



Council Meeting Agenda

Wednesday 28 May 2025 at 6:00pm

Community Hub, 48 Burns Street,
Maryborough and livestreamed on the
internet.

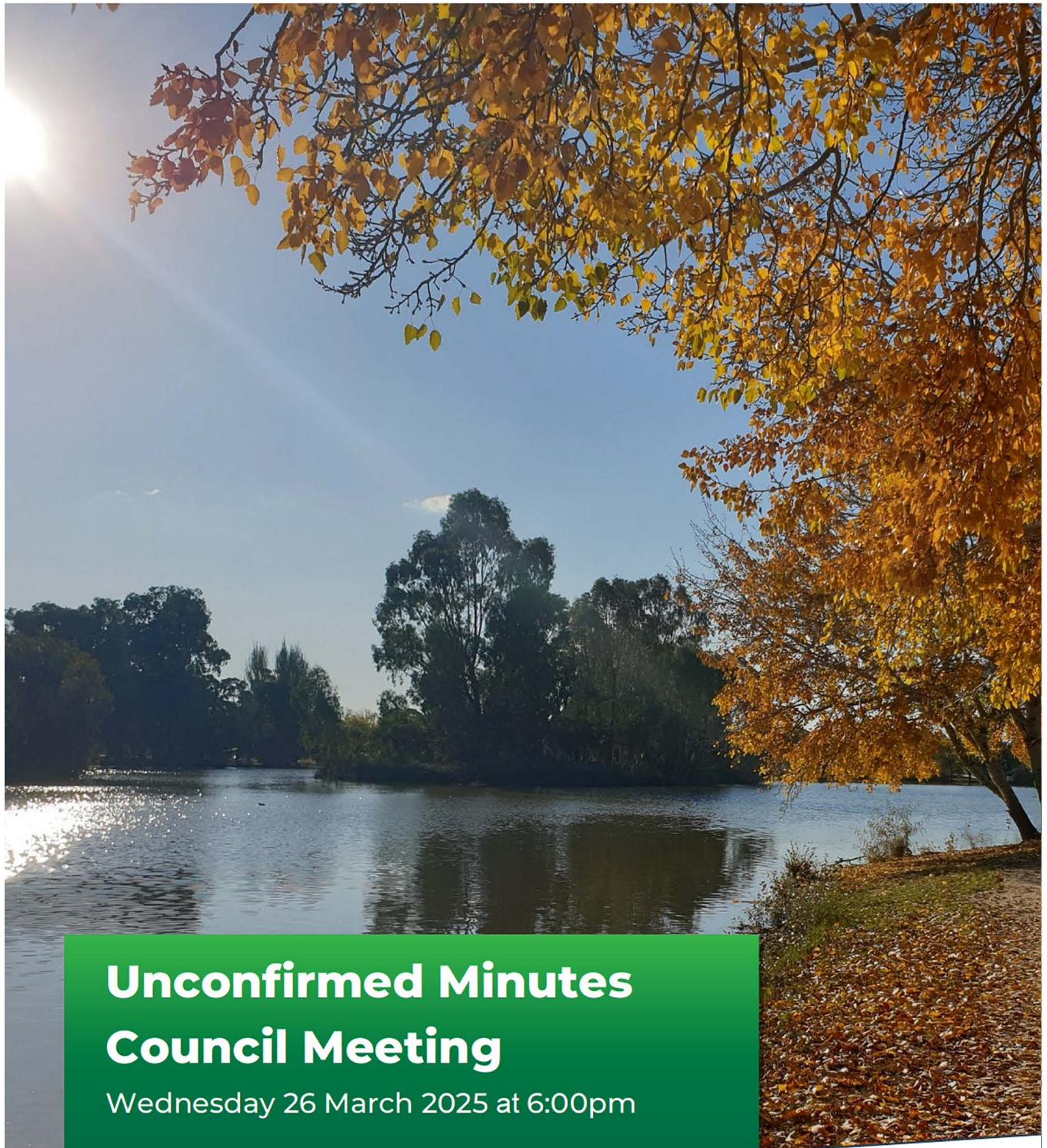
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RECOMMENDATION

That Council confirms the following Council Minutes for 26 March 2025 and Special Council Minutes for 30 April 2025.

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Unconfirmed Minutes Council Meeting

Wednesday 26 March 2025 at 6:00pm

Maryborough Town Hall
71 Clarendon Street, Maryborough



The meeting commenced at 6.00pm.

PRESENT

Councillors:

Grace La Vella (Mayor)
Ben Green (Deputy Mayor)
Geoff Bartlett

Liesbeth Long
Jake Meyer
Gerard Murphy

Officers:

Interim Chief Executive Officer, Sally Jones
General Manager Assets Infrastructure and Planning, Amber Ricks
General Manager Community Wellbeing, Emma Little
Manager Governance Property and Risk, Cecilia Connellan

1 Welcome

The Mayor, Cr La Vella welcomed attendees to the meeting and then read an Acknowledgement of Country and the Council Prayer.

2 Apologies

Nil.

3 Leave of Absence

Cr Anna de Villiers has Leave of Absence for this meeting.

4 Conflict of Interest

Ms Jones declared a conflict of interest in Item 8.1.1, as the report relates to the role of the Chief Executive Officer of Council.

Cr Long declared a conflict of interest in Item 8.2.3.

Cr Long is President of the Central Goldfields Bushwalking & Hiking Club Inc, and the Club together with the Castlemaine Maryborough Rail Trail, oppose the Broiler Farm developments. On Sunday 16 March 2025, they organised a walk along the Moloort Plains railway line from the Moloort Silo to Bald Hill to consider the likely impact that this development would have on the proposed Rail Trail.

5 Confirmation of Minutes from Previous Council Meetings

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 26 February 2025 and the Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on 12 March 2025 be confirmed.

Moved: Cr Bartlett

Seconder: Cr Green

CARRIED

6 Minutes of Delegated and Advisory Committees

Nil.

7 Petitions

Nil.

8 Officer Reports

Ms Jones had declared a Conflict of Interest in Item 8.1.1 and therefore left the meeting here, prior to any discussion or voting taking place on the item.

8.1 Corporate Performance

8.1.1 Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy

The purpose of this report is to recommend the adoption of the Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That Council adopt the amended Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy, provided as attachment 1 to this report.

Moved: Cr Murphy

Seconder: Cr Green

CARRIED

Ms Jones returned to the meeting here.

8.2 Infrastructure Assets and Planning

8.2.1 Carisbrook Flood Management Plan Reference Group Membership

This report is to inform Council on the development of an updated Carisbrook Flood Management Plan, including project scope and outputs, as well as the proposed membership of the Carisbrook Flood Plan Advisory Reference Group (FSARG) and associated Terms of Reference.

A Public Expression of Interest (EOI) process was undertaken for the selection of two (2) community members to join the Reference Group and one (1) community member to serve on both the Reference Group and the Tender Panel.

While the committee is not a statutory committee of Council, officers propose that Council formally appoint the community members and a Councillor to the committee by resolution of Council given the public interest in flood mitigation.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That Council:

1. Endorses the Draft Flood Study Advisory and Reference Group Terms of Reference;
2. Appoints three (3) community members to the Flood Study Advisory and Reference Group as noted in the Draft Terms of Reference, one of whom will serve on the tender panel for the procurement of the project consultant; and
3. Appoints Cr de Villiers to the Flood Study Advisory and Reference Group, to provide community support.

Moved: Cr Murphy

Seconder: Cr Long

CARRIED

8.2.2 DO 44- 23 42 Victoria Street Carisbrook

This report is for planning permit application no. D044/23 for the two-lot subdivision of the land at 42 Victoria Street, Carisbrook and subdivision adjacent to a road in Transport Zone 2.

Public notice of the application has been given and four objections received.

A permit decision was deferred at the Council meeting held on the 28th of November 2023.

The Application has been assessed against the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme, and it is considered that the proposed subdivision is appropriate. A peer review of the planning assessment has been completed.

Following briefing, Councillors called the application in to recommence the decision process.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That Council:

- A) Receive and note the late information submitted by Mr Wayne McKail on behalf of Mrs Judi McKail and provided as Attachment 1.

B) Having caused notice of planning permit application no. D044/23 to be given under section 52 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme and having considered all the matters generally required, including correspondence received following receipt of the officers report, resolves to refuse a planning permit and issue a Notice of Decision to Refuse a Permit in respect of planning permit application no. D044/23 for the land known and described as 42 Victoria Street, Carisbrook, for the 2 lot subdivision of the land, creation of access to and subdivision adjacent to a road in a Transport Zone 2; on the following grounds:

1. The land is subject to Clause 44.04 Land Subject to Inundation Overlay and Councillors are not satisfied that the proposal minimises the potential flood risk to life, health and safety.
2. The land is subject to a Land Use Framework Plan and a future Structure Plan and a Flood Study and the proposal does not ensure that development maintains the free passage and temporary storage of floodwaters, minimises flood damage, responds to the flood hazard and local drainage conditions and will not cause any significant rise in flood level or flow velocity from future dwelling development.

Moved: Cr Murphy

Seconder: Cr Green

CARRIED

At the request of Cr La Vella, it was noted that Crs La Vella and Long voted against the Motion.

Cr Long had declared a Conflict of Interest in Item 8.2.3 and therefore left the meeting here, prior to any discussion or voting taking place on the item.

The Mayor, Cr La Vella informed the Meeting to note that a very late objection had been received from Ms Ann Berg.

8.2.3 DO 031-24 39 Clarkes Road Moolort

The purpose of this report is to seek a Council determination for planning permit application for DO 031-24 use and development of the land for a Farm Cluster broiler farm for up to 445,000 birds and two caretakers' houses with associated buildings and works at 39 Clarkes Road, Moolort, and 141 Clarkes Road, Strathlea.

Notice of the application has been given as the proposal is classified as a Farm Cluster broiler farm under the *Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 (plus 2018 amendments)*.

As a result, eleven (11) objections and two (2) neutral submissions have been received (at the time of reporting).

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That Council:

- A) Receive and note the late information submitted by: Mr Geoff Park (provided as Attachment 1) and Ms Allison Teese (provided as Attachment 2).
- B) As the Responsible Authority and pursuant to Section 61 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, decides to refuse a permit subject to conditions and issue a Notice of Decision to Refuse a Permit in respect of planning permit application no. 031-24 for the use and development of the land for a Farm Cluster broiler farm for up to 445,000 birds and two caretakers' houses with associated buildings and works at 39 Clarkes Road, Moolort, and 141 Clarkes Road, Strathlea on the following grounds:
1. The proposal is inconsistent with the Municipal Planning Statement and Planning Policy Framework of the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme including Clause 12 (Environmental and Landscape Values), 13 (Environmental Risks and Amenity), 14 (Natural Resource Management) and 15 (Built Environment and Heritage), as the proposed cluster broiler farm would be contrary to policy framework that respectively seeks to protect landscape values, residential amenity and environmental values.
 2. The proposal is not compliant with the purpose and decision guidelines of Clause 35.07 (Farming Zone) of the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme, as the proposed cluster broiler farm would be incompatible with the amenity of nearby dwellings, would result in detrimental environmental impacts including to soil and water quality as well as impacts to water bodies and biodiversity, and by the location and design of the proposal in a rural landscape.
 3. The proposal is not compliant with the purpose and decision guidelines of Clause 53.09 (Poultry Farm) of the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme due to the appearance of the buildings and works, the need to protect the amenity of adjoining and nearby land uses, the impact of emissions from the site, impact on wetlands and water bodies and the impact upon biodiversity.
 4. The proposal is not compliant with the purpose and decision guidelines of Clause 65.01 (Decision Guidelines - Approval of an Application or Plan) of the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme, as the proposal would be contrary to orderly planning, and would result in detrimental amenity, and environmental impacts.
 5. The proposal is contrary to the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms (Department of Primary Industries 2009, plus 2018 amendments), an Incorporated Document within the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme, including standards of the Broiler Code that relate to stormwater drainage, waste management and landscape qualities.
 6. The proposal would result in an inappropriately high population of birds to be produced by the additional cluster broiler farm sheds.
 7. The proposal would result in detrimental impacts to the landscape values of the site and surrounds by the elevated location of the subject land and the significant built form of the cluster broiler farm sheds.
 8. The proposal would result in detrimental amenity impacts to residential properties in vicinity of the subject land by way of inappropriate visual, odour, lighting and noise effects.

9. The proposal would result in detrimental environmental impacts to the Moolort Plains including water bodies and water quality in addition to the ecology of this locality including native birdlife.
10. The proposal would be contrary to orderly planning by way of allowing a conflicting consent for similar development in the same location on the subject land as an existing valid planning permit issued by the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, as well as by inappropriately extending the timeline of approval for broiler development in this location since the original permit was granted.

