proceeding, in accordance with s.104 of the Road Management Act 2004.

3. Road Management Systems

3.1 Background and Process

Road asset management involves managing both physical assets, and uses and operation that have the potential to impact their condition. It applies to all road assets, including:

- the road – pavement and surface, as well as pathways, kerb and channel
- structures – bridges, culverts and traffic management devices
- road infrastructure – traffic signals and on-road electrical assets.

The aim of Council's road management system is to deliver a safe and efficient road network and meet community needs to the best of our ability, within available resources.

To create a road asset management system that would best meet Council's needs when inspecting, maintaining and repairing public roads, Council used the following nationally recognised asset management frameworks:

- International Infrastructure Management Manual (IIMM) 2015, IPWEA
- IPWEA National Asset Management Systems (NAMS+)
- Other references, as listed in Technical References.

The system is designed to set the direction for Council's asset management activities. It is also linked to the annual business planning cycle.

3.2 Asset Hierarchies – Municipal Road Network

All roads and pathways within the municipal road network are classified according to a hierarchy that considers how they are used, who uses them and how often.

The hierarchy classification is used to determine the levels of service required, prioritise works programs and determine defect intervention responses.

The two levels in the hierarchy are:

1. Road and Street network

This is further divided into four categories, as follows:

- Link road
- Collector road – sealed and gravel
- Access road – sealed and gravel
- Limited access track

See Attachment 1 for more information

2. Pathway network

This is further divided into 2 categories, as follows:

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Footpaths

- Priority 1: High-use Areas
- Priority 2: Other Areas

See Attachment 2 for further information.

3.3 Our Road Network

More information about the Council's road network is shown in the tables below.

Table 3.1 – Road length by hierarchy – date last updated: 5/06/2025

Hierarchy	Length (km)	% of Network
Link Road	563	26%
Collector Road	980	45%
Access Road	630	29%
Limited Access Track	22	1%
Total	2195	100%

Table 3.2 – Road Length by Surface Type – date last updated: 10/06/2025

Surface Type	Length (km)	% of Network
Sealed	753	34%
Unsealed	1442	66%
Total	2195	100%

3.4 Maintenance Management System

3.4.1 Maintenance Management

Council has responsibilities to road users and the community to maintain public roads to a reasonably safe and suitable standard, within our available funds and resources. By developing long-term maintenance programs for our assets, we are better able to plan how we do this.

The following maintenance requirements shape our annual program and budget:

Routine maintenance standards

Standards vary across the network depending on the asset type and relevant risk factors, such as traffic volumes and composition, operating speeds, the susceptibility of assets to deterioration and the cost effectiveness of repairs. Competing priorities for funding are also relevant.

Defect intervention levels have been established using the *VicRoads Standard Specification Section 750* and adapting it to local conditions.

The standards will be reviewed periodically to make sure they are adequate (see section 1.4).

Repair and maintenance works

Works must be completed within a specified time, depending on the severity and location of

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the defect. Response times are determined using local knowledge and experience and past performance as a guide.

Response times are monitored and will be periodically reviewed (see section 1.4).

Temporary mitigation measures

These are temporary works designed to reduce the risk of an incident, until such time as repair or maintenance works can be completed.

Response times and safety measures – for example warning signs, flashing lights, and safety barriers – are determined by reference to the risk to safety, road type and traffic volume.

Emergency works

Works that result from emergency incidents and must be undertaken immediately, for the safety of road users and the public.

Emergency works might include traffic incident management, responses to fires, floods, storms and spillages, and any assistance required under the Victorian State Emergency Response Plan and Municipal Emergency Management Plan.

3.4.2 Asset Management Plans

Council's asset management plans guide the development of long-term asset renewal programs, helping Council to plan and finance asset renewal and replacement.

3.4.3 Maintenance Surveys and inspections

A three-tier regime is used to inspect Council's road network assets. It covers safety issues, incidents, defects and condition inspections.

1. Reactive inspections (Request for Service or RFS)

These inspections are conducted in response to requests from the community. The inspection is carried out by a Council/Contractor employee and assessed according to the Hazard intervention levels, contained within Attachment 5.

2. Proactive Inspections

Regular timetabled inspections that are scheduled depending on traffic flow, the types of defects likely to impact the asset and the perceived risks of these defects.

3. Condition Inspections

These inspections identify structural integrity issues which, if untreated, are likely to adversely affect the network overall. These issues may impact short-term serviceability, as well as the ability of the asset to perform for the duration of its intended life span.

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3.4.4 Customer responsiveness and performance targets

Customer service is at the core of Strathbogie Shire Council's work and is part of the role of every person employed by Council. Council's Customer Service Charter outlines Council's commitment toward customer service. The Customer Service Charter is not intended to be a guide or indicator of resolving a specific request or report of a road defect, it is simply to guide Council's responsiveness to acknowledging your request. Council will let customers know when their request may not meet the guidelines set out in the Customer Service Charter due to complexity and/or the involvement of other stakeholders.

Your request will be inspected and assessed in accordance with timeframes specified in Attachment 4.

For more information about the Customer Service Charter, refer to Council's website via the following link, or by cutting and pasting the link into your web browser.

<https://www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au/council/plans-policies-strategies-and-reports>

3.5 Asset Levels of Service

Five elements are taken into account when determining appropriate levels of service for the road network. These are:

- Community expectations
- Technical standards
- Organisational capacity
- Performance measures and targets
- Safety of road and footpath users.

4. Public Road Register

Council maintains a register of public roads – called the Public Road Register – with the details of all public roads and ancillary areas for which we are responsible.

The Public Road Register is available at the following locations and may be viewed, free of charge, by the public during office hours each working day:

Municipal Offices
109A Binney Street,
Euroa, 3666
Phone: 03 5795 0000
Mon – Fri. 9.00 am to 5.00 pm

Nagambie Customer Service
293 High Street,
Nagambie, 3608
Phone: 1800 065 993
Mon – Fri 10.00 am to 4.00 pm

The Public Road Register is also available on Council's website at www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au

4.1 Maintenance Demarcation/ Interface (Boundary) Agreements

When roads and road-related infrastructure crosses municipal boundaries, Council's work together to develop Boundary Road Agreements. These agreements outline the assets that each council will manage and maintain.

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We have boundary roads with the following road authorities and are currently updating our boundary agreements with them:

- Benalla Rural City to the east
- Campaspe Shire to the north-west
- City of Greater Bendigo to the west
- City of Greater Shepparton to the north
- Mansfield Shire to the south-east
- Mitchell Shire to the south-west
- Murrindindi Shire to the south.

4.2 Roads not listed on the Register

The following roads are not listed on Council's Public Road Register:

- Roads which are the full responsibility of the state government, or a private enterprise
- Unformed roads for which Council have not accepted responsibility
- Roads drawn out on a plan of subdivision, until such time that Council accept responsibility for these roads
- Roads which Council have not determined are reasonably required for general public use.

4. Force Majeure

Council will make every endeavour to meet all aspects of its Road Management Plan.

However, in the event of natural disasters and other events including, but not limited to, fires, floods, droughts and the like, together with human factors, such as lack of Council staff or suitably qualified contractors, because of section 83 of the Victorian *Wrongs Act 1958*, as amended, Council reserves the right to suspend compliance with its Road Management Plan.

In the event that the CEO of the Council has to, pursuant to section 83 of the above Act, consider the limited financial resources of the Council and its other conflicting priorities, meaning Council's Road Management Plan cannot be met, they will write to Council's Officer in charge of its Road Management Plan and inform them that some, or all, of the timeframes and response times are to be suspended.

Once the events beyond the control of Council have abated, or if the events have partly abated, Council's CEO will write to Council's Officer responsible for Council's Road Management Plan and inform them which parts of Council's Road Management Plan are to be reactivated and the timeframes for each part of the Road Management Plan to be reactivated.

6. Technical References

- i. AS ISO 31000:2018 – Risk Management – Guidelines
 - ii. Integrated Asset Management Guidelines for Road Networks (AP-R202) 2002, Austroads Inc.
 - iii. International Infrastructure Management Manual (IIMM) 2015, IPWEA
 - iv. VicRoads Risk Management Guidelines
- V.** VicRoads Standard Specification Section 750 – Routine Maintenance

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Attachment 1: Road Hierarchy

Categories	Description*
Link	These roads act as links between population centres and are supplementary to the arterial road network. Key features typically include: - High truck (commercial vehicle) traffic volume - Access to major industries - Minimum 2 clear traffic lanes (excluding parking) <i>Note: In our Asset Register this incorporates Categories L0, L1, L2, L3 and L4</i>
Collector	These carry moderate volumes of traffic and provide access, by linking local areas to link and arterial roads. They also provide links between the various collector roads. Key features typically include: - Non-continuous connector (do not cross arterial roads) - Limited through traffic (not promoted, or encouraged) - Cater for, but may restrain, service and heavy vehicles - Minimum two clear traffic lanes (excluding parking) <i>Note: In our Asset Register this incorporates Categories C0, C1, C2, C3 and C4</i>
Access	These carry only local traffic. The primary function is to provide access to private properties. Key features typically include: - Short distance travel to higher level roads In the case of an unsealed access road providing access to a single property, the road will only be maintained to the closest boundary of that property. The balance will be maintained as a limited access track (see below) <i>Note: In our Asset Register this incorporates Categories A0, A1, A2, A3, A4 and CP</i>
Limited Access Track	These perform a very minimal function. They typically act as fire access, or as a secondary or seasonal access road to large rural / farming properties. Key features typically include: - Provides secondary access to properties - Unsealed roads, often unformed or with minimal material <i>Note: In our Asset Register this incorporates Category FA</i> Due to the limited function and use of these roads, they are not subject to a proactive inspection regime or the same hazard intervention levels of other roads.

* Categories follow the Infrastructure Design Manual for residential streets

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Attachment 2: Pathway Hierarchy

Footpaths

Category	Area	Description*
Priority 1	High-use Areas	These are footpaths within the CBD of towns where public footpaths have been constructed. Also included in this category is any footpath in the vicinity of Hospitals, Churches, Schools, Aged Hostels, and strategic routes to areas of significance.
Priority 2	Moderate-use Areas	Primarily included in this category is any footpath specifically constructed as access to residential and other areas & have less use than Priority 1 footpaths.

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Attachment 3: Inspection Requirements

Inspection Type	Purpose	Inspection and Reporting Requirements
Reactive – Request for Service (RFS)	Reactive inspections are designed to confirm the nature of defects/hazards reported by members of the public or Council employees and identify any that exceed the intervention levels specified in Attachment 5.	Performed by a Council/Contractor representative with knowledge of Description / Intervention Levels (Attachment 5) and road maintenance techniques who may then call in a higher level of expertise if necessary. All Reactive inspections are conducted on foot, with defects measured and photographed. The report is required to identify specific safety defect, time first reported, time inspected and by whom, subsequent action and time of completion.
Proactive Inspection	Inspection undertaken in accordance with a formal programmed inspection schedule to determine if the road asset complies with the levels of service as specified. A record of each asset is to be completed detailing the name of the inspector, the inspection date, and a description of any defects found that exceed the intervention levels specified in Attachment 5. In addition, details of the inspection will be electronically recorded against the particular asset inspected.	Proactive Inspections of roads are conducted via a slow moving vehicle, while Proactive Inspections of all other asset types are conducted on foot, with defects measured and photographed.
Night Inspections	Inspection undertaken in accordance with a formal programmed inspection schedule to assess the reflectivity of road signage, cat's eyes and roadside guideposts, and the visibility of line marking at night.	Conducted via a slow moving vehicle with standard driving lights (low beam), with visibility/legibility/reflectivity assessed by eye from distances specified respective of each asset defect type.

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Attachment 4: Inspection Frequencies

Asset Group	Hierarchy Category	Reactive Inspection Timeframe WD = Working Days H = Hours	Proactive Inspection Frequency M = Months	Night Inspections Y = Years
Sealed Roads Unsealed Roads Regulatory, Warning and Hazard Signs	Link	5WD	3M	1Y
	Collector	5WD	4M	1Y
	Access	10WD	12M	n/a
	Limited Access Track	12WD	Reactive only	n/a
Pathways	Priority 1	5WD	6M	n/a
	Priority 2	10WD	12M	n/a
Concrete and Stone Kerb and Channel	Link	5WD	12M when either adjacent road or footpath is inspected	n/a
	Collector	5WD	12M when either adjacent road or footpath is inspected	n/a
	Access	10WD	12M when either adjacent road or footpath is inspected	n/a
Bridges (vehicular and pedestrian)	Defect & Level 1 Bridge Inspections	5WD	12M	n/a
Emergency Response – All Asset / Categories * Reported Incidents / Hazards that present an immediate and significant risk to members of the public. Temporary measures (e.g. installing barriers, signage, closing the road/pathway, etc.) will be implemented to reduce the risk to users of the road network until such time as appropriate repairs can be completed.		12H	n/a	n/a

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* If a Proactive Inspection Frequency elapses on a Weekend or Public Holiday, the actual due date will be the next Working Day.

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Attachment 5: Defect Intervention Levels and Repair Timeframes

NOTES:

* If a repair timeframe elapses on a Weekend or Public Holiday, the actual due date will be the next working day.

** In cases where a defect is not due to be repaired in less than 4 weeks, temporary measures, such as installing warning signage, erecting barriers, or painting the defect with a bright contrasting colour, may be implemented at the time of identification to reduce the risk as much as is reasonably practicable until permanent repairs can be completed in line with the specified Repair Timeframes.

Sealed Roads

Defect type	Description / Intervention Level	Repair timeframes by hierarchy WD = Working Days W = Weeks M = Months			
		Link	Collector	Access	Limited Access Tracks
Pothole	Potholes in sealed pavement >100 mm in depth and >300 mm in diameter Potholes located in dedicated/marked bicycle lanes >50 mm depth and >300 mm diameter.	2W	1M	3M	n/a
Edge break	Edge break in the traffic lane greater than 20m in length and greater than 200mm across the lane	1M	3M	3M	n/a
Edge / shoulder drop	Edge drop off in the traffic lane greater than 10m in length and greater than 100mm in depth	1M	2M	3M	n/a

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Depressions / deformations	Depression / deformations in the traffic lane of a sealed pavement >100 mm in depth under a 3m long straight edge	1M	2M	3M	n/a
Missing pit lids	Missing Council drainage pit lids	2WD	2WD	4WD	n/a
Damaged pit lids	Damaged Council drainage pit lids (such that they are potentially structurally unsound)	1W	2W	4W	n/a
Roadside Vegetation – Overhead clearance	Vegetation intruding into the road envelope <5 m over the trafficable portion of all sealed roads	1M	3M	3M	n/a
Roadside Vegetation – Obstructing sightlines	Vegetation that is obstructing sightlines to intersections or regulatory, warning and hazard signs	1M	3M	6M	n/a

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Unsealed Roads

Defect type	Description / Intervention Level	Repair timeframes by hierarchy WD = Working Days W = Weeks M = Months			
		Link	Collector	Access	Limited Access Track
Pothole	Potholes in unsealed pavement >100 mm in depth and >500 mm in diameter	n/a	1M	2M	4M
Wheel ruts / scouring	Wheel ruts or scouring on an unsealed road >100 mm in depth	n/a	1M	2M	4M
Corrugations	Continuous corrugations on an unsealed road greater than 150mm in length >75 mm in depth	n/a	1M	2M	4M
Roadside Vegetation – Overhead clearance	Vegetation intruding into the road envelope <5 m over the trafficable portion of the road	n/a	6M	12M	12M
Roadside Vegetation – Obstructing sightlines	Vegetation that is obstructing sightlines to intersections or regulatory, warning and hazard signs.	n/a	3M	6M	6M

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Traffic Control Devices

Defect type	Description / Intervention Level	Repair timeframes by hierarchy WD = Working Days W = Weeks M = Months			
		Link	Collector	Access	Limited Access Track
Missing / Damaged Signage	Regulatory, warning and hazard signs missing, illegible or damaged making them substantially ineffective.	1M	2M	3M	4M
Missing / Damaged Guard Rail or fencing	Guard rail/fence damaged or missing making them substantially ineffective (intervention may include temporary traffic control measures)	1M	3M	6M	n/a
Missing / Damaged Pavement markings	Pavement markings at critical locations (refer to definitions table for critical locations) which are missing or faded making them substantially ineffective.	1M	3M	4M	n/a

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Pathways

Defect type	Description / Intervention Level	Repair timeframes by hierarchy WD = Working Days W = Weeks M = Months	
		Priority 1 – High Use Areas	Priority 2 – Other areas
Vertical Displacement	Vertical Displacement >25 mm in height	2W	1M
Loose segmented pavers	Loose and unstable segmented pavers (i.e. bluestone, bricks, etc.) that move underfoot	2W	1M
Cracking	Cracking in pathways >40 mm wide	2W	1M
Undulations	Undulations (depressions / bumps) >75 mm in depth/height under a 1.5m straight edge	1M	6W
Dislodged / missing pieces / potholes	Dislodged or missing pieces or potholes >300 mm in length/width and >25 mm in depth	2W	1M
Missing pit lids	Missing Council drainage pit lids	2WD	2WD
Damaged pit lids	Damaged Council drainage pit lids (such that they are potentially structurally unsound)	1M	1M
Vegetation overhead clearance	Vegetation intruding into the pathway envelope <2.5 m over pathway surface	6M	6M
Dislodged / missing tactile indicator	Damaged or missing	1M	2M

* Pram crossings / ramps providing transition between road and pathway levels are treated as part of the pathway for the purposes of the application of description / intervention levels.

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Kerb and Channel

Defect type	Description / Intervention Level	Repair timeframes by hierarchy WD = Working Days W = Weeks M = Months			
		Link	Collector	Access	Limited Access Track
Vertical Displacement	Vertical displacement – uplift section (measured by risk assessment against the defect presented)	2M	2M	6M	n/a
Horizontal Displacement	Horizontal displacement section (measured by risk assessment against the defect presented)	2M	2M	6M	n/a

Bridges and Culverts

Defect type	Description / Intervention Level	Repair timeframes by hierarchy WD = Working Days W = Weeks M = Months			
		Link	Collector	Access	Limited Access Track
Bridge and culvert defects	Visible damage likely to pose an immediate and significant risk to members of the public	2W	4W	2M	3M

Strathbogie Shire Council Road Management Plan 2025 Review 1 July 2025



Strathbogie
SHIRE COUNCIL

OFFICIAL**Acknowledgement of Country**

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the places we live, work and play.

We recognise and respect the enduring relationships they have with their lands and waters and we pay respects the Elders past, present and emerging.

Document ID	
Last review	September 2021
Current review	July 2025
Adopted by Council	
Next review	2029
Responsible Officer	Director Sustainable Infrastructure

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Road Management Plan 2025 Review

Introduction

Council has an established Road Management Plan (RMP) under the *Road Management Act 2004*. The RMP is a plan that details the inspection regime, defect intervention levels and defect repair response times for all nominated road related assets under Council management. Compliance with the current RMP limits Council's public liability to legal action from claims for damages for incidents with these assets. The RMP ensures that the community is informed about how Council manages its road assets. The RMP also enables the community to comment to Council about the level of service Council offers in terms of intervention associated with roads and road related assets.

The RMP was initially adopted by Council on 16 November 2004. It was subsequently reviewed and amended by Council on 20 September 2005, 15 May 2007, 19 June 2012, February 2014, April 2017 and September 2021. As outlined in Section 8 of the Road Management (General) Regulations 2016, an incoming Council must review the RMP within six months after each general election or by the next 30 June, whichever is later, unless the Minister administering that Act extends the period under section 125(4) of that Act.

The Municipal Association Victoria's (MAV) main role is to advocate for local government interests, provide policy and strategic advice and to support Councils. They also provide insurance services on behalf of Councils. One of the key areas of concern for the MAV and Councils is risk and liability and MAV provide support and advice in relation to the requirements, developments and management of the Road Management Plan.

In preparation for the review the MAV ran workshops and outlined to Councils that incidents and claims in relation to assets management through the Road Management Plan have risen by over 80% since 2018 and that resultant payout has risen by over 200%

The highest risk area and the areas that lead to the most claims are hazards that lead to trips and falls. Taking this into consideration the MAV conducted a review of the data captured from the 79 Victorian Councils in 2022. The areas that they focused on were:

- Proactive inspection frequencies
- Reactive inspection frequencies
- Footpath defect intervention levels
- Defect repair timeframes.

The review also identified concerns in relation discrepancies and lack of clarity across the Road Management Plan developed by each of the member Councils. Taking this into account the MAV developed two standard templates, one for rural Councils and one for metropolitan Councils.

The MAV recommended to all member Councils to consider changing their Road Management Plan to this new format as it provides consistency across Councils and closes some gaps in relation to management of risk and liability. We have heeded this advice and our proposed RMP has been based on the standard template for rural Councils.

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Review Process

Officers commenced a review of the existing RMP plan in late 2024. The review group comprised: Oliver McNulty, Director Sustainable Infrastructure; Brian Doyle, Manager Operations; Gavin Williams, Operations Coordinator; Kate Thompson, Principal Property Officer; Brett Andrews, Services Inspector, Chris Bishop Assets Officers and Lyn Cooper, Asset Planning Administration Officer.

As a first step the current RMP was converted to the MAV standard template for rural councils. The plan was then examined by the review group keeping in mind the following:

- The RMP is a document available to the community and is a document that the Council can communicate to the community how the roads and road related infrastructure is managed
- To serve this audience well the RMP needs to be in simple language, include only necessary information and be unambiguous
- The RMP must be set up in a format to ensure that the officers who work with the document in inspecting and carrying out the identified tasks within the RMP are clear and measurable
- That this is a document that Council will refer to when framing the budget for works to road assets on an annual basis.

Over several meetings, members of the review group made comments on the draft RMP taking into the account the points above. These comments and an initial draft of an amended RMP was issued for further comment.

As part of this review process officers considered and referred to other items as part of the review process:

- *The Road management Act 2004*
- The Road management (General) Guidelines
- Vicroads papers and guidance documents relating to RMP's
- MAV papers and guidance documents relating to RMP's
- Papers outlining legal opinion in relation to the creation of RMP's
- Feedback from Councils insurers
- Plans and documents prepared by other similar rural Councils
- Council Policies.

At these meetings each section of the RMP was discussed in detail taking into account each of the items above.

The outcomes of this review process were presented to Council at a briefing session held on 1 July 2025. The draft amended RMP was presented at a Council Meeting on 15 July and approved to go on public exhibition inviting feedback from community members. The feedback period commenced on 23 July and closed on 4 September 2025 in accordance with requirements of the *Road Management (General) Regulations 2016 Part 3 Division 1 Regulation 9 (4)*

OFFICIAL**Review****Overview**

Officers asked themselves the question what is the purpose of the RMP? This was discussed with reference to the documents listed above taking into context the experience of the group around the table.

In summary it was discussed that the RMP:

- Provides a mechanism through which Council can manage its legal liability
- Outlines when Council will undertake works on hazards either identified through inspection or via a community request
- Provides our community with a clear and transparent understanding of what Council will or will not do
- Annual budget is established based upon the inspection cycles and intervention levels outlined.

A key decision was made at this stage to clarify that the RMP was a document to manage hazardous defects within roads and road related infrastructure. It has been clarified which assets were included for inspection under the RMP. These are:

- Roads – Sealed Surface
- Roads – Pavement
- Gravel Roads
- Pathways
- Kerb and Channels
- Bridges and Major Culverts
- Signage (regulatory and warning)
- Roadside vegetation within the sightline zone at sealed road intersection

All other road and road related infrastructure which would not be considered as being high risk items are managed under operational processes.

In summary, the changes from the Last Road Management Plan (2021) are:

- Content and layout moved to the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) standard template for rural Councils
- Clarification around assets which we inspect and maintain
- Maps outlining which pathways are covered by the plan
- A review of inspection times and response times across all road and road related infrastructure assets

Following is a more detailed listing of changes.

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Road Hierarchy

Council's existing asset system categorises roads by functional classification and road class. The functional classification was either: link; collector; access; access – property only; or fire access. Road class was based on the number of vehicles per day and ranged from 0 (unformed), 1 (<50vpd) to 4 (>500 vpd). For example a Link road with 50-150vpd would be categorised as L2.

In the interests of simplicity and clarity, the review group determined that roads should be categorised as Link, Collector, Access or Limited Access Track.

Inspection Frequencies

A review of proactive inspection times was conducted by the review group. Taking into account the number of staff with sufficient expertise to conduct the inspections and the extent of the network, the following changes were recommended:

Asset Group	Hierarchy Category	Reactive Inspection Timeframe WD = Working Days H = Hours	Proactive Inspection Frequency M = Months	Night Inspections Y = Years	Comment
Sealed Roads	Link	5WD	3M	1Y	
Unsealed Roads	Collector	5WD	4M	1Y	Increased from three months
Regulatory, Warning and Hazard Signs	Access	10WD	12M	n/a	Increased from three months
	Limited Access Track	12WD	Reactive only	n/a	Was twelve months
Pathways	Priority 1	5WD	6M	n/a	
	Priority 2	10WD	12M	n/a	
Concrete and Stone Kerb and Channel	Link	5WD	12M when either adjacent road or footpath is	n/a	New

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			inspected		
	Collector	5WD	12M when either adjacent road or footpath is inspected	n/a	New
	Access	10WD	12M when either adjacent road or footpath is inspected	n/a	New

Intervention Levels and Response Times

Key features of the plan are tables that set out:

- An inspection regime
- Types of road maintenance activities with respective “intervention level” and “response times” for the maintenance requirement.

The review considered the “reasonableness” of these standards by comparing these maintenance requirements to the plans of the other like Councils. This benchmarking found that there is considerable variation in some measures across those Councils and Strathbogie’s measures were not in the extreme of the variation. This comparison did not conclude that Strathbogie’s measure were “unreasonable”

The review also considered the measures Strathbogie has in place are reasonable given its capacity to resource the required work within the required response times. Also, the budget available for Council to undertake routine maintenance of its roads is consistent with the requirements of the plan.

Notwithstanding the above, the review has identified that a number of intervention levels and response times are recommended to be adjusted. A table of these recommended adjustments is provided below:

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Sealed Roads

Defect type	Description / Intervention Level	Repair timeframes by hierarchy WD = Working Days W = Weeks M = Months				Comment
		Link	Collector	Access	Limited Access Tracks	
Pothole	Potholes in sealed pavement >100 mm in depth and >300 mm in diameter Potholes located in dedicated/marked bicycle lanes >50 mm depth and >300 mm diameter.	2W	1M	3M	n/a	Was 2W / 2W / 1M / 2M For all items Limited Access Tracks set to n/a as there are no sealed limited access tracks.
Edge break	Edge break in the traffic lane greater than 20m in length and greater than 200mm across the lane	1M	3M	3M	n/a	Was 2W / 2W / 1M/ 2M

Document name:
Doc ID#

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Edge / shoulder drop	Edge drop off in the traffic lane greater than 10m in length and greater than 100mm in depth	1M	2M	3M	n/a	Was 2W / 2W / 1M/ 2M
Depressions / deformations	Depression / deformations in the traffic lane of a sealed pavement >100 mm in depth under a 3m long straight edge	1M	2M	3M	n/a	Was 2W / 2W / 1M/ 2M
Missing pit lids	Missing Council drainage pit lids	2WD	2WD	4WD	n/a	New
Damaged pit lids	Damaged Council drainage pit lids (such that they are potentially structurally unsound)	1W	2W	4W	n/a	New
Roadside Vegetation – Overhead clearance	Vegetation intruding into the road envelope <5 m over the	1M	3M	3M	n/a	Was 6M for link and 'as resources allow' for others

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	trafficable portion of all sealed roads					
Roadside Vegetation – Obstructing sightlines	Vegetation that is obstructing sightlines to intersections or regulatory, warning and hazard signs	1M	3M	6M	n/a	new

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Unsealed Roads

Defect type	Description / Intervention Level	Repair timeframes by hierarchy WD = Working Days W = Weeks M = Months				Comment
		Link	Collector	Access	Limited Access Track	
Pothole	Potholes in unsealed pavement >100 mm in depth and >500 mm in diameter	n/a	1M	2M	4M	Previous intervention level description simplified and timeframes were 2M / 3M / 3M /6M For all items related to Link roads: there are no unsealed link roads so set to n/a
Wheel ruts / scouring	Wheel ruts or scouring on an unsealed road >100 mm in depth	n/a	1M	2M	4M	Was > 150mm Timeframes were 3M / 3M / 6M / 6M
Corrugations	Continuous corrugations on an unsealed road greater than 150mm in length >75 mm in depth	n/a	1M	2M	4M	Timeframes were 3M / 3M / 6M / 6M
Roadside Vegetation – Overhead clearance	Vegetation intruding into the road envelope <5 m over the trafficable portion of all	n/a	6M	12M	12M	Added

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	roads					
Roadside Vegetation – Obstructing sightlines	Vegetation that is obstructing sightlines to intersections or regulatory, warning and hazard signs.	n/a	3M	6M	6M	new

Traffic Control Devices

Defect type	Description / Intervention Level	Repair timeframes by hierarchy WD = Working Days W = Weeks M = Months				Comments
		Link	Collector	Access	Limited Access Track	
Missing / Damaged Signage	Regulatory, warning and hazard signs missing, illegible or damaged making them substantially ineffective.	1M	2M	3M	4M	Was within 1 month if missing or substantially ineffective
Missing / Damaged Guard Rail or fencing	Guard rail/fence damaged or missing making them substantially ineffective (intervention may include temporary traffic control measures)	1M	3M	6M	n/a	new

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Missing / Damaged Pavement markings	Pavement markings at critical locations (refer to definitions table for critical locations) which are missing or faded making them substantially ineffective.	1M	3M	4M	n/a	Was Annual Program subject to funding

Pathways

Defect type	Description / Intervention Level	Repair timeframes by hierarchy WD = Working Days W = Weeks M = Months		Comment
		Priority 1 – High Use Areas	Priority 2 – Other areas	
Vertical Displacement	Vertical Displacement >25 mm in height	2W	1M	Was > 20mm abrupt step Was – refer to program
Loose segmented pavers	Loose and unstable segmented pavers (i.e. bluestone, bricks, etc.) that move underfoot	2W	1M	new
Cracking	Cracking in pathways >40 mm wide	2W	1M	new
Undulations	Undulations (depressions / bumps) >75 mm in depth/height under a 1.5m straight edge	1M	6W	new

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Dislodged / missing pieces / potholes	Dislodged or missing pieces or potholes >300 mm in length/width and >25 mm in depth	2W	1M	new
Missing pit lids	Missing Council drainage pit lids	2WD	2WD	new
Damaged pit lids	Damaged Council drainage pit lids (such that they are potentially structurally unsound)	1M	1M	new
Vegetation overhead clearance	Vegetation intruding into the pathway envelope <2.5 m over pathway surface	6M	6M	new
Dislodged / missing tactile indicator	Damaged or missing	1M	2M	new

* Pram crossings / ramps providing transition between road and pathway levels are treated as part of the pathway for the purposes of the application of description / intervention levels.

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Kerb and Channel

Defect type	Description / Intervention Level	Repair timeframes by hierarchy WD = Working Days W = Weeks M = Months				Comment
		Link	Collector	Access	Limited Access Track	
Vertical Displacement	Vertical displacement – uplift section (measured by risk assessment against the defect presented)	2M	2M	6M	n/a	New
Horizontal Displacement	Horizontal displacement section (measured by risk assessment against the defect presented)	2M	2M	6M	n/a	New

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Bridges and Culverts

Defect type	Description / Intervention Level	Repair timeframes by hierarchy WD = Working Days W = Weeks M = Months				Comment
		Link	Collector	Access	Limited Access Track	
Bridge & culvert defects	Visible damage likely to pose an immediate and significant risk to members of the public	2W	4W	2M	3M	Was < 25% capacity Timeframes were 3M / 3M / 6M / 6M

OFFICIAL**Road Register**

The road register accompanies the Road Management Plan. It contains a listing of roads that Council is responsible for. The review found that the register is not kept up to date on a regular basis. Recent efforts by Council to put increased emphasis on asset management should drive improved accuracy of asset data including the register of roads and systems to support maintenance of that data.

Community Submissions

The review was advertised in the government gazette, local newspapers and Council's web site indicating that submissions may be made to Council from 23 July 2025 to 4 August 2025. A total of 6 submissions were received.

The issues raised in the six submissions did not relate to the matters covered by the plan. In summary:

- One related to an upgrade of a floodway
- One related to inspecting and grading a specific road
- One related to how we grade our roads
- One related to a speed change on a specific road and litter
- Two related to a request for specific road to be added to the Road Register

Therefore, no amendments to the plan were proposed.

Supplementary Edition

Maps showing our footpath network were included to make it clear which footpaths are covered by the RMP, e.g. footpaths in recreation reserves are not part of road related infrastructure and are not covered by the plan. The RMP also contains new images that clearly identify who is responsible for each asset within the road reserve, such as private driveways, footpaths etc.

Summary

Council is required to update its Road Management Plan every four years, with each new Council.

The content and layout of the Road Management Plan 2025 is in the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) template (Rural), the assets which we inspect and maintain have been clarified and inspection times and response times across all road and road related infrastructure assets have been reviewed and updated to reflect the capacity of current staffing and budget.

The draft Road Management Plan 2025 was placed on public exhibition inviting formal submissions from community members from 23 July 2025 to 11.59pm on 4 September 2025.

Six submissions were received; however, as none were related to the content of the Road Management Plan, no amendment to the plan is proposed. These submissions will be reviewed by the Director Sustainable Infrastructure and actioned as appropriate.

Issues: Community Submissions

Six submissions were received from community members and are attached as Attachment 1 for Council's consideration. All submissions have been redacted to remove personal or identifying information to protect privacy.

Submission 1.

*"To whom this applies,
My concern is Ridge road in Gooram for residents, property owners, utilities companies, emergency vehicles, shire of Mansfield residents and the general public who use this road on a daily basis. Also Emergency services have been turn away because of the roughness and difficulty of access of the road. The road is washed away on the hill where the telco communication tower is, the only route on the incline/decline is driving on the grassed area, which is now bare clay surface and eroding and will get worse in time. In wet conditions this is a potential hazard causing an accident which may lead to damage, injuries or death. I ask the shire of Strathbogie to inspect this hazard as your duty of care to be included in the road management plan if it has not already been attention to and have the road graded."*

Submission 2.

"I would like the floodway on leos road to be done properly so that every time it floods it isn't washed away. The water can drop but it will be impassable. Every time counsel has to bring machinery and a couple of blokes out. And every time gravel is put down and every time it gets washed away. This can happen 3 or 4 times a year. I worked out it cost \$10,000 every year to temporarily fix. Fix it properly."

Submission 3

1. Background to Landholder Request for Council to Review the Management of McEwan Lane

The landholders who are signatory to this submission all depend on McEwan Lane to gain access to their dwellings, to their Strathbogie Ranges landholdings, to their rural business enterprises and associated business facilities. (Without McEwan Lane, landholders would be in a landlocked valley.) McEwan Lane is a Government road within the Strathbogie Council LGA that sits on the boundary between the Strathbogie Council and the Benalla Council. The road provides the only access to the rural properties held by four different property owners (5 individuals).

Currently, one of four separately-owned landholder entities is required by law to manage the road. The road is not being managed to a satisfactory level by that one landholder. This creates unsafe driving conditions and undermines the efficient and effective business operations of three sets of enterprises.

Landholders signatory to this submission to the Strathbogie Council Road Management Plan Review, understand that under Victorian Law*, the principle which must guide a Victorian Road Authority including an LGA when they are determining whether a road should be on the Public Road Register is 'whether the road is reasonably required for general public use'.

(*Relevant Acts appear to be The Victorian Road Management Act 2004 Section 17, and, The Victorian Subdivision Act 1988.)

2. Changed Circumstances in our Valley since McEwan Lane was taken off Public Road Register

In 2000 McEwan Lane provided road access to one large farm which for decades had been owned by members of the one extended family and had been managed operated as the one rural enterprise.

In 2025 McEwan Lane provides the only access for four separate land holders (five individuals) to access their:

- three dwellings,
- land holdings /paddocks and diverse business operations, including cattle and sheep grazing, grape and wine production, horse agistment and farm forestry
- farm facilities that support these businesses

3. How McEwan Lane became the Management Responsibility of One Landowner in 2000

In 2000, the management of McEwan Lane became the responsibility of one owner of one section of the former large farm. This resulted from the Strathbogie Council placing a Section 173 Agreement on a Planning Permit for the construction of a dwelling on – with Permit issued in April 2000. The Section 173 Agreement attached to title places the full responsibility for managing McEwan Lane on the owner of Lot, and requires them to:

- take full responsibility for maintaining the full length of the McEwan Lane Road (1.1km)
- do so at no cost to the Council, until such time as the owner constructs the Road to the minimum road construction standards of the Shire of Strathbogie, and that
- they agreed that if they failed to maintain the road then the Council can step in, upgrade the road to the minimum road standard required by the Council, and that the owner must pay the Council the full associated costs of the works.

4. The Impact in 2025 of McEwan Lane being taken off the Public Register

McEwan Lane is not being maintained to Council standards by current owner the Lot.

Other landowners in valley who are not legally responsible for maintenance road, have from necessity, undertaken essential maintenance activities, including:

- Removing fallen limbs across road and dangerous dead branches overhanging road
- Mowing /slashing verges to reduce fuel loads, control weeds and remove vehicle hazard o kangaroos suddenly jumping from long grass growing right to the verge and being hit. (Our equipment is not designed to do roadside slashing; hidden stones etc are damaging it)
- Recently sharing over \$8000 costs of having road graded and some surface material replaced

- We occasionally grazed stock on the road to reduce weeds, fire fuel-loads and vehicle hazards (from kangaroos jumping out and being hit). Unfortunately, the current owner of Lot recently forbade other landowners grazing stock on road to continue doing so, for fear of cattle manure on their vehicles. (We are unclear under what authority she does this.)

In spite of above efforts by landholders not legally responsible for road maintenance, McEwan Lane is now in a serious state of disrepair and becoming exponentially more degraded. It is now beyond the voluntary capacity of the landholders who depend on it for access. Deterioration includes:

- Road camber is virtually flat, so water pools and potholes get bigger
- Drainage lines are gone, water no longer runs off road, and weeds grow to road verge
- Road surface is almost gone and becoming corrugated.

5. Landholders therefore request The Council review the current status of McEwan Lane

For the above reasons, we respectfully request the Council to review the current status of McEwan Lane as part of the Strathbogie Council Road Management Plan Review, and to restore McEwan Lane to the Public Register, as was formerly the situation up until 2000."

Submission 4.

This submission relates to the same issue as Submission No. 3.

"I am writing to formally request that the unmade government road servicing the properties located at [REDACTED] Warrenbayne West Road, Baddaginnie, be officially added to the Strathbogie Road Register.

This road serves as the sole access point for four separate properties and three residences, and it is in active and continuous use. Given its importance for the local community and

property owners, formal recognition and inclusion on the road register is essential for its ongoing management and maintenance.

The properties that rely on this road for access are:

4 Lots – details removed for privacy.

The road is utilized on a regular basis by property owners, residents, staff, contractors, clients, and the general public, further demonstrating its importance as a key access route.

I trust that you will consider this application and take the necessary steps to add this vital thoroughfare to the Strathbogie Road Register."

Submission 5.

"After having 30 years in the earthmoving industry and 80% of that time operating a grader. I worked in puckapunyal army range maintaining gravel road network on base. Roads had to be up to a standard for evacuation purposes in case of army personnel getting hurt.

The shire doesn't do roads properly the free roll on the back of graders are useless. For a road to last they have to be mixed to the right moisture content and compacted in with a smooth drum vibrating roller. The road surface would keep its shape longer and where the road is corrugated or potholed badly scarify road before grading. The most important thing in roads is compaction if they aren't rolled properly the roads not sealed off and damage happens easily.

The culverts also aren't cleaned out properly small excavator with tilting bucket to shape drains so they drain road. Backhoes are no good.

More reshetting of roads mixing the top layer of old road with new material gives you more fines and roads generally come up better."

.

Submission 6.

"Road management committee shire of Strathbogie,

I live on Euroa Strathbogie road, I would like the speed limit reduced to 80kph, and the banning of air brakes, which are excessively used around this stretch of straight road, due to trucks mainly grain trucks and tippers speeding, then coming up to the corner or gateway opposite my home. The time saved by speeding to and from Strathbogie to Euroa is minimal difference between 80 and 100 kph far too many Roos and wombats are killed between the water board and sheans creek road ,due to speed and non educated drivers, solarpowered flashing lights at dawn and dusk would maybe help deer are a problem too (although they are preferable to deer hunters), air brake use frightens my horses and once damaged ,they are unsaleable, means no income, still the ongoing expenses, also when I work night shift I am sleep deprived if I cannot get daytime rest another issue along this section of road is idiots in a hurry trying to overtake turning traffic please slow them down ,a straight stretch of road is not a speedway.

Also why does the shire see fit to grade road edges ,breaking them up and knocking down the guide posts , ! when they have just been repaired and resealed by federal roads ? AND leave a mess on our roadside verge ,that we try to keep tidy ?..we are forever picking up litter too ,could the shire please enforce the covering and tying down of tip loads?

Thankyou".

11.3.2 Master Inland Rail Development Agreement

AUTHOR Director Sustainable Infrastructure

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director Sustainable Infrastructure

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Commonwealth Government's Inland Rail Project has a clear aim of getting more freight on rail. To support this vision in Victoria as part of the Tottenham to Albury project, work will be undertaken along the existing rail corridor throughout North East Victoria. More specifically in Euroa, there is not adequate clearance under the Anderson Street Bridge and new infrastructure will be required to safely allow for double-stacked carriage trains.

The Master Inland Rail Development Agreement (MIRDA) sets out the rules of engagement between Strathbogie Shire Council and Inland Rail in order to successfully deliver the Inland Rail Program, covering (but not limited to) the identification of assets impacted, returned works and standards to be used for the design, construction and hand back of Council assets. This agreement is specifically between Inland Rail and Strathbogie Shire Council. Similar agreements are in place with other local government authorities where the Inland Rail Project is occurring.

Council first considered the draft MIRDA agreement in February 2024 where it requested clarification on some elements of the agreement. Council considered the MIRDA agreement further in August 2024, following an extensive revision process including an independent legal review. As part of the resolution in February Council resolved to:

"Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to subsequently execute any documents that are necessary to give effect to the Agreement, including any Further or Supplementary Agreements recording amendments to the Agreement that are minor in character"

At the meeting in August 2024 Council was provided with an update on the MIRDA Agreement and Council resolved:

"That Council note the execution of the Master Inland Rail Development Agreement by the Chief Executive Officer as authorised by Council"

Some variations have been made to the scope of the project since this time which require consideration by Council, and changes to the MIRDA. These include:

- Brock Street and Scott Street, Euroa Footpath variations – prepared, awaiting Council execution
- Frost Street, Euroa Pedestrian Underpass Closure – prepared, awaiting execution
- Deed Poll (Schedule 6) – prepared, awaiting execution; binds John Holland and successors to MIRDA obligations.
- Future Land Tenure and ownership

Council resolved at the June 2025 meeting to remove the renewal and upgrade of Frost Street Euroa underpass from the scope of the Inland Rail Project and to accept a contribution of \$350,000 from Inland Rail into Councils Capital Works program for allocation to future identified projects.

Execution of these documents is required to update the MIRDA and safeguard Council's legal, financial, and governance position.

In addition to the above, Inland Rail has worked with Council, VicTrack, DTP, ARTC and V/Line to finalise draft land tenure arrangements at Euroa. These are detailed in the Euroa Land Use Change Register and the supporting land tenure plans. The documents clarify:

- Council freehold and Crown land parcels that remain under Council ownership or Committee of Management.
- Adjustments to VicTrack lease boundaries within the rail corridor.
- Parcels of Council land to be permanently acquired by the project, with costs to be met by Inland Rail.
- Realignment of VicTrack boundaries to reflect the final occupation of the rail corridor.
- Private lease adjustments (such as Nutrien interface parcels).

Acceptance of these tenure changes provides certainty over long-term land ownership and management responsibilities, ensuring Council is not left with unfunded or unclear liabilities once the project is complete.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign the amendments to the Master Inland Rail Development Agreement taking into consideration the Brock Street Variation, Scott Street Variation, Frost Street Pedestrian Underpass Closure, and the Deed Poll (Schedule 6)**
- 2. Approve in principle the land tenure changes outlined in the Euroa Land Use Change Register and supporting land tenure plans, noting that parcels to be acquired by Inland Rail will be fully funded by the project, VicTrack boundaries will be adjusted, and Council's freehold and Crown land responsibilities will be confirmed**
- 3. Approve the allocation of the \$350,000 contribution received from Inland Rail towards Council's Capital Works Program for inclusion in projects that relate to the Railway Precinct Masterplan and improved connectivity across the rail corridor.**
- 4. Note that the allocation of this funding to specific projects will be managed through Councils Capital Works reporting.**
- 5. Note that future reports will be presented to Council in relation to the sale and transfer of land ownership in accordance with the *Local Government Acts 1989 and 2020*.**

PURPOSE

To provide Council with an update on the Master Inland Rail Development Agreement (MIRDA), including background, Council's August 2024 resolution, and the current status of outstanding variations and deeds requiring execution, in order to inform Council's decision-making and endorsement of next steps.