Moved: Cr Murphy

Seconder: Cr Green

CARRIED

9 Councillor Reports and General Business

Nil.

10 Notices of Motion

Nil.

11 Urgent Business

Nil.

12 Confidential Business

Nil.

13 Meeting Closure

The Mayor, Cr La Vella closed the meeting at 6:33 pm.

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ATTACHMENTS

8.2.2 DO 44- 23 42 Victoria Street Carisbrook

Attachment 1

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: Council meeting March 26th Item 8.2.2DO 44- 23 42 Victoria Street Carisbrook
Date: Saturday, 22 March 2025 8:44:51 AM

To whom this may concern.

Dear Sir, Madam.

I am Wayne Mackail and I am writing on behalf of my wife , Judith McKail) with the intention of having the correct information and requirements presented in the Officers report.

Objection to the officer's recommendation

1- We would like to see the June 2023 Draft

Maryborough North, Flagstaff and carisbrook Land use Framework plan , which was done by Hnasons be tabled before any new planning applications are approved.

2- The Carisbrook levee Review has been tabled and approved, this Fred Spain review covers has many recommendations which directly affect this application.

We would like to see all studies, works and recommendations in the Levee review be done before any planning applications are approved.

3- There is mention of the NCCMA flood study 1989 with a mention of 1% level .

Permit Notes NCCMA Flood levels for the 1% AEP (100-year ARI) flood event have been determined for this area under provisions of the Water Act 1989.

NCCMA in response to the Spain levee review have agreed that a new flood study be done. We believe no planning application should be done until that NCCMA Flood study has been presented.

4- the Raising of Marion st and houses has direct effect on all houses between the Bluestone drain east to Marrion st. This issue must be rectified so Marion st does not have a daming effect on these houses. The Marion st concern has to be rectified.

5- there is a [Draft Carisbrook Independent Levee Review Implementation Plan \(PDF, 451KB\)](#) . In this plan there is (we believe) over 20 (of the 34 submitted plans which have direct effect on the application property. We would like to see the works completed and flood studies done before any application is approved.

6- there was a mention of an Internal Flood study east of the proposed levee. This was a key point which has to be done before any development or application is approved . Being aware of the actual water flow one would think is KEY to any planning approval.

7- There has been a Levee advisory committee just formed and there is a community Levee flood committee. We would suggest that before any application was approved that the local knowledge be sought, especially when having the knowledge oof those who have actually experienced the previous floods.

This is just a few suggestions and we would recommend that no application be approved

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for Carisbrook until at least the above items have been researched and reports presented.

Thank you for your time and we hope this objection to item 8.2.2 gives the councillors and council officers some insight into concerns re development in the Carsbrook are.

The task of councillors and council is to provide a safe area for the community. we ask that the thoughts when making this decision that the thoughts of future buyers, also be taken into account, as this project will have effect for every person who lives in this property from completion onwards.

It is crucial that all the correct reports, information and works be done to protect every property moving forward.

Thank you for your time.

Regards

Wayne McKail and Judith McKail

[REDACTED]

And owner of a Victorian st Carisbrook property which is four houses the application site.

Judi has lived through and experienced every flood from 1987.

Wayne move to Carisbrook in 2007 and we both now live in Maryborough

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Item 8.2.3 DO 031-24 39 Clarkes Road Moolort

Attachment 1

Formal objection to the unconstrained development of industrial scale broiler farms on the Moolort Plains



18th July 2024

The purpose of this letter is to express my concern and dismay with the unconstrained development of industrial scale broiler farms on the Moolort Plains.

At the outset, I wish to express the strongest possible objection, not only to the raft of current applications, but to all future applications related to the establishment of intensive farming operations on the Moolort Plains.

My expertise

I am an ecologist and a Director of [REDACTED] an interdisciplinary consulting company concerned with all aspects of environmental decision-making. I have been a director of [REDACTED] Pty Ltd since 2013 and have more than 25 years' experience in facilitating interactions between scientists, policy makers and the community.

In recent years I have coordinated a diverse range of consultancies on biodiversity assessment, investment planning, benefit: cost analysis and evaluation across a diversity of landscapes and themes. He has extensive experience in applying structured decision-making approaches to biodiversity prioritisation, threatened species conservation, invasive species assessment and climate change vulnerability assessment and integrated assessment of bushfire risk and integrated catchment management.

I have worked extensively across all agro-ecological regions in Australia over the past 25 years and has deep and extensive networks with government agencies, NRM groups and environmental NGOs. From 1998-2013 I worked in various roles with Victoria's North Central Catchment Management Authority, the last seven years as a Knowledge Broker. In this role I was responsible for the development of collaborative partnerships between researchers, policy makers, extension staff and landholders that lead to improved knowledge exchange and on-ground biodiversity outcomes. As part of the Future Farm Industries CRC I worked with a small research team exploring the development and application of INFFER, awarded the Australian Research Council 2009 Eureka Prize for excellence in interdisciplinary research. Between 2006 and 2011 I was theme leader (knowledge broking) for the CERF Landscape Logic program, collaboration between six NRM regions across Victoria and Tasmania and seven research organisations.

My background is in landscape ecology, teaching and community education and I was involved in the establishment of the Victorian Landcare Centre at Creswick in 1992. I has a long-standing interest and involvement with communities working to improve biodiversity conservation in agricultural landscapes. Since 1999 I have been a trustee of the Wettenhall Environment Trust, a philanthropic organisation that supports projects to enhance the vitality and diversity of the Australian natural living environment. In 2009 I received the prestigious Dr. Sidney Plowman Travel and Study Award as

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part of the Victorian Landcare Awards. I have co-authored 15 peer-reviewed journal papers, 4 book chapters and numerous papers for presentation at national and international conferences. I was a member of the Victorian Catchment Management Council from 2015 to 2018 and instrumental in the development of the 2017 Catchment Condition and Management Report.

Why am I objecting?

Below I outline seven major objections to the unconstrained development of industrial scale broiler farms on the Moolort Plains. I would ask that you carefully consider the matters outlined below, not only in relation to the present raft of applications, but in all future applications of a similar nature.

In the light of local government support for, and active involvement in, major environmental projects (e.g. Moolort Wetlands Restoration project) and community projects (e.g. Castlemaine-Maryborough Rail Trail) on the Moolort Plains, approving further development of large-scale broiler farms would at best appear short-sighted, and at worst, hypocritical.

1. The need for detailed Environmental Impact Assessment

The Moolort Plains are a unique ecological and social landscape, with significant biodiversity, cultural and economic values, that are recognised Australia-wide. Unconstrained industrial scale broiler farm developments have the potential to irrevocably degrade these values, and to change the character of this special area forever.

The proposed developments are of significant scale. They are in close proximity to a number of significant wetlands and close to designated waterways. The land on which these developments occur are typically on free-draining volcanic soils, with poorly understood connectivity to local and regional groundwater systems.

I would urge the responsible authorities to defer consideration of any current applications and commission a detailed and rigorous Environmental Impact Assessment (International Association for Impact Assessment, 1999 and Holder, 2004) of the effects of all current and proposed applications. In doing so, not only will this demonstrate best practice and gather evidence to inform balanced decision making, it will set the standard required for future applications of a similar nature.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) can be defined as:

- The process of identifying, predicting, evaluating and mitigating the biophysical, social, and other relevant effects of development proposals prior to major decisions being taken and commitments made.

The objectives of EIA are:

- To ensure that environmental considerations are explicitly addressed and incorporated into the development decision making process.
- To anticipate and avoid, minimize or offset the adverse significant biophysical, social and other relevant effects of development proposals.
- To protect the productivity and capacity of natural systems and the ecological processes which maintain their functions.
- To promote development that is sustainable and optimizes resource use and management opportunities.

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In reviewing the current raft of applications I have ask that you consider the degree they meet the objectives of EIA. By any judgement they fail on all of the above objectives. Industrial scale broiler factories, as proposed here, require careful management of water, waste, and odour. The supporting material typically provided with these applications make mention of the area's significant environmental values or consideration of the risks associated with managing the complex in a manner that has no deleterious impact on soil, water and biodiversity.

2. Potential for direct and indirect impacts

According to the Victorian Code For Broiler Farms 2009 ...

"the key environmental issues pertaining to broiler farms are associated with the run-off of nutrients or waste to the surrounding environment – that is, into ground and surface waters, particularly waterways. Although runoff is usually well controlled on broiler farms, the main potential source of run-off is waste areas such as temporary litter piles, compost piles and litter spreading areas that are inappropriately sited or managed. However all aspects of the broiler farm operation (including the broiler sheds and stormwater systems) must be designed to avoid nutrient run-off to ground and surface waters".

This statement highlights a major weakness in the Code. While acknowledging water issues associated with Broiler Farms are very important, it ignores broader consideration of impacts on ecosystem processes, biodiversity and soils.

The 2018 amendments to the Code also failed to give proper attention to potential biodiversity impacts. Specifically the Code states (p.36) ... *Prospective applicants should seek advice from the responsible authority in the early stages of planning to identify any additional overlays and to understand their obligations to manage on-farm vegetation and biodiversity.*

This statement effectively constrains consideration of biodiversity values to the development footprint and makes no allowance for the cumulative and landscape scale effects of successive developments.

My examination of the requisite flora and fauna assessments associated with individual applications reveals them to be of a very poor standard, failing to detect and document the presence of significant flora and fauna taxa, including a number of state and federally listed threatened species. For example the Moolort Plains is home to 16 of the 24 raptor species, found on continental Australia. Two species, the Spotted Harrier and Black Falcon, are regarded as vulnerable and near threatened respectively under the Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act. Both species are seen regularly in the vicinity of the proposed developments, and it is not difficult to imagine the potential for adverse impacts, especially considering the past record of poor environmental management. The Australian Painted Snipe (listed as endangered at both a state and federal level) has been recorded in close proximity to several existing and proposed broiler farm developments, yet none of the studies I have examined notes this fact.

Furthermore applications typically mention the use of 'environmentally safe' rodent baits without providing specific details. It is becoming increasingly understood that new generation rodent baits are having a deleterious effect on native birds, in particular raptors. It is no surprise that a decline in recent decade in raptor abundance on the Moolort Plains is associated with the spread of broiler farms and increasing use of toxic baits.

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3. The failure of previous developments to comply with specified environmental requirements

In preparing my objection, I have taken into consideration the existence of a number of broiler complexes in the area. My personal view is certainly coloured by observing how the current developments were established and their subsequent management.

It is my understanding that permit requirements include the establishment of native screening plantings on the perimeter of the sites. While some efforts have been made the standard of these plantings are questionable and there has been no discernible visible improvement of site amenity.

Furthermore I understand that there are strict conditions imposed in relation to the disposal of chicken waste, including bird carcasses and manure. Again, it appears that the required practices have not been complied with and large volumes of waste have been stockpiled on nearby properties, adjacent to significant wetlands with little regard for run-off of nutrients and other pollutants into the swamp and groundwater. The owners of at least one facility have been fined by the EPA for illegal waste disposal on at least one occasion.

A requirement of the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms is the preparation of an Environmental Management Plan (EMP). Notwithstanding the weaknesses of the plan provided in the application, what confidence can we have that even these inadequate plans will be complied with into the future? The EMP is supposed to be audited annually and provided to Council. To my knowledge this rarely occurs.

What assurances can proponents provide that the operation of the proposed development will be operated and maintained in a manner that ensures that off-site impacts are avoided, minimised and offset?

4. Degradation of landscape amenity

The Moolort Plains are a place of significant landscape value. Prior to European settlement the area was sparsely wooded grassland, punctuated with a number of gentle volcanic cones, deeply incised valleys and chains of freshwater meadows and red gum and lignum wetlands. While agricultural development has had a major impact on the landscape, the essential character remains that observed by Major Mitchell's party that passed nearby in 1836.

The establishment of yet more broiler sheds will further degrade the visual amenity of the Moolort Plains landscape. Once lost it is doubtful if this would ever be recovered.

5. The 'thin end of the wedge'

Industrial scale, intensive animal industries are a source of ongoing concern in many places beyond the Moolort Plains. While the current applications may be seen as 'just a few additional sheds', evidence from elsewhere in the world would suggest this is not how it will end up, especially if hasty and ill-considered development decisions are made.

For example, in the eastern United States, nutrient pollution and run-off from the 'broiler belt' is directly linked to a serious decline in water quality in Chesapeake Bay, the loss of valuable fishing stocks and an overall degradation of vital ecosystem services. Major efforts are now being made to reverse these impacts, involving the expenditure of billions of dollars of public money, accompanied by heavily enforced regulation of intensive animal industries. **This has all happened within a generation.**

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6. Lack of cost: benefit analysis on the proposed development

The proponents of broiler farm development typically forecast major economic benefits as a result. There is no evidence to substantiate these claims.

The other side of the benefit consideration is of course an assessment of costs. There are a number of costs associated with this (and future) developments that should be considered in arriving at a decision.

- What will be the loss of in value of essential ecosystem services?
- What will be the loss of value of key environmental assets, including wetlands, waterways, threatened species and prime agricultural soils?

While the capacity for a detailed cost: benefit analysis is not feasible in all instances it would seem timely for the relevant authorities to undertake an economic assessment of the benefits provided by the area's natural landscapes and traditional agricultural activities, in relation to tourism, recreation and provision of environmental services.

It is worth noting that the proposed development of the Castlemaine Maryborough Rail Trail (CMRT), a project supported by local government, has required rigorous benefit cost analysis in order to proceed to feasibility and design stage. The value of this project which promises to generate significant economic and social benefits to the area will be compromised and undermined should further broiler farm developments be allowed on the plains. I understand that at least one current planning application directly intersects with the proposed route of the CMRT.

7. It undermines a long history of landholder, community and government involvement in projects that have successfully integrated farming and conservation

I have a deep, personal connection with the landscape of the Moolort Plains, having developed extensive personal knowledge of its natural values, especially relating to vegetation and fauna, over many years. A summary of recent observations can be found at my Natural Newstead blog <http://geoffpark.wordpress.com/>

Over the last 25 years I have also observed the strong, ongoing commitment of landholders on the plains, towards environmental rehabilitation, beginning with Project Branchout and salinity control activities in the 1980s, extensive revegetation and grassy woodland restoration in the 2000s, through to more recent projects that have protected significant areas of unique wetland habitat. Landcare is synonymous with the landholders of the Moolort Plains, with a number of local landholders recognised for their enduring efforts to restore and improve the productive capacity of their land.

I have lived in the Newstead district for almost 40 years and have a long-standing association with the Moolort Landcare Group. This group has a wonderful track record of environmental works, knowledge generation and community development that dates back to the mid-1980s. The legacy of these works I believe is significantly undermined by untrammelled expansion of broiler farms.

Conclusion

In 2014 I made a formal objection to a planning application (Number 071\13, from Grandview Poultry Pty Ltd for 141 Clarkes Road Strathlea) for the development of a broiler farm near Joyce's Creek at Strathlea. The process associated with the assessment of this application and a subsequent

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appearance as an expert witness at VCAT has given me some insights to the inadequacy of the current legislative and regulatory framework in protecting both the environment and rural communities where these developments are allowed to exist.

The current planning framework with its focus on individual applications is completely useless in addressing the cumulative effects of intensive agricultural developments such as broiler farms on the ecological, landscape and social values at scale.

In particular I have witnessed the immeasurable damage that has been caused to farming families, local residents and concerned community members as they have fought individual battles against a tidal wave of applications.

I urge the relevant local government authorities and associated statutory bodies with a role in the assessment and approval of broiler farm applications to 1) recognise the cumulative impacts of these developments, 2) consult with the local community in a way that seeks to better understand their concerns and 3) encourages the state government to take a more informed and courageous stance in shaping a planning process that provides long-term protection for significant landscape, ecological and community values.

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Supporting Information relating to the values of the Moolort Plains

On the 13th of May 2011, the Central Goldfields Shire, writing in support of a funding proposal from the North Central Catchment Management Authority to the Federal Government Funding, observed.

“This wetland complex has long been recognised for its important ecological, cultural and social values, by the landholders who manage them and the broader community of our district. Many of the wetlands have been managed for conservation values over a number of generations and the proposed project will enable landholders to implement on-ground actions to secure the long-term stewardship of these areas.

Furthermore the letter noted.

“... a number of objectives in the Local Planning Policy Framework under Clause 21.0 recognise the need to ‘enhance, protect and augment remnant vegetation and wildlife corridors on freehold land; ‘encourage the establishment of buffer areas and adequate setback distances as a means to enhance and protect significant vegetation’, and ‘encourage the use of incentives to support and facilitate the retention of significant stands of native vegetation on private land’.

In closing the letter stated.

“We believe the project has the potential to generate significant economic, social and environmental benefits to our district and the region...”

According to BirdLife Australia, the nation’s peak ornithological conservation body ...

“We have been aware of the ‘hidden’ value of these wetlands for some time, especially given that the nationally threatened Australian Painted Snipe has been recorded in the area. Many other wetland birds of significance are also recorded at the Moolort Plains wetlands; and there are a number of wetlands that are known breeding sites for Brolga. Birds Australia believes that the wetlands of the Moolort Plains provide important remnant waterbird habitat through a landscape that is otherwise predominantly cleared for agriculture. The wetlands, as a complex, provide a variety of habitats and form a wetland corridor through which migratory species can travel. Therefore, the project actions to protect wetlands from uncontrolled grazing, conduct pest plant and animal control, revegetate wetlands with buffers, create management agreements, and so on, are greatly needed and supported”.

In July 2011, the Commonwealth Government allocated \$919,000 to the North Central Catchment Authority (NCCMA) for a major project to protect the values of these same wetlands! This project was one of the largest Caring for our Country (CfoC)-funded projects approved under the auspices of the 2011-12 Business Plan.

The implementation of this collaborative project involved the NCCMA, Moolort Landcare Group, Birdlife Australia, Trust for Nature (Vic), Maryborough Field Naturalists Club, Parks Victoria, Mount Alexander Shire Council and Central Goldfields Shire Council, working with local landholders to conduct research, on ground works, awareness activities and monitoring of the Moolort wetlands.

The project, commenced in late 2011 and concluded in December 2012, has protected 208 ha of high priority private wetlands through a combination of Trust for Nature Covenants and North Central CMA 10-year agreements. 12 out of 15 landholders contacted during the project agreed to wetland protection, highlighting the positive commitment to long-term environmental protection,

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shared by many farmers on the Moolort Plains. Extensive field monitoring has been undertaken to gain baseline data, which will help evaluate the extent of ecological condition change over time.

The Moolort wetlands

The Moolort wetlands, is a chain of approximately 48 swamps scattered across a large basalt plain (known as the Moolort Plains) located in the Loddon catchment of North Central Victoria.

The combined area of all the swamps in the Moolort wetlands is approximately 1034 hectares. The swamps largely occur on private land and have been described as Red-gum wetlands, freshwater meadows and/or shallow freshwater meadows (DSE 2004).

The area has been extensively cleared for agriculture with sheep grazing and cropping the major land uses. While the mean annual rainfall is approximately 524 mm, rainfall totals over the past decade have been substantially lower, meaning that until recently these swamps have been largely dry. Many of the swamps are already managed for conservation by local farmers, but there is also evidence that the prolonged drought has brought some of the land on/around the swamps back into production (Seymour et al. 2010). Whilst some of the swamps have been fenced to manage stock access, a number have been grazed and cropped. There are approximately 30 commercial farmers within the wetland area.

The wetlands are situated on a large area of basalt which is part of the Victoria Volcanic Plains Bioregion, a designated national biodiversity hotspot. The basalt is 30 to 50 metres thick and regional groundwater flow is generally to the north (Australian Natural Resources Atlas 2002). Discharge from this basalt aquifer occurs in topographic lows, producing the Moolort wetlands (ANRA 2002). The Groundwater Management Unit is known as 'Moolort' (ANRA 2002).

The Moolort Plains has been described as being 'largely featureless' with the exception of prior-stream levees and swamps and is quaternary olivine basalt (Schoknecht 1988). The northern part of the Moolort Plains (north of the Pyrenees Highway) features a fertile red duplex soil, ideal for cropping. The southern part of the Moolort Plains features volcanic cones (now flat hills), is poorly drained and is more suitable for grazing (Schoknecht 1988). Nine major soil types occur through the Moolort Landcare group area (Bryant & Lorimer 1993).

Eucalyptus camaldulensis is found within and directly surrounding many of the wetlands. Tangled Lignum *Muehlenbeckia florulenta* is a feature on some of the swamps. Moolort Plains is largely a treeless plain that was once dominated by native grasslands. According to Park (2010), Silver Banksia, Drooping Sheoak, Tree Violet and Bursaria were prominent prior to clearing - of these only Tree Violet remains to any extent.

Some of the notable swamps making up the Moolort wetlands complex are Long Swamp, Saligari's Swamp, Frogmore Swamp, Walker's Swamp, Blackmore's Swamp, Lakeside Swamp, Pioneer, Lignum Swamp, White's Swamp, Baker's Swamp, Merin Merin and Middle Swamps, the latter two managed by Parks Victoria as State Game Reserves.

Long Swamp at 187 ha is the largest wetland in the complex and potentially the most significant. The site was drained in 1965 by the former Tullaroop Shire in an attempt to alleviate a perceived salinity threat (Kevin & Day 1993) and the drain is still in place today.

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Saligari's Swamp is a large Red-gum wetland at the southern end of the Moolort Plains near Campbelltown. This swamp contains rare or threatened species/ecosystems (ANRA 2002) and is listed as an important site in the South West Victoria Brolga Flocking Site database.

Environmental values

The wetlands have been described by local farmers as an 'oasis' amongst agricultural land and are considered to play a very important role in bird migration (Seymour 2010, unpublished thesis). For example, Long Swamp is said to be an important wildlife corridor between Tullaroop Reservoir and Deep Creek (NCCMA asset list).

The Moolort wetlands have supported a rich abundance of bird life as evident in the writings of Chisholm (1969). A bird list of the Moolort Plains, compiled between the 1950s and 1960s, lists 103 different species of birds (Rogan & Courtney 1963).

According to a survey of local residents living in and around the Moolort Plains, the swamps are valued highly for a range of environmental reasons particularly for providing bird habitat, sustaining life, threatened species habitat and playing a vital role in bird migration (Seymour 2010, unpublished thesis).

In 2012, the Commonwealth Government listed *Seasonal Herbaceous Wetlands (Freshwater) of the Temperate Lowland Plains*, under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Protection (EPBC) Act 1999. The name reflects that these wetlands are characterised by a particular hydrology, geographical position and vegetation structure. These are isolated, freshwater wetlands that are usually inundated on a seasonal basis through rainfall, then dry out, so surface water is not permanently present. They occur on the lowland plains of temperate south-eastern Australia and have a vegetation structure that is open, i.e. woody cover is absent to sparse, and the ground layer is dominated by herbs (grasses, sedges and forbs) adapted to seasonally wet or waterlogged conditions. This wetland ecological community includes flora, fauna and micro-organisms and remains present in both wet and dry periods. When standing water is present, wetland plants are clearly evident, however during drought or seasonal dry period's plants may not be visible above ground. During dry periods aquatic and amphibious species persist as desiccated shoots, underground rootstocks or propagules (seeds, spores and eggs) in the ground. The ecological community rapidly reverts to its wet form upon inundation if the hydrological and biological characteristics of the wetland are relatively intact.

A number of the significant wetlands in the Moolort Plains, including some very close to the proposed development, have been assessed to belong to the listed ecological community.

The Seasonal Herbaceous Wetlands ecological community is naturally surrounded by native dryland vegetation communities, typically natural temperate grasslands and grassy woodlands. These are distinguished from the wetlands by the dominance of a suite of dryland grass and forb taxa, e.g. *Themeda*, *Austrostipa*, *Chrysocephalum*, and the absence of wetland species. These grassy dryland communities also have declined considerably and some are listed as nationally threatened ecological communities in their own right, e.g. *Natural Temperate Grassland of the Victorian Volcanic Plain*; *Grey Box (Eucalyptus microcarpa) Grassy Woodlands and Derived Native Grasslands of South-eastern Australia*; *Buloke Woodlands of the Riverina and Murray-Darling Depression Bioregions*, remnants of which all are known to occur on the Moolort Plains.

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In recent times there have been sightings of a number of significant bird species including Brolga, Spotted Harrier, Black Falcon, Royal Spoonbill, Nankeen Night-heron and Red-kneed Dotterel. During the 2010-11 wetting period there has been breeding observed of Pacific Heron, Little Pied Cormorant and Black-winged Stilt with a major influx of waterbirds.

A detailed floristic survey and fauna survey has recently been completed for Long Swamp (Cook 2009). This survey revealed Growling Grass-frog. More comprehensive flora and fauna surveys are warranted across the entire complex.

A number of rare and threatened fauna species are also found on the Moolort Plains, with recent records in the vicinity of the proposed broiler complex development. These include the Striped Legless Lizard *Delma impar* (Vulnerable under EPBC Act); Olive Legless Lizard (*Delma inornata*) and the Woodland Blind Snake *Ramphotyphlops proximus* (near threatened in Victoria under the FFG Act).