To also seek Council's endorsement of the land tenure changes identified in the Euroa Land Use Change Register and supporting land tenure plans, which formalise ownership, lease and management responsibilities post-project.

BACKGROUND

The Inland Rail Beveridge to Albury (B2A) project, delivered by Inland Rail, is a nationally significant freight program. Works associated with the project intersect with municipal infrastructure, requiring clear agreements on design standards, asset handover, and future maintenance responsibilities.

To manage these impacts, Inland Rail developed the Master Inland Rail Development Agreement (MIRDA) in consultation with councils. The agreement establishes:

- Standards for design and construction of municipal assets
- Processes for transferring and vesting assets between Inland Rail and Council
- Clarity on ongoing maintenance responsibilities
- Mechanisms for variations to agreed works
- Legal protections binding Inland Rail and its contractors to Council requirements.

Through Council resolutions in 2024 it was resolved to enter into the MIRDA, subject to finalisation of several supporting schedules and deeds. The resolution recognised the MIRDA as necessary to:

- Provide a binding framework for how Inland Rail works interface with Council assets
- Safeguard Council from inheriting non-compliant or substandard infrastructure
- Ensure asset ownership and responsibilities are clearly defined
- Enable effective dispute resolution and variation management.

Since that resolution, negotiations with Inland Rail have progressed, but several key documents remain outstanding and require Council's agreement before the MIRDA can be fully executed.

As part of these negotiations, Inland Rail, Council, DTP and VicTrack have reviewed the land parcels impacted at Euroa. The Euroa Land Use Change Register provides a clear record of required changes: confirmation of Council's retained land, acquisition of specific parcels by Inland Rail, adjustments to VicTrack's boundaries, and resolution of adjoining private leases. These changes provide the necessary legal clarity on land management once project works are complete.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Background to Proposed MIRDA Variations

(a) Brock Street Footpath Contribution

- This variation addresses long-standing community safety concerns about pedestrians, including parents and children, walking along Brock Street between Campbell Street and Hart Street to access the childcare centre. Increased traffic on the detour route following Inland Rail works heightened these risks and was highlighted in the updated Road Safety Audit
- Construction of a compliant footpath was identified as essential; however, delivery by John Holland (Inland Rail's contractor) was deemed prohibitively expensive due to higher project construction standards. Council therefore delivered the work directly, with Inland Rail providing a financial contribution
- The variation to Schedule 9 – Special Conditions formalises this arrangement, specifying a one-off contribution of up to \$40,000
- Documentation is prepared and remains outstanding with Council for execution. Signing will close out this element of the MIRDA

- Execution will finalise this component of the MIRDA.

Risk if not executed: Governance risk; contribution not formally secured within MIRDA, weakening accountability for completed works.

(b) Scott Street Footpath Contribution

- This variation relates to a new footpath along Scott Street (approximately 118 metres between Elliott Street and Beaton Street), intended to connect the new northern station entrance to the existing network near Beaton Street
- Council requested this connection to provide safe pedestrian access, particularly for families and children using Bicentennial Park. Inland Rail initially refused, arguing the link fell outside the defined 'Station Precinct' and was not required under project obligations
- Council strongly contested this position, highlighting safety and compliance issues: without the footpath, pedestrians would be forced to walk on the carriageway where there is no kerb and channel, no sealed shoulder, limited sightlines near the underpass, and no separation from traffic. This situation does not meet DDA or Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles
- Following negotiation and legal advice, Inland Rail agreed to provide a financial contribution to Council for delivery of the works. The footpath itself will not be constructed until after Inland Rail works are finalised, which may be one to two years away
- A contribution of approximately \$22,000 has been agreed in principle, with Council to construct the path at the appropriate time
- The variation to Schedule 9 – Special Conditions will formalise this arrangement. Documentation is prepared and remains outstanding with Council for execution.

Risk if not executed: Council may lose the contribution and be left to fully fund future delivery. Safety and accessibility issues remain unresolved.

(c) Frost Street Pedestrian Underpass Closure

- Council resolved at the June 2025 meeting to support the permanent removal of the Frost Street pedestrian underpass
- The proposed variation gives effect to this decision, records Council's formal consent, and documents obligations for reinstatement works and risk management. Council has already received a financial contribution of \$350,000 from Inland Rail towards this outcome
- This contribution will be allocated towards Council Capital Works Program for projects identified as part of the Rail Precinct Masterplan and to support connectivity across the rail corridor
- This funding will be allocated to specific projects through Councils Capital Works process.
- Documentation is prepared and outstanding with Council for execution.

Risk if not executed: Delay prolongs community uncertainty, creates ambiguity over reinstatement responsibilities, and weakens enforceability of risk mitigations.

(d) Deed Poll (Schedule 6)

- Schedule 6 requires Inland Rail to execute a Deed Poll binding its contractor (John Holland) and any successors to the obligations of MIRDA

- This mechanism provides legal certainty, ensuring that subcontracted delivery remains fully accountable to Council standards
- The Deed Poll is prepared and remains outstanding with Council for execution
- Execution is essential to safeguard Council's legal position and ensure enforceability of obligations
- Execution is necessary to protect Council's position and ensure enforceability.

Risk if not executed: Obligations may not bind contractors or successors, exposing Council to compliance risks and limiting enforceability if responsibilities change.

(e) Land Tenure Issues

The Euroa Land Use Change Register and plans highlight the following:

- Council's freehold and Crown land parcels are clearly documented and will remain Council's responsibility.
- Adjustments to VicTrack boundaries formalise occupation of the corridor and avoid future disputes.
- Certain small Council parcels are to be permanently acquired by Inland Rail, with acquisition costs met by the project. Land and road alignment changes will need to be advertised in line with the requirements as set out within the *Local Governments Acts 1989 and 2020*
- VicTrack leases and private lease adjustments (e.g. Nutrien) are aligned to the new corridor boundary.

Risk if not executed: Failure to endorse these changes risks leaving Council with uncertainty over ownership, maintenance, and long-term liability.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The MIRDA is a direct agreement between Inland Rail and Council and has not been subject to community consultation. The Frost Street underpass closure remains a sensitive matter, and finalising the variation will assist with clear community messaging and expectation management.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

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.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Brock Street Footpath Contribution	Low	Unlikely	Minimal	Contribution already received but not yet formalised in MIRDA, weakens governance/audit trail.
Scott Street Footpath Contribution	Medium–High	Possible	Major	Contribution not secured, Council may bear full cost in one–two years, safety/accessibility issues remain unresolved until constructed.
Frost Street Underpass Closure	Medium	Probable	Moderate	Delay prolongs community uncertainty and creates ambiguity over reinstatement responsibilities.
Deed Poll (Schedule 6)	Medium	Unlikely	Major	Contractors or successors not bound to MIRDA obligations, Council exposed to compliance/legal risks.
Land Tenure	Medium	Possible	Moderate	Failure to endorse the Euroa Land Use Change Register may expose Council to: • Ambiguity over asset ownership and maintenance responsibility. • Potential unfunded liabilities for land or assets adjacent to the rail corridor. Legal uncertainty regarding rail boundary management.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Inland Rail developed the Master Inland Rail Development Agreement (MIRDA) in consultation with councils. The agreement establishes:

- Standards for design and construction of municipal assets
- Processes for transferring and vesting assets between Inland Rail and Council
- Clarity on ongoing maintenance responsibilities
- Mechanisms for variations to agreed works
- Legal protections binding Inland Rail and its contractors to Council requirements.

On 20 August 2024, Council resolved to enter into the MIRDA, subject to finalisation of several supporting schedules and deeds.

In addition, endorsement of the land tenure changes provides legal certainty, ensuring that ownership transfers, acquisitions, and lease adjustments are enforceable, binding, and properly recorded against Council's land register.

There are requirements set out within the Local Government Acts 1989 and 2020 in relation to the sale of land and any adjustments to the boundaries of road reserves. These will require future Council resolutions and advertisement process as set out within the Acts.

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

Whilst the development of the Master Inland Rail Development Agreement has taken significant officer time and legal review, under the agreement, Council's costs are able to be reimbursed by the Inland Rail.

In addition, future costs incurred by Council under the agreement, will be reimbursed by the Inland Rail.

Returned assets must be confirmed to avoid unplanned maintenance liabilities and ensure proper allocation of costs.

The Euroa land tenure changes are fully funded by Inland Rail, with acquisition costs met by the project and no net loss to Council. Formal acceptance ensures Council avoids unplanned costs associated with unfunded land responsibilities.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Social

The removal of the underpass will have minor impacts on pedestrian travel distances for a proportion of the community.

Environmental

No significant impacts identified. Standard environmental management obligations under MIRDA continue to apply.

COLLABORATION

During the negotiating period of the agreement, there was a high level of collaboration between both parties to ensure the best outcome.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* was considered in the preparation of this report with consideration given to the aspects of respect, equality and dignity.

CONCLUSION

Execution of these documents is required to update the the Master Inland Rail Development Agreement and safeguard Council's legal, financial, and governance position.

In addition, endorsement of the Euroa land tenure changes is necessary to confirm ownership, leasing and management responsibilities post-project. This will protect Council from uncertainty or future liability and ensures the MIRDA framework is fully supported by accurate land records.

ATTACHMENTS

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**INLAND
RAIL** 

**MASTER INLAND RAIL
DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT
CONTRACT NO 9000-0347**



Strathbogie Shire Council (B2A Tranche
2)
("ASSET OWNER")

Inland Rail Pty Ltd
("IRPL")

ARTC

The Australian Government is delivering
Inland Rail through the Australian
Rail Track Corporation (ARTC), in
partnership with the private sector.

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CONTRACT NO 9000-0347



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Date

Parties

Strathbogie Shire Council (ABN 50 882 781 013) of 109A Binney Street, Euroa VIC 3666
(Asset Owner).

Inland Rail Pty Ltd (ACN 094 819 520) of 11 Sir Donald Bradman Drive, Keswick Terminal, SA 5035 (IRPL).

Recitals

- A. Asset Owner owns, operates and maintains the Asset.
- B. ARTC intends to design and construct the Works which form part of the Project.
- C. The Works involve the construction of the work described in Schedule 1.
- D. The parties agree to the matters set out in this Agreement.

It is agreed as follows.

1. Definitions and interpretation

1.1 Definitions

In this Agreement:

Agreement means this document, together with all schedules and exhibits to this document.

Approval means any consent, approval, authorisation, licence, registration, order, permission or concurrence required by any Law, including those under this Agreement, required for the commencement, execution or completion of the Project Activities and includes the Planning Approval.

ARTC means IRPL for the purposes of this Agreement.

ARTC Contractor means any contractor engaged by ARTC to carry out the Project Activities.

Asset means the infrastructure described in item 1 of Schedule 1.

Asset Owner Costs has the meaning given in clause 8.1.

Business Day means a day that is not a Saturday, Sunday or any other day that is a public holiday in the capital city of the State or Territory specified in item 7 of Schedule 1, and excludes 27 to 31 December (inclusive).

Certificate of Completion means a certificate that is generally in the form set out in Schedule 13.

Claim includes any claim, action, demand or proceeding:

- (a) under, arising out of, or in any way in connection with, this Agreement;
- (b) arising out of, or in any way in connection with the Project Activities; or
- (c) otherwise at Law or in equity including:
 - (i) by statute;
 - (ii) in tort for negligence or otherwise, including negligent misrepresentation; or
 - (iii) for restitution, including restitution based on unjust enrichment.

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Completion means the stage when:

- (a) the Returned Works have been completed in accordance with the Works Description except for minor Defects which:
 - (i) do not prevent the Returned Works from being reasonably capable of being used for their intended purpose; and
 - (ii) can be corrected without prejudicing the convenient use of the Returned Works; and

Consequential Loss means any:

- (a) loss of income, loss of revenue, loss of profit, loss of financial opportunity, loss of any business or loss of business opportunity, loss of contract, loss of goodwill, loss of use or loss of production, loss of value to the Asset, loss of revenue (whether that loss is direct or indirect);
 - (b) indirect or consequential loss, howsoever arising; and
 - (c) failure to realise anticipated savings, reduced costs or other benefits,
- in each case whether present or future, fixed or unascertained, actual or contingent.

Construction Environmental Management Plan means the plan so titled to be prepared by ARTC or an ARTC Contractor in respect of the carrying out of the Project Activities (including works in or on the Land) as revised and amended, from time to time, in accordance with clause 4.2.

Contamination means the presence in, on or under land or any other aspect of the Environment of a substance, gas, chemical, liquid or other matter (whether occurring naturally or otherwise) which is:

- (a) at a concentration above the concentration at which the substance, gas, chemical, liquid or other matter (whether occurring naturally or otherwise) is normally present in, on or under land or any other aspect of the Environment in the same locality, being a presence that presents a risk of harm to human health or any other aspect of the Environment; or
- (b) toxic, flammable or otherwise capable of causing harm to humans or damage to the Environment including asbestos, toluene, polychlorine biphenyls, lead based paints, glues, solvents, cleaning agents, paints and water treatment chemicals.

Defect means any defect or other non-conformance in the Returned Works.

Defects Correction Period means the period of 12 months from the date that the Returned Works are handed back to Asset Owner in accordance with clause 6.3

Design Documentation means the design documentation to be prepared by ARTC or an ARTC Contractor in relation to the Returned Works.

Environment means components of the earth, including:

- (a) land, air and water;
- (b) any layer of the atmosphere;
- (c) any organic or inorganic matter and any living organism;
- (d) human-made or modified structures and areas; and
- (e) interacting natural ecosystems that include components referred to in paragraphs (a) to (c) of this definition.

Government Agency includes a department of State, statutory or public authority, instrumentality, corporation, body or person whether Commonwealth, State, territorial or local.

GST means any tax imposed under the *A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999* (Cth).

Interface Matters has the meaning given in clause 3.3(a).

Insurances has the meaning given in clause 9.

Land means any land on which ARTC is located and any other land to which ARTC is given a right of access by Asset Owner.

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Land Access Arrangement means a separate lease, licence, permit, agreement or other undertaking between ARTC and Asset Owner or a third party granting ARTC access to land in connection with the Project Activities.

Law means:

- (a) any statute, regulation, rule, proclamation, order, ordinance or by-law whether present or future and whether Commonwealth, State, territorial or local;
- (b) the common law;
- (c) any Approval (including any condition or requirement under an Approval); and
- (d) any requirements of any Government Agency.

Loss includes:

- (a) any cost, expense, loss, damage or liability whether direct, indirect or consequential (including Consequential Loss or pure economic loss), present or future, fixed or unascertained, actual or contingent; and
- (b) without being limited by paragraph (a) and only to the extent not prohibited by Law, any fine or penalty.

Planning Approval means the planning approval referred to in item 3 of Schedule 1.

Project means the project described in item 4 of Schedule 1.

Project Activities means all things and tasks which ARTC is, or may be, required to carry out or do under this Agreement to comply with ARTC's obligations under this Agreement, including designing and constructing the Works.

Project Independent Verifier means the person identified in item 14 of Schedule 1.

Rail Safety National Law means, where the relevant State or Territory identified in item 7 of Schedule 1 is:

- (a) New South Wales, the *Rail Safety National Law (NSW)* as defined in the *Rail Safety (Adoption of National Law) Act 2012* (NSW);
- (b) Queensland, the *Rail Safety National Law (Queensland) Act 2017* (Qld); or
- (c) Victoria, the *Rail Safety National Law (Victoria)* as defined in the *Rail Safety National Law Application Act 2013* (Vic).

Returned Works means the physical parts of the Works which ARTC or an ARTC Contractor must complete and hand over to, and which will become the property of, Asset Owner upon Completion, as described in the Schedule 2 and section 10.3 of Schedule 10

Senior Representative means in respect of a party to this Agreement the person named in item 5 of Schedule 1 or such other person (or delegate) notified in writing by the applicable party to the other parties.

WHS Legislation:

- (a) means the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Cth) and the *Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011* (Cth); and
- (b) where any other applicable legislation in the State in which the Project is located imposes work health and safety obligations in respect of the Works, also includes this legislation.

Works means the physical works described in item 6 of Schedule 1, which ARTC or an ARTC Contractor will plan, design, construct, commission and complete in accordance with the Works Description, and includes the Returned Works.

Works Description means the Works Description which appears in Schedule 10 to this Agreement, which must be updated in accordance with this Agreement.

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1.2 Interpretation

In this Agreement, headings are for convenience only and do not affect interpretation, and unless the context indicates a contrary intention:

- (a) the expression "person" includes an individual, the estate of an individual, a corporation, an authority, an association or joint venture (whether incorporated or unincorporated), a partnership and a trust;
- (b) the words "includes" in any form is not a word of limitation;
- (c) a reference to any party includes that party's executors, administrators, successors, and permitted assigns, including any person taking by way of novation;
- (d) a reference to any document (including this Agreement) is to that document as varied, novated, ratified or replaced from time to time;
- (e) a reference to any statute or to any statutory provision includes any statutory modification or re-enactment of it or any statutory provision substituted for it, and all ordinances, by laws, regulations, rules and other statutory instruments (however described) issued under it;
- (f) references to parties, clauses, schedules, exhibits and annexures are references to parties, clauses, schedules, exhibits and annexures to or of this Agreement and a reference to this Agreement includes any schedule, exhibit or annexure to this Agreement;
- (g) words importing the singular include the plural (and vice versa), and words indicating a gender include every other gender;
- (h) where a word or phrase is given a defined meaning, any other part of speech or other grammatical form of that word or phrase has a corresponding meaning;
- (i) a reference to a day, month, quarter or year is a reference to a calendar day, a calendar month, a calendar quarter or a calendar year respectively;
- (j) a reference to "\$" or "dollar" is to Australian currency; and
- (k) a reference to any thing is a reference to the whole or any part of it and a reference to a group of persons is a reference to all of them collectively, to any 2 or more of them collectively and to each of them individually.

1.3 Governing law

This Agreement is to be governed by, and will be construed according to, the laws of the State or Territory specified in item 7 of Schedule 1.

1.4 No bias against drafting party

In the interpretation of this Agreement, no rule of construction applies to the disadvantage of one party on the basis that that party put forward or drafted this Agreement or any provision in it.

1.5 Business Day

If the day on or by which any thing is to be done under this Agreement is not a Business Day, that thing must be done:

- (a) if it involves a payment other than a payment which is due on demand, on the preceding Business Day; and
- (b) in all other cases, no later than the next Business Day.

1.6 Commencement

The rights and obligations of the parties under this Agreement commence on the date of this Agreement.

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2. The Works**2.1 General Obligations**

- (a) The parties acknowledge that ARTC is carrying out the Project and that the Project will have a number of significant interfaces with, and will impact upon, Asset Owner, the Assets and the Land.
- (b) To give effect to this the parties have agreed to assist, and co-operate with, each other party, as well as any ARTC Contractor, in relation to any matters affecting:
 - (i) the Project; and
 - (ii) the spirit and intent of this Agreement.
- (c) Each party acknowledges that ARTC is required to meet strict contractual timing obligations in relation to the provision of information and notices to each ARTC Contractor and agrees to:
 - (i) carry out its obligations under this Agreement in a reasonably expeditious manner; and
 - (ii) provide all reasonable assistance to ARTC necessary to ensure that it can comply with such obligations.

2.2 Approvals and Works Description

- (a) ARTC and ARTC Contractors are responsible for obtaining all Approvals.
- (b) Asset Owner will promptly, at the cost of ARTC, provide all reasonable assistance in connection with obtaining Approvals upon a written request from ARTC.
- (c) ARTC will consult with other parties on the details of the Project which affect the other parties, the Assets and the Land and as part of this will seek to agree upon all aspects of these matters for the purpose of enabling ARTC to progress the process of obtaining all Approvals.
- (d) Asset Owner acknowledges that ARTC will obtain Planning Approval for the Project under the relevant Law. Without limiting its other obligations under this Agreement and Asset Owner must:
 - (i) cooperate with ARTC in relation to the planning process; and
 - (ii) if Asset Owner has any comments or objections arising from the planning process raise those comments or objections with ARTC prior to making any submission or comment to any relevant Government Agency and co-operate in good faith with ARTC to endeavour to resolve those comments or objections without the need for submission to any relevant Government Agency.
- (e) The parties acknowledge that the current scope of the Project insofar as it relates to Asset Owner, the Asset, the Land, and any Returned Works is as set out in the Works Description.
- (f) The parties must work together co-operatively to review and update the Works Description as the planning and design process for the Project progresses.
- (g) The parties will negotiate in good faith to finalise the Works Description so that it sets out the finally agreed position between them in relation to all aspects of the Project insofar as it relates to Asset Owner, the Asset or the Returned Works.
- (h) Asset Owner acknowledges that it may not insist upon the Works Description requiring that any Returned Works:
 - (i) have an increased functionality or performance capability compared to the Asset; or
 - (ii) be designed and constructed to any standard or requirement which is higher than the applicable standard or requirement under any relevant requirement of Law or any mandatory applicable Australian code.

2.3 Carrying out of Project Activities

- (a) ARTC must carry out the Project Activities in accordance with the requirements of this Agreement.

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- (b) ARTC must coordinate all activities associated with the carrying out of the Project Activities and minimise any interference with the operation and use of the Asset arising out of or in connection with the Project Activities.
- (c) Asset Owner must not hinder or impede the implementation of the Project Activities other than:
 - (i) to the extent necessary to exercise its rights under any Land Access Arrangements to which it is a party or Schedule 3;
 - (ii) to the extent necessary to respond to an emergency, traffic incident or other matter affecting public health or safety; and
 - (iii) to the extent necessary to comply with all Law.
- (d) ARTC must ensure that the Project Activities do not prevent Asset Owner from complying with its obligations under Law (except to the extent that this is a consequence of the Project Activities being carried out in accordance with this Agreement).
- (e) This clause 2.3(e) applies where so stated in item 8 of Schedule 1.

ARTC must procure from any ARTC Contractor a deed poll in a form substantially similar to the form of Schedule 6 and provide this to Asset Owner within 30 Business Days of the date of the contract it has entered into with that ARTC Contractor.

2.4 Parameters for the carrying out of Project Activities

- (a) Without limiting ARTC's other obligations under this Agreement, in undertaking the Project Activities, ARTC must:
 - (i) ensure the Project Activities do not cause any traffic adjustment or impact on the Asset other than as anticipated by the Construction Environmental Management Plan; and
 - (ii) ensure that it and any ARTC Contractor liaise with Asset Owner in relation to the carrying out of the Project Activities.
- (b) If any loss or damage occurs to any part of the Asset from or arising out of the Project Activities, ARTC must:
 - (i) take immediate steps to clear any debris and begin initial repair work;
 - (ii) promptly consult with Asset Owner and carry out such steps as are necessary to ensure the prompt repair or replacement of the loss or damage so that there is minimal disruption to the use of the Asset;
 - (iii) manage all repair and replacement activities so as to minimise the impact on the Asset; and
 - (iv) keep Asset Owner fully informed of the progress of the repair and replacement activities.

2.5 Comply with law in carrying out Project Activities

Without limiting ARTC's other obligations under this Agreement, ARTC must comply with all Laws in performing its obligations under this Agreement and in carrying out the Project Activities.

2.6 Rail Safety National Law

- (a) Terms used in this clause 2.6 which have a defined meaning in the Rail Safety National Law will have the same meaning in this clause 2.6 as they have in the Rail Safety National Law.
- (b) If Asset Owner is a road manager of a public road and the Works involve risks to safety described in either section 107(1) or section 107(2) of the Rail Safety National Law:
 - (i) ARTC, in its capacity as a rail infrastructure manager; and
 - (ii) Asset Owner, in its capacity as the road manager of a public road,
 must comply with their respective obligations prescribed by section 107 of the Rail Safety National Law.

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- (c) To the extent clause 2.6(b) requires ARTC and Asset Owner to seek to enter into an interface agreement:
 - (i) where there is an existing interface agreement between ARTC and Asset Owner, the existing interface agreement will be amended so that the requirements of section 107 of the Rail Safety National Law are satisfied; or
 - (ii) where there is no existing interface agreement between ARTC and Asset Owner, ARTC and Asset Owner will enter into a new interface agreement in accordance with the requirements of section 107 of the Rail Safety National Law.

2.7 Safety

- (a) Subject to clause 2.6, ARTC acknowledges and agrees that ARTC is solely responsible for all work, health, and safety matters as between the parties to this Agreement in connection with the Project Activities, including appointing any "principal contractor" (within the meaning of the WHS Legislation).
- (b) Asset Owner must provide ARTC such assistance (including through the provision of information) as is reasonably required by ARTC, at ARTC's cost, to enable ARTC to comply with its obligations as a person commissioning a construction project under the WHS Legislation, including information in its possession or control relating to hazards and risks to health and safety at or in the vicinity of the Project.
- (c) Asset Owner personnel attending site will need to have completed ARTC Site Induction and ARTC Contractor's induction training. The cost of Asset Owner attendance at such training will be paid for by ARTC up to a maximum of 5 participants. Additionally, Asset Owner personnel attending sites within the rail corridor will need to have satisfied the competencies required to obtain a Rail Industry Worker Card.
- (d) Asset Owner must, upon request by ARTC, attend workshops with ARTC and/ or any ARTC Contractor (or such other invitees of ARTC) relating to 'Safety in Design' in respect of the Returned Works. Asset Owner will arrange for relevant and suitable personnel of Asset Owner to attend any such workshops.
- (e) ARTC will provide at least 5 Business Days prior notice of a workshop described in clause 2.7(d) to Asset Owner and any such workshop must be held on a Business Day during normal business hours and the parties must work together to agree a mutually convenient day, time and location on a day and at a venue which the Asset Owner has confirmed are convenient to it.

2.8 Emergency Work

In the case of an emergency, traffic incident or other matter affecting the health or safety of workers or the public which arises out of or is in connection with the Project Activities, ARTC must, and Asset Owner may, undertake all actions necessary to manage the emergency, traffic incident or other matter affecting the health or safety of workers or the public notwithstanding the fact that the scope, manner and timing of those actions have not been notified to the other party.

2.9 Monitoring Regime

Where so stated in item 9 of Schedule 1 the provisions in Schedule 3 apply.

2.10 Condition Reports

Where so stated in item 10 of Schedule 1 the provisions in Schedule 4 apply.

2.11 Rail Asset

Where so stated in item 11 of Schedule 1 the provisions in Schedule 7 apply.

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2.12 Special Conditions

The conditions in Schedule 9 (if any) will apply as if set out in full in this Agreement.

3. Information and meetings**3.1 Provision of information**

- (a) Subject to clause 3.1(b):
 - (i) Asset Owner will promptly provide to ARTC from time to time, upon written request from ARTC, any information in its possession or control relating to design, construction, engineering, operation, maintenance, or technical matters in respect of the Asset or which is otherwise reasonably required by ARTC for the purposes of the Works or Project Activities; and
 - (ii) ARTC will provide to Asset Owner from time to time, upon written request from Asset Owner any information which is reasonably required by Asset Owner relating to design and construction of the Returned Works which is required by Asset Owner for the purposes of this Agreement.
- (b) The parties do not have to provide to each other under clause 3.1(a) any information:
 - (i) the disclosure of which would cause a party to breach an obligation of confidentiality owed by Asset Owner to a third party;
 - (ii) which a party considers (acting reasonably) is commercially sensitive to the party; or
 - (iii) the disclosure of which is not permitted by Law.
- (c) Each party will and will procure that each person to whom any information provided under clause 3.1(a) is provided will, treat the information received as confidential.
- (d) If required by the party, providing the information, prior to disclosure of that information to any third party, the receiving party must procure that each person to whom the information is to be disclosed executes a confidentiality agreement in favour of party providing the information (on the terms reasonably required by party providing the information) that it will keep the information confidential in accordance with that agreement.
- (e) Nothing in clause 3.1(c) or 3.1(d) applies if the party receiving (or that has received) the information under clause 3.1(a) requests the party providing (or that has provided) the information to consent to the information's external disclosure and the latter party gives that consent in writing. A party whose consent is requested must not unreasonably withhold that consent. **The parties agree that withholding consent based on:**
 - (i) the confidential nature of Commonwealth project, commercial sensitivity or confidential obligations to a third party; or
 - (ii) information being such information which will be released by ARTC to the public in due course,

will not be unreasonable. The Asset Owner agrees that no detailed design documentation may be disclosed.
- (f) Each party acknowledges that this Agreement does not confer on any party any rights of ownership in any information provided under this Agreement (including under clause 3.1) and, without limiting clause 3.1(g), all intellectual property rights (including copyright) in such information remain unaffected by this Agreement.
- (g) Each party that receives information under this Agreement (including under clause 3.1) is granted a licence by the party providing the information to use that information for the purpose of complying with its obligations under this Agreement and:
 - (i) in the case of ARTC, for any purpose associated with the Project; and
 - (ii) in the case of Asset Owner, for the operation and maintenance of the Returned Works.

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- (h) The licence granted under clause 3.1(g) will be a non-exclusive, irrevocable and royalty free licence to use (including to sublicense others to use) the information for the purposes set out in clause 3.1(g).

3.2 Disclaimer

- (a) The parties acknowledge that they have not:
 - (i) made any representation;
 - (ii) given any information or advice; or
 - (iii) given any warranty,
 of any kind in respect of any information supplied or made available by them under or in connection with this Agreement.
- (b) Each party acknowledges and agrees, that they will not be liable to each other for or in connection with matters in respect of which it has reviewed documents, provided information or given comments or consent under or in connection with this Agreement.
- (c) The parties waive any Claim they may have against each other in respect of any matter referred to in clauses 3.2(a) or 3.2(b).

3.3 Operational Meetings

- (a) Asset Owner will be invited to attend meetings between ARTC and any ARTC Contractor, for any part of such meeting during which any issues relating to the Project Activities relevant to the Asset or safety matters in respect of the Asset are discussed (Interface Matters).
- (b) Asset Owner will arrange, at the request of ARTC, for its Senior Representative to attend any such meetings (to which ARTC may invite attendees) to discuss any issues relating to Interface Matters.
- (c) ARTC will provide at least 5 Business Days prior notice of any such meeting to Asset Owner and any such meeting must be held on a Business Day during normal business hours and the parties must work together to agree a mutually convenient day, time and location on a day and at a venue which the Asset Owner has confirmed are convenient to it.

3.4 Monitoring Meetings

- (a) ARTC will arrange for meetings to be held monthly (or such other period as agreed by the parties) on and from commencement of the Project Activities between Senior Representatives of Asset Owner, ARTC and the relevant member or members of any ARTC Contractor to review the progress, monitoring and management of Interface Matters and to discuss and resolve any matters of concern in relation to or arising out of those matters including any breach of this Agreement by any party or matters of concern (including in relation to public health and safety, workplace health and safety, emergencies, property damage or traffic management).
- (b) Any party to this Agreement may request a meeting of Senior Representatives and the relevant member or members of the ARTC Contractor (following reasonable notice) to deal with any matters of material concern to a party.
- (c) Each party will use reasonable endeavours to ensure that its Senior Representative attend any such meetings under this clause or, if that person is not available, a person who has equivalent power and authority to make decisions in relation to the relevant matter attends such meetings.
- (d) ARTC must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the relevant member or members of any ARTC Contractor attend any such meetings if so requested.
- (e) ARTC will attend, and will procure that a relevant member of any ARTC Contractor will attend, any meeting about, or that part of any meeting about, the performance of the Project Activities required by Asset Owner provided that Asset Owner provides at least 5 Business Days prior notice of any such meeting.

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The provisions in Schedule 8 apply where so stated in item 12 of Schedule 1.

4.2 Construction Environmental Management Plan

- (a) Prior to commencement of construction of the Works, ARTC will provide to Asset Owner extracts of the Construction Environmental Management Plan for each stage of construction (in a self-contained package which is, where reasonable to do so, capable of interpretation without reference to other material):
 - (i) detailing the proposed work methods for the Project Activities; and
 - (ii) detailing the proposed management of the impact of the Project Activities on the capacity and performance of the use of the Asset,
 to the extent only that they relate to the Project Activities.
- (b) If the Construction Environmental Management Plan requires other material for interpretation and it is not reasonable to provide it in a self-contained package, then ARTC must provide such material to Asset Owner at the same time as it provides the extracts of the relevant plan.
- (c) Subject to clause 4.2(d):
 - (i) Asset Owner may, within 15 Business Days of receipt of such extracts, provide to ARTC its written comments on the extract Construction Environmental Management Plan;
 - (ii) if Asset Owner does not make any comments within 15 Business Days it will be deemed to have accepted the Construction Environmental Management Plan;
 - (iii) ARTC will ensure that the Construction Environmental Management Plan is amended to take account the comments provided by Asset Owner pursuant to clause 4.2(c)(i) and the amended plan will then be deemed to be accepted by Asset Owner; and
 - (iv) ARTC will ensure that any ARTC Contractor complies with the Construction Environmental Management Plan which is deemed to be approved by Asset Owner.
- (d) Asset Owner acknowledges and agrees that it is only entitled to make comments under clause 4.2(c) on the extract of the Construction Environmental Management Plan provided pursuant to clause 4.2(a) to the extent that it does not comply with the Works Description.
- (e) If any Construction Environmental Management Plan in respect of which Asset Owner is entitled to comment is amended after it has been deemed to have been approved by Asset Owner in accordance with this clause 4.2:
 - (i) ARTC must provide a copy of the relevant amended Construction Environmental Management Plan; and
 - (ii) ARTC and Asset Owner acknowledge and agree that clauses 4.2(c) and 4.2(d) will reapply.

4.3 Road Use and Degradation

The parties acknowledge and agree that ARTC and each ARTC Contractor will use local roads owned and controlled by Asset Owner in accordance with Schedule 12 and this agreement.

4.4 Construction

ARTC will ensure that each ARTC Contractor carries out the Returned Works:

- (a) in accordance with the Design Documentation and the Works Description and in a manner which minimises any damage to or interference with the Asset; and
- (b) in accordance with this Agreement.

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4.5 Asset Owner's Personnel

- (a) Asset Owner must ensure that the individuals nominated by Asset Owner and listed in item 16 of Schedule 1 in the positions specified in item 16 of Schedule 1 are used to review and make comments on the Design Documentation.
- (b) Asset Owner must:
 - (i) subject to clause 4.5(b)(ii), not replace the individuals referred to in clause 4.5(a) without ARTC's prior written approval, which will not be unreasonably withheld; and
 - (ii) if any of the individuals referred to in clause 4.5(a) dies, becomes unable to continue in their positions due to illness or resigns from the employment of Asset Owner, replace them with personnel of at least equivalent experience, ability, knowledge, and expertise approved by ARTC.

5. The Land**5.1 Access to the Land**

- (a) This clause 5 only applies to the extent that ARTC is given access to the Land by Asset Owner.
- (b) If ARTC has entered into any Land Access Arrangements, ARTC must comply with its obligations under the Land Access Arrangements.

5.2 Reinstatement of the Land

- (a) Subject to any contrary obligations in any Land Access Arrangements, after ARTC no longer requires access to the Land, ARTC must ensure that the Land is reinstated at least to the condition existing at the time it was first provided with access to the Land.
- (b) Subject to any contrary obligations in any Land Access Arrangements and without limiting the generality of clause 5.3, ARTC must:
 - (i) at its cost, ensure that the Land, is reinstated by an ARTC Contractor as soon as reasonably practicable at least to the condition existing at the time of commencing any Project Activities; and
 - (ii) in addition to its obligations under clause 2.10 (if any), arrange joint condition inspections of the Land by Asset Owner and ARTC (with any ARTC Contractor entitled to attend as observers if they so request) for the purpose of establishing the condition of the Land:
 - A. immediately prior to the first commencement of the Project Activities;
 - B. following the date of construction completion of the Works; and
 - C. otherwise at a mutually agreed inspection frequency.

5.3 Contamination

- (a) If ARTC or an ARTC Contractor causes, contributes to or uncovers any Contamination in, on or under the Land, ARTC must, or must procure the ARTC Contractor to:
 - (i) immediately notify any relevant Government Agency as required by Law;
 - (ii) promptly notify Asset Owner;
 - (iii) comply with all relevant obligations under any Land Access Arrangements.
- (b) Where ARTC or an ARTC Contractor gives a notice under clause 5.3(a) in circumstances where the Contamination was caused by ARTC or an ARTC Contractor, ARTC must, or must procure the ARTC Contractor to:
 - (i) as soon as reasonably practicable, dispose of, or otherwise deal with, such Contamination in accordance with Law; and

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- (ii) remediate the contaminated Land to the standard required by Law, to the extent to which:
 - A. the Land is in any way degraded by the Contamination caused by ARTC or an ARTC Contractor; or
 - B. the Contamination is of such a nature that a Government Agency could issue a notice under Law requiring it to be remediated.

6. Completion

6.1 Process

- (a) Asset Owner acknowledges and agrees that, when either ARTC or an ARTC Contractor considers that the Returned Works have achieved Completion:
 - (i) ARTC will notify Asset Owner in writing that the Returned Works have achieved Completion; and
 - (ii) Asset Owner must:
 - A. jointly inspect the Returned Works with any ARTC Contractor and ARTC at a mutually convenient time within 10 Business Days of receiving the notice in accordance with clause 6.1(a)(i); and
 - B. ensure that appropriately qualified staff are available to carry out the inspection within such period of time; and
- (b) Within 5 Business Days of inspecting the relevant Returned Works pursuant to clause 6.1(a)(ii), Asset Owner must give a notice to ARTC stating:
 - (i) that Asset Owner is satisfied that the Returned Works have achieved Completion; or
 - (ii) if the relevant Returned Works have not achieved Completion, the items which it believes remain to be completed.
- (c) If Asset Owner has given a notice under clause 6.1(b)(i), ARTC will issue a Certificate of Completion for the Returned Works (**Certificate of Completion – Schedule 13**).
- (d) If Asset Owner has:
 - (i) given a notice under clause 6.1(b)(ii);
 - (ii) not given a notice within the timeframe required by clause 6.1(b)(i),
 then ARTC:
 - (iii) if there are items which remain to be completed, will cause any relevant ARTC Contractor to attend to the items which remain to be completed; or
 - (iv) if ARTC or an ARTC Contractor considers that the Returned Works have achieved Completion (and there are no items which remain to be completed), may request that the Project Independent Verifier jointly inspects the Returned Works with Asset Owner, any ARTC Contractor and ARTC at a mutually convenient time within 5 Business Days of receiving ARTC's request.
- (e) Within 10 Business Days of inspecting the relevant Returned Works pursuant to clause 6.1(d)(iv), the Project Independent Verifier must provide a notice to ARTC and the Asset Owner stating:
 - (i) that the Project Independent Verifier is satisfied that the Returned Works have achieved Completion; or
 - (ii) if the relevant Returned Works have not achieved Completion, the items which it believes remain to be completed.
- (f) If the Project Independent Verifier has issued:
 - (i) a notice under clause 6.1(e)(i), ARTC will issue a Certificate of Completion for the Returned Works; or

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- (ii) a notice under clause 6.1(e)(ii), ARTC will cause any relevant ARTC Contractor to attend to the items which remain to be completed.
- (g) Any determination of the Project Independent Verifier will, in the absence of manifest error, be final and binding upon the parties to this Agreement.

6.2 Handover

- (a) Once ARTC issues a Certificate of Completion for the Returned Works, then:
 - (i) within 5 Business Days, ARTC Contractor will advise the date upon which the Returned Works will be handed over to Asset Owner; and
 - (ii) the date advised in accordance with clause 6.1(d)(i) must be no earlier than the date, which is 5 Business Days, and no later than the date that is 15 Business Days, after the date on which the ARTC issues the Certificate of Completion for the Returned Works.
- (b) Ownership of the Returned Works will vest in Asset Owner upon handover in accordance with clause 6.2(a).

6.3 Management of the opening of the Project

This clause 6.3 applies to the extent any part of the Works is on, or passes over, the Asset.

ARTC must notify Asset Owner 20 Business Days prior to the commissioning of the Works with a view to Asset Owner and ARTC implementing appropriate procedures in respect of the commissioning and operation of the Works.

6.4 Defects Correction Period

- (a) Asset Owner acknowledges that the Returned Works are subject to a Defects Correction Period.
- (b) If at any time during the Defects Correction Period Asset Owner identifies a Defect in the Returned Works, it may give a notice requiring ARTC to rectify the Defect.
- (c) If there is a Defect in the Returned Works and Asset Owner gives ARTC a notice under clause 6.4(b), ARTC must in respect of any Defect for which it is given a notice under clause 6.4(b) rectify or procure an ARTC Contractor to rectify the Defect.
- (d) ARTC will provide Asset Owner with the documents specified in item 2 of Schedule 1 before the end of the Defects Correction Period for the Returned Works.

6.5 Appointment of Project Independent Verifier

- (a) ARTC will engage the Project Independent Verifier to perform the functions required under clause 6.1(e), and in doing so must:
 - (i) engage the Project Independent Verifier on terms that require the Project Independent Verifier to act independently and not as an agent of ARTC, the relevant ARTC Contractor or Asset Owner; and
 - (ii) procure that the Project Independent Verifier provides Asset Owner with a deed poll in the form of Schedule 14.
- (b) ARTC will pay the fees, costs and expenses of the Project Independent Verifier for the services and functions performed by the Project Independent Verifier in accordance with this Agreement.
- (c) Asset Owner acknowledges that the Project Independent Verifier may also be the Project Independent Verifier (or be performing an otherwise similar function) in respect of other projects for the Inland Rail Program.

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7. Liability**7.1 Liability and indemnity**

- (a) Subject to clauses 7.1(b) and 7.2, ARTC must indemnify Asset Owner from and against any Claim or Loss suffered or incurred by Asset Owner in respect of:
 - (i) any injury to, or death of, persons; and
 - (ii) the loss of (whether total or partial) or destruction or damage to, any real or personal property of any person (including Asset Owner),
 caused by, arising out of or in any way in connection with any negligent act or omission by ARTC (including any wilful misconduct of ARTC) or any breach of this Agreement by ARTC.
- (b) Any amount claimed by Asset Owner pursuant to the indemnity in this clause 7.1 will be reduced proportionally to the extent the Loss or Claim arises from a negligent act or omission of Asset Owner or one of its employees, agents or contractors or a breach of this Agreement by Asset Owner.

7.2 Limitation of Liability

- (a) Subject to clause 7.2(b), ARTC's total aggregate liability in respect of any Claim or Loss suffered or incurred by Asset Owner arising out of or in any way in connection with this Agreement, the Works, or the Project Activities, is limited to the amount that ARTC recovers in respect of any Claim or Loss under a policy of insurance that ARTC is required to effect and maintain under this Agreement.
- (b) Clause 7.2(a) does not limit ARTC's liability under clause 8.
- (c) The ARTC Contractor will enter into a deed poll in a form substantially similar to the form of Schedule 6 in accordance with the provisions of clause 2.3(e), in terms of which the Asset Owner is indemnified in respect of any Claim or Loss suffered or incurred by Asset Owner arising out of or in any way in connection with this Agreement, the Works or the Project Activities subject to the limitation set out in the deed poll.

7.3 Survival

This clause 7 shall survive the termination or expiry of this Agreement for any reason.

8. Asset Owner Costs**8.1 ARTC liable to pay costs**

Where approved in accordance with clause 8.2, ARTC must pay Asset Owner's reasonable direct and actual costs incurred:

- (a) in performing its obligations under this Agreement; and
- (b) for the use of Asset Owner's internal resources and external consultancy costs for reviewing Design Documentation,

in each case up to but not exceeding the budget approved under clause 8.2 (**Asset Owner Costs**).

8.2 ARTC approval

The parties agree that ARTC will not be liable to pay Asset Owner for any of the Asset Owner Costs referred to in clause 8.1, unless:

- (a) in the case of the costs relating to the use of Asset Owner's internal resources:
 - (i) ARTC and Asset Owner have agreed upon the stages of design review for which ARTC will pay Asset Owner for the use of Asset Owner's internal resources; and

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- (ii) Asset Owner has prepared a budget and monthly forecast for this design review using the applicable hourly and daily rates set out in Item 13 of Schedule 1 and ARTC has approved this budget and monthly forecast; and
- (b) in the case of the external consultancy costs, ARTC has (in its absolute discretion) agreed in writing that it is necessary for Asset Owner to directly engage external resources to supplement its internal resources to review the Design Documentation (rather than ARTC engage those resources on behalf of Asset Owner) and ARTC has approved:
 - (i) the scope of the work for which it is prepared to reimburse Asset Owner for the use of these external resources;
 - (ii) the hourly and daily rates that are to be paid; and
 - (iii) the budget for this scope of work.

8.3 Invoice

- (a) Invoices for the Asset Owner Costs will be sent by Asset Owner to ARTC at not less than four weekly intervals and must only include amounts for which Asset Owner is entitled to claim payment pursuant to clauses 8.1 and 8.2.
- (b) Asset Owner must provide ARTC with each invoice:
 - (i) itemised particulars of the Asset Owner Costs;
 - (ii) a certificate from Asset Owner that the Asset Owner Costs incurred are true and accurate; and
 - (iii) a forecast of the Asset Owner Costs likely to be incurred in the following month.