Community/social value

The Moolort wetlands have significant indigenous heritage value. An initiation ground of the Djadja Wurrung people is located 'in a secluded valley' near Carisbrook (Willis 1988). The Moolort Plains were an important food source for the local Indigenous people (the Dja dja Wurrung language group).

The area also has significant European cultural heritage value as an historic mining site, as one of the earliest European pastoral settlements in the region (previously known as Charlotte Plains) and as the setting for Raimond Gaita's acclaimed novel 'Romulus, My Father' (set around Frogmore Swamp and dealing with the hardships of immigrants in the 1950s).

It seems also that the Moolort Plains has contributed much to providing Australian ornithological data dating back to the early 1900s. Growing up around Maryborough, Alexander Chisholm wrote extensively about bird life around the Moolort swamps.

A 2009 survey of the local residents and farmers found that the Moolort swamps are valued for a range of social reasons across the community including: learning/educational value, research value, bird watching, Indigenous history and for being peaceful places (Seymour 2010, unpublished thesis).

The Dja Dja Wurrung People are the traditional owners of the Moolort Wetlands. During the aforementioned Moolort wetlands project seven landholders participated in assessments for cultural heritage, recording artefacts and significant sites. A report (available from the North Central CMA) was drafted about the cultural heritage importance of the wetlands, highlighting the incredible productivity of the region.

References

- North Central CMA (2011) Moolort Plains Wetland Investigation, North Central CMA, Huntly, Victoria - see attachment
- Cooke, D. (2009). Report on the feasibility of restoring Long Swamp, Moolort. Unpublished report for Trust for Nature.
- Australian Natural Resources Atlas (ANRA 2002). Water resources – overview – Victoria. See <http://www.anra.gov.au/topics/water>

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- Land Conservation Council (1981). LCC North Central Area Final Recommendations, Feb 1981.
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- Principle of Environmental Impact Assessment Best Practice. International Association for Impact Assessment. 1999
- Holder, J., (2004), Environmental Assessment: The Regulation of Decision Making, Oxford University Press, New York

Birds of the Moolort Plains and adjacent areas

Specific notes on birds of concern

The DSE Advisory List of Threatened Species (see ref.) as the basis for considering bird species of potential concern. These have been classified into the following categories:

1. Residents that are likely to use the area in the vicinity of where the turbines are located – these have been further divided into forest/woodland (RF) and wetland/plains (RW) species.
2. Migrants that undertake regular movements through the area of interest – divided as above into woodland (MF) and wetland/plains (MW) species.
3. Nomadic/vagrant species (NV) that are recorded irregularly in the area in response to factors such as food availability (e.g. nectar flow associated with eucalypt flowering or wetland filling).

Category	Species	Status (EPBC/FFG)	Comment
RF	Barking Owl	-/E	
	Bush Stone-curlew	-/E	Locally near extinct
	Powerful Owl	-/V	
	Speckled Warbler	-/V	
	Chestnut-rumped Heathwren	-/V	
	Crested Bellbird	-/NT	
	Diamond Firetail	-/NT	
	Hooded Robin	-/NT	
	Spotted Quail-thrush	-/NT	
RW	Black Falcon	-/V	Resident and breed on the plains
	Brolga	-/V	2-3 pairs locally - breeding
	Eastern Great Egret	-/V	
	Hardhead	-/V	
	White-bellied Sea-Eagle	-/V	Breed on Cairn Curran
	Nankeen Night Heron	-/NT	
	Pied Cormorant	-/NT	
	Royal Spoonbill	-/NT	Small numbers at Cairn Curran and larger wetlands
	Spotted Harrier	-/NT	Resident and breed on the plains
MF	Swift Parrot	E/E	Regular migrant to Muckleford Forest and nearby areas
	Painted Honeyeater	-/V	As above
	Square-tailed Kite	-/V	Breed locally in forest areas – at least 2 pairs
	White-throated Needletail	-/V	Also found over open country
	Black-chinned Honeyeater	-/NT	
	Black-eared Cuckoo	-/NT	Spring migrant to box-ironbark
MW	Curlew Sandpiper	-/E	
	Marsh Sandpiper	-/V	Frogmore Swamp
	Wood Sandpiper	-/V	Frogmore Swamp
	Caspian Tern	-/NT	Small numbers seen on Cairn Curran and occasionally on larger wetlands
	Latham's Snipe	-/NT	Small numbers use a variety of small wetlands during spring passage
	Pectoral Sandpiper	-/NT	Lignum Swamp
NV	Australian Painted Snipe	VU/CE	Small numbers used Moolort wetlands in

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			2010/11 – likely bred
	Regent Honeyeater	EN/CE	Locally extinct
	Blue-billed Duck	-/E	Occasionally seen on larger wetlands e.g. Lignum and Frogmore Swamps
	Freckled Duck	-/E	~ 30 at Cairn Curran in mid-2013
	Gull-billed Tern	-/E	Rare
	Intermediate Egret	-/E	Occasional
	Little Egret	-/E	Rare
	Australasian Shoveler	-/V	Small numbers uses wetlands
	Baillon's Crake	-/V	Small numbers when conditions are suitable
	Musk Duck	-/V	Relatively common when conditions are suitable
	Glossy Ibis	-/NT	Seen at Lignum and Frogmore Swamps
	Little Button-quail	-/NT	
	Whiskered Tern	-/NT	Regular in small numbers on Cairn Curran and larger wetlands

Note on status

Critically endangered (CR), Endangered (E), Vulnerable (V), Near-threatened (NT) under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act

Reference:

Advisory List of Threatened Vertebrate Fauna in Victoria – 2013, Victorian Government Department of Sustainability and Environment Melbourne, March 2013.

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Item 8.2.3 DO 031-24 39 Clarkes Road Moolort Attachment 2

Objection to Proten Victoria 031-24 Dated 22.03.2025 Amended

The Application being objected to

Planning Permit Reference No 031-24 Address: 39 Clarkes Road Moolort and 141

Clarkes Road, Strathlea

This is to be added to my objection to Permit Application 031-24 and is answer to the question raised by Councillor Ben Green.

In this submission of 22 March 2025, I have added context to the importance of respecting the broad ridgeline where this Broiler Farm is proposed.

Response to Question from Councillor Green

Question: Where in the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms is the reference to ridgelines and the broiler development?

Answer: Victorian Code for Broiler Farms

Section 7 Farm Design and Operational Elements

Page 28 Standard E1 S3 Protecting the Visual quality of the landscape.

Approved measure E1 M3.3 This is a key part of Section & Farm Design and Layout.

Existing ridgeline vegetation is maintained to avoid breaking the ridgeline silhouette.

This is a key part of Section & Farm Design and Layout Pages 24 – 40.

The first to note is the subject land's location of buildings and works has frontage onto Clarkes Road.

The north end of Clarkes Road runs from Rodborough Road south to the Hurns Road Intersection and continues to the south.

Clarkes Road follows the broad north-south **ridgeline** between Middle Creek and Joyce's Creek. The height of the silos would break this ridgeline.

See Focus CDS Consultants Fig 1 Location and Topographic Plan.

Contours: Note the ~~250~~ 260 m contour that generally encompasses the Proposed Broiler Farm. This shows the broad ridgeline that is referred to in my submission.

This is the ~~high point~~ high broad ridge in the Strathlea landscape in the south-east area of the extensive Moolort Plains and is a strong factor in determining the visibility of proposed broiler farm. The highest point on Clarkes Road is the 270 m contour just to near the south-west corner of the Site, locally identified by a large farm shed, locally known as Ivor's Shed.

Victorian Code for Broiler Farms

Section 7 Farm Design and Operational Elements

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Note: All broiler farm permit applications (regardless of the farm classification) are required to meet the objectives and standards of the all 6 Elements of this Code.

Section 7. Farm Design and Operational Elements.

The relevant elements are in

PART 1 Location, farm size and setback requirements

Element 1 E1: Location, siting and size

PART 2 Farm Design

Element 2 E2: Farm design, layout and construction

Standard E1 S3 Protecting the visual quality of the landscape

Buildings and works are to be sited account for the topography and views from public roads, to minimise their visual impact on the landscape.

Element 4 E4: Landscaping

The landscape of Clarkes Road is an open landscape of crops and pastures not even open woodlands. Hence the proposed plantings of agroforestry on the site are not protecting the visual quality of these rolling plains. This is assuming the plantings would establish and grow in a timely manner.

Approved Measure E1 M3.3 Page 28 of the Code.

Existing ridgeline vegetation is maintained to avoid breaking the ridgeline silhouette.

The ridgeline vegetation is currently crop or pasture so this is the vegetation that is sustainable and comprises annual crops or pastures to 1 meter tall.

Any attempts to screen the sheds, silos and associated constructions with woody vegetation is fraught as nearby landholders found in trialling shelterbelts for farms.

The Eucalypt red gums are confined to the streams like Joyce's Creek and to wetlands in the southern part of the Moolort Plains.

The species approved in the now lapsed Permit Application for the landscape plan have not been found naturally or are proven to grow sufficiently on the broad ridgeline between Middle Creek and Joyce's Creek. This is illustrated by the poor growth of plantings around Unit 1 and 2, these were planted at least 10 years ago.

The original vegetation was native grasses & herbaceous plants and small shrubs.

This land of the ridgeline is not viable for agroforestry as described in the application, there is no evidence in the Permit Application offered by Hayden Burge of Landform Architects or by FocusCDS Consultants of examples to confirming the viability of the agroforestry in the southern Moolort Plains area.

Alison H Teese OAM 22/03/2025



Unconfirmed Special Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 30 April 2025 at 6:00pm

Maryborough Town Hall, 71 Clarendon Street, Maryborough.



The meeting commenced at 6:00pm.

PRESENT

Councillors:

Grace La Vella (Mayor)
Ben Green (Deputy Mayor)
Geoff Bartlett
Anna de Villiers
Liesbeth Long
Jake Meyer
Gerard Murphy

Officers:

General Manager Community Wellbeing, Emma Little
Acting General Manager Assets Infrastructure and Planning, Alan Jones
Acting General Manager Corporate Performance, Anthony Smith
Acting Manager Governance, Property and Risk, Libby Sheward
Governance Advisor, Ralph Anania

1 Welcome

The Mayor, Cr La Vella welcomed attendees to the meeting and then read an Acknowledgment of Country and the Council Prayer.

2 Apologies

An apology was received for the Interim Chief Executive Officer, Sally Jones.

3 Declarations Conflict of Interest

Nil.

4 Items of Business

4.1 Draft Rating and Revenue Plan 2025-2029

Presenting to Council, its Draft Rating and Revenue Plan for 2025 – 2029 and to commence community engagement and the public submission process in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That Council:

1. Endorse the Draft Revenue and Rating Plan 2025 – 2029, provided as Attachment 1 to the report, for community consultation.
2. Give public notice of its Draft Revenue and Rating Plan 2025 - 2029 on Council's website and invites written submissions from Thursday, 1 May until Thursday, 22 May 2025.
3. In reliance of its Community Engagement Policy, resolves that any person who makes a written submission and requests in writing, to be heard in support of their submission, will be heard by a Hearing of Council to be held on Wednesday 4 June 2025 commencing at 6pm at the Maryborough Town Hall, if required.

Moved: Cr Murphy

Seconder: Cr Meyer

CARRIED

4.2 Draft 2025/26 Budget

To propose that Council endorse its Draft 2025/26 Budget (incorporating the four (4) year Budget) and to commence the community engagement and public submission process in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That Council:

1. Endorse its draft 2025/26 Budget (incorporating the 4-year Budget), provided as Attachment 1 to this report for community consultation.
2. Give public notice of the draft 2025/26 Budget on Council's website and invites written submissions from Thursday, 1 May until Thursday, 22 May 2025.
3. In reliance of its Community Engagement Policy, resolves that any person who makes a written submission and requests in writing, to be heard in support of their submission, will be heard by a Hearing of Council to be held on Wednesday 4 June 2025 commencing at 6:00pm at the Maryborough Town Hall, if required.

Moved: Cr Murphy

Seconder: Cr Green

CARRIED

4.3 Places for Play - the Play Space Strategy Draft

To propose that Council endorse its Draft Places for Play – the Play Space Strategy and to commence community engagement and the public submission process in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That Council:

1. Endorse its Draft Play Space Strategy, provided as Attachments 1 and 2 to the report, for community consultation or a 3-week period.
2. Receive a further report, following the completion of the consultation process.

Moved: Cr Long

Seconder: Cr Bartlett

CARRIED

4.4 Princes Park Grandstand

To propose that Council endorse its Draft Princes Park Grandstand Changeroom Concept Design and to commence community engagement and the public submission process in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That Council:

1. Endorse its draft Princes Park Grandstand Changeroom Concept design, provided as Attachment 2 to the report, for community consultation for a 3-week period.
2. Receive a further report, following the completion of the consultation process.

Moved: Cr Murphy

Seconder: Cr Meyer

CARRIED

4.5 Council Approval to allow completion of works under Contract G1760-23 Flood Emergency Works (Civil) – Panel of Suppliers

To seek Council approval to complete a late tender process under a pre-existing Panel of Suppliers Tender Contract – G1760-23, for works that Council has received external funding (Federal Governments' Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements).

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That Council:

1. Notes the report.
2. Approves the late tender process, advertised on 3 March 2025 under the umbrella of Contract G1760-23, be allowed to be executed under the said Contract G1760-23.
3. Authorises the CEO under delegation to ensure that recommendation two above, is promptly actioned.

Moved: Cr de Villiers

Seconder: Cr Bartlett

CARRIED

5 Meeting Closure

The Mayor, Cr La Vella closed the meeting at 6:27pm.

7 Council Reports

7.1 DO 061-23 705 Baringhup Road Carisbrook

Author: Coordinator Statutory Planning

Responsible Officer: General Manager Infrastructure Assets and Planning

The Officer Presenting this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff reports that there are disclosable interests that need to be raised in relation to this report.

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to recommend a 'decision position' on planning permit application 061-23 for the use and development of the land for a Class B broiler farm for up to 400,000 birds and a caretaker's house with associated buildings and works at 705 Baringhup Road, Carisbrook.

An application for review of the matter has been to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) - reference No. P270/2025; as a major case scheduled for a ten-day hearing commencing 28th of July 2025. Accordingly, a decision on the application will not be made by Council.

Notice of the application has been given as the proposal is classified as a Class B broiler farm under the *Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 (plus 2018 amendments)*. As a result, thirty-nine (39) objections and three (3) neutral submissions have been received (Agriculture Victoria, Environment Protection Authority, VicTrack).

The application has been assessed against all matters that the responsible authority must consider, pursuant to section 60 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

The recommendation of this report is that Council, as responsible authority, decides a position on whether Council would have resolved to refuse to grant a permit on the ground(s) that are outlined.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council, as the responsible authority and pursuant to section 61 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, determine that had an application to VCAT for review under Section 79 of the Act not been made, would have issued a Notice of Decision to Refuse a Permit in respect of planning permit application no. 061-23 for the use and development of a Class B broiler farm for up to 400,000 birds and a caretakers house with associated buildings and works at 705 Baringhup Road Carisbrook on the following grounds.

1. The proposal is inconsistent with the Municipal Planning Statement and Planning Policy Framework of the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme including Clause 02.04 (Central Goldfields Strategic Plan), Clause 12 (Environmental and Landscape Values), 13
2. (Environmental Risks and Amenity), 14 (Natural Resource Management) and 15 (Built Environment and Heritage), as the proposed Class B broiler farm would be contrary to policy framework that respectively seeks to protect landscape values, residential amenity and environmental values.
3. The proposal is not compliant with the purpose and decision guidelines of Clause 35.07 (Farming Zone) of the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme, as the proposed Class B broiler farm would be incompatible with the amenity of nearby dwellings, would result in detrimental environmental impacts including to soil and water quality as well as impacts to

water bodies and biodiversity, and by the location and design of the proposal in a rural landscape.

4. The proposal is not compliant with the purpose and decision guidelines of Clause 53.09 (Poultry Farm) of the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme due to the appearance of the buildings and works, the need to protect the amenity of adjoining and nearby land uses, the impact of emissions from the site, impact on wetlands and water bodies and the impact upon biodiversity.
5. The proposal is not compliant with the purpose and decision guidelines of Clause 65.01 (Decision Guidelines - Approval of an Application or Plan) of the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme, as the proposal would be contrary to orderly planning, and would result in detrimental amenity, and environmental impacts.
6. The proposal is contrary to the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms (Department of Primary Industries 2009, plus 2018 amendments), an Incorporated Document within the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme, including standards of the Broiler Code that relate to stormwater drainage, waste management and landscape qualities.
7. The proposal would result in an inappropriately high population of birds to be produced by the additional broiler farm sheds.
8. The proposal would result in detrimental impacts to the landscape values of the site and surrounds and the significant built form of the broiler farm sheds.
9. The proposal would result in detrimental amenity impacts to residential properties in vicinity of the subject land by way of inappropriate visual, odour, lighting, and noise effects.
10. The cumulative effect of odour and noise from the proposal, in addition to existing broiler farms, would undermine the amenity of the area. Cumulative odour emissions would not achieve the ambient air quality standards in the Environment reference standard, contrary to clause 13.06-1S. Noise emissions associated with the use would undermine the rural amenity of the area when assessed individually or cumulatively.
11. The proposal would undermine the landscape significance of the Moolort Plains wetlands contrary to the Municipal Planning Strategy.
12. The effluent disposal associated with the shed wash out represents an unacceptable risk to the water quality and ecological values of the Moolort Plains.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2021-2025 – Leading Change

The Community's vision 4. Transparent decision making;

This report has been developed in accordance with the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act), the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme (the Planning Scheme), and the *Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 (plus 2018 amendments)* (the Broiler Code).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

N/A

REPORT

The application proposes the use and development of the land for a Class B broiler farm for up to 400,000 birds, caretakers house and associated buildings and works at 705 Baringhup Road Carisbrook. Refer to Attachment 1: Advertised plans (Rev F, dated 14/03/2024) and it is these plans that form the basis of the recommendation in this report.

- A second set of plans was submitted for discussion purposes (Rev I, dated 20/06/2024) and provided some additional detail and changes including:
 - shows the existing dam to the north of the proposed broiler sheds.
 - shows two (2) proposed dams, one having a 10ML capacity and the other having a 25ML capacity, adjacent to the existing dam.
 - The caretaker's house was relocated from the north/east of the broiler sheds to the north/west of the broiler sheds, with the effluent envelope also relocated.
 - Sheds also increased in size from 156m in length x 25.5m in width (3,978m²) to 174m in length x 25.5m in width (4,437m²).

Energy facility building, 39.4m x 10.5m (413.7m²).

Mortality composting pad 30m x 15m on a clay base

The Revision I plans were never formally substituted via an amendment to the planning permit.

The applicants are Ian & Robert Hurse (Robert Hurse is the landowner), who are represented by Michael Vukadinovic (Pavilion Farms). The proposal is also known as Pavilion Farm 11.

No free-range operations are proposed.

Broiler sheds

Primarily, the proposal is for the construction of six broiler sheds that would house a maximum of 400,000 birds. Six sheds are proposed with the following characteristics:

- 156m in length x 25.5m in width (3,978m²)
- Constructed in parallel and will be 16m apart.
- Wall height of 2.5m to the eaves
- Maximum height of 4.5m to the ridgeline
- 100mm reinforced concrete slab
- Concrete dwarf walls with an above ground height of 200mm.
- Walls above the dwarf walls will be white Colourbond
- Roofs will be zincalume
- Air exhaust fans on the norther end of sheds.

Associated buildings and works

- 9 x feed silos 9m in height and 3.4m in diameter
- Generator & amenities shed
 - 32m x 8m (256m²)
 - 3m wall height
 - Includes generator room, office, and storage room
- An amenity building (NB: no floor plan or elevations provided)
- Energy facility building

- 39.4m x 10.5m (413.7m²) (NB: not shown on the site layout plan, however a floor plan and elevations are included in the plan set Rev B. This use would also need a planning permit, not currently sought)
- Upgrade of an existing internal access road, 6m wide and with an all-weather construction. This is located approximately 1,060 metres north of the intersection of Baringhup Road and Bald Hill Road.
- 3 x water storage tanks
 - 12.7m diameter
 - 2.9m height
 - Woodland grey
- 3 x gas tanks

Caretaker's house

A four-bedroom, one study and two-bathroom caretakers house is proposed to be located to the north/west of the broiler sheds, immediately north of the 10m landscaped buffer to the sheds. It is also proposed to have an external deck and carport.

Walls will be Askin Volcore panels, which is an insulated panel, and the roof will be corrugated Colourbond with a 5-degree pitch. Roof gutters will also be Colourbond. A 2,000L water tank is proposed for toilet flushing.

It is provided with a septic tank and absorption area of 30m x 15m (450m²).

There is separate internal access road to the caretaker's house.

Operational arrangements

The submitted Planning Report and supporting documents that accompany the application provide details on operational arrangements for feed, water, litter management, vermin control, management of dead birds, odour control, bird pickup, shed cleaning, landscaping, land capability and wastewater. Particular points of note include:

- It will operate 24 hours a day and 365 days a year.
- Most work and traffic generation will generally occur 7am – 7pm weekdays and 7am to 1pm on Saturdays.
- Bird collection is done at night as the birds are less active.
- There will be three (3) full time staff, and a further two (2) FTE staff used between batches to clean out manure, wash the sheds, prepare bedding, and shed equipment for new birds.
- The farm manager has been nominated and will be the primary contact for complaints.
- The growing production cycle is approximately seven (7) weeks per batch.
- Between batches there will be approximately fourteen (14) days for sheds to be cleaned and sanitised and prepared for the next batch.
- There will be approximately 5.7 batches per year.
- Each shed will accommodate up to 66,666 birds per batch. This equates to 2.27 million birds per annum.
- Feed is kept in silos and delivered as required by enclosed bulk delivery trucks and discharged into the silos from the trucks via an enclosed system.
- Feed is distributed to the sheds by an auger through an enclosed ducting to automated feeding systems within each shed.
- In the event of feed spills it is immediately retrieved and put into the feeding system.
- The closed feeding system does not allow access by rodents.

- Rodent control also includes the placement of rodent control boxes and baits. This is outlined in the submitted Environmental Management Plan (EMP).
- Drinking water for the birds is provided to the sheds from a dam fed by the Tullaroop Creek and piped to three (3) storage tanks with a capacity of approximately 1,000,000 litres. These tanks provide at least seven (7) days backup if there is a failure of water supply from the dam.
- Water is filtered and chlorinated and fed into an automatic drinking system in the sheds.
- The drinkers are fitted with dripless drinking nipples and cups to provide added protection against moisture affecting the litter. They also have automatic cut-off devices to ensure the birds only receive one droplet of water every time they peck at the nipples. This also avoids wetting the litter. Meters are used to gauge consumption and alert farm management if consumption is outside predetermined levels.
- Chemicals required included detergents and sanitisers for washing and sanitising the sheds. They will be delivered to site as needed and stored in the generator/storeroom building.
- Power is to be provided by a 3phase connection to the Powercor network (Page 29 of the submitted planning report, however page 12 of the submitted planning report advises that *“100% of the energy used by the proposed development will be provided by renewable power”*)
- Floors in each shed are concrete. Before a new batch of birds, the whole floor area of the sheds is covered in a layer of chopped straw (litter).
- The litter is removed at the end of each batch and replaced with a new layer.
- Litter will not be stockpiled on site. It is spread on the balance of the land used for farming purposes along with other fertilisers. Litter is also transport to customer sites where the litter is stockpiled and spread to land as a fertiliser.
- Dead birds will be composed on site in accordance with EPA regulations.

Litter and Dead Bird Removal

- Dead birds are removed from sheds daily and transferred by a front-end loader to a dead bird composting site which will be at least 100m from the nearest shed.
- The dead bird composting site is provided with bunding to prevent effluent or water run-off.
- The composting site is built on an impermeable compacted clay pad.
- Dead bird compost is retained on site and spread to the balance of the land used for farming purposes. The application states the compost is not spread on land subject to flooding, steep slopes greater than 10%, rocky or highly erodible land or where there is any risk of nutrient run-off to waterways, surrounding land or groundwater.

Access

An existing internal access road will be upgraded to provide a 6m width and all-weather construction. It is located approximately 1,060 metres north of the intersection of Baringhup Road and Bald Hill Road.

A separate internal access road branches off from this to provide access to the caretaker's house.

Truck Movements

The application was accompanied by a traffic report prepared by the applicant. The advice can be summarised as follows.

Based upon 5.7 batches per year the application advises that the use will generate in the order of 820 movements per year (an average of 2.25 per day). This is summarised for each batch as follows:

Chicken delivery	8 trucks
Gas delivery	4 trucks
Litter delivery	12 trucks
Feed delivery	41 trucks
Bird removal	79 trucks

Total per batch 144 trucks

The application states that the traffic can easily be accommodated by Baringhup Road (described as a major arterial road), feeding into Hurses Lane.

Chicken delivery and bird pick-up trucks will be coming from the Hazeldene facility in Lockwood, approximately 47km north/east. Gas deliveries and feed deliveries will be coming from Bendigo, approximately 60km north/east.