8.4 Payment

- (a) ARTC must pay that part of the amount of each invoice for the Asset Owner Costs which ARTC does not dispute are payable, within 30 days from the date of the invoice.
- (b) If an amount is disputed by ARTC, it will pay the undisputed amount in accordance with clause 8.4(a) and will notify Asset Owner in accordance with clause 11 of the disputed amount. The dispute will be a dispute for the purposes of clause 11 and clause 11 will apply.

8.5 Expenses

ARTC must pay Asset Owner its reasonable legal costs and expenses in connection with negotiating, preparing and executing this Agreement, up to a maximum of \$15,000 (excluding GST).

9. Insurance

- (a) ARTC must take out, or it must ensure that the ARTC Contractor takes out, all appropriate insurances in connection with the Works as set out in Schedule 5 (**Insurances**).
- (b) Prior to commencement of the Project Activities, ARTC must provide evidence that the Insurances are in full force and effect and in accordance with the requirements in Schedule 5.
- (c) ARTC must ensure:
 - (i) the Insurances remain in existence for the period specified in Schedule 5 (Insurances); and
 - (ii) that such Insurances are not materially amended or varied in any manner which would prejudice the position of Asset Owner as an insured.

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10. Confidentiality**10.1 General restriction**

Subject to clause 10.2, neither Asset Owner nor ARTC will, at any time, without the consent of the other party, divulge or suffer or permit its servants, consultants or agents to divulge to any person (other than to an ARTC Contractor or any other contractor engaged by ARTC in respect of the Works and their officers, employees, consultants, advisers and agents who require such reports, studies, information and data to enable them properly to carry out their duties):

- (a) any contract entered into by ARTC relating to the Works (other than this Agreement)
- (b) any information relating to the negotiations concerning this Agreement;
- (c) any information provided by one party to the other under or in connection with this Agreement; or
- (d) any information which may have come to a party's knowledge in the course of such negotiations or otherwise concerning the dealings, transactions, contracts, commercial or financial arrangements or affairs of the other parties.

10.2 Exceptions

The restrictions imposed by clause 10.1 will not apply to the disclosure of any information:

- (a) which is now or hereafter comes into the public domain (other than as a result of a breach of clause 10.1) or which is obtainable with no more than reasonable diligence from sources other than the parties;
- (b) which is required to be disclosed by law or the Listing Rules of the Australian Stock Exchange Limited (if applicable);
- (c) which in the case of ARTC, is required to be made to its shareholding Ministers and any persons within their relevant Departments provided that the recipients of the information shall not disclose the information, except as permitted by this Agreement;
- (d) which, in the case of the Asset Owner, is required to be made to the Councillors for the purpose of approving this Agreement or any action taken hereunder, provided that the recipients of the information shall not disclose the information, except as permitted by this Agreement;
- (e) to a court, arbitrator or administrative tribunal in the course of proceedings before it or him to which the disclosing party is a party or to an expert in the course of any determination by him to which the disclosing party is a party; or
- (f) which, in the reasonable opinion of the applicable party, is required to be disclosed to:
 - (i) any actual or prospective investor in or lender to (or assignee or novatee of a lender to) the party;
 - (ii) any insurer in respect of the Works or any insurer of the Asset; or
 - (iii) any of applicable party's officers, employees, professional advisers, auditors and consultants.
- (g) Before disclosing any information as required under subclause 10.2(b), the Asset Owner must take reasonable steps to the extent permitted by law or regulation to notify ARTC and to give ARTC opportunity to defend the requirement for the disclosure or to minimise the effect of the disclosure.

10.3 Publicity

- (a) Subject to clause 10.3(c), Asset Owner shall not issue any information, publication, document, or article for publication concerning the Project Activities in any media without prior written approval of ARTC and only in a manner approved by ARTC.

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- (b) Subject to clause 10.3(c), if Asset Owner receives a direct request from the media for comment in respect of any aspect of the Project Activities, Asset Owner must promptly provide details of such request to ARTC.
- (c) Asset Owner may provide information to the public in relation to closures of the Asset or other traffic adjustments as a result of the Project Activities in a timely manner and by such methods as it considers appropriate and ARTC must not provide any such information to the public without prior consultation with Asset Owner.

11. Dispute Resolution

11.1 Disputes

- (a) This clause 11 applies to any dispute or difference arising between the parties in relation to:
 - (i) this Agreement or its interpretation;
 - (ii) any right or liability under this Agreement; or
 - (iii) any act or omission by a party under or arising out of or in connection with this Agreement, the Works, or the Project Activities, whether before or after its termination,
 (each a **Dispute**).
- (b) A party claiming that a Dispute has arisen shall notify the other party in writing, specifying the details of the Dispute, including:
 - (i) particulars of the party's reasons for being dissatisfied;
 - (ii) the position which the party believes is correct; and
 - (iii) the value of the amount in Dispute (if relevant).
- (c) Disputes that may arise between the parties are to be resolved at the lowest possible level within the management structure of each party, and escalated in accordance with the following escalation procedure:
 - (i) each party must refer the Dispute to the relevant managers at each party responsible for the matter in Dispute and use its best efforts by undertaking genuine and good faith negotiations with a view to resolving the Dispute within 14 days following the notification of the Dispute or such longer period as agreed between the parties;
 - (ii) in the event that the managers fail to resolve the Dispute within 14 days, the parties should refer the Dispute to the Senior Representatives for consideration and to undertake further genuine and good faith negotiations with a view to resolving the Dispute within 14 days following the referral or such longer period as agreed between the parties; and
 - (iii) in the event that the Senior Representatives fail to resolve the Dispute within 14 days, then the parties should refer the Dispute to their Chief Executive Officer.

11.2 Continuance of performance

Despite the existence of a Dispute, the parties will continue to perform their respective obligations under this Agreement.

12. Termination for convenience

- (a) Without prejudice to any of ARTC's other rights under this Agreement, ARTC may at any time for its sole convenience, and for any reason, by written notice to Asset Owner terminate this Agreement effective from the time stated in ARTC's notice or if no such time is stated, at the time the notice is given to Asset Owner.
- (b) If ARTC terminates this Agreement under this clause 12, ARTC must within the required time (or, if no time is specified, within a reasonable time):

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- (i) comply with any relevant obligations in any Land Access Arrangements;
- (ii) comply with clauses 4.3, 5.3 and Schedule 4 (and section 4 of Schedule 4 will apply as if Completion had occurred);
- (iii) without limiting its obligations under clause 12(b)(ii):
 - A. reinstate those Assets in relation to which any of the Works has been commenced to at least the condition existing at the commencement of this Agreement; and
 - B. make safe the Returned Works and the land used or disturbed by ARTC in the course of the Returned Works; and
- (iv) pay Asset Owner any amounts which would otherwise have been payable under clause 8 had the Agreement not been terminated.

13. Notices

- (a) Any notice, demand, consent, approval, claim or communication (**Notice**) to be given or served under or arising out of a provision of this Contract must be in writing and may be delivered by hand or sent by prepaid post or by mail, through Aconex in a manner which fully complies with the Inland Rail Program Aconex User Guide, as the case may be, to the relevant address or mail address:
 - (i) stated in item 14 of Schedule 1; or
 - (ii) last notified in writing to the party giving the Notice,
 - (iii) for the party to whom or upon which the Notice is to be given or served.
- (b) For the avoidance of doubt, a Notice sent by mail is not a valid Notice for the purpose of this Contract unless the Notice has been sent by Aconex in the manner referred to in clause 13(a).
- (c) A notice delivered or sent in accordance with clause 13(a) will be deemed to have been given and received:
 - (i) if delivered, upon receipt; and
 - (ii) if posted, 3 days after posting.

14. General

14.1 Entire agreement

This Agreement represents the entire agreement between the parties in respect of its subject matter and supersedes all prior agreements, representations, warranties, promises, statements, negotiations, and letters in respect of its subject matter.

14.2 Further acts

Each party will promptly do and perform all further acts and execute and deliver all further documents (in form and content reasonably satisfactory to that party) required by Law or reasonably requested by any other party to give effect to this Agreement.

14.3 Jurisdiction

- (a) Each party irrevocably submits to the non-exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of State or Territory specified in item 7 of Schedule 1, and the courts competent to determine appeals from those courts, with respect to any proceedings which may be brought at any time relating in any way to this Agreement.
- (b) Each party irrevocably waives any objection it may now or in the future have to the venue of any proceedings, and any claim it may now or in the future have that any proceedings have been brought in an inconvenient forum, where that venue falls within clause 14.3(a).

OFFICIAL**14.4 Amendments**

This Agreement may only be varied by a document signed by or on behalf of each of the parties.

14.5 Waiver

- (a) Failure to exercise or enforce or a delay in exercising or enforcing or the partial exercise or enforcement of any right, power or remedy provided by Law or under this Agreement by any party will not in any way preclude, or operate as a waiver of, any exercise or enforcement, or further exercise or enforcement of that or any other right, power or remedy provided by Law or under this Agreement.
- (b) Except as expressly provided in this Agreement, any waiver or consent given by any party under this Agreement will only be effective and binding on that party if it is given or confirmed in writing by that party.
- (c) No waiver of a breach of any term of this Agreement will operate as a waiver of another breach of that term or of a breach of any other term of this Agreement.

14.6 Consents

Any consent or approval referred to in, or required under, this Agreement may be given or withheld, or may be subject to any conditions as the relevant party (in its absolute discretion) thinks fit, unless this Agreement expressly provides otherwise.

14.7 Agreement does not affect operation of statutes

- (a) The parties acknowledge and agree that nothing in this Agreement will in any way unlawfully restrict or otherwise unlawfully affect the unfettered discretion of a party to this Agreement in the exercise of any of its functions and powers pursuant to any Law. The rights and powers conferred by this Agreement upon a party are in addition to the statutory rights and powers of that party.
- (b) To the extent of any inconsistency between this clause 14.7 and any other provision of this Agreement, this clause prevails.

14.8 Assignment

- (a) A party must not assign or transfer its interest under this Agreement without the prior consent of the other parties.
- (b) A party (the **Consenting Party**) must not withhold its consent to an Assignment of the other party's interest under this Agreement if the other party (the **Assignor**) first makes an application to the Consenting Party for consent and the Assignor demonstrates to the Consenting Party's reasonable satisfaction that the proposed assignee is a respectable, responsible and solvent person who is capable of performing all of the obligations in this Agreement to be performed on the part of the Assignor.

14.9 Indemnities

- (a) Any indemnity in this Agreement is a continuing obligation, separate and independent from the other obligations of the parties, and survives termination, completion, or expiration of this Agreement.
- (b) It is not necessary for a party to incur expense or to make any payment before enforcing a right of indemnity conferred by this Agreement.
- (c) A party must pay on demand any amount it must pay under any indemnity in this Agreement.

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14.10 Counterparts

This Agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts and by the parties on separate counterparts. Each counterpart constitutes the agreement of each party who has executed and delivered that counterpart.

14.11 GST

- (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Agreement, any amount payable for a supply made under this Agreement which is calculated by reference to a cost, expense or other amount (including GST) paid or incurred by a party will be reduced by an amount equal to any input tax credits to which that party is entitled to in respect of that cost, expense or other amount. Each of the parties will be assumed to be entitled to full input tax credits unless they provide evidence to the other parties to the contrary.
- (b) If GST becomes payable on any supply made by a party (**Supplier**) under this Agreement:
 - (i) unless indicated otherwise, any amount payable under any other provision of this Agreement for that supply (**Agreed Amount**) is exclusive of GST;
 - (ii) to the extent that the consideration for the supply is not expressed as an amount of money, the value of the non-monetary consideration is to be treated as inclusive of GST; and
 - (iii) an additional amount will be payable by the party providing consideration for that supply (**Recipient**), equal to the amount of GST payable on that supply as calculated by the Supplier in accordance with the GST law and payable at the same time and in the same manner as for the Agreed Amount,

provided that the Recipient will not be required to pay an additional amount until the Supplier has provided a tax invoice (or equivalent documentation which complies with the GST law) to the Recipient in respect of that supply.
- (c) If, for any reason, the GST payable by the Supplier in respect of a supply it makes under this Agreement (incorporating any increasing adjustments or decreasing adjustments relating to that supply) varies from the additional amount it receives from the Recipient under clause 14.11(b) in respect of that supply, the Supplier will provide a refund or credit to or will be entitled to receive the amount of this variation from the Recipient (as appropriate). Where an adjustment event occurs in relation to a supply, the Supplier will issue an adjustment note to the Recipient in respect of that supply within 10 Business Days after becoming aware of that adjustment event occurring.
- (d) If the Recipient is dissatisfied with any calculation to be made by the Supplier under this clause, the Recipient may, at its own expense and after notifying the Supplier accordingly, refer the matter to an independent expert nominated by the President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants for expert determination, which will be final and binding on all parties (absent manifest error). The expert will act as an expert and not as an arbitrator and will take into account the terms of this Agreement, the matters required to be taken into account by the Supplier under this clause and any other matter considered by the expert to be relevant to the determination. The parties must release the expert from any liability in acting as an expert, except in the case of fraud on the part of the expert.
- (e) The right of the Supplier to recover any additional amount in respect of GST under this clause is subject to the issuing of the relevant tax invoice or adjustment note to the Recipient within 4 years of the Supplier's liability to pay that GST arising.
- (f) The parties must use their best endeavours to determine the mutually acceptable GST inclusive market value of any non-monetary consideration provided for supplies made under this Agreement to be included in tax invoices to be issued to the Recipient of the relevant supply.

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14.12 Survival

- (a) Any clause which is expressly provided to survive termination or expiry of this agreement, or any clause which by its nature is intended to survive termination or expiry of this agreement, shall survive such expiry or termination.

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Schedule 1 – Particulars

1.	Asset (clause 1.1)	Asset Owner assets impacted by the Project are listed in Schedule 2
2.	Documents to be provided to Asset Owner (clause 6.3)	A copy of 'as built' drawings in a format agreed at Item 18 of Schedule 1
3.	Planning Approval (clause 1.1)	"Inland Rail - Beveridge to Albury Incorporated Document (GC 157) and any additional relevant planning approvals that are required to support the delivery of the Inland Rail Project in Victoria"
4.	Project (clause 1.1)	Tottenham to Albury (T2A Tranche 2) of the Inland Rail Program. (Project)
5.	Senior Representatives (clause 1.1)	Asset Owner: John Harvey Director Sustainable Infrastructure ARTC: Christian Rogers – Senior Project Manager Phone: 0400 513 179 Email: CRogers@ARTC.com.au
6.	Works (clause 1.1)	Works are described in Schedule 10.
7.	Relevant State or Territory (clause 1.1, 1.3 and clause 14.3)	VIC
8.	Does clause 2.3(e) apply (clause 2.3(e))	☒ Yes ☐ No Contractor Deed Poll
9.	Does Schedule 3 apply (clause 2.9)	☒ Yes ☐ No Monitoring Regime
10.	Does Schedule 4 apply (clause 2.10)	☒ Yes ☐ No Condition Reports
11.	Does Schedule 7 apply (clause 2.11)	☐ Yes ☒ No Rail Asset
12.	Does Schedule 8 apply (clause 4.1)	☒ Yes ☐ No Design Document Review
13.	Rates for costs payable by ARTC (clause 8)	Refer to Schedule 11
14.	Project Independent Verifier (clause 1.1)	The Independent Verifier as advised by ARTC.

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15.	Service of notices (clause 13)	Asset Owner Representative: (a) John Harvey – Director Sustainable Infrastructure by hand or prepaid post PO Box 177, Euroa, 3666 (b) by mail through Aconex All transmittals must be sent to the ARTC Representative via the Asset Owner document controller assigned to the Project as notified by Asset Owner to ARTC from time to time. ARTC Representative: Christian Rogers – Senior Project Manager (a) by hand or prepaid post ARTC Level 16 180 Ann Street Brisbane QLD 4000 (b) by mail through Aconex All transmittals must be sent to the Asset Owner Representative via the ARTC document controller assigned to the Project as notified by ARTC to Asset Owner from time to time.	
16.	Asset Owner's Personnel (clause 4.5(a))	ROLE	NAME
		<Insert details>	<Insert details>
17.	Design Documentation Standard (Schedule 8)	Refer to Schedule 10	
18.	Format of Design Documentation (Schedule 8)	DESIGN DOCUMENTATION	"AS BUILT" DESIGN DOCUMENTATION
		PDF	CAD; ACDC of all Returned Works

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Schedule 2 – Asset Owner Assets

This schedule documents all assets owned by Strathbogie Shire Council that will be impacted by the delivery of the T2A project as part of the Inland Rail program.

These assets are represented in the tables below grouped by “Asset Type”. Details of Returned Works post construction are shown in Schedule 10.3 – Returned Works.

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Road Works

DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	WORKS REQUIRED	REFERENCE DRAWINGS
Railway St connection onto Anderson St Bridge	Between Railway St and Anderson St	Bridge/road connection to be removed	Drawings to be provided once the design is further developed
Council Car Park	Adjacent platform off Railway St	To be incorporated into the station precinct parking/vehicle access design including tie-in to Railway St	Drawings to be provided once the design is further developed
Elliot St termination	South of Scott St	With a new underpass constructed, the southern Elliot St connection to Scott St will not be able to be retained. This section of Elliot St will be terminated in a dead end with turn-around facility	Drawings to be provided once the design is further developed
Detour route during Anderson Street Construction	Proposed detour route via Brock St/Birkett St	Upgrade of Council roads to accommodate detour traffic during construction of Anderson Street. Exact road/s to be confirmed during further design phases.	Drawings to be provided once the design is further developed

Utilities – Details of Utilities impacted by the works will be developed through design phases

UTILITY SPECIFIC ID	TYPE	CHAINAGE (KM)	UTILITY DESCRIPTION	TREATMENT	NEW UTILITY	LENGTH OF NEW UTILITY + CABLE (M)	PERMANENT PROTECTION OF UTILITY?	LENGTH OF PROTECTION (M)	LENGTH OF ABANDONED (M)	COMMENT

Structures – No council structures identified as impacted

STRUCTURE	LOCATION	WORKS REQUIRED	REFERENCE DRAWINGS

Other Assets

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DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	WORKS REQUIRED	REFERENCE DRAWINGS
Footpaths and pedestrian underpasses	Project Area	General works to footpaths and pedestrian underpasses that are affected within the project works area	Drawings to be provided once the design is further developed
Other Ancillary Assets (i.e. drainage modification, street lighting, car parking)	Project Area	Detail to be defined through Preliminary and Detailed design phases	Drawings to be developed through Preliminary and Detailed Design Stages

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Schedule 3 – Monitoring Regime

ARTC's Contractor will implement a Monitoring Regime in accordance with their Conditions of Approval.

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Schedule 4 – Condition Reports**1. Definitions**

In this Schedule 4:

Condition Consultant means the consultant appointed by ARTC or its Contractor to prepare the Condition Survey Plan and to carry out the Initial Condition Report and the Dilapidation Survey.

Dilapidation Survey means the survey referred to in clause 4.

Infrastructure means Assets

Initial Condition Report means the report referred to in clause 3.

2. Condition Consultant

- (a) Prior to the commencement of any Works, ARTC or its Contractor will appoint the Condition Consultant who will, at ARTC's expense, prepare: the Initial Condition Report; and
- (b) the Dilapidation Surveys.

3. Initial Condition Report

- (a) Prior to any Works being carried out, ARTC or its Contractor must instruct the Condition Consultant to inspect the Infrastructure and prepare a report detailing the condition of the Infrastructure.
- (b) ARTC or its Contractor must instruct the Condition Consultant to:
 - (i) provide a draft of the Initial Condition Report to ARTC and Asset Owner for comment; and
 - (ii) take into account ARTC and Asset Owner's comments on the draft Initial Condition Report and to incorporate such of those comments in a further draft of the Initial Condition Report as the Condition Consultant considers appropriate and provide a copy of the further draft Initial Condition Report to ARTC and Asset Owner for approval.
- (c) ARTC and Asset Owner must provide any comments on the draft of the Initial Condition Report to the Condition Consultant within 20 Business Days of receipt of the report under clause 3(b)(i).
- (d) ARTC and Asset Owner must consult and act reasonably in order to promptly agree the draft Initial Condition Report. If the draft Initial Condition Report is not agreed within:
 - (i) 20 Business Days of Asset Owner first being provided with a copy of the draft Initial Condition Report under clause 3(b)(i); or
 - (ii) 10 Business Days of Asset Owner first being provided with a copy of the revised Initial Condition Report under clause 3(b)(ii),
 the matters in dispute may be referred by either Asset Owner or ARTC for determination in accordance with clause 11.
- (e) The Initial Condition Report for the purposes of this Agreement will be the draft Initial Condition Report agreed by Asset Owner and ARTC pursuant to clause 3(d) or determined in accordance with clause 11.
- (f) Asset Owner and ARTC agree that the Initial Condition Report will accurately record the condition of the relevant Infrastructure prior to the carrying out of the Works.
- (g) ARTC must ensure that no Works are carried out until the Initial Condition Report is agreed by Asset Owner and ARTC pursuant to clause 3(d) or determined in accordance with clause 11.

4. Dilapidation Survey

- (a) As soon as reasonably practicable following completion of the Works as determined in accordance with Schedule 1, ARTC or its Contractor must instruct the Condition Consultant to inspect the Infrastructure and, if Asset Owner reasonably requires a Dilapidation Survey of one or more of the Infrastructure, the Condition Consultant will prepare a survey detailing the condition of the Infrastructure.
- (b) ARTC or its Contractor must instruct the Condition Consultant to:
 - (i) provide a draft of the Dilapidation Survey to ARTC and Asset Owner; and

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- (ii) take into account ARTC and Asset Owner's comments on the draft Dilapidation Survey and incorporate such of those comments in a further draft of the Dilapidation Survey as the Condition Consultant considers appropriate and provide a copy of the further draft Dilapidation Surveys to ARTC and Asset Owner for approval.
- (c) ARTC and Asset Owner must consult and act reasonably in order to promptly agree the draft Dilapidation Survey. If the draft Dilapidation Surveys is not agreed within a reasonable time of Asset Owner and ARTC first being provided with a copy of the draft Dilapidation Survey, the matters in dispute may be referred by either Asset Owner or ARTC for determination in accordance with clause 11.

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Schedule 5 – Insurance

ITEM	TYPES OF INSURANCES	MINIMUM SUM INSURED	PERIOD OF INSURANCE	INSURANCE COVER IS TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING
i	Public Liability	Public Liability \$20,000,000 each and every occurrence.	Until the expiry of the Defects Correction Period	(a) Is with an approved insurer as defined in clause 1 of the Definitions and Notes below; (b) Is governed by the law of State or Territory specified in Schedule 1 and subject to Australian jurisdictions as defined in clause 2 of the Definitions and Notes below; (c) Includes contractors and sub-contractors for their respective rights, interests, and liabilities as an additional insured; and (d) Includes a cross liability clause as defined in clause 3 of the Definitions and Notes below.
ii	Workers Compensation	As per relevant Workers Compensation State legislation.	Annually	As per relevant Workers Compensation State legislation.

Definitions and Notes:

- Approved insurer means:
 - an Australian registered insurance company which is approved by the Australian Prudential Regulatory Authority ('APRA') to conduct general insurance business in Australia; or
 - Lloyds Underwriters; or
 - The Comcover insurance scheme for the Australian Federal Government
- Insurances policies must be subject to the laws of Australia (or an Australian State or Territory) and their courts.
- A Cross liability clause operates as if there was a separate policy of insurance covering each of the insured. This means that the insurer provides each party named on the insurance policy access to the limit of liability, subject to the overall limit under the policy not being exceeded.
- References in this Insurance Schedule to the "contractor" and the "contract" are to be interpreted to harmonise with the terminology used in the contract in which this Insurance Schedule is used (eg "ARTC Contractor" and "Agreement" or as the case may be).

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Schedule 6 – Contractor Deed Poll

This Deed Poll is made on

Given by: <Insert details> (ABN<insert number>) of <insert address> (**ARTC Contractor**).

In favour of: <Insert details> (ABN<insert number>) of <insert address> (**Beneficiary**)

Background

- A. ARTC and the Beneficiary entered into the Master Inland Rail Development Agreement on or about <choose date> (the **MIRDA**).
- B. ARTC and the ARTC Contractor entered into the Construction Contract on or about <choose date> (the **Construction Contract**).
- C. Pursuant to the Construction Contract the ARTC Contractor is required to enter into this Deed Poll in favour of the Beneficiary.

Operative provisions**1. Interpretation**

Terms defined in the MIRDA have the same meanings when used in this Deed Poll unless otherwise expressly defined in this Deed Poll.

2. Benefit of warranties and acknowledgements

The ARTC Contractor acknowledges and agrees that each promise, warranty, undertaking, representation, and acknowledgement made by the ARTC Contractor in the Construction Contract is made for the benefit of and is directly enforceable by the Beneficiary.

3. Obligations under Construction Contract

The ARTC Contractor warrants that it will comply with its obligations under the Construction Contract to the extent that they relate to the Project Activities and the Works.

4. Indemnity

The ARTC Contractor must indemnify the Beneficiary against:

- (a) any loss of or damage to property of the Beneficiary; and
- (b) any liability to or claims by a third party in respect of loss of or damage to property, the loss of use of or access to property, or injury to or death of persons,

caused by, or arising out of, or in any way in connection with, the Project Activities and the Works (to the extent that the ARTC Contractor is required under the Construction Contract to carry out those activities or works), provided that the ARTC Contractor's responsibility to indemnify the Beneficiary will be reduced proportionally to the extent that an act or omission by the Beneficiary contributed to the loss, damage, injury or death.

5. Limitation

The ARTC Contractor's total aggregate liability in respect of any Claim or loss suffered or incurred by Beneficiary arising out of or in any way in connection with this Deed Poll, the Project Activities or the Works, is limited to:

- (a) the amount for which the ARTC Contractor is entitled to be indemnified in respect of the Claim or loss under a policy of insurance that the ARTC Contractor is required to effect and maintain under the Construction Contract, or would have been entitled to be indemnified for but for:
 - (i) a breach by the ARTC Contractor of its obligations in respect of insurance under the Construction Contract;

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- (ii) a failure by the ARTC Contractor to pay any premiums or to otherwise maintain the insurances required under the Construction Contract;
 - (iii) a breach by the ARTC Contractor of any provision of a contract of insurance which the ARTC Contractor is required to maintain under the Construction Contract; or
 - (iv) any conduct by the ARTC Contractor under a contract of insurance which the ARTC Contractor is required to maintain under the Construction Contract, which entitles an insurer to avoid the relevant contract of insurance or to reduce its liability under the relevant contract of insurance; and
- (b) to the extent that liability to Beneficiary is not covered by clause 6(a), the aggregate sum of \$20,000,000.00.

6. Consequential Loss

- (a) Subject to clause 6(b), the ARTC Contractor has no liability (whether in contract, tort negligence, under an indemnity or otherwise) to the Beneficiary for any Consequential Loss suffered or incurred by the Beneficiary arising out of or in connection with this Deed or otherwise in connection with any act or omission of the ARTC Contractor.
- (b) The exclusion of Liability of the ARTC Contractor under clause 6(a) does not apply:
- (i) to liability arising from:
 - A. any criminal act or fraud; or
 - B. wilful misconduct or wilful default,
 on the part of the ARTC Contractor or any of its subcontractors or agents;
 - (ii) arising from injury to, illness, disease, or death of a person, caused or contributed to by the ARTC Contractor or any of its subcontractors or agents.
 - (iii) to the extent to which the ARTC Contractor or any of its subcontractors or agents is paid or indemnified, or is entitled to be paid or indemnified, under any insurance effected in respect of such a liability up to the limits that such insurance is required to be effected and maintained under the MIRDA; or
 - (iv) to the extent the ARTC Contractor or any of its subcontractors or agents cannot limit or exclude such Liability at law.

7. Acknowledgement of reliance

The ARTC Contractor acknowledges that the Beneficiary:

- (a) **(liability)**: may suffer loss if the ARTC Contractor does not comply with its obligations under the Construction Contract in respect of the Project Activities and the Works; and
- (b) **(reliance)**: is entitled to, and will, rely on this Deed Poll.

EXECUTED AS A DEED POLL.

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by <Insert details> (ABN<insert number>) in accordance with section 127 of the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth):

Signature of director

Signature of company secretary/director

Full name of director

Full name of company secretary/director

Date

Date

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Schedule 7 – Rail Asset

[Note insert provisions which may need to be inserted where the Asset is rail]

OFFICIAL**Schedule 8 - Design Documentation Review**

- (a) Prior to commencement of construction, ARTC will provide to Asset Owner a copy of the Design Documentation for each stage of construction (in a self-contained package which is, where reasonable to do so, capable of interpretation without reference to other material) of the Returned Works. If Design Documentation requires other material for interpretation and it is not reasonable to provide it in a self-contained package, then ARTC must provide such material to Asset Owner at the same time as it provides the relevant Design Documentation.
- (b) Subject to paragraph (c):
 - (i) Asset Owner may, within 15 Business Days of receipt of such Design Documentation, provide to ARTC its written comments on the Design Documentation; and
 - (ii) if Asset Owner does not provide any comments within the timeframe required by paragraph (b)(i), Asset Owner will be deemed to have accepted the Design Documentation.
- (c) Asset Owner acknowledges and agrees that Asset Owner is only entitled to make comments under paragraph (b) on the Design Documentation provided pursuant to paragraph (a) to the extent that such Design Documentation does not comply with the Works Description.
- (d) Unless otherwise agreed in writing by Asset Owner, ARTC will not use for construction purposes any Design Documentation unless:
 - (i) a copy of that Design Documentation has been provided to Asset Owner in sufficient time to enable Asset Owner to provide comments as contemplated by paragraph (b)(i); and
 - (ii) ARTC has considered the comments provided by Asset Owner in accordance with paragraph (b)(i) or Asset Owner has withdrawn the comments after consultation with ARTC.
- (e) Unless otherwise specified in item 17 of Schedule 1, all Design Documentation will be prepared in accordance with ARTC Inland Rail standards and specifications.
- (f) Design Documentation will be issued to Asset Owner electronically in the formats specified in item 18 of Schedule 1.

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Schedule 9 – Special Conditions

No Special Conditions.

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Schedule 10 – Works Description

10.1 Scope of Works

The Australian Government has undertaken to deliver the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail as a vital piece of infrastructure to complete the National Freight Network and to provide for a significant modal shift of freight from road to rail. To deliver this strategy, the Inland Rail Program has been divided into 13 projects, one of these being the Tottenham to Albury (T2A) Project.

Within the T2A project, there is limited flexibility in design solutions to achieve the required clearance. This is largely due to spatial constraints in brownfield areas where tie-in to existing infrastructure is required. Design solutions that could provide the required clearance under bridges are limited to:

- ▶ Lowering or realigning the track; and, or,
- ▶ Raising or widening the bridges; or
- ▶ Replacing the bridges (road and pedestrian footbridges)

The T2A project scope has been split into two phases:

T2A Project Scope 1 (Phase 1): Beveridge to Albury Section Stage 1, which is the subject of this Agreement. T2A Stage 1 will utilise the existing North East Rail Line from Beveridge to Albury and modify or replace existing infrastructure at discrete locations along the corridor where there is not adequate clearance for double stacked freight trains.

T2A Project Scope 2 (Phase 2): Is the Southern End of the T2A project. Phase 2 has been suspended following the announcement of The Beveridge Intermodal Freight terminal.

Stage 1 has 12 discrete enhancement sites, one of which is located in the Strathbogie Shire Council LGA.

SITE	PROPOSED WORKS	LGA
Anderson/Scott St and Euroa Station Precinct	Re-alignment of tracks to the North/West of the main Station platform with a new Western platform to be built. Removal of existing East platform and track. New car-parking and bus drop off area to be created on both East and West of track, along with a new DDA compliant pedestrian underpass to connect the platforms. Anderson/Scott St existing bridge will be demolished with a new underpass to be constructed. Existing access ramps from Anderson St to Hinton St and the platform will be removed.	Strathbogie

10.1.1 Background of Site

- The existing Anderson Street Overbridge consists of a 3-span bridge spanning the East and West ARTC Main lines. The bridge deck is formed by structural steel girder and supported by the reinforced concrete piers and abutment.
- Anderson Street overbridge is a Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) structure and provides a key road link to other regional towns in the region. The road is authorised for over mass and over-dimensional heavy vehicles.
- The bridge provides vehicular access to Euroa Station through a ramp connecting to the east of the overbridge. The bridge is currently secured with a combination of steel rail fencing and w-beam safety barrier.
- Council has indicated that the Railway Street side ramp and the Station access side ramp need not be replicated in the final design
- The Road Underpass option has been progressed through Reference Design

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10.1.2 Functional and Performance Requirements

a) General Requirements

- i. The design solution for the Anderson/Scott St road connection is a road underpass.
- ii. Urban design and landscaping design to requirements of Authorities and the Urban Design Framework and Urban Design Guidelines prepared for the delivery of the Project.
- iii. Modifications to ancillary assets impacted shall be undertaken to relevant standards as required within the project area (i.e. drainage assets, street lighting, car parks etc...)
- iv. ARTC and the Contractor must prepare and implement a Community and Stakeholder Management Plan (CSMP), in consultation with Strathbogie Council, that includes the following (without limitation):
 1. Addresses all Project activities that potentially impact on community and business operations and provide for a well-coordinated communication and engagement process.
 2. Sets out processes and measures to provide advance notice to key stakeholders and other potentially affected stakeholders of construction activities (including any staged works, early works, main works, or out of hours works), significant milestones, changed traffic conditions, interruptions to utility services, changed access and parking conditions, periods of predicted high noise and vibration activities, including contact details for enquiries/complaints.
 3. Provides for any interested stakeholder to register their contact details to the Project webpage to ensure they are automatically advised of planned construction activities, Project progress, mitigation measures and intended reinstatement measures where applicable.
 4. Respite and Relocation Management Plan (where required) to manage those residents and businesses directly impacted by noise and vibration (day and night works).

b) Rail Requirements

- i. All Works at Euroa Station and surrounding areas shall be designed to mitigate additional adverse impacts on adjacent properties up to and including 1% AEP.
- ii. Maintenance access and positions of safety for rail personnel are to be provided for in the design.
- iii. The existing Euroa Station building is situated between East and West main lines. The East and West main lines are to be relocated and a new platform face built on the relocated West main track. The existing East main line to be removed from the current alignment and landscaped to provide level access from Station Street and carpark to the platform.
- iv. The existing West main 47kg rail is to be replaced with new 60kg rail for the extent of the Site.
- v. SG East and West tracks catering for freight at 115km/h (max.) and passenger Express V/Line at 130km/h (max.).
- vi. Relocation of and continuity of all existing systems, Utility Services and Signalling Assets as may be necessary as a result of the design.
- vii. The design must demonstrate that the existing track formation and drainage are not compromised.
- viii. Emergency Services access to the station building must be demonstrated in the design.
- ix. Station facilities to PTV and V/Line standards including Ancillary Assets on the platforms.
- x. Security, lighting, user comfort and safety must be incorporated into the design for day and night.
- xi. Ease of maintenance must be considered in the design.
- xii. Functional drainage system for the track and pedestrian underpass which does not impact train services or underpass connection.

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- xiii. The design must demonstrate that the existing station building, structures and Assets are not compromised or changed.
- xiv. The set-out for the proposed platform and associated station pit must take into account spatial considerations so as to provide for future gauntlet track on both the East and the West main tracks.
- xv. If the rail level through the retained platform requires raising, then allowance for rebuilding of the platform face to current standards must be made.

c) Rail Structure Requirements

- i. Design load is 300LA as per AS5100:2017.
- ii. A new rail bridge will be required spanning the new road underpass
- iii. Two new shared use path bridges with 3m clear width (appropriate additional clearance for walls, fences and barriers shall be provided) incorporated into the new rail underbridge with paths connecting into the new Station Precinct on the Albury side and into the existing footpaths on the Beveridge side.
- iv. Demolish the existing rail bridges/pedestrian underpasses connecting Kirkland Avenue to Frost Street and provide a new single rail underbridge to accommodate both the re-aligned West and East Line. The minimum vertical clearance to the underside of the new overbridge shall be 2.4m and pedestrian path with a 1.8m clear width shall be provided. A stormwater pump system is not required for this underpass.
- v. Demolish the existing rail bridge supporting the existing East Line at Cree Steet and provide a new rail underbridge to accommodate the re-aligned East Line. The minimum height to the underside of the new West Line overbridge shall be maintained.
- vi. Demolish the existing pedestrian underpass at the Anderson Street which connects Hinton St to Handbury St and provide a new shared use underpass to accommodate both the re-aligned West and East Line. The minimum vertical clearance to the underside of the new underpass shall be 2.5m and a shared use path with a 3.0m clear width appropriate additional clearance for walls, fences and barriers shall be provided. A stormwater pump system is not required for this underpass.
- vii. A new DDA compliant underpass for pedestrians from the Railway St car park to Euroa Station and connecting through to the western side of the town is required with a minimum of 5m in width and 3m in height. This underpass must include a stormwater pump system. The design shall adequately provide the shortest route wherever possible, whilst meeting an open visual amenity.
- viii. The existing bridge, side road embankments and ramps, and all earthen embankments must be removed and taken back to the natural ground level to the extent that is not required in the permanent works.
- ix. Installation of lifts at the new station pedestrian underpass location.

d) Road Requirements

- i. The design of the road must cater for oversize/overmass (OSOM) and over-dimensional heavy vehicles as per VicRoads standards.
- ii. Road design must comply with design vehicle for a B-double and be checked against the operation of a B-Triple vehicle.
- iii. The Road design speed must be 60km/h, with posted speed to be determined in consultation with the Road Authority.
- iv. Annual average daily traffic (AADT) for road is to be verified through the preliminary design phase
- v. Clearance check to be undertaken for a 25m non-articulated vehicle.
- vi. Maximum desired road grade as per AGRD, but not steeper than 8%.
- vii. Provide all earthworks, retaining walls, signage and, street furniture, civil and drainage required as a result of road works. Reconfigure including associated property accesses as required to mitigate any adverse impacts to property owners, including provision of required sightlines.
- viii. Adverse impacts to adjacent properties, traffic and driveway connections must be minimised and managed during design consultation.

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- ix. Lane configuration of Anderson St must be a single carriageway providing for two-way traffic with each traffic lane having a minimum width of 3.5m with 1.2m minimum width outer shoulders. Reinstate street lighting and road Assets as required.
- x. The proposed detour route during the Anderson St closure is via Brock Street, Campbell Street and Birkett Street.
- xi. Birkett St level crossing and immediate road approaches must be upgraded to be made suitable for B-Double vehicles during any extended Anderson St closure. This will involve any associated upgrade to the current active level crossing, including all associated signalling work.
- xii. The remainder of any proposed temporary traffic detour during construction must be assessed and made suitable for B-double truck movements.
- xiii. The Road design at the intersection of Rail and Binney St must include a concept layout for a potential future roundabout at the end of Binney St
- xiv. Following construction works completion, the entire traffic detour route must be returned to Council in a comparable or better state than prior to works commencement.
- xv. The road underpass shall be designed to stay dry in a 1:50 year flood event including 300mm freeboard, with impact to surrounding properties minimised for a 1:100 year event
- xvi. Pump system to be installed within the road underpass as per DTP requirements.
- xvii. The Pump system to drain the water to the culvert at approximately 150.598km
- xviii. The underpass structure configuration must be optimised to allow access for safe inspection and maintenance by DTP.
- xix. The underpass must have a vertical height clearance of 5.9m.

e) Station Precinct Requirements

- i. Footpaths linking the station entrance to surrounding land uses including:
 - 1. Residential areas
 - 2. Retail areas across Railway St to Binney St (Euroa Town Centre)
 - 3. Recreational areas to the south and east of the railway line including Euroa Public Park
- ii. Provide cycling links directly to bicycle parking area
- iii. 10 Bike hoops on the Eastern side of the track (within 50m of faregate)
- iv. Direct pedestrian path from bike parking to the faregate
- v. Direct pedestrian paths between station and bus stops
- vi. 2 coach bays located within 50m of platform on the Eastern side of the track
- vii. Bus Shelter to meet patronage needs
- viii. PIDs at all decision points to align with V/Line standards and must consider locations of bus shelters, underpass and passenger movements
- ix. Provision of minimum 30 car parks on the Eastern side of the track, including 2 DDA car parks
- x. Provision of 25 car parks on the Western side of the track including 2 DDA car parks
- xi. Installation of a new compliant standalone Communications and Equipment Room (CER) on the retained platform
- xii. Provision of at least 2 staff parking spots with one next to the CER
- xiii. Allowance for 4 spaces for pick-up and drop off which can be shared with taxi's/rideshare on each side of the track

10.1.3 Options and Alternatives

None currently proposed

Table 5.5 Stakeholders Interface:

TRANSPORT AGENCIES	ROAD AUTHORITIES	UTILITIES	OTHER
Department of Transport and Planning	Strathbogie Shire Council	TBC on option choice	Adjoining Neighbours
V/Line – RSO	Department of Transport and Planning		Neighbouring Business

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TRANSPORT AGENCIES	ROAD AUTHORITIES	UTILITIES	OTHER
Victrack – Asset Owner			Emergency Services
ARTC - RIM			Adjoining Health Services
			Euroa Stakeholder Group
			Euroa Connect

10.1.5 Traffic Management

- ARTC (through its nominated D&C Contractor) is responsible for any temporary traffic diversions and traffic management. This includes all works consequential to gaining acceptance from Council and DTP.
- Temporary traffic management may require that works be undertaken in relation to alternate traffic routes, subject to the requirements of Council and DTP.
- ARTC (through its nominated D&C Contractor) is required to obtain all approvals from relevant road authority and responsible to deliver the works required as part of the approvals.

10.2 Technical Requirements

ASSET	STRATHBOGIE SHIRE COUNCIL STANDARD AND REQUIREMENT
Roadworks	Aust Standards, AustRoads, Infrastructure Design Manual
Road Drainage	Infrastructure Design Manual
Foot Paths	Infrastructure Design Manual
Street Trees	Tree Management Plan
Traffic Signage	Australian Standards

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10.3 Returned Works (New works)

As the design process progresses, the Parties will meet acting reasonably and in good faith to agree on the allocation of ownership and maintenance responsibilities for the Returned Works. Once agreement has been reached, the tables below will be updated to reflect the agreed ownership and maintenance boundaries.

Road Works

Following the completion of Preliminary Design the Parties will meet acting reasonably and in good faith to agree **and** document all assets in relation to roadworks within Council's road reserve or other areas as identified within the project area that will be owned and/or maintained by Strathbogie Shire Council as a result of the delivery of the T2A project as part of the Inland Rail program.

ASSET	LOCATION	WORKS REQUIRED	REFERENCE DRAWINGS

Retaining Walls

N/A at this stage

Other Assets

Following the completion of Preliminary Design the Parties will meet acting reasonably and in good faith to agree **and** document all assets in relation to the area's listed in the below table that are within Council's road reserve or other areas as identified within the project area that will be owned and/or maintained by Strathbogie Shire Council as a result of the delivery of the T2A project as part of the Inland Rail program.

DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	WORKS REQUIRED	REFERENCE DRAWINGS
Land Opportunities Use			
Footpaths			
Other Ancillary Assets - drainage modification, street lighting, car parking			

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Schedule 11 – Schedule of Rates for Cost Reimbursement

Item	Description	Unit	Hourly Rate 2024/2025
	<u>Internal Resources</u>		
1	Executive Manager (Chief Executive Officer)	hrs	
2	Director	hrs	
3	Principal Engineer	hrs	
4	Senior Engineer / Council Officer / Manager	hrs	
5	Coordinators / Design Engineer / Civil Engineer	hrs	
6	Senior Works Inspector	hrs	
7	Other Support Officer (Admin)	hrs	
8	Principal Planner	hrs	
	<u>External Consultants:</u>		
1	Lawyers (have utilised Maddocks Lawyers)	hrs	
2	Other Consultants (please insert company name and role if required)	Per day	
3			

The rates shown *exclude* GST

Rates shown are to be reviewed on 1 July each year.

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Schedule 12 – Road Use and Degradation

Defined terms in this Schedule 12 are given the following meanings or as set out in this Agreement.

Definitions

Build Corridor means the physical site that Head Contractor will have control of for the purposes of construction of the Works during the site establishment and construction phases

Condition Report means a report that provides an indication of the overall condition of a Road, at a certain point in time, by identifying and recording defects in the road formation, pavement, and surface, as appropriate. It records any aspects of the Road that may be affected by Project Activities. Condition Reports include Dilapidation Reports which are typically used for roads that have a formal pavement design.

Construction Period means the period from site establishment to the start of the Defects Correction Period.

ESA means equivalent standard axles, a measure of traffic loading.

Haul Road means a Road used by the Head Contractor to haul material inside the Build Corridor.

Haulage Route means roads identified in the Traffic Management and Safety Plan as either;

- a) A Haul Road; or
- b) A Road used as a link from the main road to the Build Corridor and traffic on that road is predominately Project related or;
- c) A Road that is part of the wider network and Project traffic is a percentage of overall users.

Independent Contractor means a contractor that does not have a business relationship with either of the parties other than the performance of professional services on a paid basis.

Local Road Network means the Roads on the diagram labelled Strathbogie Shire Council Road Network that are not State Roads.