In addition to the above the submitted traffic report advises that during construction of the broiler farm approximately 507 additional truck movements would take place over a period of approximately five (5) months.

Landscaping

A landscape plan submitted with the application shows the following:

- A landscaped mound around each side of the sheds, setback 20m from the sheds in accordance with the Broiler Code requirements to allow for ventilation.
- The mounds are 8 metres wide.
- 90 plants per 75 metres.
- The example planting schedule shows a band of three (3) rows of trees planted
- Tree species are nominated as various species of Eucalyptus with varying mature heights.
- The 16m between each shed is to be grassed.
- No removal of existing vegetation.

Page 14 of the planning report submitted with the application states there will be 4,000 new native trees.

Land Capability

A Land Capability Assessment (LCA) was submitted with the application, dated 20 March 2024 (v2), prepared by Provincial Geotechnical Pty Ltd.

This assessed the needs of the proposed caretakers house and amenities building.

It recommended a location for the septic tank and an effluent disposal area of 30m x 15m, both located north/west of the proposed caretaker's house.

Various recommendations are included in the report that could be implemented by endorsement of the LCA if a permit should be granted.

The LCA did not address the wastewater from the broiler sheds or dead bird composting site.

The Broiler Code

The *Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 plus 2018 Amendments* (the Code) is an environmental Code to ensure high environmental standards are achieved through the Victorian planning process. It is an incorporated document at Clause 72.04 in the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme and all planning schemes throughout Victoria.

The purpose of the Code is to:

1. *Deliver sound environmental performance in the planning, design, construction, operation, and management of broiler farms*
2. *Protect local amenity from adverse impacts, including offensive odours, dust, noise, and visual impacts*
3. *Protect the surrounding environment from adverse impacts*
4. *Permit an economically viable, competitive, and sustainable broiler farm industry.*

To achieve these outcomes the Code sets requirements for the:

- *siting and size of broiler farms*

- *application of best practice in the design, construction, operation, and management of broiler farms to satisfy relevant environmental standards*
- *preparation, assessment, and determination of broiler farm development proposals through the planning permit system*
- *ongoing monitoring of broiler farm operations through routine audits.*

The Code identifies the emissions from a broiler farm that can cause nuisance including odour, dust, noise, and light spill.

These can be mitigated with an appropriate boundary setback, separation distance and employing best practice in the design, siting, operation, and management of the broiler farm.

The boundary setback must be at least 100m between the boundary and nearest external edge of a new broiler shed, litter stockpile or compost pile.

The separation distance is the distance from the nearest edge of the broiler shed to the nearest external edge of a sensitive use on land beyond the broiler farm property. It excludes sensitive uses directly associated with broiler farm operations such as dwellings on the broiler farm property.

The Code uses a formula to determine the separation distance based on the classification of the broiler farm. The proposed broiler farm is a Class B as the farm capacity is between 10,000 and 400,000 birds and the separation distance is not wholly contained within the broiler farm boundary. The Code identifies the minimum separation distance as 686m.

The Code has a series of Elements to be addressed, each of which includes an objective, standards, and various approved measures.

The Elements are:

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| Element 1(E1): | Location, siting, and size. |
| Element 2 (E2): | Farm design, layout, and construction. |
| Element 3 (E3): | Traffic site access, on farm roads and parking |
| Element 4 (E4): | Landscaping |
| Element 5 (E5): | Waste management |
| Element 6 (E6): | Farm operation and management (Environmental Management Plan (EMP)) |

Site and surrounds

The site

The subject site's title particulars are Volume 10529 Folio 776, Lot 1 on TP018831S with a street address of 705 Baringhup Road Carisbrook,

It is an irregular shaped parcel of land with a total area of 138.4ha, located on the north/west side of Baringhup Road.

There is an existing dwelling and various outbuildings. A large dam is located to the north of the sheds, and it is understood this dam has an approval from GMW.

An existing access track is provided from Baringhup Road and is lined with planted trees on its northern side.

There are various other patches of trees and some scattered trees on the subject site.

The surrounds

Pavilion Farms operate three (3) other broiler farms in the surrounding area as follows:

Farm 7 at 396 Bald Hill Road (Planning Permit 050-20)

Farm 8 at 3080 Pyrenees Hwy (Planning Permit 051-20)

Farm 9 at 683 Baringhup Road (Planning Permit 018-21)

The image below shows the existing broiler farms in red and the proposed broiler farms in yellow.



The table below summarises the approved and proposed broiler farms operated, or proposed to be operated by, Pavilion Farms.

Farm Number	Address	Permit/Application No.	Existing/Proposed	Comments
#11	705 Baringhup Road Carisbrook	061/23	Proposed	Subject to current s79 VCAT appeal P270/2025.
#10	3280 Pyrenees Highway Carisbrook	022/23	Proposed	Applicant has requested application be placed on hold pending appeal of 061/23 as the priority application. Advertising has concluded with objections received and referrals have been returned.
#14	394 Bald Hill Road Carisbrook	017/25	Proposed	New application, currently under initial assessment. It is noted that application 110/24 was lodged for farm #14 also on the eastern side of farm #7 but this application has been made redundant by newer application 017/25 and is due to be withdrawn.
#7	396 Bald Hill Road Carisbrook	050/20	Existing	Permit approved following NOD being issued. No appeal.
#8	3080 Pyrenees Highway Carisbrook	051/20	Existing	Permit approved. Exempt from notice and review requirements. No appeal.
#9	683 Baringhup Road Carisbrook	018/21	Existing	Permit approved. Exempt from notice and review requirements. No appeal.

The surrounding area is otherwise characterised by agricultural uses, mainly broad acre cropping and grazing, along with scattered dwellings that are mostly associated with farming.

The adjoining site to the north/east at 835 Baringhup Road contains several mullock heaps from past mining activity and is owned by Mount Alexander Shire Council.

Other items of note include the Cairn Curran Reservoir about 4.8km to the east (at the closest point) within the Public Use Zone (PUZ), the Tullaroop Reservoir about 4.7km to the west (at the closest point) within the Public Use Zone (PUZ) and the Havelock State Forest about 7.7km to the east (at the closest point) within the Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ).

Apart from any existing or proposed caretakers house on the site or in the applicant's ownership, the nearest third-party/off-site dwellings to the proposed sheds include:

- A dwelling approximately 2,100 metres west
- Three dwellings approximately 2,800 metres southwest
- Two dwellings approximately 2,100 metres north

All these dwellings are within the FZ.

The nearest Rural Living Zone is approximately 4.6km to the south/west on the edge of Carisbrook and the nearest residential zone is approximately 5.2km to the south/west in Carisbrook.
(Refer Attachment 2)

Registered Restrictions

Pursuant to section 61(4) of the Act, the responsible authority must refuse to grant a permit if it would authorise anything that would result in a breach of a registered restrictive covenant. The subject land is not affected by any such registered restriction.

Permit triggers

Under the Planning Scheme, a permit is required pursuant to the following:

- Clause 35.07-1 (FZ), a permit is required for a broiler farm as a Section 2 use of the land in the FZ, with the relevant condition being satisfied that the requirements of Clause 53.09 'Poultry farm' must be met.
- Clause 35.07-1 (FZ), a permit is required for the caretaker's house as a Section 2 use of the land in the FZ, with the relevant condition being satisfied that the requirements of Clause 35.07-2 'Use of land for a dwelling, small second dwelling or rural worker accommodation' must be met.
- Clause 35.07-4 (FZ), a permit is required to construct a building or carry out works associated with a use in Section 2 of Clause 35.07-1.
- Clause 43.01-1 (HO113), a permit is required to construct a building or carry out works.

Definitions

Clause 73.03 of the Planning Scheme sets out the definitions of various land use terms, including:

- Broiler farm: *Land used to keep broiler chickens for the production of meat.*
 - A broiler farm is nested within the land use term of 'poultry farm,' which in turn is in nested within the land use term of 'animal production,' which in turn is in nested within the land use term of 'animal husbandry,' which in turn is in nested within the land use term of 'agriculture'
- Caretaker's house: *A dwelling on the same site as a building, operation, or plant, and occupied by a supervisor of that building, operation, or plant.*
 - A caretaker's house is nested within the land use term of 'dwelling,' which in turn is in nested within the land use term of 'accommodation.'

Planning Scheme considerations

The following lists the relevant clauses of the Planning Scheme and their relevant content, purposes, or decision guidelines:

00 Purpose and Vision

02 Municipal Planning Strategy

02.01 Context

- The Shire contains significant areas of remnant vegetation, notably its stands of Box Ironbark Forest. Central Goldfields is located within the heart of the Box Ironbark ecosystem, which provides a habitat for a wide diversity of flora and fauna that is unique to this ecosystem. The Moolort Plains wetlands are a unique wetland complex situated in the Volcanic Plains in the Shire's east.
- The Shire is located south-west from the Loddon River catchment. Several creeks including the Bet Bet, Emu, Timor, Tullaroop and McCallums Creeks, traverse the Shire and the Avoca River forms part of its western boundary with the Pyrenees and Northern Grampians Shires. Other major water features include Lake Cairn Curran and Tullaroop Reservoirs.
- The Shire's productive agricultural land is a finite and important resource. Cropping, grazing, fodder conservation and horticulture are ongoing agricultural activities. Conflicts between farming, industry and residential uses are an ongoing challenge for the Shire. Agricultural uses are further impacted by climate change and soil degradation from erosion, salinity, and prior mining activities.
- Central Goldfields Shire has a number of industries that are driving the local economy, such as primary industries and trades; population driven industries; knowledge and public sector industries and tourism. Despite agriculture declining as an employment source, there are opportunities for improving supply chains, increased food manufacturing and diversified farming practices.
- The Shire is part of the Goldfields Tourist Region, which celebrates its gold and mining heritage. There are also significant Aboriginal sites and an emerging arts and culture sector in the Shire which present unique cultural tourism experiences. Central Goldfields is well serviced by a road network, with limited public transport options available. Active transport is emerging as an important resource for the sub-regional centre of Maryborough and within the district towns. The Shire features a diverse array of open space and recreation facilities.

02.02 Vision

- Our vision is "to be a vibrant, thriving, inclusive community" (Council Plan 2017-2021).
- Central Goldfields Shire Council seeks to create a shire that:
 - Has a supported, cohesive community, living a full and healthy life.
 - Has a vibrant local economy which contributes to the municipality's economic prosperity.
 - Celebrates the rich built and natural heritage and a sustainable environment.

02.03 Strategic Directions

02.03-2 Environmental and landscape values

- **Landscape**
 - Prominent features of the natural landscape include Paddy's Ranges State Park, Mt Bealiba Range, Moolort Plains, the Cairn Curran Reservoir and Talbot's volcanic rises. Several creeks including the Bet Bet, Burnt, Emu, Timor, Tullaroop and McCallums Creeks traverse the Shire, and the Avoca River forms part of the western boundary with the Pyrenees and Northern Grampians Shires.
- **Biodiversity**
 - A rich diversity of plants, animals and habitats exist across the Shire. As part of the north central catchment, the Bealiba/Dalyenong, Moolort Plains and Upper Loddon are recognised as priority biodiversity areas.
 - The Moolort Plains Wetlands is a unique wetland complex located within the Volcanic Plains in the eastern part of the Shire. The catchment of the wetlands is Victoria's only National Biodiversity hotspot and is the habitat for many native animals, particularly waterbirds, and

a number of threatened fauna species. The wetlands contain different wetland types, although their precise location, characteristics and biodiversity is not well understood. Recognised threats to the unique wetlands complex situated in the Volcanic Plains are cropping, pest plants and animals. Threatened flora species within the Box Ironbark Forests, include Buloke, Small Milk-wort, Clover Glycine and Scented Bush-pea. Threatened fauna species include Swift Parrot, Powerful Owl, Brush-tailed Phascogale and Striped Legless Lizard.

- Council seeks to protect environmental and landscape values by:
 - Support mechanisms to identify and protect the Moolort Wetlands and the Bealiba/Dalyenong area.
 - Protecting the water quality of the Loddon and Avoca Rivers and Bet Bet Creek waterway systems.
 - Protecting the Talbot district volcanic rises and the Cairn Curran Reservoir as significant landscapes.

02.03-3 Environmental risks and amenity

Natural environmental hazards including bushfire, land degradation and flooding present risks and constraints for land use and development in Central Goldfields Shire. Climate change has the potential to have adverse impacts on agriculture, tourism and on economic prosperity and viability in general. The interface between industrial uses and neighbouring residential uses are an ongoing challenge in the Shire. Emerging industries, such as intensive agriculture, greyhound keeping and training, can create amenity conflicts between land uses.

- Council seeks to address environmental risks and amenity by:
 - Minimising the potential impact of development on water pollution, land degradation and risk of salinity and erosion.
 - Ensuring land capability supports land use and development, particularly in areas of environmental risk.