Road means the physical formation of the road within a road reserve including, as relevant, the table drains, kerb and guttering, culverts, stormwater drainage, bridges, footpaths, signage and any other Council assets within the Road Reserve.

Road Reserve means the legal area within which the physical road is constructed

Road Segment means a section of road between intersections with other roads

State Road means a road asset owned by Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) on behalf of the VIC State Government

Traffic Management and Safety Plan means the plan so titled to be prepared by ARTC or an ARTC Contractor.

Timely Manner means as soon as reasonably practicable with the urgency of the work being related to the risks associated with the deterioration.

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Local Road Maintenance

Road Types	Scope (all road types)	Process (all road types)	Outcomes
Local Road Network – Sealed Roads	Affects any road, or road segment, used by ARTC to undertake the Project. Construction traffic includes all vehicles used by ARTC, any ARTC Contractors, its employees, consultants, advisors and agents including suppliers of materials.	Haulage Routes 1. Haulage Routes to be identified by ARTC or the ARTC Contractor prior to use for construction access or supply of materials or otherwise in connection with the Works through the Traffic Management and Safety Plan Traffic Volumes 2. Unless the parties agree that sufficient data is available from existing sources to establish the base traffic volumes, one (1) week of data logging will be undertaken for each Haulage Route or Road Segment thereof with different traffic (using counter/classifier) at the cost of ARTC and in locations agreed to by Asset Owner. Wet weather, school holidays, harvest peaks, major events and major holidays (Easter, Christmas, long weekends etc) are to be avoided where possible.	Local Road Network – Sealed Roads. Maintain safety and serviceability of the local road network during the Project with the necessary work being conducted in a Timely Manner. Following Project Activities, return the Road to the same surface quality and pavement design life as prior to Project commencement, adjusted for the proportion of overall asset life of each Road Segment in line with the agreed base traffic volumes.
Local Road Network – Unsealed	Excludes road impacts associated with other developments such as separate third-party projects/developments or quarries which supply the project, where these have their own road maintenance obligations under conditions of development approval.	Where necessary, and as agreed between the parties, a loading percentage will be applied to account for Roads where seasonal factors impact the annual road traffic volume not captured by the one (1) week's base traffic volume. The results of this data logging (together with any additional agreed loading percentage) will be considered the base traffic volume. Estimated additional traffic volumes for each Road Segment and ESAs associated with the Project are to be agreed by the parties and shall be considered the projected traffic volumes. The projected traffic volume will be compared with the agreed base traffic volumes.	Local Road Network – Unsealed (Gravelled) Maintain safety and serviceability of the local road network during the Project. Following Project Activities, make good the Road to the Asset Owner standard for an Unsealed Gravelled road.
Local Road Network – Unsealed (Natural surface)		At Asset Owner's request, but not exceeding three (3) times per year, additional counts are to be undertaken by ARTC where Asset Owner has reasonable grounds for considering that actual Project traffic volumes may have materially increased from the projected traffic volumes. Further, ARTC may undertake additional counts, not exceeding three (3) times per year, where ARTC has reasonable grounds for considering that Project traffic volumes may have materially decreased from the projected traffic volumes.	Local Road Network – Unsealed (Natural surface) Maintain safety and serviceability of the local road network during the Project.

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		Road Condition Assessments 3. Prior to the commencement of any Project Activities, an Independent Contractor, engaged by ARTC at its expense, is to prepare a Condition Report in respect of any Haulage Routes identified in accordance with paragraph 1 above, as required. A copy will be issued to Asset Owner for its records. 4. Asset Owner has the right to have a representative, at the expense of ARTC, present during all field survey work including Condition Reports. 5. ARTC will perform monthly visual inspections of Haulage Routes that are in use throughout the Build and advise Asset Owner of any deterioration identified. In addition, Asset Owner may also monitor road conditions throughout the Build and assess any deterioration that affects serviceability. Any deterioration identified by either party or requiring rectification will be treated in line with the following principles. Cost of Maintenance 6. Where traffic volumes, including construction traffic, do not exceed the Road Segment's base traffic volumes, the Asset Owner will continue to be responsible for the cost of maintaining those Road Segments. Where the traffic volumes, including construction traffic, exceed the Road Segment's base traffic volumes, ARTC will be responsible for paying the cost of maintenance equal to the percentage of traffic volume in ESA's which exceeds the Road Segment's designed traffic volume. Asset Owner will pay the cost of maintaining all Road Segments up to the design traffic volume threshold. Performance of Maintenance 7. Road maintenance is to be carried out to by Asset Owner (unless otherwise agreed between the parties) to Asset Owner standards relevant to that Road Segment. Project End 8. At the end of the Construction Period the Independent Contractor is to prepare a Condition Report identifying any further works required to achieve the identified outcomes as set out in this Schedule. The Parties agree the Condition Reports are used as the basis of identifying whether further works are so required.	Following Project Activities, make good the Road to the Asset Owner standard for an Unsealed (Natural Surface) road (including table drains).

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		9. Any such works are to be undertaken, or caused to be undertaken, by ARTC at its expense and in a Timely Manner. 10. If any dispute arises over the scope of works identified in paragraph 8 of this Schedule, ARTC will, acting reasonably, consider any submission from Asset Owner regarding the degradation of Roads. 11. A Defects Correction Period applies to any works conducted on sealed roads in accordance with paragraph 9. 12. At the end of the Defects Correction Period an audit is to be undertaken by the independent Contractor in collaboration with ARTC, Asset Owner and the Head Contractor to confirm that the works have achieved the specified outcomes. 13. Asset Owner's reasonable costs, in undertaking the steps of the process outlined above are to be paid by ARTC at the rates agreed in this Agreement. Refer clause 8 Asset Owner Costs	

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Schedule 13 – Certificate of Completion Form

NOTICE OF COMPLETION

Clause 6.1(c)(i)

[From ARTC] _____

[To Asset Owner] _____

ARTC refers to the contract titled "Master Inland Rail Development Agreement, Contract No <insert details>" between ARTC and Asset Owner (**MIRDA**).

Unless the context requires otherwise, terms used in this notice have the meanings given to them in the MIRDA.

In accordance with <select one: 6.1(c) / 6.1(f)(i)> of the MIRDA, ARTC and the Asset Owner are satisfied that the Returned Works have achieved Completion on <insert date>.

[Signed the ARTC Project Manager]

[Date]

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Schedule 14 – Project Independent Verifier Deed Poll

<insert details>

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Executed as an Agreement

Signed for **INLAND RAIL PLY LTD (ACN 094 819 520)**:

Signature of agent/attorney

Name of agent/attorney

Date

Signed for and on behalf of **STRATHBOGIE SHIRE COUNCIL (ABN 50 882 781 013)** by its duly authorised representative



Signature of duly authorised representative

Tim Tamlin

Name of duly authorised representative

13/08/2024

Date

In the presence of:



Signature of Witness

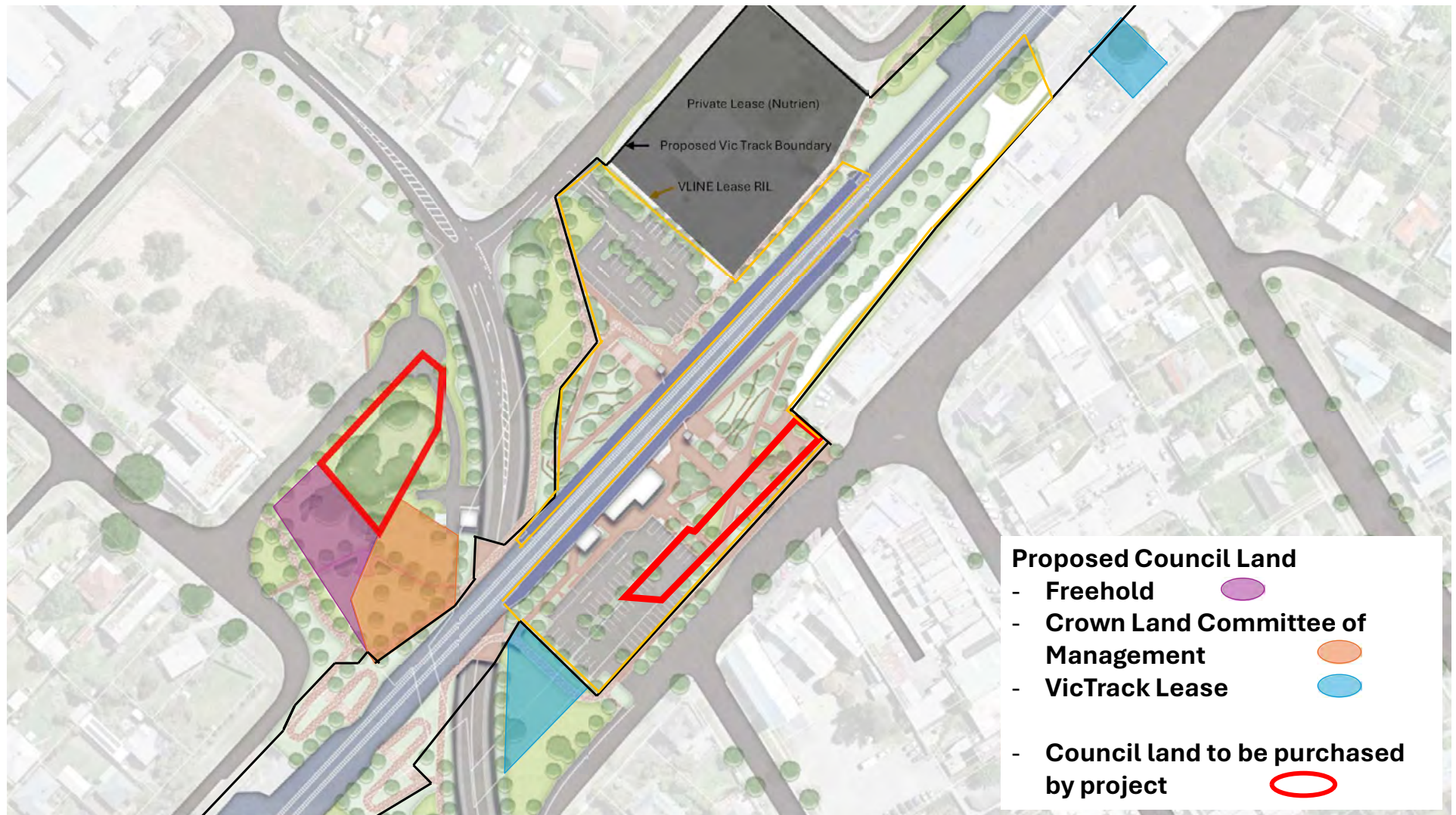
Amanda Tingay

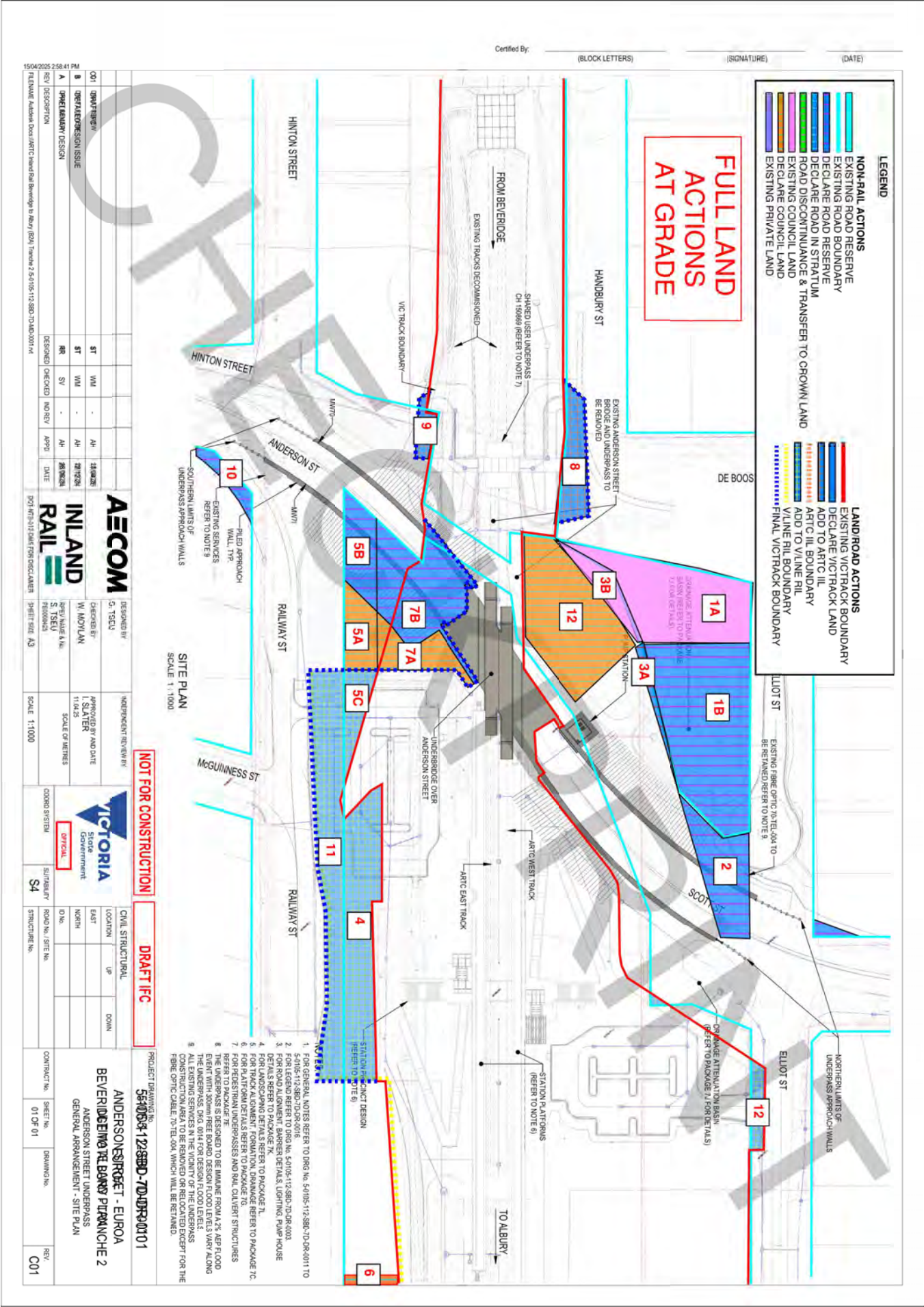
Print Name



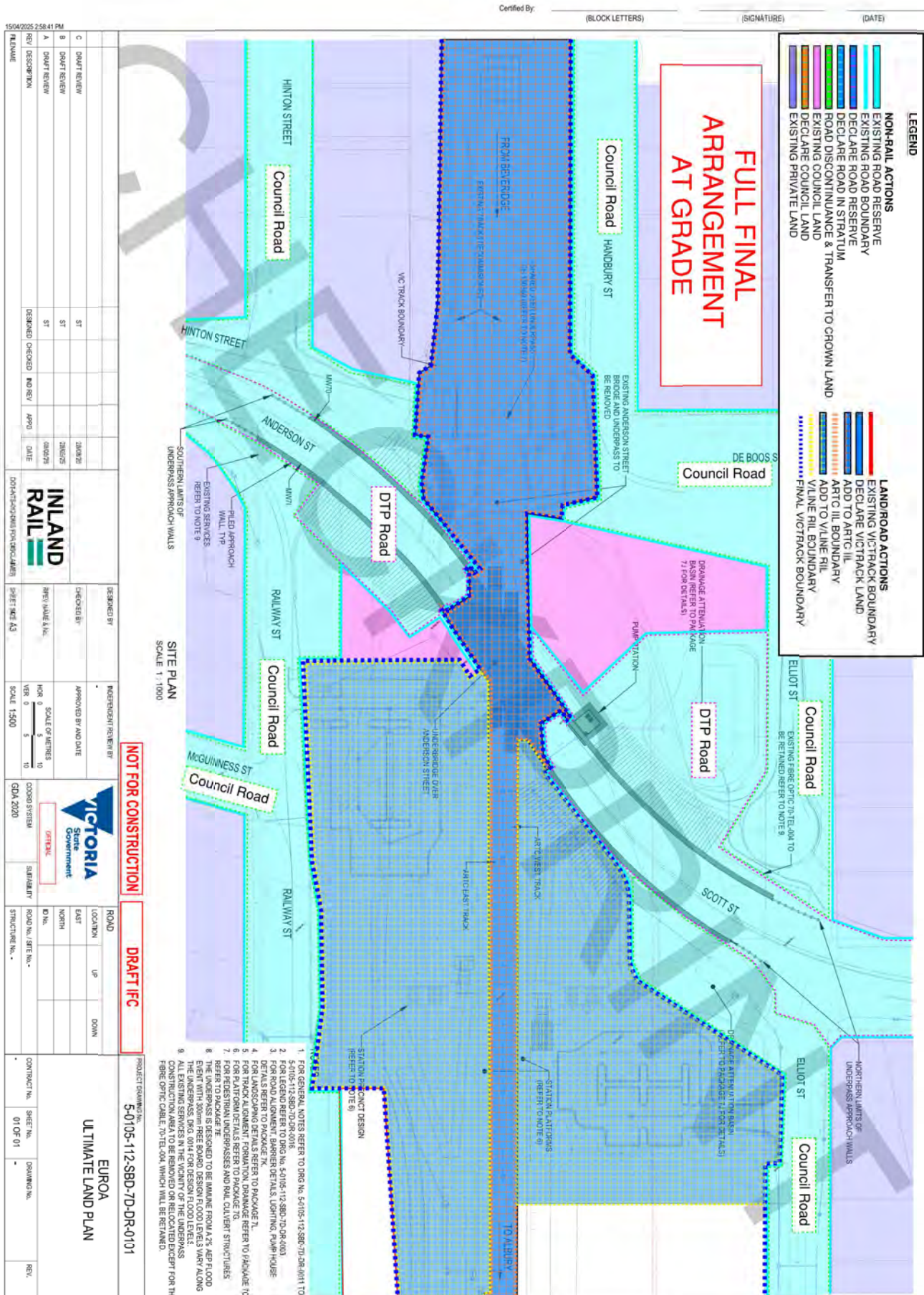
Current Council Land

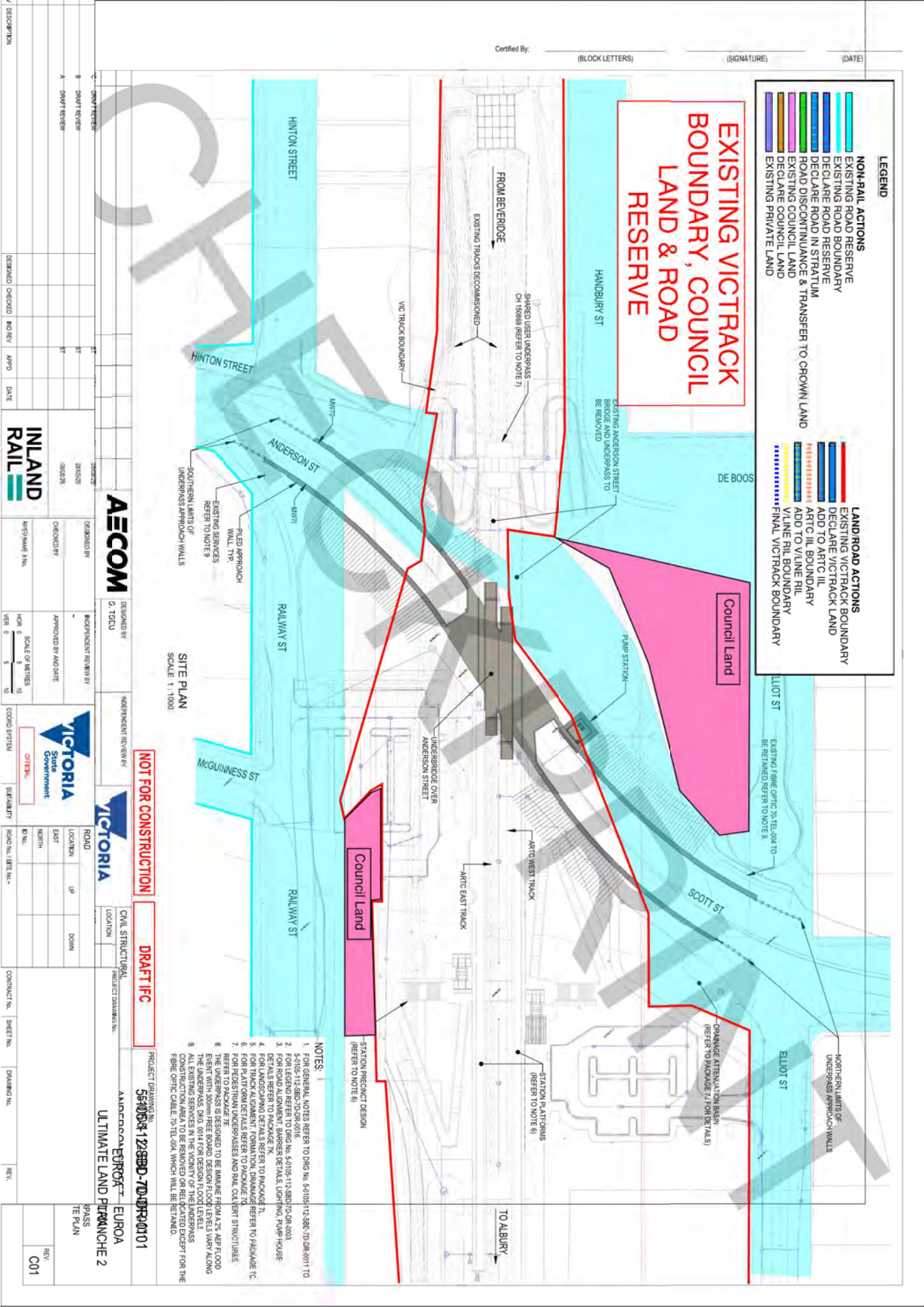
- Freehold 
- Crown Land 
- Committee of Management
- VicTrack Lease 





Attachment 11.3.2.3 Euroa - Ultimate Land Plan - Proposed.





Attachment 11.3.2.5 Euroa - Existing Road Reserves- Council Land and Vic Track Boundary (002)

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Euroa Land Allocation Change

Change ID	SPI	Address	Current Owner	Land Area (m2)	Current Lease	Current Land Use	Proposed Land Use	Proposed Owner	Proposed Land Area (m2)	Proposed Lease	Comments
1A	2004\PP5288	Crn Elliot and De Boos St, Euroa	Strathbogie Shire Council	2,660.02	N/A	Public Open Space	Public Open Space	Strathbogie Shire Council	1,185.88	N/A	
1B							Road Reserve	DTP	1,474.14	N/A	Drainage basin and pump station access
2	2005\PP5287	Scott St, Euroa	Crown Land	497.3	Strathbogie Shire Council Committee of Management	Road Reserve	Road Reserve	DTP	497.3	N/A	
3A	2006\PP5287	Scott St, Euroa	Crown Land	234.37	Strathbogie Shire Council Committee of Management	Public Open Space	Road Reserve	DTP	46.31	N/A	
3B							Public Open Space	Crown	188.06	Strathbogie Shire Council Committee of Management	
4	16~40\PP5287	Railway Stret, Euroa	Strathbogie Shire Council	945	N/A	Carpark	Station Forecourt/Public Open Space	VicTrack	945	Vline (RIL)	
5A	16A~40\PP5288	Railway Street, Euroa	Crown Land vested to VicTrack	940	Strathbogie Shire Council	Road Reserve	Public Open Space	Crown Land vested to VicTrack	262	Strathbogie Shire Council	
5B							Road Reserve	DTP	300	N/A	
5C							Station carpark	Crown Land vested to VicTrack	378	Vline (RIL)	
6	6~40\PP5287	Railway Stret, Euroa	Crown Land vested to VicTrack	460	Strathbogie Shire Council	Open Space/Frost St pedestrian underpass	Public Open Space	Crown Land vested to VicTrack	460	Strathbogie Shire Council	
7A	7~34\PP5287	Scott St, Euroa	Crown Land vested to VicTrack	1064	Vline & ARTC	Station Access & Rail Corridor	Public Open Space	Crown Land vested to VicTrack	254	Strathbogie Shire Council	
7B							Road Reserve	DTP	810	N/A	
8	N/A	Handbury Street, Euroa	Strathbogie Shire Council	N/A	N/A	Road Reserve	Rail Corridor	VicTrack	315	ARTC	
9	N/A	Rear of 2 Hinton Street, Euroa	Unused Government Road Reserve (DEECA)	N/A	N/A	Unused Government Road Reserve	Rail Corridor	VicTrack	108	ARTC	
10	1\TP605092	5 Anderson Street, Euroa	ARTC	902	N/A	Vacant Land/Site Office	Road Resreve	Strathbogie Shire Council	93	N/A	New section of road reserve
11	N/A	Railway Street, Euroa	Strathbogie Shire Council	N/A	N/A	Road Reserve	Rail Corridor	VicTrack	1,100	Vline (RIL)	Removal of section of road reserve to be Victrack land for station forecourt area.
12	N/A	Scott Street, Euroa	DTP	N/A	N/A	Road Reserve	Public Open Space	Crown Land	1154	Strathbogie Shire Council	Removal of section of road reserve to be Crown Land with Council as Committee of Management for public open space
13	N/A	Elliot St, Euroa	Strathbogie Shire Council	N/A	N/A	Road Reserve	Rail Corridor	VicTrack	123	Vline (RIL)	Removal of section of road reserve to be Victrack land for Vline carpark entrance

11.3.3 Significant Tree Policy

AUTHOR Coordinator Waste and Environment

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director Sustainable Infrastructure

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report recommends that the Council endorse the Significant Tree Policy which establishes a framework for identifying and protecting trees of environmental, cultural, and community significance on Council-managed land.

The Policy is designed to be innovative yet practical, keeping within existing resources and minimising additional costs to Council. By focusing on Council-owned land and integrating the Significant Tree Register into existing processes, the Policy ensures strong environmental outcomes while remaining straightforward and cost-effective to implement. Importantly, it also provides a foundation that can be expanded in the future should greater community demand or priorities emerge.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Endorse the Significant Tree Policy as attached to this report**
- 2. Note that the Significant Tree Register will be made available, for public information, on Council's website.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

A Significant Tree Policy has been developed to guide the establishment and management of a Significant Tree Register, including clear criteria for what will and will not be included. The concept was first identified in the Council Plan 2021–2025, but progress was delayed due to resource limitations and the risk of creating a register that Council could not adequately manage.

A Significant Tree Policy and Register provide an important framework to guide development, community activity and biodiversity protections across the shire. By identifying and recognising trees of environmental, cultural, and community value, the Policy ensures that Council can minimise impacts on these natural assets.

This approach supports balanced development while protecting the Shire's unique landscape, character and heritage, and also targeting conservation and protection efforts where they will be most effective.

The Policy delivers on an action in Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2022–2027 and aligns with the current Tree Management Plan.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Private Trees

Council officers investigated including trees on private property within the scope of this policy. However, this was not pursued as Council currently lacks the resources to enforce protections on private land.

Options such as a new local law, an enforcement officer, or advocating for a state-based planning overlay could be explored in the future. At this stage, only trees on Council-owned or managed land are proposed to be covered.

Protection of Trees

Significant trees will be managed as Council assets and afforded additional protection where practicable, in alignment with Council's existing *Tree Management Plan*, Local Laws, and relevant State legislation.

In accordance with Strathbogie Shire Council Local Law No 2, significant trees will be safeguarded against damage and vandalism. Specifically, Section 8.1 of the Local Law states:

"8.1 A person on Council land must not: (a) damage or interfere with that Council land, including any trees or vegetation located on it."

Managing The Register

The Significant Tree Register will form a subset of the existing Tree Register, which is already maintained by Council's Tree Project Officer. This integration ensures consistency and minimises duplication of effort.

The Significant Tree Register will be made public via Council's website.

Public Nominations

Community members will be able to nominate trees for assessment. Nominations will be reviewed by the Tree Project Officer (or delegate) to confirm the tree is a Council asset and assess the tree against the criteria in the Significant Tree Checklist (attached).

Only trees on Council land will be eligible. Nomination volumes are expected to be low and will be managed through existing customer request systems.

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 Significant Tree Register will be made public via Council's website.

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:

- *Environment Protection Act 2017 (Vic)*
- *Native Vegetation Act 1991 (Vic)*
- *Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)*
- *Victorian Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic)*

Climate Change Action Plan 2022–2027

The Policy directly responds to an action in Council's *Climate Change Action Plan*, supporting local efforts to protect biodiversity, enhance resilience, and strengthen the natural environment.

Tree Management Policy and Tree Management Plan

The Policy complements these existing documents by providing a specific framework for identifying and protecting trees of particular significance.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- **SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities:** Protecting significant trees contributes to safer, more inclusive and resilient communities by preserving natural heritage.
- **SDG 13: Climate Action:** Trees play a vital role in climate regulation, carbon storage, and urban cooling.
- **SDG 15: Life on Land:** Conserving significant trees protects biodiversity, habitats, and ecosystems.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Community expectations exceed Council resources (e.g. calls for private trees to be included)	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Clearly define policy scope, communicate limitations, and explore future options if resourcing allows.

Community opposition to the establishment of a Significant Tree Register	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium	Inform the community of the purpose and benefits of the Register, and clearly explain how it supports biodiversity, heritage, and community values.
Damage or vandalism to trees listed on the register	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Increase community awareness, signage, and apply Local Law enforcement measures.
Legal challenges or disputes regarding tree inclusion/exclusion from register	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium	Ensure transparent criteria (Council owned land), arborist assessments, and fair nomination/review processes.
Ongoing costs of maintaining the register and managing nominations strain Council resources	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Integrate into existing Tree Register management, monitor workloads, and review resourcing during policy reviews.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

At present, there are no new legal implications arising from this policy, as it applies only to trees located on Council owned or managed land. The policy functions as an internal framework for managing Council's assets and does not impose obligations on private landowners. The following legal considerations are relevant:

- The policy sits alongside Council's Local Law No. 2, which already prohibits damage to trees and vegetation on Council land. Breaches of the Local Law can attract penalties.
- By identifying and protecting significant trees, Council needs to ensure they are managed safely. If a significant tree poses a risk (e.g. limb drop), Council has a legal duty of care to act reasonably to mitigate hazards.
- Should the scope of the policy be expanded in future to cover private land, legal advice would be required to address property rights, enforcement powers, and legislation implications.

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

All efforts have been made to minimise financial impacts by utilising existing staff resources and systems, including the current Tree Register, Pozi mapping platform, and existing Council communication portals (email and phone) for public nominations.

Some additional staff hours will be required for:

- Updating and maintaining the Significant Tree Register
- Ensuring the register is publicly accessible
- Communicating the policy and informing the community
- Managing and accessing public nominations.

These costs are expected to be minimal and absorbed within existing operational budgets.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Economic

Protecting Council's existing assets can reduce long-term maintenance and infrastructure costs.

Social

Significant trees contribute to community identity, pride, and wellbeing by preserving cultural heritage and enhancing amenity in public spaces.

Environmental

Significant trees provide vital habitat, support biodiversity, and protect remnant vegetation across the Shire.

Climate Change

Significant trees help mitigate climate impacts by storing carbon and reducing urban heat.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The Significant Tree Policy is innovative in that few Victorian councils the size of Strathbogie Shire have adopted such an approach.

It demonstrates Council's commitment to sustainability while keeping the scope manageable by focusing on Council-owned land.

This framework allows Council to demonstrate the value of a register without the need for new local laws or planning scheme amendments, while leaving open the option to expand the policy in the future if it becomes a community priority.

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

The Significant Tree Policy gives Council a straightforward way to identify and protect trees of high value on Council land.

Having a register makes it easier to manage and celebrate these trees, while showing the community that we value biodiversity and heritage. The work can be done mostly with existing resources, with some extra staff time needed to keep the register up to date and communicate it to the public.

Overall, it's a practical policy that supports Council's environmental and sustainability goals.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Significant Tree Policy (1)
2. Significant Tree Criteria check list

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Strathbogie Shire Council Significant Tree Policy

September 2025

Strathbogie
SHIRE COUNCIL

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Significant Tree Policy 2

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Significant Tree Policy

Document ID:	SSCEDOC-43802981-431
Effective Date:	
Last Review:	New
Current Review:	September 2025
Date Adopted by Council:	
Next Scheduled Review Date:	September 2027
Responsible Officer:	Director Sustainable Infrastructure

OFFICIAL**PART 1: POLICY****1. PURPOSE**

This policy aims to provide guidance on identification and protection of trees which have aesthetic, biological, community, cultural and/or historical significance within the Strathbogie Shire. Only trees on Council owned or managed lands are within the scope of this policy.

Significant trees are recognised by Council as valuable. These trees provide crucial environmental and ecological benefits including preserving biodiversity, protecting habitat for wildlife, and climate regulation by mitigating urban heat, storing carbon and improving air quality. Trees enhance the visual appeal and character of streetscapes and public spaces.

Significant trees can become a focal point for education, conservation efforts, and community pride. Some trees are linked to historical events, people or periods. Iconic trees can be a local landmark, contributing to community identity and sense of place. And some trees may hold a spiritual or cultural importance to First Nations communities.

A Significant Tree Policy and accompanying register provide an important framework to guide development and planning decisions. By identifying and recognising trees of environmental, cultural, and community value, the policy ensures that planning outcomes appropriately consider and minimise impacts on these significant natural assets. This approach supports balanced development while protecting the Shire's unique landscape, character and heritage. Additionally, by documenting these trees, conservation and protection efforts can be more effectively targeted to preserve important species and ecosystems.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

The Strathbogie Shire Council is committed to protecting significant trees within the Shire from the adverse effects of development or vandalism. This policy serves as a framework for evaluating and adding significant trees into a Significant Tree Register.

Protecting our significant trees helps Council to achieve one of the key priorities of Strathbogie Shire Council which is to minimise harmful impacts on our natural environment and reverse biodiversity decline. Additionally, this policy outlines how the Significant Tree Register will be maintained and made available to the public.

The development of a Significant Tree Register is an action in the Climate Change Action Plan 2022-2027.

3. APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

This policy shall only apply to trees located on council-owned or managed land within the Strathbogie Shire, including road reserves and recreational reserves.

This policy will not apply to trees that grow on privately-owned lands.

OFFICIAL**4. ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Role	Responsibilities
Director Sustainable Infrastructure	Review and maintain the policy

5. SIGNIFICANT TREE DEFINITION

For the purpose of this policy, a significant tree is a tree on Council owned or managed land that meets one or more of the following criteria.

A significant tree is defined as:

- Any tree of exceptional aesthetic quality
- Any tree notable for its height, trunk diameter, or canopy spread
- Any tree that is particularly old or venerable
- Any tree that plays a critical role in the landscape, streetscape, or townscape, including remnant vegetation and landmark trees
- Any tree linked to a notable public figure or cultural group
- Any tree commemorating an important historical event
- Any tree that is rare in the area or belongs to a rare species or variety, including endangered species
- Any tree exhibiting unusual growth forms or physical characteristics, including unique pruning styles
- Any tree of horticultural or genetic value that could serve as a source of propagating stock
- Any tree that is part of a recognized historic garden, park, or town.

These criteria are outlined in the checklist titled "Criteria – Significant Trees".

6. SIGNIFICANT TREE REGISTER

A register of all identified Significant Trees will be available on Council's website.

All decisions regarding the inclusion or omission of trees in the Significant Tree Register, in accordance with the criteria, will be made by Council's Tree Project Officer and Arborist.

Members of the public, including Council staff, may submit a request for a tree to be assessed for inclusion in the Significant Tree Register, provided the tree is located on land owned or managed by Council.

7. SIGNIFICANT TREE PROTECTION

This Policy interacts with various existing state, regional and local laws and regulations, which must be considered in Council's decision-making process. In particular, state policies and legislation shall take precedence over this Policy, including, but not limited to

- *Environmental Protection Act 2017*

Significant Tree Policy Document SSCEDOC-43802981-431

OFFICIAL

- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- *Strathbogie Planning Scheme*

As a Council asset, all significant trees will be managed in accordance with Council's Tree Management Policy and provided with additional care and protections when required and practicable.

In alignment with Strathbogie Shire Council Local Law Number 2, significant trees will be safeguarded against damage and vandalism. Specifically, Section 8.1 of the Local Law states:

"8.1 A person on Council land must not: (a) damage or interfere with that Council land, including any trees or vegetation located on it."

8. MAINTENANCE OF THE REGISTER

The Significant Tree Register will be maintained by Council's Tree Project Officer or Arborist and will be made available to the public via Council's GIS mapping system, *Pozi Public*.

The register will be updated on a regular basis and as needed.

9. RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

- Native Vegetation Act 1991
- Tree Management Policy, Strathbogie Shire Council 2022
- Tree Management Plan, Strathbogie Shire Council
- Road Management Plan, Strathbogie Shire Council 2021
- Open Space Plan, Strathbogie Shire Council 2014-2024
- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Strathbogie Planning Scheme
- Climate Change Action Plan 2022-2027

10. POLICY REVIEW

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

Minor amendments to the policy may be authorised by the CEO at any time where such changes do not alter the substance of the policy (e.g. a change to the name of a related document, or a change in legislation).

11. HUMAN RIGHTS

Strathbogie Shire Council is dedicated to upholding the principles of human rights as outlined in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (Vic). The Human Rights Checklist has been completed to ensure that this policy aligns with the Council's commitment to human rights principles.

OFFICIAL

Criteria – Significant Trees

The criteria for identifying significant trees within the Strathbogie Shire were informed by multiple authoritative sources, including guidelines from the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) and established best practice standards.

Significant trees must meet at least one of the following criteria to be included on the *Strathbogie Shire Council's Significant Tree Register*.

☐ **Horticultural**

Trees of horticultural or genetic value that may serve as important propagating stock, including disease-resistant or hardy specimens. This includes native, locally indigenous, or exotic species, especially those with ecological significance or habitat value, such as remnant or self-sown indigenous trees.

☐ **Heritage**

Trees of cultural, historical, or social significance within Strathbogie Shire include commemorative plantings, those associated with notable individuals or events, and features such as Avenues of Honour or trees linked to royalty or public figures. They also encompass trees that hold spiritual or cultural importance to communities or cultural groups, such as scar trees, corroboree trees, or those central to community engagement and cultural identity.

☐ **Ecological**

Trees that play a vital ecological role by providing essential habitat features—such as hollows, food sources, or nesting sites for fauna—or by influencing the local environment through shade, cooling, and stabilisation of degraded areas. These trees may also serve as windbreaks or contribute to canopy connectivity across green spaces, enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem resilience.

☐ **Location**

Trees that occur in a unique location or context and contribute meaningfully to the landscape. This includes settings like historic parks, cemeteries, landmarks, environmentally sensitive sites, or broader landscape features such as Seven Creeks Park.

☐ **Rare**

Trees of rare species or varieties, including those with very localised distribution. This may include threatened indigenous species, disjunct communities, or rare exotic specimens.

☐ **Age**

Trees that are particularly old or venerable, especially remnant specimens. Their age contributes to their significance within the local context.

OFFICIAL☐ **Size**

Trees of outstanding size relative to their species, measured by height, canopy spread, or diameter at standard height (DSH). Exceptional size enhances their visual and ecological impact.

☐ **Aesthetic**

Trees that are striking in form or location, making a strong visual contribution to the landscape. Their loss would result in a substantial change to the local character.

☐ **Unique Form**

Trees with unusual growth forms or physical features such as abnormal outgrowths, fused branches, or damage from lightning or pruning. These characteristics make them visually and biologically distinctive.

11.3.4 Future Firewood Program

AUTHOR Director Sustainable Infrastructure

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director Sustainable Infrastructure

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines options to address community request for affordable firewood following Council's decision in 2023 to stop issuing Fallen Timber Permits, based on advice from the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) regarding safety, insurance and environmental/biodiversity impacts. Since then, residents have relied on State forest free firewood collection sites which are not always accessible for all community members.

Following the resolution from the May 2025 Council meeting relating to firewood collection, three options have been considered in response to this resolution:

- continue to leverage existing alternatives
- recommence a permit system; or
- provide free firewood directly to at-risk residents.

Following a detailed analysis of each of these three options, it is recommended that Council commence a procurement process to identify local firewood providers to form a panel of suppliers, to support the provision of firewood to at risk community members for the period from May 2026 – September 2026 on a one-year trial basis. A further report will be provided to Council at the end of this period to assess the success of this program.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Note that Strategic Risk in relation to firewood, as included in the urgent business resolution at the May 2025 Council meeting has been included on Council's updated Strategic Risk Register.**
- 2. Note that Officers commence a procurement process to establish a panel to support the provision of firewood services to at risk community members for the period May 2026 – September 2026 on a one year trial basis**
- 3. Council Officers will engage approved suppliers from the panel at point two above to provide firewood to at risk community members subject to the following criteria (including but not limited to):**
 - The community members who permanently reside within Strathbogie Shire Council boundaries
 - That a maximum of one 1.5m³ load would be provided to each residence per month where wood is the main source of heating their dwelling
 - That this process will run from May – September 2026 as approved/considered through the budget process.
 - That the applicants must provide evidence of their need such as a seniors card, concession card, low income health card or approved hardship application or by referral through a community service authority.

- 4. Note that a survey will be completed by officers at the end of the winter period in 2026 to report back to Council on the outcome of the trial.**
- 5. \$15,000 be allocated through the mid-year budget process to the procurement and supply of firewood service for a trial period of 12 months.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with context regarding the cessation of the Fallen Timber Permit system and to present options to address community request for low-cost firewood. The report considers the implications of reintroducing roadside firewood collection and explores potential alternative approaches for Council to support residents.

An urgent business item was raised by Council at the May 2025 Council meeting where it was resolved to:

1. Note that Strathbogie Shire area has already entered the cold of winter and has already experienced subzero nighttime temperatures across the Shire.
2. Note that some Strathbogie Shire residents are struggling financially and rely on low cost firewood from designated collection points in order to maintain health and comfort during cold months.
3. Note that Council has for the past two years relied upon DEECA designated collection points to fulfill the community's need for low-cost heating fuel, having previously terminated issuing permits for roadside firewood collection.
4. Note that all of the eight DEECA designated firewood collection sites relied upon are over 40 km distant from Euroa (and other Shire population centres) and mostly located in extremely challenging rough terrain along fire trails in the state forest. Two of the closest DEECA designated firewood collection sites were inspected by Councillors and found to be completely unsuitable for the ready provision of firewood to the community.
5. Note that multiple Shire residents have made clear to multiple Councillors that the facts outlined in (1)-(4) above are serving to effectively prevent them from collecting low cost firewood.
6. Given that points (1)-(5) above present a risk not only to the residents themselves, but to the Shire as well, request Officers to add to Council's strategic risk register an item with words to the effect that 'there is a risk that Strathbogie Shire residents who are struggling financially and rely on wood heating may face grave physical harm due to the inability to heat their homes during winter time due to lack of firewood, resulting in reputational and financial damages to the Shire'. As 'grave physical harm' denotes a critical risk, and as we are already experiencing subzero nighttime temperatures in Strathbogie Shire, mitigation strategies are needed with utmost priority.
7. Request Officers to therefore immediately implement mitigation strategies for the above critical strategic risk by methods considered most expedient and effective to provide free or low cost firewood for those residents in need.
8. Manage the above mitigation strategies such that areas of environmental or heritage concern are excluded and clearly prohibited from firewood harvesting.
9. Report back to Council at earliest opportunity on implementation.

There are a number of factors outlined below that have been considered in development of this report.

Removal of Fallen Timber Permits

From 2020 to 2023 Council issued Removal of Fallen Timber Permits to 55 residents. These permits enabled residents to collect fallen timber along moderate conservation rated roadsides. The permit was limited to 1 cubic meter of wood to be used for personal use only. The total income generated from the 55 permits was \$801.

The process of providing permits for roadside collection of firewood was ceased in March 2023. The decision to remove the availability of these permits came after a recommendation from the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) who raised concerns with the risks associated with roadside firewood collection. There were concerns that by granting permits for residents to collect firewood from the roadside Council was encouraging people to stop and work at the side of the road without proper controls or safety measures.

Additionally, the practice was not supported by Council's Local Laws and enforcement of the conditions of the permit, including protecting native species and habitat, which is required by legislation, was outside the resourcing potential of Council Officers.

State Forest Collection Sites

Firewood for personal use can still be collected from designated areas in State forests during autumn and spring. Forest Fire Management Victoria, together with the Conservation Regulator, patrols these areas to ensure compliance with collection rules. For the past two years, Council has relied on these designated collection points to help meet community demand for low-cost firewood following the termination of roadside collection permits.

However, all collection sites accessible to local residents are located outside the Shire's population centres, with most situated in difficult terrain. Councillors have inspected two of the closest sites and found them unsuitable for the ready provision of firewood to the community.

Community Partnerships

Council officers have had discussions with several community service groups who currently support at risk community members and in some cases already provide firewood. They have all indicated that where possible they will continue to provide the service and support they provide.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Community Complaints

It can be noted that Council has no record of any complaints since they stopped issuing permits for removal of fallen timber although community members have spoken directly to Councillors on this issue.

Community Risk and Roadside Safety of Residents

Council's liability insurance (LMI) covers Council itself but not third parties. As residents do not hold their own insurance (as a contractor would), allowing roadside firewood collection is effectively an uninsured activity. Any injury, accident or damage that occurs during collection could expose both the resident and potentially Council (if "reasonable care" is not demonstrated) to liability. MAV recommends that if Council were to reintroduce permits, formal risk assessments must be undertaken and documented for each permit to demonstrate compliance with the 'reasonable care' requirement. Insurance and other protections are also recommended to protect individuals and the community.

Not all community members can safely collect firewood, meaning the most vulnerable residents may not have the ability and resources required to use a permit-based system.

Conversely, Councillors have raised concerns that financially vulnerable residents who rely on wood heating may face serious health and safety risks if they are unable to adequately heat their homes during winter. This presents not only a welfare issue for the community but also reputational risks for Council if no alternative support mechanisms are provided. This same issue provides a risk for Council and the individual if they are not fit to collect and work within the roadside safely, operating chainsaws, trailers and motor vehicles.

Environmental Impacts

While permits provided a semi-regulated means for the community to access firewood, the removal of fallen timber has significant environmental consequences. Fallen logs and branches provide important habitat for native wildlife, particularly when they contain hollows, and play a role in nutrient cycling and soil health. Collection under the former permit system was restricted to moderate conservation-rated roadsides in an attempt to balance community needs with biodiversity protection. Residents were required to comply with conditions of the permit including limiting collection to one cubic metre for personal use, avoiding high conservation-value roadsides, not felling live trees, and taking practical steps to prevent the spread of weeds.

If undertaken correctly and carefully, the environmental impacts of this permit system would likely be minimal. However, Council did not, and does not currently, have the resources to ensure compliance with these conditions.

Council has a legislated responsibility under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (Vic) and the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) to consider biodiversity when making decisions or carrying out works on Council-owned or managed land, such as roadsides. This responsibility requires Council to ensure that actions protect species and habitats and apply a precautionary approach where there is a risk of environmental harm.

State Forest Collection Sites and Other Existing Alternatives

Firewood for personal use can be collected from designated areas in State forests during autumn and spring. Forest Fire Management Victoria, together with the Conservation Regulator, patrols these areas to ensure compliance. Official signage marks designated areas, and maps and regulations are available online. While these sites provide a legal and regulated supply of firewood, access is limited, reducing their suitability for ready provision of firewood to the community.

Officers have met with representatives from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DECCA) to discuss the opportunity to open additional firewood collection sites. At this meeting it was noted that:

- DECCA would investigate opportunities to open further collection sites
- That DECCA were also required to ensure that all collection sites identified complied with Biodiversity requirements and legislation
- That these sites were unlikely to be suitable for at risk community members to be able to collect firewood.

Other existing state and regional support programs to reduce the cost of heating and energy bills includes:

- Rebates for Efficient Heating and Cooling, Solar Victoria Program assists households in upgrading to modern electric systems
- Victorian Energy Upgrades Program provides discounts and rebates on energy-efficient products and appliances
- Pensioner Concession Card Energy Bill Relief Program offers direct financial support for eligible households
- Home Energy Assistance Scheme (HEAS) Energy Bill Relief is a targeted bill relief for vulnerable households
- Goulburn Murray Solar Savers Program provides quality and trusted quotes to install solar systems and reduce long-term energy costs.

Option 1 - Direct Provision For Firewood To Residents

Officers have investigated opportunities, options to enable Council to provide direct access for at risk community member to firewood. These options include;

- Bulk purchase of precut timber that would be stored on Council property to enable community members to collect individual loads, or to enable service clubs' access to the timber for at risk community members. This would be difficult to manage and to ensure that the community most at risk have access to the firewood. This could impact service clubs and businesses in the community that provide firewood to the community.
- Council collects and store timber at a location for community members to access and cut their own firewood. This is not considered as any fallen timber collected will need time to cure and may not be suitable for firewood. There are also risks for Council allowing community members to access and cut firewood on Council sites. This solution would limit the ability to ensure that at risk community members are able to access firewood.
- Advertise an expression of interest for contractors who currently provide firewood as a commercial venture. Council engages them directly to provide firewood to at risk community members subject to the following criteria (but not limited to):
 - o The community members permanently reside within Strathbogie Shire Council boundaries
 - o That a maximum of one 1.5m³ load would be provided to each residence per month where wood is the main source of heating their dwelling
 - o That this process will run from May – September 2026 as approved through the budget process.
 - o Eligibility requires evidence of a seniors card, concession card, low income health care card, or approved hardship application or by referral through a community service authority.

OPTIONS

Option 1: Recommence Permits

Restarting the permit system would give residents a semi-regulated way to access firewood and allow Council to set conditions to reduce impacts. However, enforcement is resource-intensive, relies heavily on residents doing the right thing, and still carries risks of environmental damage and physical harm to residents especially if permit conditions are not

followed. To align with MAV guidance, Council would also need to complete a formal risk assessment for each permit, which would be resource-intensive and require access to specialist trained staff.

Importantly this option does little to support the residents most in need, as many would be physically unable to collect and transport the firewood themselves.

This option also requires inclusion in the Local Law 2: Community which is unlikely to come into effect any earlier than 1 July 2026.

Option 2: Provide Free Firewood to At-Risk Residents

Directly supplying firewood to vulnerable community members ensures it goes to those who need it most. This option reduces Council's liability risks and makes environmental impacts easier to manage.

The limitations of this option would be the most costly of the three options, require staff resources, and could create expectations for ongoing Council support. Careful consideration would be needed around eligibility (who qualifies, how much wood is provided, and how often). Support would also only reach households with wood-burning heating, which may be seen as inequitable for residents without this option. Council may be criticised for not supporting other at-risk households with their gas and electricity bills which enable heating in these households, or where they choose not to run their heaters due to the cost of living.

The cost of provision and delivery is estimated at around \$250 per load per resident supported.

Option 3: Do Nothing/Leverage Existing Alternatives

This option requires only a small extra cost of staff time, and it avoids the risks to biodiversity and liability that come with formally allowing people to collect firewood on roadsides. It also makes it clearer when people are collecting firewood illegally.

The downside is that residents in need won't be directly supported via Council for low-cost firewood collection.

This option would see Council focus on promoting and facilitating access to existing State and regional support programs. Council can work directly with residents, through Council's climate change officer, to encourage them to transition to longer-term and more sustainable energy solutions.

In addition to this Council could advocate to the State and Federal Government for further hardship payments and subsidies to support at risk households greater access to funds for the purchase of firewood, and alternatively offset gas and energy costs associated with household heating and cooling.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As part of the development of this report, officers have had a few discussions with DECCA to determine if it would be possible to increase the number of locations where the community can collect firewood.

Officers have also had discussions with local service and sporting clubs to determine if they would be able to support Council in the development of a firewood program.

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:

Legislation

- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth)*
- *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (Vic)*
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic)*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)*
- *Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)*
- Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Insurance Guidance

Council Policies and Plans

- Tree Management Policy
- Tree Management Plan
- Road Management Plan 2021
- Roadside Vegetation Management Plan (Draft)
- Climate Change Action Plan 2022–2027

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

As raised in Urgent Business at the May 2025 Council meeting, Council resolved the following:

Given that points (1)-(5) above present a risk not only to the residents themselves, but to the Shire as well, request Officers to add to Council's strategic risk register an item with words to the effect that:

‘there is a risk that Strathbogie Shire residents who are struggling financially and rely on wood heating may face grave physical harm due to the inability to heat their homes during winter time due to lack of firewood, resulting in reputational and financial damages to the Shire’ as ‘grave physical harm’ denotes a critical risk, and as we are already experiencing subzero nighttime temperatures in Strathbogie Shire, mitigation strategies are needed with utmost priority’.

As requested by Council this has been included on Council's Strategic Risk Register. The updated Strategic Risk Register will be presented to Council's Audit and Risk Committee on 21 November 2025.

This report has also identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Injury or accident to residents collecting firewood from roadsides	Possible	Major	High	Do not reintroduce permits; Restrict collection of fallen timber to trained officers and contractors.
Environmental harm from removal of fallen timber and habitat loss	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Do not reintroduce permits; Restrict collection of fallen timber to trained officers and contractors.
Financial and legal liability to Council if "reasonable care" not demonstrated	Possible	Major	High	Do not reintroduce permits; If permits are considered, require risk assessments, permit conditions, and safety information.
Vulnerable residents unable to access affordable heating (leading to health and wellbeing impacts)	Likely	Major	High	Promote access to State and regional programs; consider targeted support with clear eligibility and resourcing.
Reputational damage to Council if community needs not met	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Communicate clearly about available supports; advocate for improved access to energy programs.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

If Council were to recommence a permit system, it must comply with its responsibilities under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (Vic) and the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Vic) to protect biodiversity and regulate the removal of native vegetation, including fallen timber. Council also has obligations under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic) to take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure that activities on Council land are safe. This option would also require a change to the Local Law to allow these permits and activities to be authorised by Council.

To maintain liability insurance coverage, Council would be required to demonstrate "reasonable care" as outlined in Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Insurance guidance. This would necessitate documented risk assessments for each permit, clearly defined permit conditions, and active enforcement. Failure to implement these measures could expose Council to legal or financial liability.

If Council was to provide free firewood to residents in need, legal responsibilities would arise in relation to the sourcing, handling and delivery of the firewood. Council would need to comply with biodiversity protection laws, apply appropriate risk management under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic) for staff or contractors, and meet its obligations under the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic) to act fairly, transparently and in the best interests of the community. Clear eligibility criteria and processes would be necessary to avoid inequity or claims of bias in distribution.

Both approaches carry legal risks and would require significant compliance effort, including

careful planning, clear procedures, and adequate resourcing, to ensure Council meets its statutory obligations and manages liability appropriately.

Council is not legislated to provide firewood, heating or cooling to households.

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 recommended option is option 2 provide free firewood for at risk community members

This option is likely to be the most resource intensive. Costs would include sourcing, processing, and delivering firewood, along with administrative costs to establish and monitor eligibility criteria. The cost per residence, for the delivery of a load of firewood, is estimated at approximately \$250, with the total cost dependent on the number of eligible households. It is recommended to budget \$15,000 for this service in the midyear budget review.

It is recommended that this trialed on a one-year basis and that at the end of the program that a survey would be undertaken by officers to determine the success of the program. This will be reported back to Council to determine if the program should continue for future years.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Economic

Economically, any option requiring direct supply or active permit management would require significant resources and may not be financially sustainable for Council in the long term.

Social

There is a need to balance community safety and biodiversity protection with the welfare of vulnerable residents who rely on firewood for heating.

Environmental

The removal of fallen timber has impacts on habitat, biodiversity and soil health, while improved access to alternative energy programs may reduce these pressures.

Climate Change

From a climate change perspective, supporting residents to transition towards efficient electric heating and renewable energy aligns with Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2022–2027 and broader State objectives to reduce emissions.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

This issue presents an opportunity for the Council to explore innovative approaches that go beyond traditional firewood supply. Continuous improvement could include working in

partnership with community organisations, neighbouring councils and State Government agencies to identify safer and more sustainable ways of supporting vulnerable households.

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

This report has provided background on the former Fallen Timber Permit system, outlined the risks and considerations associated with roadside firewood collection, and highlighted a range of existing supports and potential approaches available to Council.

The information is intended to assist Council in its deliberations on how best to respond to community needs while balancing environmental, legal, financial and social factors.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

11.4 Corporate

11.4.1 Draft Customer Service Charter

AUTHOR Customer Service Coordinator

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director People and Governance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Providing high quality customer service is fundamental to building trust, transparency, and satisfaction between Council and the community it serves. As the primary point of contact for many residents, businesses, and stakeholders, our customer service approach reflects the values, professionalism, and responsiveness of our organisation.

The current Customer Service Charter was developed in 2019 and is due for review. Work has been undertaken to develop a draft Customer Service Charter based on feedback received from recent community engagement (through the key strategic document development), benchmarking with other councils, community satisfaction survey results and internal department engagement.

A contemporary, customer-focus Charter will provide clearer expectations, foster accountability, and ensure that all Council staff are empowered to deliver services that are inclusive, accessible, and of a consistent high standard.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Note the draft Customer Service Charter**
- 2. Endorse the draft Customer Service Charter for public exhibition and consultation from 27 October 2025 to 24 November 2025**
- 3. Note that Officers will produce a report to Council on the community consultation feedback and completed Customer Service Charter for final adoption at a future council meeting.**

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to present the draft Customer Focus Service Charter to the Council for consideration, with a recommendation that it be released to the community for feedback during the period from 27 October 2025 to 24 November 2025.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

The draft Customer Focus Service Charter outlines Council's commitment to delivering high quality customer service, acknowledging this as a whole of organisation responsibility. It clearly sets out what customers can expect when contacting Council, including standards of service, response timeframes, and mutual obligations around respectful conduct and behaviour.

Response times are provided for various methods of communication including:

- email and online forms
- phone
- in-person contact
- written requests
- Freedom of Information requests.

The Charter also outlines Council's privacy commitments and provides suggestions on the type of information customers should have ready to assist in processing requests efficiently. In addition, it references the complaints handling process, detailing available methods for lodging complaints and how they are managed.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As part of the "Our Community, Our Voice" engagement process to inform the development of Council's key strategic documents, residents were asked:

"What does great customer service from Council look like to you?"

Consistent themes emerged from the feedback highlighting the importance of receiving responses within reasonable timeframes, clear and transparent communication about requests and ongoing Council work, follow-through on commitments and undertakings, timely follow-up, especially regarding service requests, respectful contact, and accessible services, staff, and communication channels.

In preparing the draft Customer-Focus Service Charter, the existing Strathbogie Customer Service Charter was reviewed alongside charters from both similar and dissimilar councils to support benchmarking and comparison. Information from Community Satisfaction Survey results was also considered, and consultation was undertaken with internal departments. This draft now provides the community with an opportunity to offer further feedback and assist in shaping the final version.

Inform - To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions.

Consult - To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions.

Involve - To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

Collaborate - To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.

Empower - To place final decision making in the hands of the public.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

The development of a Customer Focus Service Charter is intrinsically linked to the Council Plan 2025-2029 and specifically to the Annual Action Plan 2025–2026 year, under the direction "Deliver".

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-Focus experiences.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Lack of service standards	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Charter provides a service standard levels and expectations
Customer dissatisfaction	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Clearly defined procedures for handling complaints and unresolved issues

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no negative legal considerations associated with this report.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

No Council officers 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, after which the community have an opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Customer Focus Service Charter.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The review and development of the draft customer service charter has been undertaken within existing resources.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**Economic**

A customer service charter offers economic value by increasing customer retention, streamlining service delivery, and reducing complaints and disputes. It enhances brand reputation and trust, drives word-of-mouth growth, and improves staff productivity and morale.

Social

A customer service charter promotes fairness, accountability, and transparency, helping build trust between an organisation and the community. It ensures customers are treated with respect and consistency, supports inclusion by setting clear expectations, and encourages a culture of service and responsibility contributing to stronger social relationships and community confidence.

Environmental and Climate Change

A customer service charter can support climate and environmental goals by promoting responsible practices, such as reducing paper use, encouraging digital communication, and committing to sustainable service delivery helping minimise the organisation's environmental footprint.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

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

CONCLUSION

The current Customer Service Charter developed in 2019 is due for review. Work has been undertaken to develop a draft Customer Focus Service Charter based on feedback received from a recent community survey (through the key strategic document development phase), benchmarking with other councils, community satisfaction survey results and internal department engagement.

The purpose of this report is to endorse the draft Customer Service Focus Charter for public exhibition for the period 27 October 2025 to 24 November 2025.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Customer Service Charter

A photograph of a woman with glasses and a blue lanyard smiling at a man with glasses and a green sweater who is standing at a service counter. The woman is behind the counter, and the man is facing her. The counter has a speckled top and a wooden base. The background is a plain wall.

Strathbogie Shire Council
**Our Promise to the Community -
Customer Service Charter**

Strathbogie
SHIRE COUNCIL

OUR VISION

Our vision is to deliver a customer-focused service across all functions of our organisation functions to support and empower a thriving community all while working towards delivering a sustainable and inclusive future.

To ensure we achieve this vision, our commitment to you is:

A Customer Focused Culture

- We will foster a culture where our people are engaged, connected, and empowered—creating an environment that places our customers at the heart of everything we do.
- We will cultivate a passionate, accountable and customer-centric culture that reflects our values and recognises and rewards excellence in performance

Transforming the Customer Experience

- We will prioritise the continuous review and enhancement of our service design and delivery to drive meaningful transformation in the customer experience
- We will align and empower our people to champion initiatives that enhance the customer experience.

We are committed to understanding our customers’ needs through active listening and feedback, ensuring a positive experience in all interactions. All staff play a role in delivering excellent service, and we will continue improving the customer experience by adopting new, responsive support methods.

OUR PROMISE TO YOU

We are committed to ensuring all interactions with our community are fair, efficient, and courteous. We also uphold the highest standards of occupational health and safety and meet our duty of care obligations at all times.

When you contact Council, we will:

- Greet you politely and identify ourselves by first name
- Respond to your contact promptly, within 2 business days for in person or phone calls and within 10 business days for written or emailed requests.
- Treat you with respect and courtesy
- Listen carefully to understand and respond to your needs appropriately
- Communicate in a clear and concise manner
- Take responsibility to assist you with your enquiry to the best of our ability
- Provide choice in our service delivery methods to ensure accessibility across the community
- Keep you informed of the status of your request or enquiry and close the loop once it’s complete
- Give priority to any emergency situation that may pose a risk to community safety within our jurisdiction

WORKING TOGETHER - HELP US TO HELP YOU

When you contact Council, please:

- Provide all relevant information to help us better assist effectively
- For complex enquiries, provide full details in writing to ensure accurate response or investigation
- Please treat us with courtesy and respect. We are here to help you. Abusive behaviour towards our staff will not be tolerated under any circumstances
- Let us know when things change, for example your contact details

To ensure your request is properly recorded and directed to the most appropriate Officer, please contact Council using one of our monitored Corporate Contact Solutions.

Email: info@strathbogie.vic.gov.au

Business Hours Telephone: 1800 065 993 or 03 5795 0000

After Hours Telephone: 1800 065 993

Post: PO Box 177, Euroa VIC 3666

Our Website www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au and selecting the “Submit a Request” icon

Or in person at one of our Offices

109A Binney Street Euroa, Mon – Fri 9am - 5pm
 352 High Street Nagambie, Mon – Fri 9am – 4pm

Or Snap Send Solve via the mobile app.

ACCESSIBILITY

We are committed to ensuring all members of the community have full access to Council Services.

Please tell us if you have specific communication needs or barriers so that we can assist you by:

- Using an assistance service, such as an interpreter or TTY (for free)
- Talking with you if you have trouble reading or writing
- Communicating with another person acting on your behalf

OUR SERVICE TARGETS

Measuring our Performance

We measure our performance against clear service standards, reflecting customer expectations and our regulatory obligations. We are committed to transparent reporting to the community.

Service Type	Our Targeted Response Time
Enquiries resolved at first contact with a Customer Service Centre	80%
Average wait times for calls to the Customer Service Centres	60 seconds
Maximum time to acknowledge a phone message	2 working days
Maximum time to acknowledge written or emailed correspondence	10 working days
Maximum time to acknowledge receipt of a Complaint	2 working days
Maximum time to reply to an escalated Complaint	10 working days
Community Satisfaction Survey – Customer Service performance	70%

We are committed to providing high-quality services and seeking continuous improvement. This Charter includes clear standards and performance measures for transparency, is reviewed annually and updated to reflect our community’s evolving needs.

WE VALUE YOUR FEEDBACK

We encourage and welcome any feedback or suggestions you may have to help us improve our customer service. Your input is important - it helps us better understand your needs and continuously enhance the way we serve our community.

You can provide feedback at anytime through the following channels:

- Email: info@strathbogie.vic.gov.au
- Business Hours Telephone: 1800 065 993 or 03 5795 0000
- Post: PO Box 177, Euroa VIC 3666
- Or In person at one of our Offices

RESPECTING YOUR PRIVACY

Strathbogie Shire Council recognises that your privacy is very important to you and we are committed to safeguarding it. We will endeavour to take all reasonable steps to keep any information we hold about you secure.

Strathbogie Shire Council employees are also obliged to respect the confidentiality of any personal information held and not disclose such unless required to do so by law.

Your Personal Data will be managed in line with Councils Privacy and Data Protection Policy, in accordance with the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014.

You can access this policy on our website. You can also access your personal information by contacting Council’s Privacy Officer on 1800 065 993.

IF YOU ARE NOT SATISFIED

We welcome and encourage all feedback as a key means of measuring what we are doing well and where we can improve our service.

Our Complaints Policy outlines what you can expect from us, and how you can assist us in responding to complaints effectively. This policy is available on our website.

If you feel that the service you received does not meet the standards outlined in this Customer Service Charter, you may lodge a complaint, in accordance with our Complaints Policy.

Submitting a Complaint

Complaints can be submitted via:

Website: www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au/council/contact-us/

Email: info@strathbogie.vic.gov.au

Post: PO Box 177, Euroa VIC 3666

Phone: 1800 065 993 or 03 5795 0000

In Person:

- Main Office - 109A Binney Street Euroa from 9am – 5pm
- Nagambie Office - 352 High Street, Nagambie from 9am – 4pm

- All complaints will be treated as a priority
- We aim to process and acknowledge you within 10 business days. If we are unable to meet this time-frame, we will contact you to advise of a delay and when you should expect a response. Our aim is to resolve all complaints within 30 business days
- If you are not satisfied with the result, we will provide you with an internal review

Contacting us

Email: info@strathbogie.vic.gov.au

Business Hours Telephone:
1800 065 993 or 03 5796 0000

After Hours Telephone: 1800 065 993

Post: PO Box 177, Euroa VIC 3666

Our Website www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au and selecting the
“Submit a Request” icon

Or in person at one of our Offices

109A Binney Street Euroa, Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm
352 High Street Nagambie, Mon – Fri 9am – 4pm

Or Snap Send Solve via the mobile app.

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.

Strathbogie
SHIRE COUNCIL

11.4.2 Record of Informal Meeting of Councillors September 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 September 2025 to 30 September 2025 are included in the attachments below.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

Note the Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors from 1 September 2025 to 30 September 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. 20250902 Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors
2. 20250903 Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors
3. 20250909 Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors
4. 20250910 Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors
5. 20250916 Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors
6. 20250923 Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors

Staff Only

Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors

Meeting Details	Title	Councillor Briefing	
	Date	2 September 2025 at 9:30 am	
	Location	Euroa Community Conference Centre	
	Councillors	• Cr Ewart Kennedy • Cr Binks • Cr Carlson	• Cr Holloway • Cr Stevens • Cr Halsall • Monitor Allan
	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 • Awais Sadiq – Manager Planning and Investment • Gillian Williamson – Principal Planner • Jack Frances – Senior Planner • Kerry Lynch – Governance Officer	
	Guest Speakers	Michelle Cobb – Regional Development and Engagement Manager, NBN Co Felicity Macchion – CEO Goulburn Valley Regional Library Various Community Submitters – Planning Hearing Euroa Quarry, Gooram Lane, Euroa	
Present	Apologies	Cr Jeffery	

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	New Governance Arrangements – Goulburn Valley Regional Library	None
2	NBN Co Update	None
3	Planning – – Hearing of Submissions Meeting P2025-033 – Euroa Quarry, Old Gooram Lane, Gooram	Cr Halsall

The meeting concluded at 4:30 pm

Record completed by	Officer Name - Officer Title	Kerry Lynch – Governance Officer

Staff Only

Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors

Meeting Details	Title	Transport, Manufacturing and Construction Industry Meeting	
	Date	3 September 2025 at 4:00 pm	
	Location	Euroa Community Conference Centre	
Present	Councillors	• Cr Claire Ewart Kennedy • Cr Fiona Stevens	• Cr Clark Holloway • Cr Vicki Halsall
	Officers	• Rachelle Quattrocchi – Chief Executive Officer • Rachael Frampton – Director Community and Planning • Steve Cooper – Economic Development Coordinator	
	Guest Speakers	• Chrissy McNeil – Gervale Homes • Manager Gervale Homes • Shirley Saywell – Brady & Kibble • Dean Pontin – Golden Camel Mining	
	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

Staff Only

Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors

Meeting Details	Title	Councillor Briefing	
	Date	9 September 2025 at 9:30 am	
	Location	Euroa Community Conference Centre	
	Councillors	• Cr Jeffery • Cr Binks (Online) • Cr Carlson	• Cr Holloway • Cr Stevens • Cr Halsall • Monitor Allan
	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 • Awais Sadiq – Manager Planning and Investment • Kate McKernan – Manager Community and Culture • Leanne Carbonneau – Manager Community Safety • Trevor Pye – Customer Service Coordinator • Kerry Lynch – Governance Officer	
	Guest Speakers	Inland Rail – Caitlin Riley, Project Manager and Adam Wiseman, Stakeholder Engagement Lead	
	Apologies	Cr Ewart Kennedy	

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	Inland Rail Update and Master Inland Rail Development Agreement	None
2	Strategic Planning Work Program	Cr Halsall
3	Rainbow Ready Petition	None
4	Draft Customer Service Charter	None
5	Draft Local Law No 2 Consultation Report	None
6	Firewood Collection Update	None

The meeting concluded at 4:00 pm

Record completed by	Officer Name - Officer Title	Kerry Lynch – Governance Officer

Staff Only

Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors

Meeting Details	Title	Cuppa with a Councillor
	Date	10 September 2025 at 10:00 am
	Location	Black Caviar Café, Nagambie
	Councillors	• Cr Claire Ewart Kennedy • Cr Fiona Stevens
Present	Officers	• Tess McNabb, Governance Officer
	Guest Speakers	Various Community Members
	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	• Aquatic facilities and their closure periods • Purple bins • Nagambie Recreation Reserve • Nagambie Waterways • Accessibility with rounded/circular roofed public seating in the main street and lakeside. • Cleaning required at road reserve sizzle area • Concerns surrounding recycling at supermarket car park • Nagambie medical centre parking for elderly. • Traffic concerns surrounding drivers believing the main street is double lane (particularly out the front of the Black Caviar Café/brewery) which is emphasised during public holiday and weekend traffic • Community enquiries on splash park • Frost Street underpass • Councillor Training expenses and transparency around spend on Council training/accommodation expenses • Tourism • Concern regarding "sludge" across road coming into Nagambie • Disabled carparks and toilets in the main street	None

The meeting concluded at 12:00 pm

Record completed by	Officer Name - Officer Title	Tess McNabb – Governance Officer

Staff Only

Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors

Meeting Details	Title	Councillor Briefing	
	Date	16 September 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 • Monitor Allan
	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 • Awais Sadiq – Manager Planning and Investment • Barbara Taylor – Town Planner • Kerry Lynch – Governance Officer	
	Guest Speakers	Richard Baum – Ashton Forsyth Consultants	
	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	Councillor and Executive Team Planning and Development Workshop	None
2	Notification of Statutory Planning Applications	Cr Halsall
3	Review of Agenda Council Meeting 16 September 2025	Cr Halsall Cr Binks

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	Emergency Management
	Date	23 September 2025 at 9:30 am
	Location	Euroa Community Conference Centre
	Councillors	• Cr Jeffery • Cr Stevens • Cr Carlson
Present	Officers	• Rachelle Quattrocchi – Chief Executive Officer • Rachael Frampton – Director Community and Planning • Oliver McNulty – Director Sustainable Infrastructure • Mark Leitinger – Emergency Management Officer
	Guest Speakers	• Peter Dedman - CFA Commander D22 and Strathbogie Catchment Officer • John Newlands - Operations Officer Emergency Management • Jess Downie – Vic SES • Casey Hawkey – Vic SES
	Apologies	Cr Ewart-Kennedy, Cr Binks, Cr Holloway, Cr Halsall, Amanda Tingay Director People and Governance

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	Emergency Management Overview	None

The meeting concluded at 12:30 pm

Record completed by	Officer Name - Officer Title	Mark Leitinger – Emergency Management Officer

11.5 Communications, Engagement and Advocacy

11.5.1 2024-2025 Annual Report

AUTHOR Governance Officer

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR Director People and Governance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council's annual report is a key document that demonstrates the ongoing financial and governance performance of the council and must be prepared each year as per section 98(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act).

The Annual Report describes the organisation's performance over the 2024-25 financial year in accordance with the requirements of the Act and the *Local Government (Finance and Reporting) Regulations 2004*.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

That Council adopt the Strathbogie Shire Council Annual Report 2024-25 for the financial year ended 30 June 2025, including the 2024-25 Financial Report and Performance Statement, as certified by the Victorian Auditor General.

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is for Council to adopt the Annual Report 2024-25, including the 2024-25 Financial Report and Performance Statement, as certified by the Victorian Auditor General.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

In accordance with *Local Government Act 2020* section 98(1), Councils are required to prepare an Annual Report.

This document details Council's performance for the financial year as measured against the Council Plan 2021–25 and Annual Budget 2024–25.

The Annual Report 2024–25 provides Council with a valuable opportunity to communicate our achievements, highlights, and performance during the 2024–25 financial year to our residents and interested stakeholders.

The Annual Report 2024–25 contains the following sections (but not limited to):

- Report of Operations
- Audited Performance Statement
- Audited Financial Statement
- A copy of the auditor's report on the Performance Statement
- A copy of the auditor's report on the Financial Statement under Part 3 of the *Audit Act 1994*

The Audit and Risk Committee held a meeting on 5 September 2025 and reviewed and endorsed the draft performance and financial statements

At the Council Meeting held on 16 September 2025, Council provided in principle approval to the performance and financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2025.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plan

This report is consistent with the following objectives and actions in the 2021-25 Council Plan and 2021-25 Council Plan Action Plan.

Strategic Focus Area 6: Accountable. Transparent. Responsible.

Maximise public transparency and accountability around our performance and decision-making processes.

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*
- *Audit Act 1994*
- Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020
- Local Government Performance Reporting Framework
- Council Budget 2024-25
- Council Plan 2021-2025
- Council Plan Action Plan Actions 2024-25

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This report has identified the following risk(s):

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
The Annual Report is not endorsed by Council in accordance with the requirements of the <i>Local Government Act (2020)</i>	Rare	Major	Low	The Annual report is adopted by Council no later than 31 October 2025
The Annual Report does not represent nor align with the objectives of the Council Plan 2021-25	Rare	Low	Minor	The Report of Operations highlights the performance against the Council Plan 2021-2025

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Section 131 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires Council to prepare an Annual Report for the financial year just completed. A copy of this report must be presented at a Council Meeting open to the public by no later than 31 October 2025 for adoption.

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 Annual report is produced in house and printed externally. The cost of production of the Annual Report has been allowed for in the 2025-26 Budget.

COLLABORATION

The Annual Report 2024-25 was developed in collaboration with key stakeholders across the organisation including Finance, Community and Planning, Sustainable Infrastructure, Communications, Engagement and Advocacy, and Governance teams.

No external consultation is required.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

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

CONCLUSION

The Strathbogie Shire Council Annual Report 2024-25 for the year ended 30 June 2024, including the Financial Statements and Performance Statement, as certified by the Auditor-General, is presented to Council for adoption.

The Annual Report acknowledges the performance, key challenges and highlights for the financial year 2024-25.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2024-25 Annual Report

Strathbogie
SHIRE COUNCIL



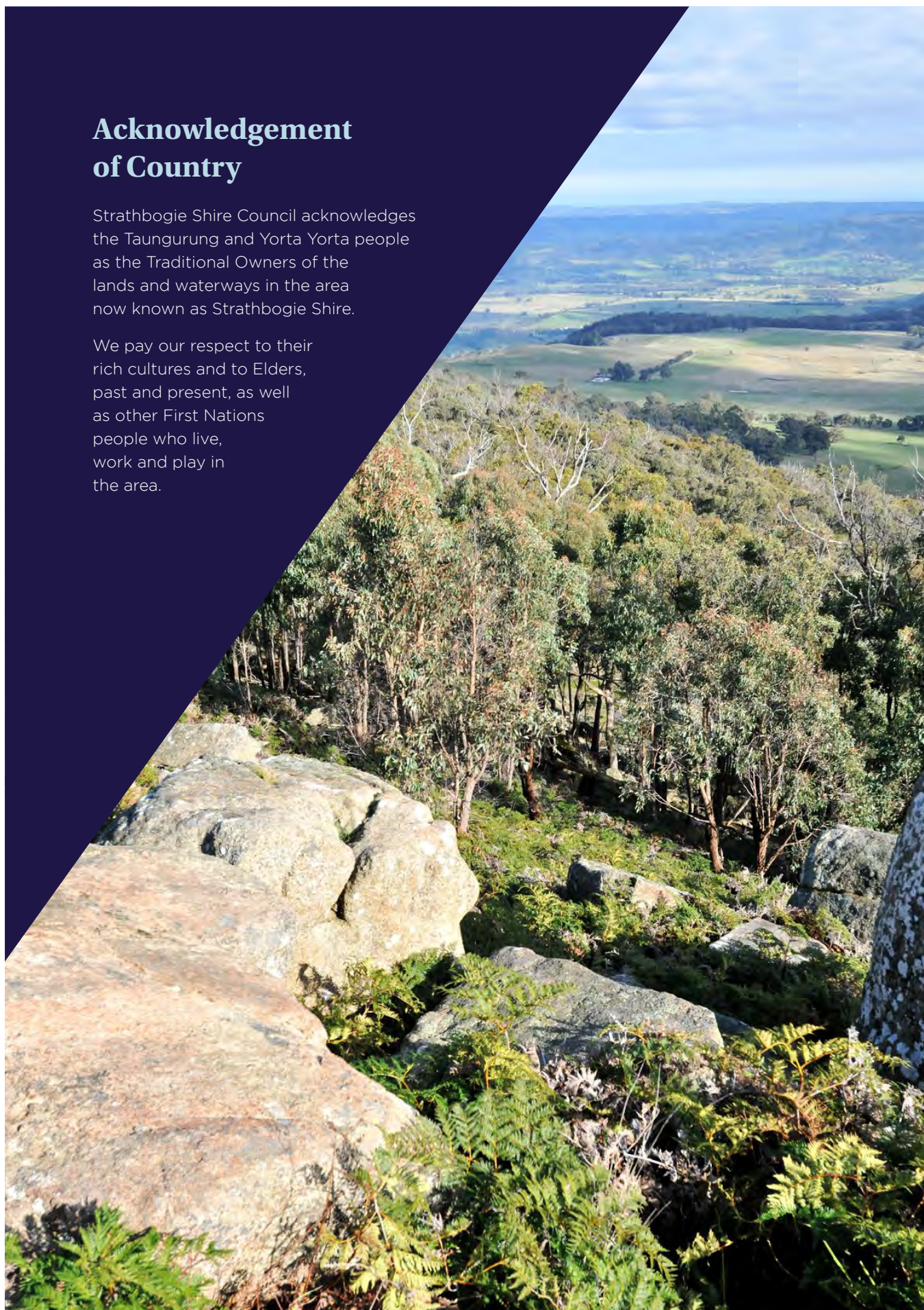
Annual Report 2024-25



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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Introduction

About this report

This is Strathbogie Shire Council's Annual Report for the financial year to 30 June 2025. It is an important tool for informing our many stakeholders, including residents and ratepayers, community groups, businesses, our local members of parliament, other government agencies and non-government organisations. This report provides the reader with insight into Council's efforts and achievements, governance and structures, and presents financial and operational performance information for the year.

It is prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, the Office of Local Government's Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines and other legislation.

Welcome to the 2024-25 Annual Report. This year's Strathbogie Shire Council Annual Report tells the story of our progress, challenges, and achievements between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025. It reflects the work Council has done alongside our community to support local priorities and, to shape a vibrant and resilient future.

Our Council Plan 2021-25 priorities

Our engagement program allowed us to develop a clear understanding of our community's values and priorities. These are reflected in the focus areas in our Council Plan:

- 1. Engage. Create. Unite.
- 2. Live. Access. Connect
- 3. Protect. Enhance. Adapt.
- 4. Inclusive. Productive. Balanced.
- 5. Strong. Healthy. Safe.
- 6. Accountable. Transparent. Responsible.

Our vision for our community

At the June 2025 Council meeting, Council formally endorsed the final suite of strategic plans that will guide the Shire's future – cementing a major milestone shaped by community input, strong leadership and a focus on financial sustainability.

Council endorsed the:

- Refreshed Community Vision 2035
- Council Plan 2025-2029
- Financial Plan 2025-2035
- Asset Plan 2025-2035
- Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029
- Budget 2025-2026 (and Fees and Charges)

Community Vision 2035

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.

Our Profile

Strathbogie Shire sits in north-east Victoria, stretching from the scenic Strathbogie Ranges across to the Nagambie Lakes district and the Goulburn Valley plains. Known for its natural beauty, agriculture, award-winning wineries, and vibrant communities, the Shire is a wonderful place to live, work, visit, and belong.

Home to around 11,500 people across more than 6,000 households, Strathbogie Shire spans 3,303 square kilometres and is connected by over 2,200 kilometres of roads, linking welcoming towns, productive farms, iconic wineries, and celebrated horse studs. The Shire is well-positioned, with easy access to regional centres including Shepparton, Benalla, and Seymour, and is less than a two-hour drive from Melbourne.

Our three main towns — Euroa, Nagambie, and Violet Town — are supported by a network of smaller communities, including Avenel, Longwood, Ruffy, Strathbogie, and Graytown. Each township has its own character, strengths, and community spirit. Strathbogie Shire combines the best of rural living with strong connections and easy access to services.

We are proud of our communities, our landscapes, and our shared ambitions. Whether it's preserving heritage, supporting local businesses, improving infrastructure, or creating opportunities for connection and growth, everything we do aims to make Strathbogie Shire an even better place to live, work, and visit.



Our Community

The following snapshot is comprised from the most recent data available from the Australian Census and Profile.id.

 11,739 Population	 49% Male	 50% Female	 54 Median age
 9.8% Born overseas	 4% Speak a language other than English at home	 7.1% Need assistance with core activities	 22.3% Volunteer
 73% Own or mortgage a house	 14% Renting a house	 18% Households are couples with children	 1.9% Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

Top industries of employment

 18.4% Agriculture Forestry and Fishing	 12.2% Health Care and Social Assistance	 9.7% Construction	 7.2% Education and Training

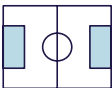
Visitor economy

 Visitors spent over \$96 Million in Strathbogie during the 2024/25 financial year which is an increase of 5.15 %, well above the rate of inflation.

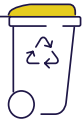
Our Services

We deliver a wide range of infrastructure, services and programs to the Strathbogie Shire community. In 2024-25 this included:

 9,682 Customer service requests through our customer relationship management system	 18,412 Calls answered by our Customer Service Team	 11,205 Visitors to our customer service centre's in Euroa and Nagambie	 12,650 People visited the Nagambie and Euroa Visitor Information Centres
 \$163,000 Community grants issued	 200 Trees of significance identified	 2,297 Animals registered	 16 New citizens
 3,761 Visitors to the Euroa Cinema with 55 movie screenings	 119 Planning applications received, and decisions made on 106	 2,400 Tree management jobs completed	 18,450 Visitors to our four aquatic facilities
 6 Months of Nagambie Splash Park fun	 52,248 Registered library visits	 2,213 Kilometres of roads (1,465 km unsealed, 748 km sealed)	 2,015 Metres of footpaths constructed
 132 Bridges and over 300 culverts	 405 Buildings and structures	 13 Community halls	 400 Square metres of garden beds

 26 Playgrounds maintained	 11 Sports grounds	 42 Hard courts and bowling greens	 4 Maternal Child Health Centres
 7 Transfer station	 1 Transfer station resale shop	 26 Parks and creekside reserves maintained	 6,000 Hours of grading unsealed roads
 200 Recycled plastic composite and reinforced concrete pipes (RCPs) installed	 106 Permits issues for Local Laws, Footpath trading, or shipping containers	 124 Local law event permits	 \$49,225 Provided through event funding supporting 15 community events

During the 2024-25 year, our waste collection trucks collected:

 1,162 Tonnes of residual waste (up from 1,123 tonnes in 23/24)	 884 Tonnes of recyclable waste (down from 948 tonnes in 23/24)	 1,659 Tonnes of organics waste (down from 1,767 tonnes in 23/24)	 4,900 Purple (glass) bins were delivered during June as part of our transition to a four-bin system

Challenges and Future Outlook

Strathbogie Shire is a vibrant rural community of just over 11,500 people, spread across more than 3,300 square kilometres. While our lifestyle, natural beauty, and close-knit communities are highly valued, we face a range of ongoing challenges that require strategic focus and thoughtful investment.

Challenges

Demographic change

The Shire's median age is 54 years, compared to the Victorian average of 38. Children (0-14 years) make up less than 15% of the population, while 27% are aged 65 and over. This creates unique pressures on service delivery, health and wellbeing programs, and housing, and highlights the need to attract and retain younger families. Geography and population spread add to these pressures; with multiple townships and a widely dispersed population, delivering consistent, high-quality services and infrastructure across our Shire requires significant resources and careful coordination.

Workforce attraction and retention

Attracting and retaining skilled staff continues to be a challenge, influenced by our rural location, a smaller local talent pool, and competition from larger regional centres. These factors can at times impact Council's capacity to consistently deliver high-quality services and progress strategic initiatives. We remain committed to exploring innovative approaches to workforce development and engagement.

Infrastructure demands

Council manages over 2,190 km of roads (the majority unsealed) and more than 300 bridges and culverts. Maintaining these assets across a large rural area comes with high costs, particularly when balanced against other community priorities and the growing expectations of our community roads, bridges, and community facilities require ongoing investment to remain safe, functional, and fit for purpose. Balancing the need to renew existing assets with the demand for new or upgraded infrastructure is a constant challenge.

Connectivity and resilience

Limited mobile coverage, patchy internet access, and prolonged power outages in some areas impact daily life, business operations, emergency responses, and visitor experiences.

Financial pressures

Modest population growth and a limited rate base mean that maintaining services and assets within State rate cap limits is challenging. Operating deficits and rising costs require ongoing efficiency measures and advocacy for more equitable funding models.

Balancing growth with character

Strategic projects such as the proposed Nagambie industrial precinct aim to boost local jobs and economic activity but must be managed in a way that preserves the Shire's rural charm and environmental values.

The Future

We will continue targeted advocacy for improved digital and mobile connectivity, recognising its importance for safety, business, and tourism. Alongside this, we will develop and implement strategies to attract younger families and working-age residents, while also supporting healthy and active ageing in our existing population.

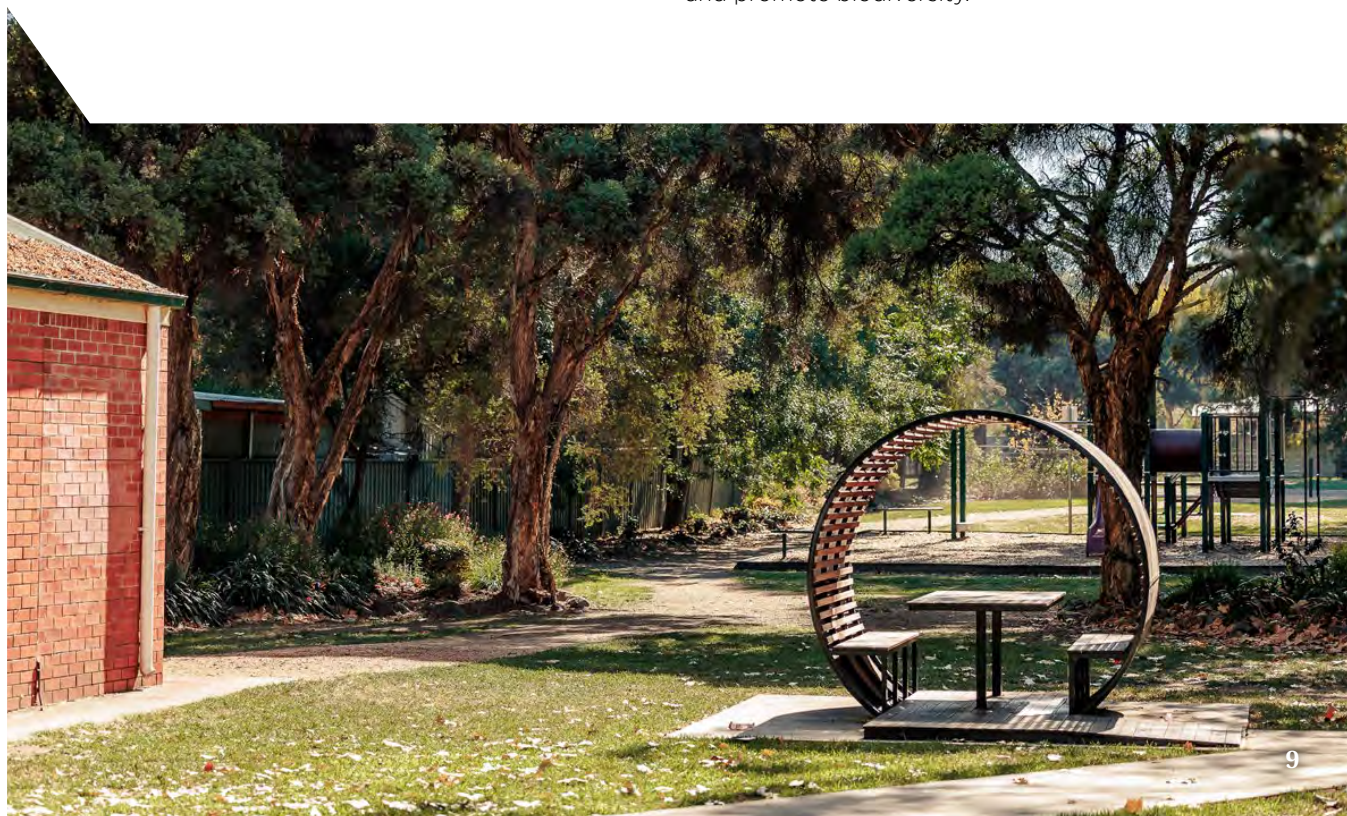
Maintaining focus on workforce development, workplace culture, and flexible arrangements will be key to retaining skilled staff. By fostering workplace flexibility, training opportunities, and welcoming environments, we aim to attract and retain quality staff committed to our community's long-term success.