02.03-4 Natural resource management

- Agricultural land
 - Agricultural land in the Shire is a resource that must be maintained for productive use. Viable land in the Shire includes the high riverine plains in the Dunolly, Bealiba and Natte Yallock areas; volcanic plains and rises at the Moolort Plains, Talbot and east of Carisbrook; metamorphic plains and ridges south of Bealiba and west of Dunolly; granite to the south and south-east of Bealiba; and the sedimentary hills and rises around Maryborough, Dunolly and Carisbrook.
 - Agricultural industries include cropping, sheep and cattle grazing and fodder conservation. There are emerging specialisations in less traditional agricultural activities such as fruit and vegetable growing, poultry farming, nursery, and floriculture, as well as emerging industries such as intensive agriculture and renewable energy production.
 - Land use conflict can occur between agriculture and residential land uses. This has the potential to affect the operation of farms and reduce their productive capacity.
 - The future of the agricultural industry is dependent on sustainable agricultural practices. Issues such as soil salinity, erosion and maintaining water quality and quantity are threats to agricultural production.
 - Intensive agriculture industries have the potential to cause effluent disposal problems and affect the amenity of adjacent land uses and greyhound keeping and training can cause conflict for nearby residential uses.
 - Council aims to protect agricultural and environmental values by:

- Promoting sustainable agricultural activities and land management practices that minimise adverse impacts on the primary production and environmental values of surrounding land and the catchment.
- Water
 - The Central Goldfields Shire is situated in the Loddon dry land catchment and is part of the wider Avoca Loddon-Campaspe catchment.
 - With a significant area of the Shire situated in the catchment of the Tullaroop and Laanecoorie Reservoirs and Lake Cairn Curran, there is a need for sustainable land management in water supply catchment areas.
 - Protection of water quality and maintaining water supply are priorities. Poor land use planning decisions, illegal and unsafe dams, unplanned incremental change, and inadequate land management can influence both water quality and quantity in the catchments.
 - Council aims to protect the viability of natural resources by:
 - Discouraging the subdivision of land or conversion to land uses that take the land out of productive use.
 - Promoting alternative cropping, intensive agriculture and value adding enterprises.
 - Minimising conflicts between agriculture and residential uses to ensure productive agricultural capacity is not reduced.
 - Supporting emerging agricultural industries that are compatible with existing agricultural practices, including horticulture, intensive animal production, niche agriculture, value adding industries and renewables.
 - Protecting the environs and water catchments of Tullaroop and Laanecoorie Reservoirs and Lake Cairn Curran.

02.03-7 Economic development

The Central Goldfields Shire's economy is small compared to the Loddon Campaspe region, which is attributed to its lower population base. The main areas of economic activity are primary industries (agriculture, construction, manufacture, and transport); population driven industries (retail, hospitality, personal and household services); knowledge and public sector industries (health, education, and government agencies) and tourism (accommodation, hospitality, arts, and recreation services).

- Rural enterprises
 - Agricultural activities are primarily cropping, sheep and cattle grazing and fodder conservation. Beef and sheep farming are high employers within the sector. There are emerging specialisations in less traditional agricultural activities such as fruit and vegetable growing, poultry farming, nursery, and floriculture, as well as a growing interest in intensive agriculture, horticulture, contributing to supply chain networks and renewable energy production.
- Tourism
 - Tourism is an emerging industry in the Shire, which is part of the Goldfields Tourist Region and on the Golden Way Touring Route between Ballarat and Bendigo. Each of the Shire's towns and hamlets have heritage streetscapes and landscapes which are complemented by environmental features such as the Box Ironbark forests, Moolort Plains, volcanic ridges, and Aboriginal assets. The Shire encourages events, emerging arts, and cultural initiatives to further strengthen the tourism industry.
- Council seeks to promote economic development by:

- o Facilitating the development of the Shire's tourism industry of small gold towns, goldfields, Aboriginal cultural tourism, and environmental assets.

02.03-8 Transport

- Road network
 - o Central Goldfields Shire is well served by roads, including the Pyrenees Highway that provides important links to the Calder and Sunraysia Highways. The Wimmera Highway is located in the northern tip of the Shire near Moliagul.
- Active transport
 - o Active transport is an important transport mode within the towns and as a tourism drawcard, with rail trails an emerging interest.

o

02.03-9 Infrastructure

- Integrated water management
 - o Council recognises the interconnection of water systems, including urban areas, water supply catchments, receiving environments and agricultural water users.

02.04 Central Goldfields Strategic Framework Plans

- Central Goldfields Shire Strategic Framework Plan to Clause 2.04
 - o Shows the proposed broiler farm being within an area of 'high quality cropping land,' within a 'significant wetland area,' and within the Cairn Curran special water supply catchment.
 - o Central Goldfields Shire Environmental and Landscape Values Plan to Clause 2.04
 - o Shows the proposed broiler farm being adjacent to an area of ESO, within a 'significant wetland area,' near several waterbodies, and within the Cairn Curran special water supply catchment.
 - o Central Goldfields Environmental Hazards Plan to Clause 2.04
 - o Shows the proposed broiler farm being adjacent to an area of LSIO, adjacent to an area of SMO, and near several waterbodies.
 - o Central Goldfields Economic Development Plan to Clause 2.04
 - o Shows the proposed broiler farm being within an area of 'high quality cropping land' and within the FZ.

10 Planning Policy Framework

12 Environmental and landscape values

12.01-1S Protection of biodiversity

- Objective: To protect and enhance Victoria's biodiversity.
- Strategies:
 - o Ensure that decision making takes into account the impacts of land use and development on Victoria's biodiversity, including consideration of:
 - Cumulative impacts.
 - Fragmentation of habitat.
 - The spread of pest plants, animals, and pathogens into natural ecosystems.
 - o Avoid impacts of land use and development on important areas of biodiversity.
 - o Consider impacts of any change in land use or development that may affect the biodiversity value of national parks and conservation reserves or nationally and internationally significant sites; including wetlands and wetland wildlife habitat designated under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (the Ramsar Convention) and sites

utilised by species listed under the Japan-Australia Migratory Birds Agreement (JAMBA), the China-Australia Migratory Birds Agreement (CAMBA), or the Republic of Korea-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (ROKAMBA).

12.03-1S River and riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands, and billabongs

- Objective To protect and enhance waterway systems including river and riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands, and billabongs.
- Strategies:
 - Protect the environmental, cultural, landscape values of all waterway systems as significant economic, environmental, and cultural assets.
 - Conserve waterway systems and the landscapes and environmental values surrounding them by protecting ecological values, indigenous vegetation, terrestrial and aquatic habitats and encouraging biodiversity.
 - Sensitively design and site development to maintain and enhance the waterway system and the surrounding landscape setting, environmental assets, and ecological and hydrological systems.

12.05-2S Landscapes

- Objective: To protect and enhance significant landscapes and open spaces that contribute to character, identity, and sustainable environments.
- Strategy:
 - Ensure development does not detract from the natural qualities of significant landscape areas.

13 Environmental risks and amenity

13.01-1S Natural hazards and climate change

- Objective: To minimise the impacts of natural hazards and adapt to the impacts of climate change through risk-based planning.
- Strategy:
 - Site and design development to minimise risk to life, health, property, the natural environment, and community infrastructure from natural hazards.

13.02-1S Bushfire planning

- Objective: To strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities to bushfire through risk-based planning that prioritises the protection of human life.

13.03-1S Floodplain management

- Objective: To assist the protection of:
 - Life, property, and community infrastructure from flood hazard, including coastal inundation, riverine and overland flow.
 - The natural flood carrying capacity of rivers, streams, and floodway's.
 - The flood storage function of floodplains and waterways.
 - Floodplain areas of environmental significance or of importance to river, wetland, or coastal health.

13.04-3S Salinity

- Objective: To minimise the impact of salinity and rising water tables on land uses, buildings and infrastructure in rural and urban areas and areas of environmental significance and reduce salt load in rivers.

13.05-1S Noise management

- Objective: To assist the management of noise effects on sensitive land uses.

13.06-1S Air quality management

- Objective: To assist the protection and improvement of air quality.

13.07-1S Land use compatibility

- Objective: To protect community amenity, human health and safety while facilitating appropriate commercial, industrial, infrastructure or other uses with potential adverse off-site impacts.
- Strategies:
 - Ensure that use or development of land is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.
 - Avoid or otherwise minimise adverse off-site impacts from commercial, industrial, and other uses through land use separation, siting, building design and operational measures.

14 Natural resource management

14.01-1S Protection of agricultural land

- Objective: To protect the state's agricultural base by preserving productive farmland.
- Strategies:
 - Avoid permanent removal of productive agricultural land from the state's agricultural base without consideration of the economic importance of the land for the agricultural production and processing sectors.
 - Protect productive farmland that is of strategic significance in the local or regional context.
 - Protect productive agricultural land from unplanned loss due to permanent changes in land use.
 - Protect strategically important agricultural and primary production land from incompatible uses.
 - In considering a proposal to use, subdivide or develop agricultural land, consider the:
 - 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.
 - The potential impacts of land use and development on the spread of plant and animal pests from areas of known infestation into agricultural areas.
 - Land capability.
 - Balance the potential off-site effects of a use or development proposal (such as degradation of soil or water quality and land salinisation) against the benefits of the proposal.

14.01-1L Protection of agricultural land - Central Goldfields

- Objective: To protect productive agricultural land and its supporting infrastructure.
- Strategies:
 - Restrict the subdivision and alienation of productive agricultural land as identified in the Strategic Framework Plan and discourage its conversion to land uses that take the land out of productive use.

- o Limit development where it cannot be adequately serviced with septic systems without impacting the water catchment and encourage farm consolidation.
- o Locate poultry abattoirs and finished poultry product processing facilities where they do not adversely affect any dwelling or agricultural land.

14.01-2S Sustainable agricultural land use

- Objective: To encourage sustainable agricultural land use.
- Strategies:
 - o Ensure agricultural and productive rural land use activities are managed to maintain the long-term sustainable use and management of existing natural resources.
 - o Support the development of innovative and sustainable approaches to agricultural and associated rural land use practices.
 - o Support adaptation of the agricultural sector to respond to the potential risks arising from climate change.
 - o Encourage diversification and value-adding of agriculture through effective agricultural production and processing, rural industry, and farm-related retailing.
 - o Assist genuine farming enterprises to embrace opportunities and adjust flexibly to market changes.
 - o Support agricultural investment through the protection and enhancement of appropriate infrastructure.
 - o Facilitate ongoing productivity and investment in high value agriculture.
 - o Facilitate the establishment and expansion of cattle feedlots, pig farms, poultry farms and other intensive animal industries in a manner consistent with orderly and proper planning and protection of the environment.
 - o Ensure that the use and development of land for animal keeping or training is appropriately located and does not detrimentally impact the environment, the operation of surrounding land uses and the amenity of the surrounding area.

14.01-2L Sustainable agricultural land use - Central Goldfields

- Objective: To encourage ecologically sustainable farm management practices.
- Strategy:
 - o Ensure intensive agriculture is located to minimise risks associated with effluent disposal and protect the amenity of adjacent land uses.

14.02-1S Catchment planning and management

- Objective: To assist the protection and restoration of catchments, waterways, estuaries, bays, water bodies, groundwater, and the marine environment.
- Strategies:
 - o Ensure the continued availability of clean, high-quality drinking water by protecting water catchments and water supply facilities.
 - o Consider the impacts of catchment management on downstream water quality and freshwater, coastal and marine environments.
 - o Undertake measures to minimise the quantity and retard the flow of stormwater from developed areas.

- Require appropriate measures to filter sediment and wastes from stormwater prior to its discharge into waterways, including the preservation of floodplain or other land for wetlands and retention basins
- Ensure land use and development minimises nutrient contributions to water bodies and the potential for the development of algal blooms.

14.02-2S Water quality

- Objective: To protect water quality.
- Strategies:
 - Protect reservoirs, water mains and local storage facilities from potential contamination.
 - Ensure that land use activities potentially discharging contaminated runoff or wastes to waterways are sited and managed to minimise such discharges and to protect the quality of surface water and groundwater resources, rivers, streams, wetlands, estuaries, and marine environments.

14.02-2L Water quality - Central Goldfields

- Objective: Maintain and protect water quality in the Bealiba, Laanecoorie, Tullaroop and Cairn Curran catchments and the Loddon and Avoca Rivers and Bet Bet Creek waterways systems.
- Strategy:
 - Prioritise land capability in the assessment of land use and development applications

15.01 Built environment

15.01-6S Design for rural areas

- Objective: To ensure development respects valued areas of rural character.
- Strategies:
 - Ensure that the siting, scale, and appearance of development protects and enhances rural character.
 - Protect the visual amenity of valued rural landscapes and character areas along township approaches and sensitive tourist routes by ensuring new development is sympathetically located.
 - Site and design development to minimise visual impacts on surrounding natural scenery and landscape features including ridgelines, hill tops, waterways, lakes, and wetlands.