We will deliver critical infrastructure upgrades and maintenance through careful prioritisation and by pursuing external grant funding. Our focus will remain on renewing existing assets efficiently, using evidence-based prioritisation to maximise impact and longevity.

Major economic initiatives, including the Nagambie industrial precinct, will be progressed to capitalise on the Shire's strategic transport links. This will be supported by long-term planning that integrates our Council Plan 2025-2029, Financial Plan 2025-2035, Asset Plan 2025-2035 and Revenue and Rating Plan 2025 — all developed with robust community consultation to guide sustainable growth and service delivery.

We will strengthen long-term financial sustainability through sound asset management, efficiency gains, and partnerships with other levels of government. Engagement with our community will remain central to ensuring services and projects reflect local needs while supporting a connected, resilient, and thriving Strathbogie Shire for future generations.

Sustainability and climate readiness will continue to be a priority. Initiatives such as the Climate Ready Gardens program, circular economy projects, and the purple bin rollout will help our Shire adapt to climate change, reduce waste to landfill, and promote biodiversity.



A Message from the Mayor



Cr Claire Ewart-Kennedy

Mayor
Strathbogie Shire
Council

It has been a great privilege to serve as Mayor of Strathbogie Shire Council — a role I stepped into on 19 November 2024 with a deep sense of purpose. Looking back on 2024-25, I am filled with pride in the way our community has faced challenges with resilience, and in the way Council has kept its focus firmly on what matters most to our residents.

This has been a year of recalibration and renewal. Like many regional communities, ours has felt the impact of rising living costs and the increasing price of materials and services. The pressure to do more with less is very real. I am proud that Council has responded with a steady hand and a strong heart — making careful decisions that balance financial responsibility with community need.

We handed down a budget that was fiscally responsible and firmly grounded in the reality our residents are facing. We didn't promise frills. We focused on essentials — on the things that matter most. That has meant investing in core infrastructure, ensuring vital services remain reliable and accessible, and making every dollar count. This approach delivered a solid financial result and the confidence to keep investing where it counts.





Introduction

More than \$9 million was spent on capital works, with the majority directed towards renewing roads, buildings, parks, and community spaces. While not every project could be completed as planned — largely due to ongoing flood recovery, external approvals, and staff changes — the works delivered are making a real and lasting difference in people's daily lives.

But this year has been about more than numbers. At its heart, it has been about strengthening connections — with our residents, with local businesses, and with each other as Councillors. Council has made a conscious effort to listen more, engage more, and act with transparency.

Advocacy has also been front and centre. Working closely with our Chief Executive Officer, I have been proud to champion Strathbogie's voice at both local and regional levels. Through my regular video updates, we have kept our community informed on the issues that matter most. Through our active involvement in the Hume Region Local Government Network (HRLGN), we have amplified Strathbogie's needs, along with the needs of our region; whether on infrastructure, services, or long-term regional investment. This collective advocacy ensures our Shire is not standing alone, but shaping its future as part of a strong regional voice.

Community spirit has shone brightly throughout the year. From the excitement of local festivals and events to the warmth of local shows, markets, and sporting events, these moments remind us of what makes Strathbogie special. Council has been proud to support and participate in these events, which not only bring us together but also strengthen our economy, tourism profile, and sense of pride of place.

There is a genuine sense of positivity moving forward — of community pride and potential. That is what excites me. We are not just preserving what makes Strathbogie special — we are growing with intention. We are shaping a Shire that is future-ready while staying true to its rural character.

To my fellow Councillors, thank you for your commitment and collaboration. To Council staff, thank you for the skill and dedication you bring to every task, often behind the scenes. And to our community — thank you for your trust, your feedback, and your resilience. You are at the heart of every decision we make.

As Mayor I am proud of the progress we have made together. Our community's resilience, ideas, and spirit continue to inspire. While challenges remain, I am confident that by working side by side we will keep strengthening Strathbogie Shire for generations to come.

A Message from the Chief Executive Officer



Rachelle Quattrocchi

Chief Executive Officer
Strathbogie Shire
Council

It is an honour to present my first Annual Report as Chief Executive Officer of Strathbogie Shire Council, having commenced in the role in May 2025. My arrival coincided with a period of transition for our organisation, with a new Council elected, a newly formed executive, and the conclusion of Tim Tamlin's time as Interim CEO. I want to acknowledge and thank Tim for his steady leadership during a critical period. His guidance provided the platform for Council to reset and refocus, and I am grateful for the groundwork he laid.

Since stepping into the role, I have been focused on providing a people first leadership style and strong advocacy, with a commitment to supporting the local needs of the communities of Strathbogie.

As Chief Executive Officer, I aim to put the people of Strathbogie Shire at the centre of everything we do, to provide exceptional care and service to achieve the best possible outcomes. This commitment is underpinned by good governance, meaningful community engagement, and a determination to build and sustain trusted relationships with local businesses, industry, and the broader community.

I am committed to advocating on behalf of the community and planning for the future of our region. Successful advocacy outcomes rely on considered planning and resourcing, managing and monitoring of strategic relationships, and collaborating with partners to achieve positive community change.

Equally important is the way we serve our community each day. Over the past year, we have strengthened customer service systems and processes to make it easier for residents and businesses to access information, lodge requests, and receive timely responses. These improvements are part of a broader shift towards a more responsive and accountable organisation — one that listens carefully, reduces red tape, and delivers services in ways that meet the expectations of our community.

With a focus on ensuring the financial sustainability of the organisation, we continue to work strategically to identify and pursue economic, social, and environmental opportunities that benefit the community as a whole.

Though challenges remain for regional and rural local councils, including maintaining services from a small ratepayer base and attracting a skilled workforce. As a small rural shire, we have limited ability to increase our own-source revenue and are therefore heavily reliant on grants from Federal and State Governments. We must ensure that we maintain our infrastructure assets at the expected levels, while at the same time continuing to deliver the services needed by our community.

This year, Council navigated a challenging financial landscape. Our end-of-year results were in line or just under budget expectations, and we continue to take proactive steps to strengthen our financial management. By transitioning to best-practice budgeting principles, we're laying the groundwork and planning for greater transparency, accountability and long-term sustainability.

We've made progress on major infrastructure projects, delivering \$9.7 million in capital works — 72 per cent of the adopted program. This investment was directed towards renewing and strengthening existing infrastructure, particularly roads, which accounted for the largest share of expenditure. While challenges such as flood recovery, external approvals, and resource supply presented obstacles, the projects completed have provided real and lasting benefits across our towns and rural areas.

What has impressed me most since joining Strathbogie is the culture within our team. Our staff genuinely care about the community they serve, and their pride and purpose are powerful drivers of better outcomes.

At an organisational level, we have already made progress in strengthening systems and processes, modernising customer service, and taking a more strategic approach to community engagement. These steps are laying the foundation for a Council that is easier to deal with, more transparent in its decision-making, and clearer in its long-term priorities.

To our Councillors, thank you for your vision and confidence. To our staff, thank you for welcoming me so warmly and for the dedication you bring every day. And to our community, thank you for your patience, partnership, and feedback.

There is much to look forward to. Together, we are building a more responsive, resilient, and future-focused organisation — one that reflects the best of Strathbogie.

The Year in Review



Financial Performance Summary

Long-term financial sustainability is a key objective of Council's Financial Plan. Strathbogie Shire Council has a clear goal to strengthen its financial position in the years ahead. This is no small achievement for a small rural shire with a modest rate base, rising service costs, and significant infrastructure responsibilities.

Operating Environment

Like many rural councils across Victoria, Strathbogie continues to operate in a highly challenging environment. Our community faces cost-of-living pressures, while Council must contend with rising construction and service delivery costs, limited revenue-raising ability due to rate capping, and the ongoing requirement to maintain a large and ageing infrastructure network. With more than 2,213km kilometres of roads, 132 bridges and over 300 culverts, and key community facilities, the expectations of service delivery must be balanced against the reality of a small ratepayer base.

In 2024-25, Council recorded total revenue of \$43.3 million, with rates and charges contributing \$23.3 million across 8,117 assessments. More than half of our income (57%) is generated locally, with the balance reliant on external grants. While this mix is more balanced than the prior year (when reliance on rates was 73%), it highlights our ongoing dependence on government funding to maintain service levels and deliver capital projects.

Council expended \$38.9 million in providing services to the community, from waste and recycling to maternal and child health, library services, recreation, and township planning.

Net Operating Result

For the year ended 30 June 2025, Council reported an operating surplus of \$4.39 million — a favourable variance of \$3.97 million compared to the adopted budget. This result was largely due to the timing of Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grant receipts (\$3.6 million) and additional income sources, offset by unbudgeted carry-forward expenditure and higher depreciation.

Cash and Other Financial Assets

Council's cash position at 30 June 2025 was \$10.6 million, up \$1.0 million from the previous year. This uplift is primarily due to the early receipt of Commonwealth grant funding, offset by the completion of prior-year projects carried forward into 2024-25.

Borrowings

Debt remains modest and carefully managed, with borrowings at \$3.17 million as at 30 June 2025. Importantly, Council took on no new debt during the year. With an asset base valued at \$489.1 million, Council's debt levels remain low by sector standards.

Balance Sheet

Council's Balance Sheet confirms it's overall financial position, with liquidity and debt well within sector benchmarks. The value of property, infrastructure, plant, and equipment was \$469.7 million at 30 June 2025 — an increase of \$81.5 million due to an internal revaluation of infrastructure assets.

Our end-of-year working capital ratio was 2.68:1, well above the 1.1:1 target, indicating Council's ability to meet its short-term commitments.

Capital Works

Capital Works Program

Council delivered \$9.7 million in capital works in 2024–25, representing 72% of the adopted program. While several projects were delayed due to flood recovery priorities, staffing changes, and external approval processes, the program still delivered significant value across the Shire.

For a rural council like Strathbogie, capital works investment is not just about delivering projects on a list — it is about maintaining the infrastructure that underpins daily life. With a small ratepayer base, every dollar must be carefully allocated to ensure we are preserving existing assets, improving safety, and supporting the long-term sustainability of our towns and rural communities.

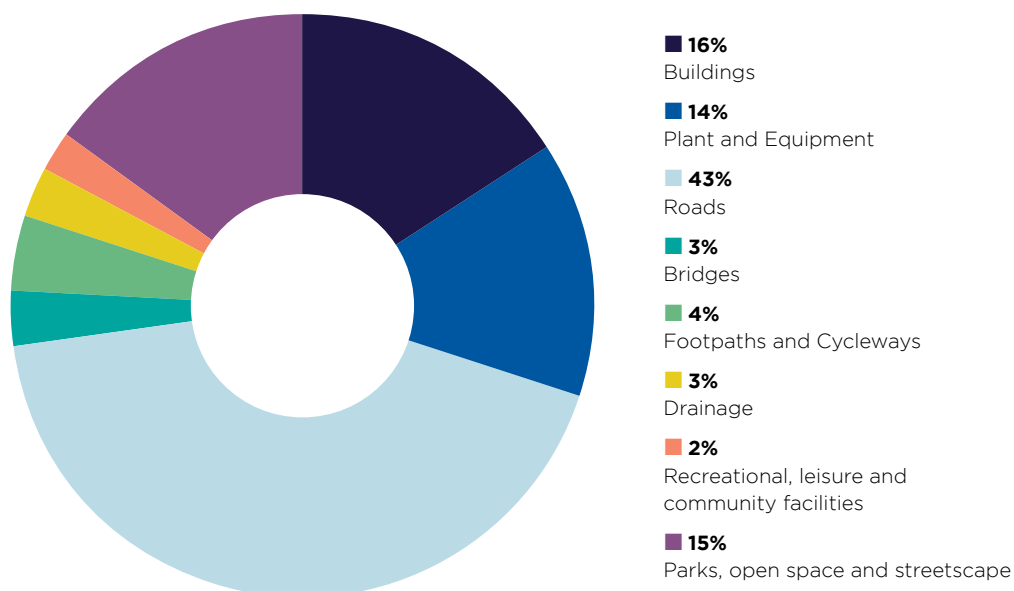
The 2024–25 program focused heavily on asset renewal, recognising that our first responsibility is to “look after what we have”. Roads were the single largest investment, with \$4.175 million spent (43% of the total program). Upgraded roads and bridges improve safety for residents, businesses, and visitors, while also strengthening the transport links that connect our farming and tourism industries to wider markets.

Other highlights included:

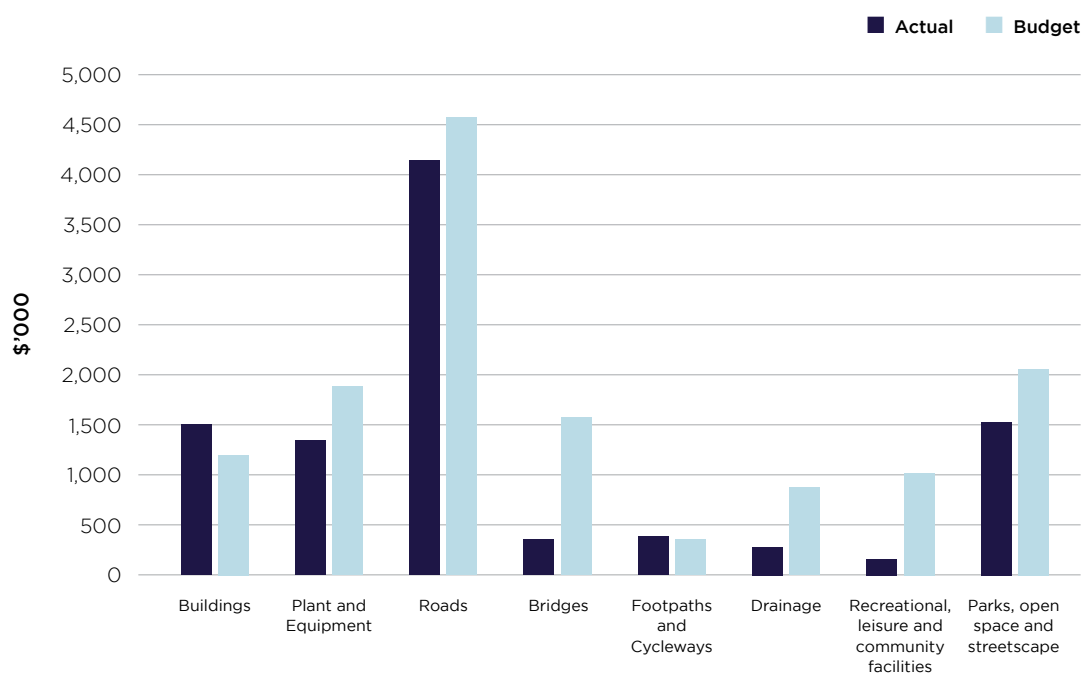
- **\$1.524 million for parks, open spaces, and streetscapes** — improving the amenity of our towns and supporting community use of shared spaces.
- **\$1.526 million for buildings** — ensuring community facilities remain safe, functional, and accessible.
- **\$1.346 million for plant and equipment** — providing staff with the tools to deliver services more efficiently.
- **\$338,900 for bridges** — supporting safe travel and access across our rural road network.
- **\$380,578 for footpaths and cycleways** — improving connectivity and encouraging healthy, active lifestyles.
- **\$278,808 for drainage** — addressing stormwater management and resilience to future weather events.
- **\$165,737 for recreational, leisure, and community facilities** — supporting the wellbeing of our residents through upgraded spaces.

While delivery was impacted by external factors beyond Council's control, the works completed in 2024–25 have already improved safety, connectivity, and amenity across the Shire. Importantly, many projects not delivered will carry forward into 2025–26, ensuring continuity of investment and value for the community.

Capital Program 2024-25



Capital Program 2024-25: Actual vs Budget



Capital Projects

Improving Road Safety with \$2 Million in Transport Accident Commission (TAC) Funding

Council secured \$2 million of funding through the TAC's Safer Local Roads and Streets Program in 2024-2025. The design and development of contract documents have been finalised, with project delivery scheduled for 2025-2026. This is an important step forward for community safety and infrastructure. This funding will support safety upgrades on three high-risk roads:

- Euroa-Strathbogie Road (Euroa to Strathbogie)
- Harrys Creek Road (Kithbrook to Violet Town)
- Longwood-Ruffy Road (Tarcombe to Ruffy)

These projects were identified through independent TAC expert analysis in consultation with Council and align with our commitment to reducing road trauma and improving safety for all road users.

Expanding Our Traffic Data Network

As part of Council's commitment to evidence-based transport planning and road safety, over 25 traffic counters were installed across the local road network during the 2024-2025 year. These units collect accurate data on vehicle volumes, speed, and travel. This data plays a vital role in:

- Identifying high-traffic and high-risk areas.
- Supporting the design of road safety upgrades.

- Informing grant applications and funding priorities.
- Supporting speed limit review applications for DTP.
- Monitoring the impact of traffic calming or infrastructure projects.

By building a robust and reliable traffic data network, Council is better equipped to make informed decisions that support safer, more efficient roads for all users.

Planning and Investment Highlights

Council received 139 new planning applications, with an estimated development value of over \$1.5 million. More than 60 new lots were approved, and several applications remain under assessment.

A standout project is the major subdivision at 401 High Street, Nagambie — one of the Shire's most significant residential growth initiatives. Nagambie is set for strong growth, with additional subdivisions ranging from 2 to 30 lots also underway in Euroa and Avenel.

Strategic planning also progressed, including:

- Completion of the Open Space Strategy
- Launch of the Asset Plan 2025-2035
- Ongoing development of the Stormwater Management Strategy
- Proposal of the Avenel Flood Study, supported by GBCMA and DEECA

Council continues to process quality applications efficiently, with most determined within the 60-day statutory timeframe. A new system has also been introduced to streamline planning referrals and improve coordination between Planning and Asset Planning teams — delivering faster, more consistent outcomes for applicants and the community.

Delivering Key Infrastructure Projects

Council delivered a range of important infrastructure upgrades in 2024–25, improving safety, accessibility, and community wellbeing across the Shire.



Annual Reseal Program

50km of priority roads were resurfaced with support from the Roads to Recovery Program, improving safety, extending asset life, and reducing maintenance costs. Durable line marking was also applied.



Longwood Female-Friendly Changerooms

A major milestone was reached with the completion of new female-friendly changerooms and a septic upgrade at Longwood Recreation Reserve. This project supports gender equity and growing participation in local sport, funded by Sport and Recreation Victoria, Council, and the Longwood Football Netball Club.



Nagambie Foreshore Walk Upgrade

Restoration of the flood-damaged boardwalk was undertaken, using sustainable materials to improve safety, accessibility, and the visitor experience — supported by the State Government's Flood Support Fund.



Footpath Construction

Over 2,000 metres of new footpaths were built to improve pedestrian safety and connectivity in key townships.



Streetscape Enhancements

The Strathbogie Township streetscape upgrade and new town entry signage in Avenel were completed, enhancing township identity and appeal.



Major Road Patching

Over 160 patch locations were repaired across five key roads — Harrys Creek, Creighton's Creek, Merton-Strathbogie, Euroa-Strathbogie, and Spring Creek — improving safety and reducing future maintenance needs.



Weir Road and Reedy Lake Road Upgrade

Despite delays from the 2022 floods and other challenges, this upgrade has delivered a safer, more resilient connection for Nagambie and Kirwans Bridge communities.



Harrys Creek Road Landslip

A design and cost estimate has been submitted to the Department of Transport under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. Traffic management remains in place while we await approval to proceed to tender.

Advocacy

Strathbogie Matters

Strathbogie Shire Council launched its advocacy video series to give residents greater visibility into the work being done behind the scenes to secure positive outcomes for the region. As a rural community, advocacy plays a vital role in ensuring local voices are heard—whether it's calling for improved infrastructure, better digital connectivity, or investment in local jobs and services. This series is designed to shine a light on the key issues Council is raising with State and Federal Governments and to share the progress being made.

Through regular video updates, the series highlights both immediate concerns and broader strategic priorities that underpin Council's long-term advocacy efforts. These include complex, long-term challenges like power reliability, drought resilience, and digital infrastructure, alongside more localised initiatives like the Avenel pedestrian rail crossing, Greening Euroa, and the Nagambie Freight and Industry Connector.

Drought Support

Council strongly advocated for greater support for communities impacted by dry conditions. Despite not being officially classified as experiencing drought, many parts of the Shire experienced significant agricultural and economic stress. Council called on state and federal governments to provide equitable drought relief based on demonstrated hardship, rather than geographic classification alone, and worked alongside peak bodies and neighbouring councils to advocate for practical support for local farmers.

Emergency Services and Volunteer Fund Reform

Throughout the year, Council continued to advocate for greater transparency and fairness in the way the Emergency Services and Volunteer Fund (ESVF) is applied to rural and regional communities. Many residents raised concerns about inconsistencies in how the levy is calculated, particularly in areas with limited or no access to emergency service coverage. Council engaged directly with the State Revenue Office and relevant government departments to highlight the impact on landholders, especially in farming areas. In addition to formal submissions and correspondence, Council collaborated with other rural municipalities to build a shared advocacy position.

This collective effort aimed to influence future reforms to ensure the levy reflects service availability and community risk in a more equitable way.

Improved Safety

Improving safety and accessibility around Avenel train station remained a priority advocacy focus for Council in 2024–25. In response to ongoing concerns from residents, Council worked closely with VicTrack, the Department of Transport and Planning, and V/Line to raise awareness of critical issues at the Saleyard Road and Bank Street crossings. These concerns included pedestrian safety, inadequate parking, and poor visibility near the rail line. Council undertook local engagement to gather evidence and community feedback and used this to strengthen its case for investment.

While the project is managed at a state level, Council's advocacy ensured the local voice was heard in planning discussions and contributed to the development of interim and long-term solutions that improve safety for both pedestrians and vehicles in the area.

Bridge Renewal

In 2024–25, Strathbogie Shire Council continued its strong advocacy for critical infrastructure upgrades across the region. A major focus was the future of Kirwans Bridge. Council worked closely with community members and stakeholders to develop and cost several replacement options, estimated between \$6–7 million. This work was supported by the formation of a community advocacy panel and engagement sessions to ensure local voices were heard.

Council continued its strong advocacy to address the future of Chinamans Bridge, a deteriorating, heritage-listed timber structure in Nagambie. In June 2024, Council resolved to demolish the bridge due to serious safety concerns and prohibitive restoration costs. Following unanimous community support through public consultation, Heritage Victoria granted conditional approval for demolition in February 2025.

Council has since appointed structural and heritage experts to develop detailed plans, including a Heritage Interpretation Strategy to honour the bridge's legacy. Demolition works are anticipated to begin in early 2026, with a focus on balancing community safety, heritage preservation, and fiscal responsibility.

Digital Connectivity

Improving telecommunications remains a key focus for Council. Council has continued to advocate to all levels of government and providers like NBN Co to fix digital blackspots across the Shire.

This advocacy has helped deliver new mobile towers in Boho, Euroa, Kirwans Bridge, Mangalore, Nagambie, and Violet Town—bringing real benefits to residents, businesses, and emergency services.

We've also contributed to AusNet's Strathbogie Benalla Community Liaison Group, supporting proposed energy upgrades in the 2026–2031 Australian Energy Regulator Budget.

Recent wins include the completed upgrade at Mount Wombat and ongoing negotiations to improve the Telstra tower in Nagambie.

Energy Reliability and Sustainability

Council continued to advocate for better power reliability and investment in renewable energy. We focused on the need for community batteries and alternative energy solutions in Violet Town, Avenel, Euroa, and Strathbogie to boost resilience, cut emissions, and improve supply in high-risk areas.

We also participated in AusNet's Strathbogie Benalla Community Liaison Group, supporting major upgrades proposed in their bid to the Australian Energy Regulator for 2026–2031.

Highlights 2024-25



Euroa Public Art Project – Stage Two

Stage Two of Euroa's public art journey received \$50,000 through the 2024-25 Pitch My Project program, building on the success of the iconic magpie sculpture. Following strong community support for local fauna themes, Council commissioned award-winning Kilmore artist Chris Anderson to create two new sculptures — a bold platypus for Seven Creeks Park and a 'baby' platypus for Binney Street. These works will strengthen links between local businesses, public spaces, and the community garden art trail, with installation expected in late 2025.

Outdoor Cinema

Our free outdoor cinema events across Strathbogie, Nagambie, and Euroa provided a much-loved opportunity for families and neighbours to reconnect. Alongside popular films, local food vendors and activities for all ages created welcoming spaces that celebrated community togetherness and the joy of shared experiences.



International Women's Day 2025

More than 120 community members gathered at Fowles Wine in Avenel for Council's International Women's Day event, themed March Forward. The afternoon tea celebrated women's achievements, with Mayor Cr Claire Ewart-Kennedy sharing her experiences of breaking barriers in the media industry.

Guests also heard from photographer and film director Alexandrena Parker, Ms Annabelle Cleeland MP, State Member for Euroa, and winemaker Tegan Clydesdale, each offering stories of resilience, leadership, and advocacy. The event highlighted Council's ongoing commitment to celebrating days of significance that inspire lasting change.

National Volunteer Week 2025

Council's celebration of National Volunteer Week was held at the newly reopened Discovery Park in Nagambie.

More than 100 volunteers attended the event, themed Connecting Communities. Keynote speaker Sarah Barnbrook, founder of Away From Keyboard Inc. and Volunteer of the Year at the Australian Women in Security Awards, delivered an inspiring address on compassion and digital wellbeing. Local Legend awards were presented to Maureen "Mozzi" Fowler and David Carson for their decades of dedication to community service.

Guests also enjoyed lunch, a tour of the redeveloped park, and a scenic cruise on the Goulburn River and Nagambie Lakes.



ARTBOX Highlights

In 2024-25, ARTBOX delivered 12 exhibitions across five locations, showcasing the work of approximately 36 artists through eight solo exhibitions, one duo, one trio, and two large group shows.

Arts in Avenel: A Month of Creative Celebration (September 2024) transformed Jubilee Park into a hub of creativity. The program featured our first-ever group community exhibition, with over 30 works by 15 local artists — including the Avenel Sketchers and a local craft group — ranging from intricate quilts to expressive paintings and sketches.

The festive opening event set the tone for a month of workshops, displays, and conversations that strengthened community pride and connection.

In February 2025, Architecture, Then and When at ARTBOX Nagambie presented an evocative collection by acclaimed Australian artist Mitchell McAuley.

Framed works on paper and sculptural pieces reflected

architectural influences from Bologna, Italy, and Longwood, Victoria. Mitchell's international exhibition experience brought a global perspective to our local program, encouraging visitors to see familiar landscapes through new creative lenses.

The Euroa Three (April 2025) celebrated the figurative works of local artists Deb Cavanagh (acrylic), Anna Mackrell (oil), and Bruce Hargrave (watercolour). Each artist brought a distinct style and medium, showcasing the diversity of talent within the region. A unique highlight was the daily presence of at least one artist, giving visitors the chance to engage directly with the creators, hear their stories, and gain a deeper appreciation of the works on display.

Together, these exhibitions reinforced ARTBOX's role in championing local talent, fostering creative exchange, and bringing diverse, high-quality art experiences to Strathbogie Shire.

New Playgrounds for Our Communities

In 2024-25, Council delivered three new playgrounds across the Shire, creating safe and welcoming spaces for children and families.

At Strathbogie and Moglonemby, ageing infrastructure was replaced as part of Council's capital works program. Local voices shaped the designs, with consultation including sessions with the Strathbogie community and visits to the Primary School to hear directly from children. In Moglonemby, Council worked closely with the Hall Committee to ensure the play space supported future improvements to community facilities.

Longwood saw the Shire's first nature play space, delivered in partnership with the Longwood Action Group through Pitch My Project funding. Identified as a community priority through the Longwood Master Plan, this project has been two years in the making. Stage 1 was completed in 2024-25, with Stage 2 scheduled for 2026-27. Local children also contributed their ideas to ensure the space reflects the needs of young people.

These projects highlight the importance of genuine community engagement and partnership. By working together, Council and the community have created play spaces that encourage activity, connection, and pride across the Shire.



Victorian Seniors Festival 2024

As part of the Victorian Seniors Festival, over 100 guests attended a special concert at the Violet Town Community Complex. The Goulburn Valley Concert Orchestra performed under the festival's theme, Explore. Engage. Evolve., encouraging seniors to embrace new opportunities and connections. The orchestra, made up of students, teachers, professionals, and community members, showcased local talent and created an inclusive cultural experience. The event reflected Council's commitment to valuing and involving seniors in community life.

Increase in Animal Registration

Animal registrations rose by 624 in 2024-25, bringing the total to 2,297. This increase is largely due to Council's proactive database use to identify unregistered pets and follow up directly with owners. Council continues to keep records up to date through reminders, door knocks, and cross-checks with microchip and government databases.

Council investigated 18 reports of dog attacks or rushes, with no prosecutions. Education remains a priority— especially around securing properties and keeping dogs on leads in public areas.

Securing Support for Youth

This funding strengthens local youth initiatives and provides opportunities for young people to develop skills, connect with their communities, and take on leadership roles.

The Amplify program delivers \$120,000 of funding over three years to support young people in leading the planning and delivery of safe, youth-friendly events for those aged 12 to 25. The Engage program contributes \$165,000 of funding over the same period, with a focus on leadership, skill-building, and empowerment. These programs are anticipated to ensure continued access to resources that help young people thrive and make positive contributions.



Youth Events and Initiatives

Several youth-led and youth-focused events were delivered across the Shire, offering opportunities for creativity, connection, and skill development.

Rock Fish

A combined music and fishing event held at the Euroa Arboretum, attended by around 150 young people and families. The event provided both entertainment and opportunities for community connection.

Aqua Safe

A recreation and safety event at Buckley Park, Nagambie, designed with input from young people who had identified water safety as a priority. The event built confidence and awareness in aquatic environments while providing fun, engaging activities.

Here and Now Festival

A youth-led festival featuring art, performances, and interactive experiences. It showcased creativity and inclusion, giving young people a platform to express their ideas and passions.

Battle of the Bands

A returning signature event providing a performance and competition platform for emerging musicians. The program offered young people an opportunity to showcase their talents, gain experience, and connect with peers.

Engagement Hub

The Community Recovery (Engagement Hub) Trailer has been constructed as a mobile unit designed to support communities during and after emergencies. Combining mobility, accessibility, and the ability to deliver timely information, the trailer can be deployed across the Strathbogie Shire to provide on-the-ground support. It has successfully facilitated pop-up information sessions focused on The First 72 Hours, helping build community resilience by encouraging individuals to plan ahead and understand how to access critical information during emergency situations.



Citizenship

In 2024-25, four citizenship ceremonies were held, marking a significant milestone in the lives of sixteen individuals who chose to make our community their home. We were proud to welcome new citizens from the United Kingdom, India, Pakistan, the Philippines, Taiwan, South Africa, Brazil, and China. These ceremonies celebrated not only their commitment to Australia but also the rich cultural diversity that continues to strengthen and enrich our region.

Costa's Climate Ready Gardens

This sold-out community event was held at Tabilk's Peppercorn Paddock, featuring Costa Georgiadis from Gardening Australia. The day inspired practical climate resilience through sustainable gardening, cultural connection, and community collaboration. Highlights included a smoking ceremony led by Taungurung Elders, insights into traditional land care, and native seedling giveaways to promote biodiversity. Supported by Emergency Recovery Victoria, the event empowered locals to take meaningful action against climate change.



Local Emergency Action Plans (LEAPs)

Council partnered with communities in Avenel, Euroa, Violet Town, Strathbogie Tableland, and Nagambie to co-design Local Emergency Action Plans.

These community-led plans help residents prepare for extreme weather events and disruptions to essential services like power, water, and transport—building local resilience and readiness.



Winter Wonderland

Winter Wonderland 2024 was a resounding success, attracting over 2,000 attendees across Nagambie, Avenel, and Euroa. The event brought joy and connection to flood-affected communities through ice skating, face painting, delicious food, live music, and a special appearance by Anna and Elsa from Frozen. More than just festive fun, the event delivered a welcome economic boost and showcased the region's appeal as a destination. Made possible through the Community Recovery Hub, a joint initiative of the Australian and Victorian Governments, Winter Wonderland highlighted the power of community spirit and connection.

Funding secured for flood planning controls

Funding of \$150,000 was secured to advance proposed amendments to flood planning controls. This work is anticipated to improve the accuracy of flood overlays and zones, supporting safer land use decisions and contributing to community resilience over time.

Planning Service Improvements

The Greenlight online system for planning permit lodgement and assessment was introduced to streamline processes both internally and externally.

It enhanced transparency, improved application tracking, and supported more efficient service delivery through collaboration with neighbouring municipalities.

Explore Euroa Day

Following the severe flooding in October 2022 that caused widespread damage to community facilities and disrupted local groups, the community came together to celebrate resilience and connection. Over 20 local organisations hosted interactive pop-up activities, engaging residents of all ages. The event featured roving performers, children's superhero training and scavenger hunts, and the joyful reopening of the Euroa Miniature Railway, reflecting the strength and spirit of the community.



16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence

In partnership with Respect Victoria and with support from Safe and Equal, Strathbogie Shire Council proudly delivered the 2024 campaign to raise awareness and action against gender-based violence.

A highlight was the Walk Against Family Violence at Nagambie Lake, bringing together the community in a visible stand for safety, respect, and equality.

Planning for Growth and Resilience

During 2024-25, the Planning Department progressed important strategic work, including the preparation of the draft Urban Growth Strategy and the draft Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy. These documents are expected to inform Council's longer-term planning program, guiding priorities, aligning projects with Council objectives, and positioning the organisation to respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Waste and Recycling

Circular Gardens – Local Compost Closing the Loop

This project showcased the power of local partnerships and circular thinking. A total of 395 cubic metres of recycled compost – created from our community's food and garden organics – was returned to gardens across the Shire, boosting biodiversity, improving soil health, and closing the loop on organic waste.

Three community gardens benefited:

- Euroa Arboretum, Euroa
- Tablelands Community Garden, Ruffy
- Yairo Community Garden, Euroa

Council's Works team also adopted recycled compost for soil improvement and landscaping at:

- Sevens Park, Euroa
- Binney Street Gardens, Euroa
- Park Street Gardens, Nagambie

Recycled organics also supported rehabilitation of the closed Violet Town landfill, meeting all EPA requirements.

Climate Ready Garden Program

The Climate Ready Garden Program provided practical education to support grassroots climate action. By helping residents design gardens that are beautiful, resilient, and biodiversity-friendly, it empowered people to take climate action in their own backyards while supporting native wildlife.

Program highlights included:

- Eight workshops delivered across the Shire (February–May 2025)
- Over 130 attendances, with 88 unique participants – many returning for multiple sessions
- Workshops rated 4.6/5 stars by participants
- Nearly all sessions booked out – showing strong community demand
- Participants' confidence in sustainable gardening increased from 5.1 to 8.2/10
- 38 personalised garden designs completed, featuring native plants, habitat elements (logs, nesting boxes), recycled mulch, water sources, and minimal-lawn designs for water efficiency.





Purple Bin Rollout – Improving Glass Recycling

The Purple Bin campaign marked our local rollout of a statewide glass recycling initiative, aimed at reducing contamination and ensuring our glass can be recycled. This marks the final step in meeting the State Government's requirement for Council to provide four bins to all properties within designated service zones.

Key outcomes:

- Approximately 4,900 purple bins delivered in June 2025, completing our transition to a four-bin system
- Community confidence in glass recycling increased by 10%, and knowledge improved by 11% since campaign launch in November 2024
- 45 newspaper ads published, including a 4-page wrap in both the Euroa Gazette and Nagambie Community Voice
- 4,096 letters sent to impacted ratepayers
- YouTube ads generated 7,155 local video views
- 11 in-person engagement events held, including library pop-ups, markets, and community events.

Nagambie Tip Shop Opening

The opening of the Nagambie Tip Shop marked a significant step in Council's commitment to sustainability and community engagement. Attended by over 40 community members, Mayor Claire Ewart-Kennedy, and Cr Laura Binks, the event highlighted strong local support. The Nagambie Men's Shed contributed to the welcoming atmosphere with a community BBQ.

The Tip Shop encourages waste reduction and reuse by offering second-hand and eco-friendly items. The launch featured creative sustainability initiatives, including recycled-themed Christmas portraits, and provided free drop-off for recyclable materials such as e-waste and scrap metal. With support from Sustainability Victoria, the event also strengthened partnerships for future environmental initiatives.

This initiative reflects Council's dedication to environmental responsibility and lays the foundation for ongoing waste education and resource recovery in the region.

Engaging with our Community

Pitch My Project

Six community projects valued at \$300,000 were endorsed for funding through Council's Pitch My Project initiative for 2024-2025, the fourth year of the program.

Community members were invited to pitch project ideas that aligned with one of the six Strategic Focus Areas of the 2021-25 Council Plan to be included in the 2024-25 Council Budget.

A total of 15 eligible projects were voted on by the community resulting in six successful project pitches:

Strategic Focus Area	Project	Value
Engage. Create. Unite.	Euroa Strathbogie Shire Art Trail	\$50,000
Live. Access. Connect.	Strathbogie Walking Path Design	\$50,000
Inclusive. Productive. Balanced.	Euroa Branding Project Stage 2	\$50,000
Strong. Healthy. Safe.	Longwood Nature Play Space Stage 2	\$50,000
Protect. Enhance. Adapt.	Avenel Memorial Hall generator	\$50,000
Accountable Transparent. Responsible.	Ruffy Tablelands Centre Verandah	\$50,000

Community Consultation – Share Strathbogie

During 2024-25 Council continued to engage through targeted outreach, broad consultation and the Share Strathbogie Community Panel based on the four engagement principles set out in our Community Engagement Policy:

1. Genuine and transparent
2. Inclusive and accessible
3. Responsive and flexible
4. Listen and learn

Council opened 14 project pages for public comment and consultation during 2024-25 with a range of opportunities for the community to provide input including online, face-to-face and in writing. The online hub had 10,972 views, 980 contributions from 470 people and more than 5,590 unique visitors to the site. The most contributions were received for Strathbogie Shire Council's Sport Strategy Survey where we received 131 contributions.

The top visited project was the Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy and Urban Growth Strategy with 1,389 visits across 763 unique visitors.

Other consultations included:

- Leaping into Resilience
- Sports Strategy
- Local Legends Initiative
- Play and Open Space Strategy
- Lease and Licensing Policy
- Kerbside Policy
- Rural Residential and Land Use Strategy and Urban Growth Strategy
- Euroa Public Art: Stage Two
- Our Community Our Future
- Sevens Creek Master Plan
- Governance Rules



**Community Satisfaction
Survey Results**

The Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey (CSS) is coordinated by the State Government but is primarily funded by participant Councils and conducted by independent researcher JWS Research.

The purpose of the survey is to measure how Victorian residents rate the performance of their Council. The results are useful to Councils as they highlight areas in need of improvement and enable them to track performance over time.

2025 Analysis

In 2025, community perceptions of Strathbogie Shire Council’s overall performance improved significantly, with our index score rising by 12 points to 48. While this result remains below the Small Rural Council average (54) and State-wide average (53), it represents a strong recovery following several years of decline.

The appearance of public areas continues to be Council’s highest-rated service (index score of 72), performing above the State average. Waste management also rated higher than the State average, while customer service remains steady at 68, in line with similar councils. Areas identified for improvement include unsealed and sealed local roads, and planning and building permits. The results highlight the importance of clear communication and transparency in Council decision-making, presenting a key opportunity to further strengthen community trust and satisfaction.

About Council

Strathbogie Shire Council

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Our Councillors

Our community elects Councillors to represent them in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* every four years. The Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) conducted the Local Government elections in October 2024.

Seven Councillors collectively make decisions and guide the development of strategies and policies to shape Strathbogie’s future. Our Councillors elect a new Mayor and Deputy Mayor each year. The current Mayor and Deputy Mayor were elected at a Statutory Meeting in November 2024.



Cr Claire Ewart-Kennedy
Mayor



Cr Scott Jeffery
Deputy Mayor



Cr Laura Binks



Cr Gregory Carlson



Cr Vicki Halsall



Cr Clark Holloway



Cr Fiona Stevens

Peter Stephenson
Administrator
(Dec 2023 to Oct 2024)

Our People

Chief Executive Officer

Rachelle Quattrocchi
(commenced 5 May 2025)

Former Interim Chief Executive Officer

Tim Tamlin
(concluded 2 May 2025)

Director People and Governance

Amanda Tingay

Director Community and Planning

Rachael Frampton

Director Sustainable Infrastructure

Oliver McNulty
(commenced 4 March 2025)

Acting Executive Manager Communications, Engagement and Advocacy

Michelle Harris
(commenced 7 November 2024)

Former Director Sustainable Infrastructure

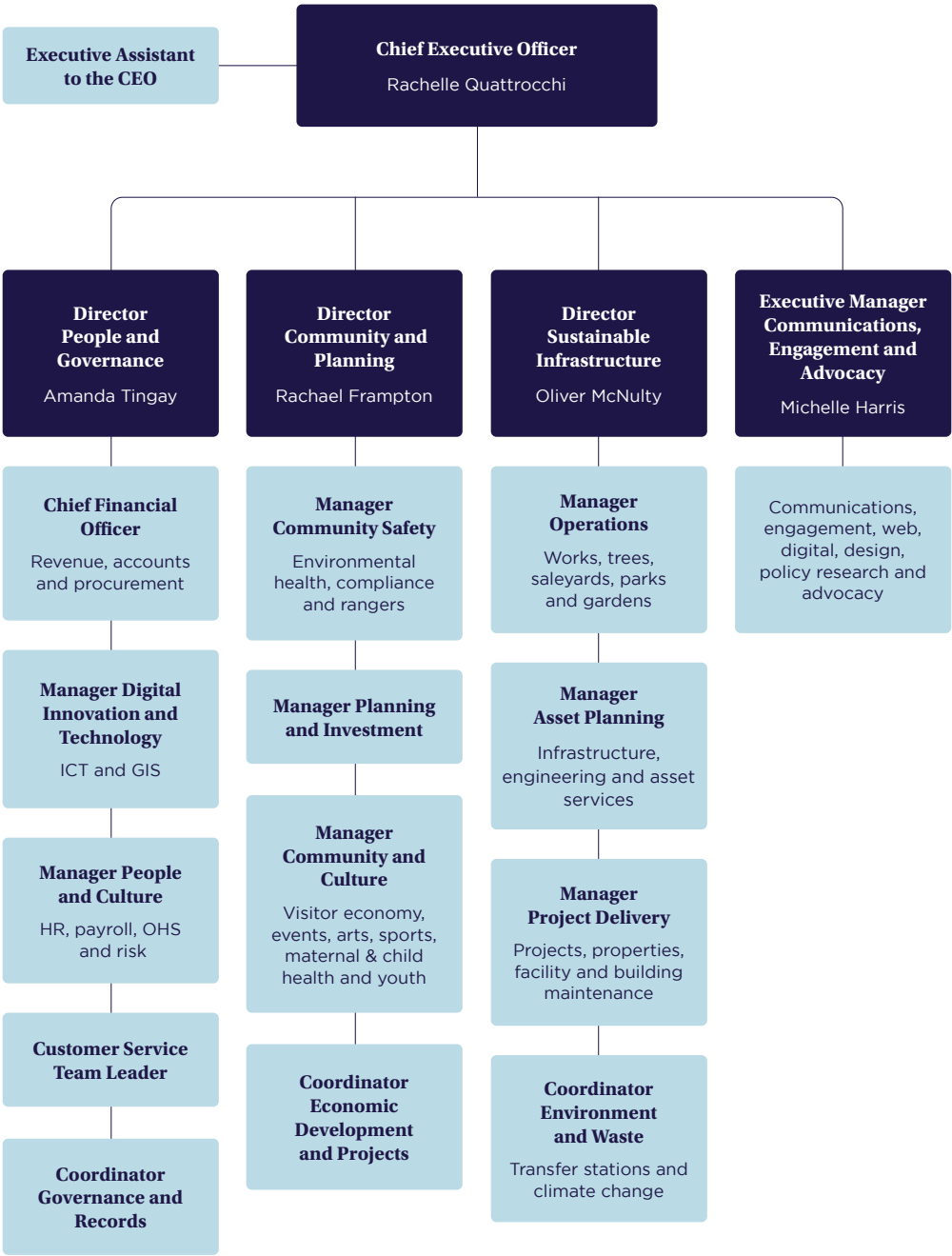
John Harvey
(concluded 4 December 2024)

Former Executive Manager Communications, Engagement and Advocacy

Rosemary Scott
(concluded 4 March 2024)



Our Organisation



Our Staff

Strathbogie Shire Council is one of the largest employers in the municipality. We employed approximately 125 permanent and temporary employees on a full time, part time, and casual basis during 2024-25. Two-thirds of our staff also live within the municipality meaning our people bring local passion, perspective, and knowledge to the services they provide.

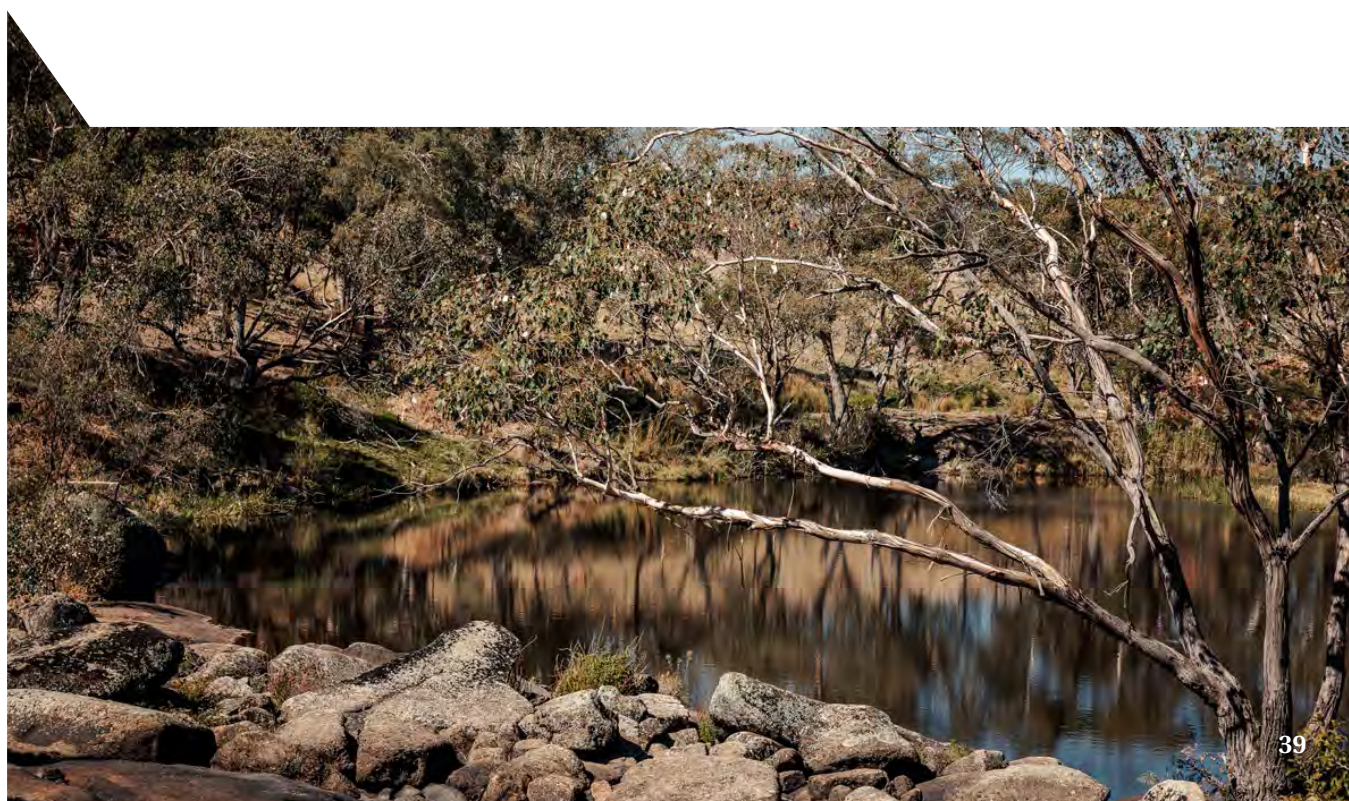
Approximately half of our staff are female, and a significant portion of the female workforce is made up of part time employees at different levels within the organisation. We try to limit the number of casual staff and temporary contracts in the workforce to provide job security.

	Band 1 FTE	Band 2 FTE	Band 3 FTE	Band 4 FTE	Band 5 FTE	Band 6 FTE	Band 7 FTE	Band 8 FTE	Other FTE	Total FTE
Permanent Full Time - W	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.00	5.00	13.00	5.00	1.84	7.00	35.84
Permanent Full Time - M	0.0	0.0	33.00	6.00	2.00	6.00	6.00	4.00	5.00	62.00
Permanent Full Time - X	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.00
Permanent Part Time - W	0.0	0.0	1.34	8.01	2.34	8.08	1.68	0.0	1.26	22.72
Permanent Part Time - M	0.0	0.0	2.74	0.0	0.0	0.59	0.55	0.0	0.67	4.55
Permanent Part Time - X	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.00
Casual - W	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.00
Casual - M	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.00
Casual - X	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.00
Total	0.0	0.0	37.08	18.01	9.34	27.67	13.23	5.84	13.93	125.11

W - Women M - Men X - Self-described gender

	Executive / Comms and Engagement	Community and Planning	Sustainable Infrastructure	People and Governance	Total FTE
Permanent Full Time – W	8.00	10.00	4.84	13.00	35.84
Permanent Full Time – M	1.00	5.00	52.00	4.00	62.00
Permanent Full Time – X	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.00
Permanent Part Time – W	0.0	9.33	1.79	11.60	22.72
Permanent Part Time – M	0.0	0.55	3.41	0.59	4.55
Permanent Part Time – X	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.00
Casual – W	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.00
Casual – M	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.00
Casual – X	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.00
Total	9.00	24.88	62.04	29.19	125.11

W – Women M – Men X – Self-described gender



Flexible Working Arrangements

Council provides a range of flexible working arrangements including:

- Working from home
- Flexible start and finish times
- Working more hours across fewer days (e.g., nine-day fortnight)
- Part Time
- Study Leave
- Purchase of additional leave.

In recent years more employees have taken advantage of the flexible working arrangements Council offers. Council supports these arrangements to promote Equal Employment Opportunity across the organisation.

Offering flexibility to all employees not only enables greater work-life-balance for existing staff, but it has also improved Council's attractiveness as an employer. We will continue to support these arrangements.

Employment Conditions

The Strathbogie Shire Council remains committed to fostering an inclusive, safe and rewarding working environment that attracts and retains high quality candidates, while supporting employee's well-being and professional growth.

We continue to support flexible work arrangements, prioritise workplace safety and encourage professional development opportunities.

The Strathbogie Shire Council's Enterprise Agreement No.10 – 2023, sets out some of the terms and conditions of employment offering benefits including leave allowances and a family friendly work environment.

Professional Development

Council is committed to the personal growth and development of its employees and provides different options for its employees to achieve it. This includes short in person and online training courses, on and off the job training, workshops, conferences, and formal study options.

The work of a dedicated officer on a skills requirement analysis for future planning across the organisation was completed at the end of 2024-2025. As a result, we procured a comprehensive training package through the Australian Institute of Management, providing staff access to more than 65 specialised short courses. They address interpersonal, departmental, and organisational training needs identified in the report.

Taking into consideration employees' aspiration for personal development enables us to determine the best path for development and in turn supports Council's succession planning and assists with the attraction, retention, and development of our staff.

Occupational Health and Safety

Council continues to work on the safety issues across the organisation with focus on emergency management, staff safety and education and building security.

Council has an active Health and Safety Representative Committee, and its members engage with their departments in safety discussions and look at ways to improve overall safety. Regular inductions, inspections, and audits are being completed.

The OHS Officer together with employees continuously updates and creates relevant safety documents and reviews procedures for their work areas to ensure they are meeting safety standards. Council continues to strengthen the safety culture and progress the Safety Management System to support a safe workplace for all its employees.

Recruitment

Council continues its strategic focus to attract and secure quality employees across the organisation.

Council continues to address recruitment challenges by embracing diversity, offering remuneration transparency and greater flexibility. As a result, in 2024-25 we successfully filled thirty two vacant positions encompassing both internal appointments as well as external hires.

Recognition of Years Of Service

Strathbogie Shire Council’s employees remain the cornerstone of our continued success and this year we celebrated again, numerous milestones in dedicated service across the organisation. Their loyalty and professional growth within our organisation not only strengthen our operational capabilities but also reinforces our commitment to being an employer that values exceptional talent.

During 2024-25, thirty three recognition of years of services were awarded across four categories:

Years of Service	Number of Recipients
Three years	19
Five years	11
Ten years	0
Fifteen years	1
Twenty years	2

Employee Wellbeing

Council continues to focus on the health and wellbeing of its employees, starting even before employees commence.

Partnering with Work Healthy Australia, Strathbogie Shire Council continues to offer soft tissue appointments on a weekly basis to all employees. These appointments address common issues such as neck and shoulder tension, lower back pain, and repetitive strain injuries that can result from gardening or sporting activities.

An Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a support service available free of charge to all employees and their families. It offers counselling and mediation service that enable discussion in confidence of either work related or personal matters affecting the lives of employees and their families. Appointments are offered in person, via phone, or via video conference to ensure employees can access the service in a way that suits them best.

Strathbogie Shire Council has expanded its employee wellbeing program to include health awareness events. During Men's and Women's Health Weeks, we engaged subject matter experts to deliver presentations on critical health topics, including prostate cancer awareness, breast cancer education, mental health resources, nutrition education, and skin cancer awareness and prevention. These initiatives demonstrate Council's commitment to supporting comprehensive employee health and wellbeing.

Furthermore, a new wellbeing online platform gives employees access to large variety of resources on topics such as mental and physical health, including healthy eating, healthy sleeping, fitness activities and age-related health issues, but also financial knowledge. Employees can access short live classes, attend or replay webinars, test their knowledge through quizzes or read articles from an extensive wellbeing library on any topic they are interested in.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Council is committed to providing a workplace that is free from bullying, sexual harassment, discrimination, and victimisation and where staff, Councillors, contractors, prospective employees, and volunteers treat each other with respect, courtesy, and dignity.

Continuous efforts to raise awareness across the organisation were supported by compulsory staff training on bullying and harassment and unconscious bias.

We continued to work through our Workforce Plan and Gender Equality Action Plan.

We received the outcome report from the Commissioner for Gender Equality in the Public Sector Dr Nicki Vincent following the submission of our progress report. The Commissioner not only found that enough information was submitted to determine whether our organisation made progress against the workplace gender equality indicators, she also determined Council met the requirements under Victoria's *Gender Equality Act 2020* and the Regulations. This meant our progress report was compliant.

Council celebrated its strong and committed female workforce by hosting an International Women's Day event. The Commissioner for Gender Equality in the Public Sector, introduced by the Mayor, joined us as a guest speaker. Her passion for working towards gender equality was infectious. But her examples of gender inequality in everyday life that is often not so obvious, made us reflect on our own actions and highlighted the need to still do more.

Delivering our Council Plan

*Out of the 65 actions in
the 2024-25 Action Plan,
40 have been achieved,
21 are in progress and four
have not been achieved.*

Council Plan Focus Area:

1. Focus. Create. Unite.

Action		Council's Role	Completion Date	Status
1.1.1 Work in partnership with the Taungurung Land and Waters Council to implement the Memorandum of Understanding.	Engaged Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	30 June 2025	Complete.
1.1.2 Continue to meet with the Taungurung Land and Waters Council to review, monitor and provide feedback on the implementation of infrastructure projects in line with the Land Use Activity Agreement.	Engaged Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	30 June 2025	Complete. A minimum of 8 meetings have occurred the past 12 months. Participation in the TLAWC Local Government Forum.
1.1.3 Embed a Partnership Plan, outlining the approach, principles and assessment criteria, across the organisation.	Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	31 March 2025	Not achieved. Advocacy is a focus in the 2025-26 Council Plan Action Plan.
1.1.4 Prepare and adopt a Social Inclusion Strategy which adopts an intersectionality approach to identify the guiding principles to promote equal rights and opportunities for everyone, redressing social and economic inequalities		Deliver	31 March 2025	In progress - will be finalised by 2026.
1.1.5 Complete the review and implement the Arts and Culture Strategy to support the community in driving diversity in activities and events.	Engaged Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	28 February 2025	Complete. New eight year Strategy and annual action plan to be developed in 2026.

Performance Indicators

Measure	Data Source	Council Role	Reporting Frequency	2025 Result	Target
Satisfaction rating Art centres and libraries	Annual Community Satisfaction Survey	Deliver	Yearly	69	68
Satisfaction rating Lobbying	Annual Community Satisfaction Survey	Advocate	Yearly	49	44
Satisfaction rating Consultation and engagement	Annual Community Satisfaction Survey	Deliver	Yearly	50	44
Satisfaction rating Informing the community	Annual Community Satisfaction Survey	Deliver	Yearly	52	49
Satisfaction rating Community decisions	Annual Community Satisfaction Survey	Deliver	Yearly	46	37
Meetings conducted with the eight Action Groups	Council Data	Deliver	Yearly	7	Two per year



Council Plan Focus Area:

2. Live. Access. Connect

Action		Council's Role	Completion Date	Status
2.1.1 Implement the Asset Plan. Local Government Act 2020 requires new Council to deliver Asset plan by October 2025.	Engaged Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	30 June 2025	Complete. Adopted by Council 17 June 2025.
2.1.2 Lobby State and Federal governments to fund improved digital and telecommunications infrastructure – Telstra, Ausnet, 3G closure.	Engaged Public Health and Wellbeing	Advocate	30 June 2025	In progress. Continued advocacy ask. Participation in AusNet's Strathbogie Benalla Community Liaison Group. Significant upgrades have been proposed in the AER 2026-2031 Budget Bid to improve energy reliability. Continued advocacy with telecommunications providers, upgrade completed on Mount Wombat, current negotiation for an improvement to the Nagambie Telstra Tower.
2.1.3 Work with community groups to expand existing community bus services.	Public Health and Wellbeing	Advocate	30 June 2025	Complete.
2.1.4 Support the work being undertaken by the Euroa Mountain Bike Club to develop a mountain bike track at Balmattum Hill through advocacy with Parks Victoria and relevant government departments.		Deliver	30 Sept 2024	Complete. Feasibility and cost benefit study presented to Council. Further work required to undertake CHMP, and land acquisition.
2.1.5 Prepare a Play and Open Space Strategy.	Engaged Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	31 July 2024	Complete. Strategy adopted 20 August 2024.
2.1.6 Review and implement the Tracks and Trails Strategy to improve connectivity and physical activity across the municipality.		Deliver	30 June 2025	In progress: Has been incorporated into the new Council Plan to be consolidated with other similar Strategies.
2.1.7 Scope and secure funding to development a Cycling Strategy.				In progress: Community consultation has occurred for the Active Transport Strategy. Work will continue as an action in the 2025-26 Council Action Plan "consolidate tracks, trails and footpaths and strategies".
2.1.8 To clarify land arrangements with VicTrack for the car park precinct (Saleyard Road and Bank Street, Avenel) including a funding commitment to upgrade the area.		Deliver	31 March 2025	In progress: Continued advocacy underway.

Action		Council's Role	Completion Date	Status
2.1.9	Work collaboratively with the Department of Transport and Planning to address the community's safety concerns (Saleyard Road and Bank Street, Avenel) in a coordinated	Deliver	30 June 2025	In progress: Continued advocacy underway.
2.1.10	Advocate to the State and Federal Governments for a funding commitment to deliver a solution for Kirwans Bridge that extends the bridge life by more than 50 years.	Deliver	30 June 2025	In progress: continued advocacy underway.
2.1.11	Advocate to the State Government regarding for a solution to Chinamans Bridge and urgent funding to implement the solution.	Advocate and Deliver	30 June 2025	In progress: Funding has been sourced and budget allocated in 2025-26 capital budget. Demolition permit received by Heritage Victoria.

Performance Indicators

Measure	Data Source	Council Role	Reporting Frequency	2025 Result	Target
Satisfaction rating - local streets and footpaths	Annual Community Satisfaction Survey	Deliver	Yearly	48	45
Satisfaction rating - lobbying	Annual Community Satisfaction Survey	Advocate	Yearly	44	51
Percentage completion - projects delivered in capital expenditure budget	Council Data	Deliver	Yearly	89%	Maintain
Infrastructure per head of municipal population	Local Governance Performance Reporting Framework (Know Your Council)	Deliver	Yearly	\$29,265 *Population provided from 2024 statistics	Increase
Asset renewal and asset upgrade as a percentage of depreciation	Local Governance Performance Reporting Framework (Know Your Council)	Deliver	Yearly	120%	Increase
Success of Top five asks in Councils' Advocacy Ask	Advocacy Ask Document	Advocate	Yearly	Significant upgrades have been proposed in Ausnets AER 2026-2031 Budget Bid to improve energy reliability Continued advocacy with telecommunications providers, upgrade completed on Mount Wombat, current negotiation for an improvement to the Nagambie Telstra Tower.	Funding allocated by State and Federal Governments

Council Plan Focus Area:

3. Protect. Enhance. Adapt.

Action		Council's Role	Completion Date	Status
3.1.1 Implement the Climate Change Action Plan for Council operations, which explores initiatives such as an urban forest strategy, micro-grids for our towns and auditing council facilities to identify opportunities to minimise their net environmental impact.	Engaged Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	30 June 2025 (year four actions)	Complete: Climate Change Action Plan 2022-2027 continues to be delivered. Climate change action plan implementation delivered biannually. Four of the 2024/25 actions are now complete. Five actions are in progress; and are near completion.
3.1.2 Integrate the Naturally Cooler Town initiative into day-to-day operations in partnership with the Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance.	Engaged Public Health and Wellbeing	Partner	30 June 2025	Complete: The Naturally Cooler Town initiative is complete and the watering and maintenance of the trees is underway.
3.1.3 Complete the Violet Town landfill rehabilitation project. EPA sign off pending.	Engaged Public Health and Wellbeing	Partner	Partner	In progress: Independent auditors have signed the rehab project off as complete and it is now sitting with the EPA. Following sign off after-care management will revert to Council.
3.1.4 Continue to involve the community in tree planting projects across the Shire.	Engaged Public Health and Wellbeing	Advocate	30 June 2025	In progress: Work still underway with community groups as required.
3.1.5 Advocate to Federal and State governments for investment in reliable power supply infrastructure with a focus on renewable energy.	Engaged Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	30 June 2025	In progress: Participation in Ausnets Strathbogie Benalla Community Liaison Group. Significant upgrades have been proposed in the AER 2026-2031 Budget Bid to improve energy reliability.
3.1.6 Continue to support community recovery from the October 2022 Flood Event.	Engaged Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	30 June 2025	
3.1.7 Develop and adopt a Fair Access Policy (in line with State Government requirement). Complete, Fair Access Policy adopted June 2024.	Engaged Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	30 June 2025	Complete.
3.1.8 Strengthen project scoping and design outcomes to maximise environmental benefit, including the management of stormwater to improve water quality.		Deliver	30 June 2025	In progress.
3.1.9 Creation of a Significant Tree Register.		Deliver	30 June 2025	In progress.

Action		Council's Role	Completion Date	Status
3.1.10 Continue advocacy in partnership with Goulburn Valley Water, opportunities to green open spaces in towns with recycled water from the towns' wastewater treatment plant. Active member of Greening Euroa.		Partner	30 June 2025	In progress: Opportunities for grants are being investigated and talks are continuing with GVW.
3.1.11 Review and implement actions from the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan to support growth within existing townships and mitigate health risks from wastewater.		Deliver	30 June 2025	In progress.
3.1.12 Deliver education program to enhance community understanding of the new four bin system.		Deliver	30 June 2025	Complete.
3.1.13 Advocate for funding for the implementation of the Municipal Drainage Strategy.		Partner	30 June 2025	Complete - funding received.
3.1.14 Understand the outcomes of the Civic Accommodation Study and present findings and recommendations to Council.		Partner	30 June 2025	Complete - report presented at the July 2024 Council meeting.

Performance Indicators

Measure	Data Source	Council Role	Reporting Frequency	2025 Result	Target
Satisfaction rating - Waste management services	Annual Community Satisfaction Survey	Deliver	Yearly	69	70
Number of education sessions delivered to schools or community groups	Council Data	Partner	Yearly	56	N/A
Average waste diversion rate	Monthly data supplied by Contractor and reported on in monthly council report.	Partner	Monthly	68.38%	70%
Contamination rate in our organics stream	Monthly data supplied by Contractor and reported on in monthly council report.	Partner	Monthly	1.40%	Less than 2%
Satisfaction rating Environmental sustainability	Annual Community Satisfaction Survey	Deliver	Yearly	58	57
Delivery of progress report - Climate Change Action Plan Implementation	Council Data	Deliver	Biannually	Four of the 2024/25 actions are now complete. Five actions are "in progress" and are near completion	Biannual reporting

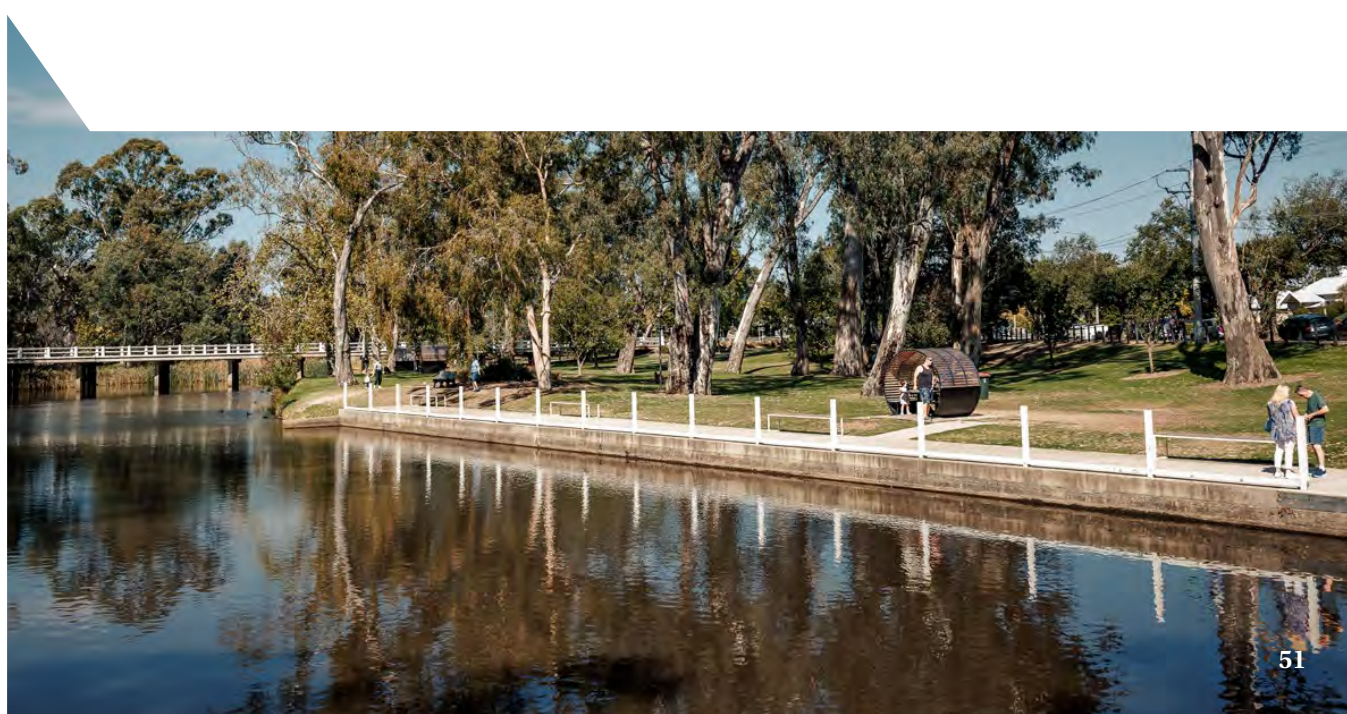
Council Plan Focus Area:

4. Inclusive. Balance. Safe.

Action		Council's Role	Completion Date	Status
4.1.1 Implement year two actions of the Economic Development Strategy.	Engaged Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	30 June 2025 (year four actions)	Complete.
4.1.2 Continue to implement the recommendations of the Strathbogie Planning Scheme review.	Engaged Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	30 June 2025	In progress: RRLUS and UGS on track to be adopted by December 2025.
4.1.3 Continue to advocate for the development of the Mangalore Airport as a freight intermodal and transport/industrial hub.	Engaged Public Health and Wellbeing	Advocate	30 June 2025	Complete.
4.1.4 Undertake the development of the Euroa Railway Precinct Master Plan.	Engaged Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	30 June 2025	In progress: Consultation to occur in the near future.
4.1.5 Continue advocating to Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) for a community led outcome for the redesign of Euroa railway infrastructure.	Engaged Public Health and Wellbeing	Advocate	30 June 2025	In progress: ongoing, until works are complete.
4.1.6 Finalise and adopt the Avenel 2030 Strategy to guide future development and growth while maintaining local character. Complete, adopted October 2024.	Engaged Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	30 June 2025	In progress: Adoption on hold due to the updates required following the adoption of other key strategic planning documents.
4.1.7 Participate in Goulburn Regional Tourism Inc	Engaged Public Health and Wellbeing	Partner	30 June 2025	Complete and ongoing.

Performance Indicators

Measure	Data Source	Council Role	Reporting Frequency	2025 Result	Target
Planning permit applications decided within 60 statutory days	Planning Permit Activity Report	Deliver	Yearly	85%	78%
Satisfaction rating - building and planning permits	Annual Community Satisfaction Survey	Deliver	Yearly	42	47
Satisfaction rating - business development & tourism	Annual Community Satisfaction Survey	Deliver	Yearly	57	56
Satisfaction rating - tourism development	Annual Community Satisfaction Survey	Deliver	Yearly	59	57
Average monthly visitation to the Nagambie Lakes Visitor Information and Euroa Visitor Information Centres	Local Government Performance Reporting Framework data (Know Your Council)	Partner	Monthly	323	300
Median number of days to decide on a planning permit application	Local Government Performance Reporting Framework data (Know Your Council)	Deliver	Yearly	Data not currently available	44 days
Asset renewal and asset upgrade as a percentage of depreciation	Local Government Performance Reporting Framework data	Deliver	Yearly	120%	107.16



Council Plan Focus Area:

5. Strong. Healthy. Safe.

Action		Council's Role	Completion Date	Status
5.1.1 Prepare a Play and Open Space Strategy. Complete, adopted by Council August 2024.	Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	31 July 2025	Complete.
5.1.2 Continue to deliver a series of events and initiatives to support healthy eating practices, reduced obesity and increased physical activity.	Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	30 June 2025	Complete
5.1.3 Complete the annual audit of tobacco sales inspections, prosecuting those businesses who sell tobacco to people under the age of 18 years.	Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	30 June 2025	Complete.
5.1.4 Continue to deliver a range of Youth Leadership Events and Activities across the municipality. Action complete, ongoing programs to be implemented.	Public Health and Wellbeing	Partner	30 June 2025	Complete. Series of youth events delivered annually.
5.1.5 Review the Public Open Space Contributions Policy.	Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	30 June 2025	Not achieved: due to Strategic work program, will be referred to consideration for the strategic work program 2025-2029.
5.1.6 Promote participation and continue to deliver MCH programs for 0-4 year-olds.	Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	30 June 2025	Complete.
5.1.7 Implement an annual action plan for health and wellbeing priorities identifying partnerships that will support the delivery of the plan.	Public Health and Wellbeing	Partner	30 June 2025	Complete.
5.1.8 Participate in 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence – deliver local initiatives throughout the municipality. Complete – participate in December 2024.	Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	31 December 2024	Complete.
5.1.9 Educate and raise awareness on ageism and elder abuse through an educational campaign that challenges ideologies.	Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	30 June 2025	Complete.
5.1.10 Review and implement programs to drive increased participation at our aquatic facilities informed by the Strathbogie Community Pools Strategy 2019-2029. Ongoing, working with Friends of Pool.	Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	30 June 2025	Complete.
5.1.11 Deliver community led actions through the implementation of the Domestic Animal Management Plan, which may include further off leash dog parks.	Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	30 June 2025	Complete. Annual progress report tabled in August annually.

Action		Council's Role	Completion Date	Status	
5.1.12	Develop and implement a communication and engagement plan to promote the health and wellbeing benefits of volunteering. Complete – "Local Legends" volunteer week activities.	Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	31 December 2024	Complete.
5.1.13	Continue to monitor the compliance of Council's emergency management framework with changing legislative requirements	Public Health and Wellbeing	Deliver	30 June 2025	Complete. All Plans and reviews are on Council's website.
5.1.14	Continue to advocate to Department of Transport around improving road safety and aligning speed limits with community expectations.	Public Health and Wellbeing	Advocate	30 June 2025	Complete and ongoing.
5.1.15	Explore options for the development of a local law around smoking in Council owned public places.	Public Health and Wellbeing	Advocate	30 June 2025	Complete: under the <i>Tobacco Act 1987</i> which includes statewide bans in certain outdoor areas such as playgrounds, sporting venues and within ten meters of public building entrances.

Performance Indicators

Measure	Data Source	Council Role	Reporting Frequency	2025 Result	Target
Satisfaction rating - appearance of public areas	Annual Community Satisfaction Survey	Deliver	Yearly	72	73
Satisfaction rating - recreational facilities	Annual Community Satisfaction Survey	Deliver	Yearly	64	67
Annual total attendance figures for all aquatic facilities	Council Data	Deliver	Yearly	18,450	18,361
Number of completed tobacco sale audits to under 18's	Council Data	Deliver	Yearly	Not delivered	Not delivered
Percentage of children enrolled who participate in Maternal and Child Health services	Local Government Performance Reporting Framework data (Know Your Council)	Partner	Yearly	71%	74%
Percentage of Aboriginal children enrolled who participate in Maternal and Child Health Services	Local Government Performance Reporting Framework data (Know Your Council)	Partner	Yearly	62%	87%
Percentage of infants enrolled in Material Child Health services who participate in 4-week key stage visit	Local Government Performance Reporting Framework data	Partner	Yearly	110%	90%

Council Plan Focus Area:

6. Accountable. Transparent. Responsible.

Action		Council's Role	Completion Date	Status
6.1.1 Implement the Workforce Plan 2021-2025.		Deliver	31 July 2025	In progress: Actions for the current workforce plan that remain open or are ongoing.
6.1.2 Implement actions of the Gender Equity Action Plan 2021-25.	Engage	Deliver	30 June 2025	In progress: New Gender Equality Action Plan that will reflect on actions in the current plan that remain opening or ongoing
6.1.3 Develop and implement an Information Technology Strategy to ensure the organisation has a suite of fully integrated systems to maximise operational efficiency.		Deliver	30 June 2025	Not achieved: Information Technology Strategy action in the 2025-26 Council Plan Annual Action Plan.
6.1.4 Incorporate the gender impact assessment tool into decision making processes to assess the gendered impacts of policies, programs and services.	Engage	Deliver	30 June 2025	Complete and ongoing.
6.1.5 Support the Audit and Risk Committee in completing its work plan.		Partner	30 June 2025	Complete.
6.1.6 Complete an audit of Council's property portfolio to identify options to maximise community benefit.	Engage	Deliver	30 June 2025	Complete.
6.1.7 Implement the Action Plan in response to the 2023/24 staff satisfaction survey.	Engage	Deliver	30 June 2025	Complete.
6.1.8 Implement an ongoing good governance training program for Councillors and staff, including self-assessment elements.		Deliver	30 April 2025	Complete.
6.1.9 Review our Customer Service Charter in partnership with a Community Panel to refine our service standards and response times.		Deliver	30 June 2025	Not achieved: Customer Focused Service Charter action in the 2025-26 Council Plan Annual Action Plan.
6.1.10 Analyse options for, and develop a plan for implementation, of an integrated performance reporting software system to efficiently collate mandatory reporting requirements and monitor performance around the delivery of this Plan.		Deliver	30 June 2025	Complete: Analysis of performance reporting undertaken. Existing system utilised.

Action		Council's Role	Completion Date	Status
6.1.11 Development and implementation of a comprehensive gender equity framework through policies, training and proactively acting on feedback from staff, Councillors, and the community.	Engage	Deliver	30 June 2025	Complete: While there is no written Gender Equality Framework, all policies were reviewed in light of gender equality. Also reflected in any training opportunity and delivery amounting to a practical framework for Council's interaction with staff and community.
6.1.12 Explore leadership training program options.	Engage	Deliver	30 June 2025	Complete: training for Councillors undertaken. Mandatory and elective.

Performance Indicators

Measure	Data Source	Council Role	Reporting Frequency	2025 Result	Target
Satisfaction rating Customer Service	Annual Community Satisfaction Survey	Deliver	Yearly	68	68
Percentage of staff with procurement responsibilities completed procurement and probity training	Council Data	Deliver	Yearly	69%	100%
Satisfaction rating - Overall performance	Annual Community Satisfaction Survey	Deliver	Yearly	48	36
Satisfaction rating - Overall direction	Annual Community Satisfaction Survey	Deliver	Yearly	58	23
Satisfaction rating - Value for Money	Annual Community Satisfaction Survey	Deliver	Yearly	40	35
Satisfaction rating -Community decisions	Annual Community Satisfaction Survey	Deliver	Yearly	46	37
Expenses per head of municipal population	Local Government Performance Reporting Framework data	Deliver	Yearly	Data not currently available	
Recurrent grants per head of municipal population	Local Government Performance Reporting Framework data	Deliver	Yearly	Data not currently available	

Governance



In Victoria, Councils are constituted under the *Local Government Act 2020* to provide leadership for the good governance of the municipal district and the local community. Council has a number of roles including:

- Making Council decisions and taking actions in accordance with relevant law
- Ensuring the ongoing financial stability of the Council
- Ensuring the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipality including mitigation and planning for climate change risks
- Providing leadership by establishing strategic objectives and monitoring achievements
- Taking into account the diverse needs of the local community in decision-making
- Ensuring resources are managed in a responsible and accountable manner
- Advocating the interests of the local community to other communities and governments
- Fostering community cohesion and encouraging active participation in civic life.

Council is committed to effective and sustainable forms of democratic and corporate governance as the key to ensuring that Council and its administration meet the community's priorities.

The community has many opportunities to provide input into Council's decision-making processes including deliberative engagement, less formal community consultation processes, and participation in public forums such the ability to make submissions to Council and ask questions at Council meetings.

Council's formal decision-making processes are conducted through council meetings, which are run in accordance with our Governance Rules. Due to the sheer volume of decisions that need to be made on a daily basis under legislation, Council delegates the majority of its decision-making to Council staff. These delegations are exercised in accordance with adopted Council policies and instruments of delegations are reviewed twice yearly to ensure they are up to date.

2024 Local Government Elections

In 2024 an Independent Electoral Representation Advisory Panel found that an unsubdivided electoral structure with seven Councillors that aligns with the principles of the *Local Government Act 2020* would provide the best model for promoting fair and equitable representation for voters in Strathbogie Shire Council and consequently facilitate good governance.

Subsequently, Strathbogie Shire moved to an unsubdivided electoral structure with seven Councillors effective October 2024.

In July 2024 Council launched the Your Community Your Voice Campaign to encourage Strathbogie Shire residents to stand as candidates for Council.

Your Community Your Voice was a comprehensive and sustained campaign held over many months, involving both internal and external stakeholders, providing prospective candidates with as much information as possible to consider becoming prospective candidates.

Fifteen candidates eventually stood for Council in the Local Government Election held on 26 October 2024, and seven Councillors were elected:

- Cr Laura Binks
- Cr Gregory Carlson
- Cr Claire Ewart-Kennedy
- Cr Vicki Halsall
- Cr Clark Holloway
- Cr Scott Jeffery
- Cr Fiona Stevens

At the Statutory Meeting of Council held on 19 November 2024 Cr Claire Ewart-Kennedy was elected Mayor and Cr Scott Jeffery was elected Deputy Mayor.

Our Focus On Good Governance

On 26 November 2024 Council received correspondence from the Minister for Local Government, The Hon Helissa Horne MP outlining her expectations around how Councillors will perform their duties.

A response was provided to the Minister for Local Government reiterating Councillors commitment to achieving the best outcomes and financial sustainability for our community and focusing on the strategic governance of our Municipality.

As part of the focus on good governance Councillors committed to, and completed (but not limited to) the following:

- Mandatory induction and training
- Preparation, community consultation and finalisation of the 2025-29 Council Plan and other legislated documents by 30 June 2025
- Councillors vision and commitment to their role
- Internal resolution solutions
- Working with the Municipal Monitor

Since taking the Oath or Affirmation of Office on 12 November 2024, Councillors undertook rigorous mandatory training and induction as set out in the Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020 within a period of four months of swearing in.

This set the tone for the Councillors commitment to their statutory obligations and establishing a high level of strategic direction for Strathbogie Shire Council.

Councillors also responded to the Victorian Government reforms to strengthen governance, integrity and Councillor conduct, and look forward to improved, sustainable and progressive outcomes for the whole of our Shire in the future.

Councillor’s 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

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, sections (88) (89) (90) (91) (92) (93) and (94) in January 2025, Council commenced the development of the:

- Community Vision 2035
- Council Plan 2025-29 (incorporating the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan)
- Revenue and Rating Plan
- Long Term Financial Plan
- Asset Plan
- 2025-26 Annual Budget.

This was a very extensive body of work, including community consultation and deliberative engagement. The strategic planning documents were completed and adopted by Council in June 2025.

Municipal Monitor

Pursuant to section 179(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), the Minister for Local Government provided notice of the appointment of Ms Marg Allan as Municipal Monitor to Strathbogie Shire Council.

The Minister announced that Ms Marg Allan was appointed as Municipal Monitor for Strathbogie Shire Council for a 12-month period, 6 November 2024 to 6 November 2025 (both dates inclusive).

The appointment of a Monitor promotes the use of Municipal Monitors to support good governance practices across Councils in Victoria.

The Monitor’s Terms of Reference are as follows (as set by the Minister):

Without limiting the Municipal Monitor’s functions and powers under sections 180 and 181, respectively, of the Act, the Municipal Monitor is:

1. To monitor the governance processes and practices of the Council, with specific regard to the following matters
 - a. The Councillors’ understanding and performance of their statutory roles and responsibilities, including the adequacy of the Council’s Councillor induction training program and professional development training
 - b. The Council’s meeting procedures and decision-making processes, including attendance at briefings and Council meetings, and the adequacy of the Governance Rules
 - c. The relationships between Councillors, including Councillor behaviour with respect to the Model Councillor Code of Conduct and processes for resolving disputes between Councillors

- d. The Council's policies, processes and practices related to the recruitment, appointment, and proposed employment conditions of an ongoing Chief Executive Officer, including the establishment of an effective working relationship between the interim and the ongoing Chief Executive Officer and the Councillors,
 - e. The Council's policies and practices that manage the interactions between Councillors and Council staff and contractors, and compliance with those policies and practices
 - f. The Council's asset management practices, including its ability to meet current and future infrastructure and asset needs of the community
 - g. Any other matters that may affect the Council's ability to effectively perform its functions, including Councillor behaviour that is creating a serious risk to health and safety or preventing the Council from performing its functions.
2. To advise and provide any relevant assistance and support to the Council to ensure good governance, with specific regard to the matters raised in clause 1.
 3. To assist the Council to develop an Action Plan and progress updates for any necessary governance improvements, with specific regard to the matters raised in clause 1.
 4. To report to the Minister for Local Government, with respect to the matters in clause 1, on:
 - a. any steps or actions taken by the Council to improve its governance and the effectiveness of those steps or actions
 - b. any recommendations in relation to the exercise of any Ministerial power under the Act.

Ms Allan will provide a report to the Minister at the completion of her tenure in November 2025.

Councillor Code of Conduct

Effective from 26 October 2024, all Councillors are required to observe the Model Code of Conduct which is prescribed in Schedule 1 of the Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Amendment Regulations 2024.

The Model Code of Conduct replaces the previous statutory requirement for each Council to develop its own Councillor Code of Conduct.

The Model Code of Conduct establishes clear standards for the behaviour and responsibilities of Councillors. Its purpose is to ensure that Councillors can effectively perform their duties and functions, supporting the Council in its overriding role to provide good governance for the benefit and wellbeing of the municipal community. By setting these expectations, Councillors are better equipped to perform their duties in a manner that reflects the values of integrity, transparency, respect and accountability.

The Model Code of Conduct is also designed to foster a spirit of cooperation and constructive collaboration among Councillors and the Council administration. The Model Code of Conduct supports open and respectful debate, enabling Councillors to express their views freely, while maintaining civility and mutual respect. By working together effectively, Councillors can make decisions that serve the best interests of the municipality as a whole, ensuring the community benefits from good governance and effective civic leadership.

Furthermore, the Model Code of Conduct serves to strengthen public confidence and trust in local government. By adhering to high ethical standards and demonstrating a commitment to serving the public interest, Councillors contribute to a positive and transparent relationship between the Council and the community it serves.

Conflict of Interest

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires Councillors to disclose conflicts of interest in the manner required by the Council's Governance Rules and exclude themselves from the decision-making process in relation to that matter. This includes excluding themselves from any discussion or vote on the matter at any Council meeting or delegated committee, and any action in relation to the matter.

A conflict of interest occurs when a personal or private interest might compromise the ability to act in the public interest. A conflict of interest exists even if no improper act results from it. Sections 127 and 128 of the *Local Government Act 2020* provide clarity around what constitutes a general and material conflicts of interest.

Council has a comprehensive procedure in place to accommodate the disclosure of a conflict of interest by both Councillors and delegated officers. Declaration of a conflict of interest is a standard agenda item for all council meetings.

During 2024-25 one conflict of interest was declared at council meetings by Councillors and no declarations were made by Council Officers.

Council Meetings

Council decisions are made at scheduled meetings of Council. Meetings are open to the public unless Council resolves to close the meeting to consider confidential matters. Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month commencing at 4.00pm.

The table below shows Councillor and Administrator attendances at Council meetings 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

Councillor	Ordinary Council Meetings	Extraordinary Meetings	Absent from Meetings	Total Meetings
Administrator Peter Stephenson	4	0	0	4
Mayor Cr Claire Ewart-Kennedy	7	3	1	11
Deputy Mayor Cr Scott Jeffery	6	2	3	11
Cr Laura Binks	8	3	0	11
Cr Gregory Carlson	7	1	3	11
Cr Vicki Halsall	8	3	0	11
Cr Clark Holloway	8	3	0	11
Cr Fiona Stevens	8	3	0	11

Council Representation

In addition to participation in Council meetings and engagement in direct community and individual consultation, Councillors are appointed to a variety of industry bodies to represent the interests of Strathbogie Shire Council. The appointments for 2024-25 are listed in the following table.

Committee/Industry Group	Council Delegate (s)
Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Committee	Mayor Cr Claire Ewart-Kennedy Cr Scott Jeffery Cr Greg Carlson
Audit and Risk Committee	Mayor Cr Claire Ewart-Kennedy Cr Clark Holloway Cr Scott Jeffery (substitute)
Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)	Mayor Cr Claire Ewart-Kennedy Cr Vicki Halsall (substitute)
Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA)	Cr Laura Binks
Rural Councils Victoria (RCV)	Cr Laura Binks Cr Fiona Stevens
Hume Region Local Government Network	Mayor Cr Claire Ewart-Kennedy
Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation	Cr Greg Carlson
Calder Woodburn Memorial Avenue Advisory Committee	Cr Fiona Stevens

Councillor Allowances

In accordance with Section 39 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the Councillor Expenses Policy, Councillors are entitled to receive an allowance whilst performing their duties. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor are also entitled to receive a higher allowance.

The Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal made a Determination providing an annual adjustment to the values of the allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors. The adjusted allowances took effect from 1 July 2024.

The Tribunal also increased the value of the Remote Area Travel Allowance to compensate eligible Councillors for time spent on long-distance travel to council meetings or functions.

From 1 July 2024, the Remote Area Travel Allowance was \$47.70 per day for eligible Councillors, up to a maximum of \$5,937.50 per annum.

Additionally, Section 39 (5) of the *Local Government Act 2020* states that a Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Councillor may elect:

- a. to receive the entire allowance to which they are entitled; or
- b. to receive a specified part of the allowance to which they are entitled; or
- c. to receive no allowance.

Strathbogie Shire Council is a category one municipality, which means the allowances are at the lowest end of those set for all councils.

Allowances for the period 19 November 2024 to 30 June 2025

Councillor	Total Allowance Paid
Mayor Cr Claire Ewart-Kennedy	\$59,218.20
Deputy Mayor Cr Scott Jeffery	\$30,834.76
Cr Laura Binks	\$19,644.75
Cr Gregory Carlson	\$19,644.75
Cr Vicki Halsall	\$19,644.75
Cr Clark Holloway	\$19,644.75
Cr Fiona Stevens	\$19,644.75
Total Allowance Paid 19 November 24 to 30 June 2025	\$188,276.71

Councillor Support, Resources, Reimbursements and Reporting of Expenses Policy

In accordance with Section 40 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council is required to reimburse a Councillor for expenses incurred whilst performing their duties as a Councillor.

Council is also required to adopt and maintain a policy in relation to the reimbursement of expenses for Councillors. Council's Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy provides guidance for the payment of reimbursements of expenses and the provision of resources, facilities and other support to the Mayor and Councillors to enable them to discharge their duties. Council also publishes in its Annual Report the details of the expenses, including reimbursement of expenses for each Councillor paid by the Council.

Councillor	Meals and Travel	Car Mileage	IT and Comms	Conferences and Training	Total Expenses
Administrator Peter Stephenson	\$540.85				\$540.85
Mayor Cr Claire Ewart-Kennedy	\$141.86				\$141.86
Deputy Mayor Cr Scott Jeffery					\$0.00
Cr Laura Binks		\$2235.20			\$2235.20
Cr Gregory Carlson					\$0.00
Cr Vicki Halsall		\$554.40			\$554.40
Cr Clark Holloway		\$2416.01			\$2416.01
Cr Fiona Stevens		\$777.04			\$777.04

Governance and Management Overview

Council continues to strengthen its statutory and better practice framework in response to extensive policy and reporting requirements introduced in the past year by the *Local Government Act 2020*.

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires Council to undertake an assessment against the prescribed governance and management checklist and include this in its report of operations. Council's Governance and Management Checklist results are set out on the following pages.

2024-2025 Governance and Management Checklist

Metric Code	Governance and Management Item	Status	In place?	Date	Supporting Comments
GC1	Community Engagement Policy	Adopted in accordance with section 55 of the Act	✓	20/06/2023	The Community Engagement policy requires the preparation of an engagement plan for projects, policies 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	✓	20/06/2023	Guidelines are outlined in the Community Engagement Policy – 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	✓	17/06/2025	The Financial Plan 2025-35, prepared under the requirements of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> , was adopted by Council on 17/06/2025
GC4	Asset Plan	Adopted in accordance with section 92 of the Act	✓	17/06/2025	The Asset Plan 2025-35 prepared in accordance with the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> , was adopted by Council on 17/06/2025.
GC5	Revenue And Rating Plan	Adopted in accordance with section 93 of the Act	✓	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	✓	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	✓	18/06/2024	The Risk Management Policy was adopted by Council 18/06/2024.
GC8	Fraud Policy	Current policy in operation	✓	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)	✓	30/05/2023	The 2023-2026 Municipal Emergency Management Plan was adopted in May 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	✓	20/08/2024	The Procurement Policy and Procedure was adopted by Council on 20/08/2024.

Metric Code	Governance and Management Item	Status	In place?	Date	Supporting Comments
GC11	Business Continuity Plan	Current plan in operation	✓	20/04/2021	The Business Continuity Plan was adopted 20/04/21 and in the process of review. The Business Continuity Management Policy was adopted by Council on 15/04/2025.
GC12	Disaster Recovery Plan	Current plan in operation	✓	31/07/2022	The Disaster Recovery Plan was updated in July 2022. Council have engaged a Managed Service Provider for the ICT Disaster Recovery systems. Council maintain an average Recovery Point Objective of 15 seconds. Six monthly testing is undertaken, the most recent test being undertaken on 22/05/2024.
GC13	Complaint Policy	Policy developed in accordance with section 107 of the Act	✓	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	✓		The workforce plan was developed in 2021 and is due for renew in 2025.
GC15	Payment of Rates and Charges Hardship Policy	Current policy in operation	✓	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	✓	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	✓	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	✓	11/12/2024	Council appointed internal auditors RSD Audit on 1/09/2023 and their contract is valid until 31/08/2026.
GC19	Performance Reporting Framework	Current framework in operation	✓		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	✓	17/06/2025	The 2025-29 Council Plan was adopted on 17 June 2025. The 2025-29 Council Plan Action Plan requires twice yearly reporting to Council against the Action Plan. The first report is due October 2025.

Metric Code	Governance and Management Item	Status	In place?	Date	Supporting Comments
GC21	Quarterly Budget Reports	Quarterly reports presented to Council in accordance with section 97(1) of the Act	✓	30/06/2025	Quarterly budget reports are made to Council: Financial Report September 2024: Financial Report December 2024: March 2025: June 2025.
GC22	Risk Reporting	Risk reports prepared and presented	✓	30/06/2025	The Strategic Risk Register is reported quarterly to the Audit and Risk Committee (6/09/2024, 29/11/2024, 28/02/2025, 6/06/2025), and to Council meetings for endorsement of Audit and Risk Committee meeting minutes.
GC23	Performance Reporting	Performance reports prepared	✓	18/02/2025	A mid-year budget was prepared for Council for the period ending December 2024 (noted by Council February 2025) and Annual Financial Statements for the period ending 30 June 2024. The biannual reviews of the 2021-2025 Council Plan were adopted by Council in February 2025 and final 2021-25 Council Plan Action Plan report due for adoption by Council July 2025.
GC24	Annual Report	Annual report presented at a meeting of Council in accordance with section 100 of the Act	✓	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	✓	26/10/2024	The Model Councillor Code of Conduct was legislated in October 2024 - <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> .
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	✓	30/06/2025	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	✓	20/08/2024	The Governance Rules were adopted by Council on 20/8/2024.

Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee has been appointed by Council in accordance with section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Its role is to provide independent oversight to monitor the effectiveness of Council in carrying out the responsibilities for accountable financial management, abiding by the governance principles outlined in the Act, maintenance of an effective system of internal control, maintenance of an effective risk management framework and fostering a transparent environment within which Council operates.

The Committee has prepared and adopted a Workplan in accordance with the requirements of section 54 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. This detailed plan assists the Committee with ensuring it discharges all its responsibilities under the Act and that a broad range of Council operations and policy frameworks are scrutinised over the three-year life of the workplan. The key pillars of the work plan are actions to:

- Monitor the compliance of Council policies and procedures with the overarching governance principles and the *Local Government Act 2020* and the regulations and any ministerial directions
- Monitor Council financial and performance reporting
- Monitor and provide advice on risk management and fraud prevention systems and controls
- Oversee internal and external audit functions
- Monitor internal controls
- Monitor compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

The table right shows Independent Committee Member and Council Representatives attendances at Audit and Risk Committee meetings 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

The Audit and Risk Committee met five times during 2024-25. Key achievements include:

- Overview of the 2024-25 Financial Statement, Performance Statement and Annual Report preparations
- Input into the preparation and review of the 2025-26 draft budget, draft capital works program and draft fees and charges
- Overview and monitoring of the 2024-25 external audit program
- Reviewed the actions relating to the 2022-27 Climate Change Action Plan
- Reviewed and made recommendations relating to the Governance Rules, Audit and Risk Charter and Council Policies
- Reviewed the results of the 2023-24 Audits: Local Government Report and endorsed the recommendations from the report
- Reviewed Council's asset management and valuation process.

Audit and Risk Committee Meetings

Member	September 2024	November 2024	February 2025	April 2025	June 2025
Paul Ayton Chair Independent Member	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sophie Lukeis Independent Member	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Alister Purbrick AM Independent Member	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
John Tanner AM Independent Member	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Administrator Peter Stephenson Council Administrator to 26 October 2024	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Cr Claire Ewart-Kennedy Councillor Representative from 19 Nov 2024	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cr Clark Holloway Councillor Representative from 19 Nov 2024	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Crowe (Australasia) External Auditors - VAGO Agent representative	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
RSD Audit Representative(s) Internal Auditors	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

Internal Audit

Council's internal audit function provides independent and objective assurance that ensure appropriate processes and controls are in place. The function is resourced by an external provider – RSD Audit.

A risk based three-year Internal Audit Plan is reviewed, revised and approved annually by the Audit and Risk Committee to ensure that the audit resources remain focussed on the appropriate areas.

The review process considers Council's risk framework, the Council Plan, the impact of any change on operations, systems or the business environment, prior audit coverage and outcomes and management input.

The following internal audits were finalised in 2024-25:

- Infrastructure (Civil) Asset Management
- Project Management (including management of projects)
- Cyber Security
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Payroll.

External Auditors

Strathbogie Shire Council is externally audited by the Victorian Auditor General.

For the 2024-25 year, the annual external audit of Council's Financial Statements and Performance Statement was conducted by Crowe (Australasia) as agents for the Victorian Auditor General's Office.

The external auditors attend Audit Committee meetings during the year to present the annual Audit Plan and Independent Audit Reports. The external audit management letter and responses are provided to the Audit Committee.

Documents Available for Public Inspection

Council is committed to achieving the public interest principles set out in section 58 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, which are:

1. Council decision making processes must be transparent except when the Council is dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of this Act or any other Act
2. Council information must be publicly available unless:
 - a. the information is confidential by virtue of this Act or any other Act; or
 - b. public availability of the information would be contrary to the public interest
 - c. Council information must be understandable and accessible to members of the municipal community
 - d. public awareness of the availability of Council information must be facilitated. Council's Public Transparency Policy outlines our aim to provide ease of access to as much Council held information as possible, while not breaching privacy legislation.

Council is committed to transparent decision making and involving our community in making those decisions. We understand that our community needs access to a wide range of information to enable people to participate in the wide range of decision making and community engagement processes we undertake.

We also know that promoting awareness across the community as to the availability of Council information is an important part of this engagement process. The objectives of this policy are to promote:

- accountability around how Council is allocating and spending public money
- increased confidence and trust in the community through greater understanding and awareness
- enhanced involvement in Council's decision-making process by the community in line with our Community Engagement Strategy and Policy
- greater clarity in Council's decision-making processes
- improved Council's performance and service delivery to our community
- access to information that is current, reliable, easily accessible and disseminated in a timely manner
- the protection of information that is identified as being sensitive or confidential under the Act and other legislation.

A range of information is available for public inspection on Council's website or upon request at the Euroa Customer Service Centre at 109A Binney Street Euroa in accordance with Council's Public Transparency Policy including:

- copies of local laws under section 75 of the *Local Government Act 2020*
- a register of conflicts of interest declared by Councillors and Executive Officers at Council meetings
- summary of personal interests for Councillor and Officers under section 135 of the *Local Government Act 2020*
- a register of election campaign donations
- details of current allowances fixed for the Mayor and Councillors

- a document containing details of overseas or interstate travel (other than interstate travel by land for less than three days) undertaken in an official capacity by Councillor or any member of Council staff in the previous 12 months
- details of total annual remuneration for all senior officers in respect of the current and previous financial year, including ranges set out as specified and the number of senior officers within those ranges
- minutes of ordinary and special meetings held in the previous 12 months which are kept under section 93 of the Act, other than those agendas and minutes relating to a part of a meeting which was closed to members of the public under section 89 of the Act and are confidential information within the meaning of section 77(2) of the Act
- a register of delegations kept under sections 87(1) and 98(4) of the Act
- details of all property, finance and operating leases involving land, buildings, plant or vehicles entered into by the Council as lessor or lessee, including the name of the other party to the lease, the terms and the value of the lease
- a register of Authorised Officers maintained under section 224(1A) of the Act
- a list of donations and grants made by the Council in the previous 12 months, including the names of persons who, or bodies which, have received a donation or grant and the amount of each donation or grant
- a list of contracts for services and goods valued at \$150,000 or more and contracts for works valued at \$200,000 or more, which Council has entered into without first engaging in a formal competitive process and which are not contracts which are referred to in section 186(5) of the Act.

Members of the public can request to view these registers at our Binney Street head office during business hours (where the information is not available on Council's website) by contacting the Governance Officer on 1800 065 993 (toll free) or by emailing info@strathbogie.vic.gov.au.

Maximising Value for Money

Council must adopt a procurement policy that outlines the principles, processes and procedures around the purchase of goods, services and commissioning of works by Council. Council adopted the Procurement Policy on 21 November 2023.

The Policy is consistent with the requirements of section 108 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and is based on the following objectives, which are to:

- seek to promote open and fair competition and provide Value for Money
- provide clear guidelines to the Council to allow consistency and control over procurement activities
- demonstrate accountability to ratepayers and residents
- provide guidance on ethical behaviour in public sector procurement
- demonstrate the application of best practice in procurement activities
- demonstrate the consideration of sustainability in procurement with respect to social, economic and environmental factors
- increase the probability of obtaining the best outcome for the municipal community when procuring goods and services
- seek to undertake collaborative procurement with other councils.

Council's Procurement Policy is based on the principles of:

- **Integration with Council Strategy** – Supporting the aims and objectives of Council's current Council Plan and demonstrating responsible financial management must be applied to all procurement activities.
- **Value for Money** – Centred on obtaining the best quality and value for the price and ensuring that the quality of the goods and services meets Council's criteria with regards to policy, performance, risk, and cost constraints. Therefore, value for money does not necessarily mean the cheapest price.
- **Benefit to the Community** – Council will consider opportunities to sustain local employment, so when different products are of comparable price and quality, products having more local content will be given precedence.
- **Environmental Sustainability** – Council will give preference to goods, services and works that will advance the use of resources having higher recycled or reused content and which are responsibly sourced. A whole life cycle cost consideration will also be given to these products in terms of the impact on the environment throughout the entire life cycle.
- **Fair And Honest Dealing** – All prospective contractors, consultants and suppliers will be afforded an equal opportunity to submit a tender or quote. Impartiality must be maintained throughout the procurement process.
- **Probity, Accountability and Transparency** – Means being able to justify and provide evidence of the process followed so an independent third party must be able to see clearly that a process has been followed and that the process was fair and reasonable.

Contracts

Council takes its obligations under the *Local Government Act 2020* in relation to maximising value for money through competitive processes seriously. No contracts for \$200,000 or more for works of a kind specified in section 186(5)(a) and (c) of the *Local Government Act 2020* were entered into without initial attempts to engage suitable suppliers via a public a competitive process.

Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan

To provide a streamlined and embedded commitment to supporting health and wellbeing, the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, a requirement under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, was integrated into the 2021-2025 Council Plan.

The Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2021-25 was developed to set out the actions Council would undertake during this time to protect, improve, and promote public health and wellbeing in Strathbogie Shire. We have monitored progress through annual reviews and as part of the Council's integrated planning and performance reporting process.

The Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2021-25 has been finalised with 97% of actions supporting the seven key themes being either completed or in progress. Access and inclusion across the life stages have been promoted throughout Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2021-25 supported by the Community Funding, Youth, and capital works programs, and the delivery of Maternal and Child Health services and programs.

Disability Action Plan

In accordance with section 38 of the *Disability Act 2006*, Council has to prepare a Disability Action Plan. Council must report on the implementation of this plan in its Annual Report. Council has incorporated the Disability Action Plan into the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

Domestic Animal Management Plan

In accordance with the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, Council is required to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan every four years. The Domestic Animal Management Plan outlines how Council will manage domestic animals within the municipality and ensure compliance with the Act and the Domestic Animal Regulations 2015.

In August 2024, Council noted the annual progress report for the 2021–2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan, which continues to guide delivery of animal management services.

Council also commenced the development of the 2026–2029 Domestic Animal Management Plan. This work will include broad community engagement to ensure the plan reflects local needs and supports responsible pet ownership, animal welfare, and public safety across the Shire.

Food Act Ministerial Directions

Food Act Ministerial Directions In accordance with section 7E of the *Food Act 1984*, Council is required to publish a summary of any Ministerial Directions received during the financial year in its Annual Report.

No such Ministerial Directions were received by Council during the 2024–25 financial year.

Road Management Act Ministerial Direction

In accordance with section 22 of the *Road Management Act 2004*, Council must publish a copy or summary of any Ministerial direction in its Annual Report.

No such Ministerial Directions were received by Council during the 2024–25 financial year.

Freedom of Information

In accordance with section 7(4AA) (a) and 7(4AA) (b) of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, Council is required to publish certain statements in its annual report and on its website, about information made available to the public.

In accordance with our Public Transparency Policy, we will try and release as much information as possible without the need to lodge a Freedom of Information request. However, where information is requested contains personal information or information from third parties, a freedom of information request will need to be lodged. This is because the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* requires us to consult with people about the release of their information.

Access to documents may be obtained through written request to the Freedom of Information Officer by making an application in writing and by email. To make it easy for our community to lodge a request, an online form can be accessed on our website at Freedom of Information Request – Strathbogie Shire.

All applications must be addressed to the Freedom of Information Officer and be accompanied by the application fee (which may be waived by Council in certain circumstances) and needs to be clear about what information is being requested.

Access charges may also apply once documents have been processed and a decision on access is made (e.g. photocopying and search and retrieval charges). Further information regarding Freedom of Information can be found on the Strathbogie Shire Council website.

During 2024-25, Eleven (11) Freedom of Information requests were received:

- Access to information was granted in part for three (3) applications in this reporting year
- Three (3) requests were not processed
- No documents existed for two (2) applications
- Access was denied in full in three (3) instances as the information was outside of the Act.

Public Interest Disclosures

In accordance with section 69 of the *Protected Disclosure Act 2012* a council must include in their annual report information about how to access the procedures established by the Council under Part 9 of that Act. It is also required to provide certain information about the number and types of protected disclosures complaints investigated during the financial year. Council is a Nominated Agency under the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* with the power to receive disclosures relating to its employees, contractors, Council registered volunteers, Council appointed committee members or Councillors.

The Act requires Council to appoint a Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator and to set out clear policies and procedures for the receipt and referral of public interest disclosures to the relevant authority for further investigation. Council adopted its Public Interest Disclosures Policy in April 2025.

Council takes its obligations as a Nominated Agency very seriously. While we are unable to determine the outcome of a public interest disclosure, we play a vital role in the receipt of complaints and provision of information for consideration by other bodies such as the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission, the Victorian Inspectorate and the Integrity and Oversight Committee.

Council also wishes to assure anyone lodging, or thinking of lodging, a public interest disclosure that they will be dealt with in a confidential and supportive manner in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

We will also protect the confidentiality and welfare of others involved in any investigation as the welfare of all those involved in the matter is of paramount importance to us. We will deal with any disclosure expeditiously and as a matter of operational priority.

Our policy and procedures apply to all Strathbogie Shire Council employees, Councillors and members of Council appointed committees are designed to ensure:

- Council meets its legislated obligations under the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* in relation to the receipt, initial assessment and any subsequent referral of a public interest disclosure to IBAC or another investigative entity
- that Council employees and the community are provided with clear and consistent advice as to how a disclosure can be made, how it will be assessed and referred to an investigative entity if need be
- that a culture is created across the organisation that encourages and values the reporting of suspected improper conduct, detrimental action or corruption
- that operational priority is given to the receipt, assessment and referral of any public interest disclosure

- that a consistent and effective system is in place for the receipt and initial assessment of all disclosures made to Council
- that robust and consistent procedures are in place to protect the confidentiality and safety of the person making the public interest disclosure
- that the person making the public interest disclosure is kept informed of the progress of their complaint, is supported throughout the process and that no reprisals will result from them making the disclosure
- that processes are in place to protect the confidentiality and wellbeing of the person(s) whom are the subject of the disclosure and those cooperating with any investigation into the matter.

There was one public interest disclosures received by officers appointed to receive disclosures, or by the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC) during 2024-25.

Further information about how to make a public interest disclosure can be obtained confidentially by contacting Council's Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator, Director People and Governance.

Alternatively, disclosures can be made directly to IBAC at www.ibac.vic.gov.au or through the Office of the Victorian Ombudsman at www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au.

Infrastructure and Development Contributions

Council reported \$92,000.00 open space contributions from developers during the 2024-25 financial year.

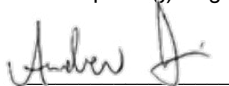


Performance Statement



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

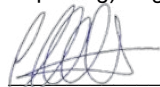
Dated: 23 September 2025

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.

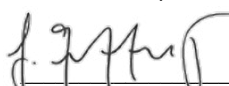
We have been authorised by the council and by the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 to certify this performance statement in its final form.



Claire Ewart-Kennedy

Mayor

Dated: 23 September 2025



Scott Jeffery

Deputy Mayor

Dated: 23 September 2025



Rachelle Quattrocchi

Chief Executive Officer

Dated: 23 September 2025



Independent Auditor’s Report

To the Councillors of Strathbogie Shire Council

Opinion	I have audited the accompanying performance statement of Strathbogie Shire Council (the council) which comprises the: • description of municipality for the year ended 30 June 2025 • sustainable capacity indicators for the year ended 30 June 2025 • service performance indicators for the year ended 30 June 2025 • financial performance indicators for the year ended 30 June 2025 • notes to the accounts • certification of the performance statement. In my opinion, the performance statement of Strathbogie Shire Council in respect of the year ended 30 June 2025 presents fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with the performance reporting requirements of Part 4 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020.
Basis for Opinion	I have conducted my audit in accordance with the <i>Audit Act 1994</i> which incorporates the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the <i>Auditor’s Responsibilities for the Audit of the performance statement</i> section of my report. My independence is established by the <i>Constitution Act 1975</i>. 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 <i>Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants</i> (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 <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and 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.

Level 31 / 35 Collins Street, Melbourne Vic 3000
T 03 8601 7000 enquiries@audit.vic.gov.au www.audit.vic.gov.au

Auditor’s responsibilities for the audit of the performance statement	As required by the <i>Audit Act 1994</i>, 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
29 September 2025



Travis Derricott
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

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.

2. Service Performance Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	2022	2023	2024	2025		
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	
Aquatic Facilities Utilisation <i>Utilisation of aquatic facilities</i> [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 <i>Animal management prosecutions</i> [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. No matters escalated to a severity that required prosecution, and therefore legal action was not warranted during this time.
Food Safety Health and Safety <i>Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications</i> [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%	0%	N/A	0%	There has been nil critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications during the reporting period.
Governance Satisfaction <i>Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement</i> [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 <i>Library membership</i> [Percentage of the population that are registered library members] x100	N/A	N/A	36.52%	N/A	31.25%	Library membership decreased in the 2024-25 reporting period due to changes in how School online memberships were recorded.

	2022	2023	2024	2025		
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	
Maternal and Child Health Participation <i>Participation in the MCH service</i> [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.
Maternal and Child Health Participation <i>Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children</i> [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 <i>Sealed local roads below the intervention level</i> [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 <i>Planning applications decided within the relevant required time</i> [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 <i>Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill</i> [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.

3. Financial Performance Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	2022	2023	2024	2025		2026	2027	2028	2029	
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	
Efficiency Expenditure level <i>Expenses per property assessment</i> [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 <i>Average rate per property assessment</i> [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 <i>Current assets compared to current liabilities</i> [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.

	2022	2023	2024	2025		2026	2027	2028	2029	
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	
Unrestricted cash <i>Unrestricted cash compared to current liabilities</i> [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 <i>Loans and borrowings compared to rates</i> [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.
Obligations Loans and borrowings <i>Loans and borrowings repayments compared to rates</i> [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 <i>Non-current liabilities compared to own source revenue</i> [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%	

	2022	2023	2024	2025		2026	2027	2028	2029	
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	
Asset renewal and upgrade <i>Asset renewal and upgrade compared to depreciation</i> [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 <i>Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)</i> [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 <i>Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue</i> [Rate revenue / Adjusted underlying revenue] x100	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 the range of 60 to 65% in future years.
Rates effort <i>Rates compared to property values</i> [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%	

4. Sustainable Capacity Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	2022	2023	2024	2025	
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	
Population <i>Expenses per head of municipal population</i>	\$2,628.01	\$3,436.34	\$3,329.59	\$3,358.31	
Population <i>Infrastructure per head of municipal population</i> [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 <i>Population density per length of road</i> [Municipal population / Kilometres of local roads]	5.29	5.20	5.28	5.35	
Own-source revenue <i>Own-source revenue per head of municipal population</i> [Own-source revenue / Municipal population]	\$2,039.13	\$2,159.59	\$2,199.95	\$2,238.49	
Recurrent grants <i>Recurrent grants per head of municipal population</i> [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 <i>Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage</i> [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 <i>Percentage of staff turnover</i> [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%	

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 <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006</i>
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 <i>Food Act 1984</i> , 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 <i>Food Act 1984</i>
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 <i>Road Management Act 2004</i>
major non-compliance outcome notification	means a notification received by a council under section 19N(3) or (4) of the <i>Food Act 1984</i> , 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, steady 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.

Report of Operations

Service Performance Indicators

The following statement provides the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures including explanation of results in the comments.

Service / indicator / measure	2022	2023	2024	2025	Comments
Aquatic Facilities					
Service standard					
<i>Health inspections of aquatic facilities</i> [Number of authorised officer inspections of Council aquatic facilities/Number of Council aquatic facilities]	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.75	There has been a 75% increase in inspections. A total of 7 health inspections were completed. This included 4 standard pool inspections (1 visit per pool), 2 follow up inspections and 1 complaint inspection.
Utilisation					
<i>Utilisation of aquatic facilities</i> [Number of visits to aquatic facilities/Population]	1.64	0.75	1.22	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.
Service cost					
<i>Cost of aquatic facilities</i> [Direct cost of aquatic facilities less income received/Number of visits to aquatic facilities]	\$19.06	\$37.21	\$46.01	\$29.42	There have been lower costs for the 2024-25 reporting period, however higher usage, contributing to the materiality variance.
Animal Management					
Timeliness					
<i>Time taken to action animal management requests</i> [Number of days between receipt and first response action for all animal management requests/Number of animal management requests]	1.50	1.50	3.34	2.32	There was a notable decrease due to improved internal processes, improved triaging, clearer assessment criteria which resulted in efficient handling of service requests.
Service standard					
<i>Animals reclaimed</i> [Number of animals reclaimed/Number of animals collected] x100	86.27%	67.86%	76.04%	62.82%	There's been a drop in animals reclaimed, likely linked to cost-of-living pressures making it harder for some owners to cover associated fees.
<i>Animals reclaimed</i> [Number of animals reclaimed/Number of animals collected] x100	11.76%	6.25%	26.09%	68.97%	There was a significant increase in the number of animals rehomed compared to the previous year. This uplift is largely due to Strathbogie Shire now operating its own pound facility and managing the rehoming process internally. In the previous year, rehoming numbers were lower as the facility had only recently opened, limiting capacity and processes were still being established.

Service / indicator / measure	2022	2023	2024	2025	Comments
Service cost					
<i>Cost of animal management service per population</i> [Direct cost of the animal management service/ Population]	\$10.91	\$11.02	\$15.60	\$14.82	The costs slightly reduced this year, with a full year of operating the Pound facility in house. This allowed for greater control over expenses, with a conscious focus on purchasing and improving service efficiency.
Health and safety					
<i>Animal management prosecutions</i> [Number of successful animal management prosecutions/Number of animal management prosecutions] x100	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	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. No matters escalated to a severity that required prosecution, and therefore legal action was not warranted during this time.
Food Safety					
Timeliness					
<i>Time taken to action food complaints</i> [Number of days between receipt and first response action for all food complaints/ Number of food complaints]	8.00	4.33	2.20	2.25	
Service standard					
<i>Food safety assessments</i> [Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that receive an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the <i>Food Act 1984</i> /Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that require an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the <i>Food Act 1984</i>] x100	77.45%	32.41%	66.98%	71.43%	
<i>Food safety samples</i> [Number of food samples obtained / Required number of food samples] x100	New	New	62%	107.14%	This improvement reflects the outcome of employing an additional part-time Environmental Health Officer throughout 2024 to support food sampling collection.
Service cost					
<i>Cost of food safety service</i> [Direct cost of the food safety service / Number of food premises registered or notified in accordance with the <i>Food Act 1984</i>]	\$478.50	\$540.45	\$841.77	\$999.60	A full year of an additional part time EHO salary costs, as well as higher food sampling expenses due to an increase in the number of samples collected.

Service / indicator / measure	2022	2023	2024	2025	Comments
Health and safety <i>Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications</i> [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	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	There has been nil critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications during the reporting period.
Governance					
Transparency <i>Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public</i> [Number of Council resolutions made at meetings of Council, or at meetings of a delegated committee consisting only of Councillors, closed to the public / Number of Council resolutions made at meetings of Council or at meetings of a delegated committee consisting only of Councillors] x100	1.00%	0.45%	1.49%	1.79%	There has been a 20% increase in council decisions made at meetings closed to the public since last year, this is due to items requiring consideration as confidential business. These items are included in Council Agendas supported by Confidential Business Certificates.
Consultation and engagement <i>Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement</i> [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on community consultation and engagement]	52.00	50.00	44.00	50.00	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.
Attendance <i>Councillor attendance at council meetings</i> [The sum of the number of Councillors who attended each Council meeting / (Number of Council meetings) x (Number of Councillors elected at the last Council general election)] x100	92.86%	88.89%	99.05%	66.96%	There has been a 32% decrease in councillor attendance at meetings since last year. This is due to suspension of the Councillors of the Strathbogie Shire from 6 December 2023 to 6am on election day, 26 October 2024, during this time.

Service / indicator / measure	2022	2023	2024	2025	Comments
Service cost					
<i>Cost of elected representation</i> [Direct cost of the governance service / Number of Councillors elected at the last Council general election]	\$50,380.71	\$59,354.43	\$66,226.29	\$64,264.00	
Satisfaction					
<i>Satisfaction with council decisions</i> [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed in making decisions in the interest of the community]	51.00	47.00	37.00	46.00	There has been a 24% increase in satisfaction with council decisions since last year. This improvement suggests that efforts to improve transparency and communication with the community are being well-received and are having a positive impact.
Libraries					
Resource currency					
<i>Recently purchased library collection</i> [Number of library collection items purchased in the last 5 years / Number of library collection items] x100	53.19%	53.42%	156.13%	62.84%	The recently purchased library collection items were incorrectly reported for the 2023-24 reporting period. The Actual figure for 2023-24 was 28,839 items. This being within the materiality threshold for 2024-25 decrease of 5.15%
Service cost					
<i>Cost of library service per population</i> [Direct cost of the library service / Population]	\$17.84	\$24.44	\$21.45	\$31.97	Increase in costs includes direct financial contribution to the Library corporation from Strathbogie Shire Council. In addition, direct rental costs have been incurred for the new Nagambie library premise during this reporting period.
Utilisation					
<i>Loans per head of population</i> [Number of library collection item loans / Population]	New	New	7.05	7.21	Mobile Library and HQ collection items are allocated equally between municipalities.
Participation					
<i>Library membership</i> [Number of registered library members / Population] x100	New	New	37%	31.25%	Library membership decreased in the 2024-25 reporting period due to changes in how School online memberships were recorded.
<i>Library visits per head of population</i> [Number of library visits / Population]	New	New	4.44	4.45	Australia Bureau of Statistics used - Population estimates by Local Government area.

Service / indicator / measure	2022	2023	2024	2025	Comments
Maternal and Child Health (MCH)					
Service standard					
<i>Infant enrolments in the MCH service</i> [Number of infants enrolled in the MCH service (from birth notifications received) / Number of birth notifications received] x100	98.81%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	
Service cost					
<i>Cost of the MCH service</i> [Cost of the MCH service / Hours worked by MCH nurses]	\$40.84	\$88.83	\$109.24	\$112.29	
Participation					
<i>Participation in the MCH service</i> [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%	71.37%	Participation in MCH services have remained steady and on a par with the previous reporting period.
<i>Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children</i> [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%	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.
Satisfaction					
<i>Participation in 4-week Key Age and Stage visit</i> [Number of 4-week key age and stage visits / Number of birth notifications received] x100	110.71%	94.94%	91.76%	110.34%	A 20.25 increase in the 4-week key age and stage visit is a result of new enrolments into the service. This is evidenced in Council's enrolment numbers with Council receiving 87 birth notifications but a total of 93 new enrolments for the reporting period. Also contributing to the percentage increase is the timing of births and the 4-week key age and stage visit, births occurring in June are having their 4 week visit in July crossing through to the next reporting period. When the data is extrapolated out over the 2023-2024 period and 2024-2025 period there are 172 birth notifications in total and 174 total attending 4-week key age and stage visits.

Service / indicator / measure	2022	2023	2024	2025	Comments
Roads					
Satisfaction of use					
Sealed local road requests [Number of sealed local road requests / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100	24.00	34.96	25.09	17.41	This could be a reflection of the focus on Inland Rail whereby calls are sent directly to the project as opposed to Council.
Condition					
Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards [Number of kilometres of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100	99.91%	99.87%	99.93%	80.84%	Accelerated deterioration 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.
Service cost					
Cost of sealed local road reconstruction [Direct cost of sealed local road reconstruction / Square metres of sealed local roads reconstructed]	\$32.92	\$37.61	\$89.35	\$36.82	This reduction represents the gains achieved as a result of the focused high volume of work completed.
Cost of sealed local road resealing [Direct cost of sealed local road resealing / Square metres of sealed local roads resealed]	\$4.82	\$4.77	\$4.24	\$5.61	Costs in this area, secured through tender, are rising across the industry, a reflection of increased material costs and increasing demand as a result of the big build.
Satisfaction					
Satisfaction with sealed local roads [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed on the condition of sealed local roads]	47.00	45.00	40.00	39.00	The impact of extreme weather events, suspending normal operations and consuming resources, has meant that reactive maintenance is behind and will take time to catch up. In addition, many roads are showing signs of delayed reaction to flooding and saturation, e.g. breakdown of seals.

Service / indicator / measure	2022	2023	2024	2025	Comments
Statutory Planning					
Timeliness <i>Time taken to decide planning applications</i> [The median number of days between receipt of a planning application and a decision on the application]	71.00	91.00	90.50	57.00	This improvement reflects our commitment to delivering a more efficient and responsive planning service, giving residents, landowners, and businesses greater certainty and supporting local investment.
Service standard <i>Planning applications decided within required time frames</i> [(Number of regular planning application decisions made within 60 days) + (Number of VicSmart planning application decisions made within 10 days) / Number of planning application decisions made] x100	78.25%	75.42%	89.19%	83.84%	Planning applications decided within timeframes remains steady and within the target range.
Service cost <i>Cost of statutory planning service</i> [Direct cost of the statutory planning service / Number of planning applications received]	\$2,347.23	\$3,833.02	\$4,971.71	\$6,537.46	This is largely due to the complexity of applications and the need to resource the service adequately to maintain quality outcomes. Council remains committed to ensuring that the planning service is both sustainable and effective in meeting the needs of our growing community.
Decision making <i>Council planning decisions upheld at VCAT</i> [Number of VCAT decisions that did not set aside council's decision in relation to a planning application / Number of VCAT decisions in relation to planning applications] x100	66.67%	100.00%	100.00%	0.00%	Only one matter went to VCAT for full merit hearing and VCAT did not support Council's decision in this case. We respect the process and will use the feedback to strengthen future planning decisions for our community. It is important to mention that two matters were resolved at VCAT via compulsory conference process to achieve good planning outcomes.

Service / indicator / measure	2022	2023	2024	2025	Comments
Waste Management					
Service standard					
<i>Kerbside collection bins missed</i> [Number of kerbside garbage and recycling collection bins missed / Number of scheduled kerbside garbage and recycling collection bin lifts] x10,000	2.31	6.11	7.97	12.43	It appears that the increase in missed bin reports over the past 12 months may be associated with the conclusion of the contract with Cleanaway. During this period, there has been a noticeable rise in service issues, which could suggest a shift in operational priorities or resourcing.
Service cost					
<i>Cost of kerbside garbage bin collection service</i> [Direct cost of the kerbside garbage bin collection service / Number of kerbside garbage collection bins]	\$112.13	\$143.94	\$91.40	\$138.24	It was discovered that there was an error in calculating this cost in the previous financial year which reported the cost lower than actual. The cost this year seems higher due to the incorrect figure last year.
<i>Cost of kerbside recyclables collection service</i> [Direct cost of the kerbside recyclables bin collection service / Number of kerbside recyclables collection bins]	\$137.56	\$172.42	\$152.10	\$152.36	
Waste diversion					
<i>Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill</i> [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%	68.59%	Waste diverted from landfill remains steady and is within the target range.

Financial Report

Strathbogie Shire Council

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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 : 23 September 2025
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
Mayor
Dated : 23 September 2025
Euroa



Cr Scott Jeffery
Deputy Mayor
Dated : 23 September 2025
Euroa



Rachelle Quattrocchi
Chief Executive Officer
Dated : 23 September 2025
Euroa



Independent Auditor's Report

To the Councillors of Strathbogie Shire Council

Opinion	I have audited the financial report of Strathbogie Shire Council (the council) which comprises the: • balance sheet as at 30 June 2025 • comprehensive income statement for the year then ended • statement of changes in equity for the year then ended • statement of cash flows for the year then ended • statement of capital works for the year then ended • notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information • certification of the financial statements. In my opinion the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the council as at 30 June 2025 and their financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of Part 4 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>, the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 and applicable Australian Accounting Standards.
Basis for Opinion	I have conducted my audit in accordance with the <i>Audit Act 1994</i> which incorporates the Australian Auditing Standards. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the <i>Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report</i> section of my report. My independence is established by the <i>Constitution Act 1975</i>. 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 <i>Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants</i> (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report 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 financial report	The Councillors of the council are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020, and for such internal control as the Councillors determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial report, the Councillors are responsible for assessing the council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is inappropriate to do so.

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Auditor’s responsibilities for the audit of the financial report	As required by the <i>Audit Act 1994</i>, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report 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 Auditing Standards 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 economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report. As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also: • identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, 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 appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Councillors • conclude on the appropriateness of the Councillors’ use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the council’s ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor’s report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor’s report. However, future events or conditions may cause the council to cease to continue as a going concern. • evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events 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
29 September 2025



Travis Derricott
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

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		4,395,049	(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	80,203,490	23,193,445
Total other comprehensive income		80,203,490	23,193,445
Total comprehensive result		84,598,539	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

	Note	Total \$	Accumulated Surplus \$	Revaluation Reserve \$	Other Reserves \$
2025					
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
		<u>477,542,222</u>	<u>128,461,461</u>	<u>348,635,717</u>	<u>445,043</u>
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
		<u>392,943,682</u>	<u>124,158,467</u>	<u>268,432,227</u>	<u>352,988</u>
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

		2025 Inflows/ (Outflows) \$	2024 Inflows/ (Outflows) \$
	Note		
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		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		<u>1,526,513</u>	<u>1,184,773</u>
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		<u>1,346,064</u>	<u>1,122,279</u>
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		<u>6,863,666</u>	<u>9,600,384</u>
* Total capital works expenditure		<u>9,736,243</u>	<u>11,907,436</u>
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 *		<u>9,736,243</u>	<u>11,907,436</u>
* Reconciliation of Statement of Capital Works to Notes			
Additions as per Note 6.1 Property, Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment		9,688,946	
Additions as per Note 5.2 (b) Intangible assets		47,297	
Total capital works expenditure		<u>9,736,243</u>	

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	4,395,049	3,971,049	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.

2.2.2 Summary of income / revenue, expenses, assets and capital expenses by program

	Income / Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Grants included in income / revenue	Total assets
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
2025					
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

	Income / Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Grants included in income / revenue	Total assets
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
2024					
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

3.1 Rates and charges

	2025	2024
	\$	\$

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		
<i>Recurrent - Commonwealth Government</i>		
Financial Assistance Grants	10,788,653	300,656
<i>Recurrent - State Government</i>		
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
<i>Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government</i>		
Emergency & Disaster Management	202,357	500,000
<i>Non-recurrent - State Government</i>		
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		
<i>Recurrent - Commonwealth Government</i>		
Roads to recovery	1,566,581	1,737,470
Total recurrent capital grants	1,566,581	1,737,470
<i>Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government</i>		
Infrastructure Funding Grant	1,761,109	2,946,078
Drought Funding	-	100,000
Nagambie Locksley Road Bridge	-	600,000
<i>Non-recurrent - State Government</i>		
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	132,769	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

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
3.5 Contributions		
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

4.1 (a) Employee costs

	2025 \$	2024 \$
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

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
(c) Trade and other receivables		
Current		
<i>Statutory receivables</i>		
Rates debtors	4,178,577	3,417,787
Special rate assessment	15,095	13,860
Net GST receivable	190,920	468,215
<i>Non statutory receivables</i>		
Other debtors	1,607,600	804,465
Allowance for expected credit loss - other debtors	(10,586)	(7,351)
Total current trade and other receivables	<u>5,981,606</u>	<u>4,696,976</u>
Non-current		
<i>Statutory receivables</i>		
Special rate scheme	8,602	12,426
Total non-current trade and other receivables	<u>8,602</u>	<u>12,426</u>
Total trade and other receivables	<u>5,990,208</u>	<u>4,709,402</u>

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	<u>1,607,600</u>	<u>804,465</u>

(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	<u>6,226</u>	<u>-</u>

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
(f) Contract assets		
Contract assets	1,710,338	2,228,093
Total contract assets	<u>1,710,338</u>	<u>2,228,093</u>

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.

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		
<i>Non-statutory payables</i>		
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	132,769	542,425
Grants received in advance - capital	748,920	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 Federal 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 charge 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

	Employee \$	Landfill restoration \$	Total \$
2025			
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
<i>Provisions - current</i>	2,558,029	53,767	2,611,796
<i>Provisions - non-current</i>	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
<i>Provisions - current</i>	2,832,908	52,101	2,885,009
<i>Provisions - non-current</i>	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

	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
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
2025					
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
	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
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
2024					
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 existing 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

* \$237,531 have been written-off to maintenance expense, out of the total write-off of \$451,545.

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 increment (\$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	-	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 did not include condition data, however, 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 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 roads assets, including a condition assessment, 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 inhouse valuation for Roads and Kerb and Channel. Fair Value for Bridges was assessed against the ABS 3101 series, however, there had not been a material change in fair value for this asset class. A full revaluation of Bridges assets, including a condition assessment, is planned to be conducted in 2025/26.

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. A full revaluation of footpaths and cycleways, including an internal condition assessment, is planned to be conducted in 2025/26.

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. The next internal revaluation of Drainage assets is planned to be conducted in 2026/27.

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

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
6.2 Investments in associates, joint arrangements and subsidiaries		
(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 6.2.

(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 - 5 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	1,359,694	1,267,019
Other long-term employee benefits	14,886	257,664
Post-employment benefits	117,065	117,286
Termination benefits	70,667	-
Total	1,562,312	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	1	3
\$10,000 - \$19,999	2	4
\$20,000 - \$29,999	4	-
\$30,000 - \$39,999	1	3
\$40,000 - \$49,999	1	-
\$60,000 - \$69,999	2	-
\$70,000 - \$79,999	2	-
\$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	1	-
\$230,000 - \$239,999	1	1
\$240,000 - \$249,999	1	-
\$280,000 - \$289,999	-	1
\$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	338,039	340,654
Other long-term employee benefits	4,920	4,389
Post-employment benefits	43,287	27,057
Termination benefits	-	-
Total	<u>386,246</u>	<u>372,100</u>

The number of other senior staff are shown below in their relevant income bands:

Income Range:	2025 No.	2024 No.
\$170,000 - \$179,999	-	1
\$180,000 - \$189,999	1	-
\$190,000 - \$199,999	1	1
	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>

Total remuneration for the reporting year for other senior staff included above, amounted to:

386,246 372,100

Notes to the Financial Report For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

7.2 Related party disclosure	2025	2024
(a) Transactions with related parties	\$	\$
During the period Council entered into the following transactions with related parties.		
<i>Contribution expenses - Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation</i>	294,522	290,648
<i>Goulburn Region Tourism Inc</i>	39,000	-
<i>Other Related Party Expenses *</i>	19,064	42,765
<i>Euroa Caravan Park - Operating and Capital Expenses **</i>		71,729
<i>Euroa Caravan Park - Lease Income **</i>		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:

<i>Euroa Caravan Park - Commitments to related parties - Amount allocated for specific purposes **</i>	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 Disaster 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 infrastructure 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 channel, the annual depreciation express for these asset classes 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

2025

Property

Land and land improvements
Buildings **

	Balance at beginning of reporting period	* Increase (decrease)	Balance at end of reporting period
	\$	\$	\$
	25,593,438	-	25,593,438
	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
Bridges **
Footpaths and cycleways
Drainage
Parks, open space and streetscapes **
Kerb and channel
Other infrastructure

	128,267,477	73,781,401	202,048,878
	40,600,896	67,430	40,668,326
	3,034,881	1,443,081	4,477,962
	11,339,619	3,427,745	14,767,364
	9,429,399	116,448	9,545,847
	3,423,614	1,415,583	4,839,197
	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
Buildings

	20,417,160	5,176,278	25,593,438
	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
Bridges
Footpaths and cycleways
Drainage
Parks, open space and streetscapes
Kerb and channel
Other infrastructure

	128,267,477	-	128,267,477
	40,736,302	(135,407)	40,600,896
	3,034,881	-	3,034,881
	11,339,619	-	11,339,619
	7,386,277	2,043,122	9,429,399
	3,423,614	-	3,423,614
	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

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
9.2 Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities to surplus/(deficit)		
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	4,395,049	(3,605,891)
<i>Non-cash adjustments:</i>		
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.

Note 10 CHANGE IN ACCOUNTING POLICY

There have been no changes to accounting policies in the 2024-25 year.

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9am to 5pm

NAGAMBIE CUSTOMER SERVICE

352 High Street, Nagambie
VIC 3608 Australia

Open Monday to Friday
9am to 4pm

12 Notice of Motion

13 Notice of Rescission

14 Confidential Business

15 Urgent Business

16 Next Meeting

The next meeting of Strathbogie Shire Council will be held on 18 November 2025 commencing at 4:00 pm.

17 Close of Meeting

There being no further business the meeting closed at pm.