16 Housing

16.01-3S Rural residential development

- Objective: To identify land suitable for rural residential development.
- Strategy:
 - Manage development in rural areas to protect agriculture and avoid inappropriate rural residential development.

17 Economic development

17.01-1S Diversified economy

- Objective: To strengthen and diversify the economy.

17.04-1S Facilitating tourism

- Objective: To encourage tourism development to maximise the economic, social, and cultural benefits of developing the state as a competitive domestic and international tourist destination.

17.04-1L Tourism - Central Goldfields

- Objective: To promote Central Goldfields Shire's natural and cultural heritage tourism assets to maximise social and economic benefits.

18 Transport

18.01-1S Land use and transport integration

- Objective: To facilitate access to social, cultural, and economic opportunities by effectively integrating land use and transport.

18.01-3S Sustainable and safe transport

- Objective: To facilitate an environmentally sustainable transport system that is safe and supports health and wellbeing.

18.02-4S Roads

- Objective: To facilitate an efficient and safe road network that integrates all movement networks and makes best use of existing infrastructure.

19 Infrastructure

19.03-3S Integrated water management

- Objective: To sustainably manage water supply and demand, water resources, wastewater, drainage, and stormwater through an integrated water management approach.

19.03-3L 07 Integrated water management - Central Goldfields

- Strategies:
 - Ensure effluent disposal systems can be contained within the site.
 - Minimise the potential for pollution if reticulated sewerage is not available by using any recommendations from a land capability assessment and considering conditions of relevant referral authorities.

30 Zones

35.07 Farming zone

- Purpose
 - To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
 - To provide for the use of land for agriculture.
 - To encourage the retention of productive agricultural land.
 - To ensure that non-agricultural uses, including dwellings, do not adversely affect the use of land for agriculture.
 - To encourage the retention of employment and population to support rural communities.
 - To encourage use and development of land based on comprehensive and sustainable land management practices and infrastructure provision.
 - To provide for the use and development of land for the specific purposes identified in a schedule to this zone.
- Decision guidelines
 - General issues
 - The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
 - The capability of the land to accommodate the proposed use or development, including the disposal of effluent.
 - How the use or development relates to sustainable land management.
 - Whether the site is suitable for the use or development and whether the proposal is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.

- How the use and development makes use of existing infrastructure and services.
- Agricultural issues and the impacts from non-agricultural uses
 - Whether the use or development will support and enhance agricultural production.
 - Whether the use or development will adversely affect soil quality or permanently remove land from agricultural production.
 - The potential for the use or development to limit the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.
 - The capacity of the site to sustain the agricultural use.
 - The agricultural qualities of the land, such as soil quality, access to water and access to rural infrastructure.
- Accommodation issues
 - Whether the dwelling will result in the loss or fragmentation of productive agricultural land.
 - Whether the dwelling will be adversely affected by agricultural activities on adjacent and nearby land due to dust, noise, odour, use of chemicals and farm machinery, traffic, and hours of operation.
 - Whether the dwelling will adversely affect the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.
 - The potential for the proposal to lead to a concentration or proliferation of dwellings in the area and the impact of this on the use of the land for agriculture.
- Environmental issues
 - The impact of the proposal on the natural physical features and resources of the area, in particular on soil and water quality.
 - The impact of the use or development on the flora and fauna on the site and its surrounds.
 - The need to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the area, including the retention of vegetation and faunal habitat and the need to revegetate land including riparian buffers along waterways, gullies, ridgelines, property boundaries and saline discharge and recharge area.
 - The location of on-site effluent disposal areas to minimise the impact of nutrient loads on waterways and native vegetation.
- Design and siting issues
 - The need to locate buildings in one area to avoid any adverse impacts on surrounding agricultural uses and to minimise the loss of productive agricultural land.
 - The impact of the siting, design, height, bulk, colours, and materials to be used, on the natural environment, major roads, vistas and water features and the measures to be undertaken to minimise any adverse impacts.
 - The impact on the character and appearance of the area or features of architectural, historic, or scientific significance or of natural scenic beauty or importance.
 - The location and design of existing and proposed infrastructure including roads, gas, water, drainage, telecommunications, and sewerage facilities.
 - Whether the use and development will require traffic management measures.

- Purpose
 - To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
 - To conserve and enhance heritage places of natural or cultural significance.
 - To conserve and enhance those elements which contribute to the significance of heritage places.
 - To ensure that development does not adversely affect the significance of heritage places.
 - To conserve specified heritage places by allowing a use that would otherwise be prohibited if this will demonstrably assist with the conservation of the significance of the heritage place.

Relevant decision guidelines include:

- The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- *The significance of the heritage place and whether the proposal will adversely affect the natural or cultural significance of the place*
- Whether the proposed works will adversely affect the significance, character, or appearance of the heritage place.

50 Particular provisions

52.06 Car parking

- Purpose
 - To ensure that car parking is provided in accordance with the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
 - To ensure the provision of an appropriate number of car parking spaces having regard to the demand likely to be generated, the activities on the land and the nature of the locality.
 - To support sustainable transport alternatives to the motor car.
 - To promote the efficient use of car parking spaces through the consolidation of car parking facilities.
 - To ensure that car parking does not adversely affect the amenity of the locality.
 - To ensure that the design and location of car parking is of a high standard, creates a safe environment for users and enables easy and efficient use.

53.09 Poultry farm

- Purpose
 - To facilitate the establishment and expansion of poultry farms, including broiler farms, in a manner that is consistent with orderly and proper planning and the protection of the environment.
- Requirement – Broiler farm
 - An application to use land or construct a building or construct or carry out works for a broiler farm must comply with the *Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 (plus 2018 amendments)*.
- Decision guidelines
 - The purpose of the relevant zone.
 - The design, height, setback, and appearance of the proposed buildings and works.
 - The proposed landscaping.
 - The need to protect amenity of existing uses on adjoining land.

- The impact of the use of the land on the surrounding area, including from the emission of noise, light, vibration, odour, dust, or waste products.
- The impact of the proposal on any wetlands, waterways, or water bodies.
- The likely environmental impact on the natural physical features and biodiversity of the land, including consideration of any Nutrient Management Plan submitted with the application.
- Whether the development will support and enhance agricultural production.

60 General provisions

65.01 Approval of an application or plan

- The matters set out in section 60 of the Act.
- Any significant effects the environment, including the contamination of land, may have on the use or development.
- The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- The purpose of the zone, overlay, or other provision.
- Any matter required to be considered in the zone, overlay, or other provision.
- The orderly planning of the area.
- The effect on the environment, human health, and amenity of the area.
- The proximity of the land to any public land.
- Factors likely to cause or contribute to land degradation, salinity or reduce water quality.
- Whether the proposed development is designed to maintain or improve the quality of stormwater within and exiting the site.
- The extent and character of native vegetation and the likelihood of its destruction.
- Whether native vegetation is to be or can be protected, planted, or allowed to regenerate.
- The degree of flood, erosion or fire hazard associated with the location of the land and the use, development, or management of the land so as to minimise any such hazard.
- The adequacy of loading and unloading facilities and any associated amenity, traffic flow and road safety impacts.
- The impact the use or development will have on the current and future development and operation of the transport system.

70 Operational provisions

71.01 Operation of the Municipal Planning Strategy

- The Municipal Planning Strategy at Clause 02 provides an overview of important local planning issues in an introductory context, sets out the vision for future use and development in the municipality and establishes strategic directions about how the municipality is expected to change through the implementation of planning policy and the planning scheme.
- A responsible authority must take into account and give effect to the Municipal Planning Strategy when it makes a decision under this planning scheme.

Clause 71.02 Operation of the Planning Policy Framework

- The Planning Policy Framework provides a context for spatial planning and decision making by planning and responsible authorities. The Planning Policy Framework is dynamic and will be built upon as planning policy is developed and refined and changed as the needs of the community change.
- The Planning Policy Framework seeks to ensure that the objectives of planning in Victoria (as set out in section 4 of the Act) are fostered through appropriate land use and development planning

policies and practices that integrate relevant environmental, social, and economic factors in the interests of net community benefit and sustainable development.

- Victorians have various needs and expectations such as land for settlement, protection of the environment, economic wellbeing, various social needs, proper management of resources and infrastructure. Planning aims to meet these needs and expectations by addressing aspects of economic, environmental, and social wellbeing affected by land use and development.
- The Planning Policy Framework operates together with the remainder of the scheme to deliver integrated decision making. Planning and responsible authorities should endeavour to integrate the range of planning policies relevant to the issues to be determined and balance conflicting objectives in favour of net community benefit and sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations. However, in bushfire affected areas, planning and responsible authorities must prioritise the protection of human life over all other policy considerations.
- Planning authorities should identify the potential for regional impacts in their decision making and coordinate strategic planning with their neighbours and other public bodies to achieve sustainable development and effective and efficient use of resources.

Referrals

The following table outlines referrals undertaken under section 55 of the Act and clause 66 of the Planning Scheme.

Organisation	Response
Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW) Clause 66.02-5 Determining referral authority	Does not object if the permit is subject to specified conditions (Refer to Attachment 3)

Goulburn-Murray Water response

GMW advised their areas of interest are surface water and groundwater quality, use and disposal. They require that development proposals do not impact detrimentally on GMW's infrastructure and the flow and quality of surface water and groundwater.

The subject site is located in the Loddon River (Laanecoorie) Special Water Supply Catchment area. GMW has no objection to a planning permit being granted subject to conditions. Particular conditions to note include requirements such as:

- Contaminated litter removed from the sheds must be transported off site by an approved contractor to an approved site.
- No spent litter from the sheds is to be stockpiled on site.
- Any temporary storage of wet litter must have an impermeable base and bunding to ensure contaminated run-off does not discharge from the temporary storage area.
- No land application of litter is to occur.
- The retention dam must be lined with an impervious liner.
- Dead birds must be disposed of off-site or managed on-site to the satisfaction of the EPA.

The application was also referred within the Central Goldfields Shire Council for comments and/or recommended conditions:

Department	Response
Engineering	Response pending

Notice

In accordance with section 52 of the Act, notice of the application was given in the prescribed form. Notice was given by placing a sign at the site, by publishing a notice in the Carisbrook Mercury, and sending it by post. Notice was given to the owners and occupiers of adjoining and surrounding land as well as to the EPA Victoria (as required by Clause 66.05 of the Planning Scheme). Informal notice was also provided to Agriculture Victoria.

As a result, forty-two (42) objections were received alongside neutral submissions from the EPA Victoria (Refer to Attachment 4), VicTrack (Refer to Attachment 5) and Agriculture Victoria (Refer to Attachment 6). A summary of the matters raised in the 42 objections are provided immediately below, followed by a summary of the matters raised in the submissions from the EPA Victoria, VicTrack and Agriculture Victoria.

Objections included one received from Mount Alexander Shire Council noting that Mount Alexander Shire Council owns the land at 835 Baringhup Road Carisbrook, an approximately 2ha site immediately adjacent to the subject site and located wholly within the 686m separation distance.

The matters raised in both the objections and submissions are addressed in the assessment that follows.

Summary of matters raised in objections

- Insufficient public notice.
- Adjoining land is incorrectly identified.
- Adjoining land is wholly included in the separation distance. Application material incorrectly states that it could not be used for sensitive purposes.
- Prejudices the future use of adjoining land.
- Application is not compliant with the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 Plus 2018 amendment and will have a detrimental impact on Council owned land (Mount Alexander Shire Council), particularly Section 7 Farm design and operational elements and Section 11 Strategic and land use planning considerations.
- The application fails to address the impacts on wetlands identified in the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme. The site is identified as a Significant Wetland Area in the Central Goldfields Shire Strategic Framework Plan and Landscape Values Plan (Clause 02.04).
- Impact on existing tourist use.
- Harmful gas emissions and dust particles.
- Food required for broiler farming requires agrochemicals to grow which results in negative environmental impacts.
- Buffer zone impacts two wetland area which attracts water birds and breeding.
- Biosecurity concerns.
- Impacts from odour.
- Impacts from noise, including from heavy vehicles.
- Impacts from lighting disturbance and light spill causing impact on drivers on Baringhup Road.
- Traffic impacts on Baringhup Road and risk to children from trucks while waiting for the school bus.
- Fertiliser restrictions on properties.
- Run off into the Loddon/water supply and Deep Creek.
- Proven lack of management and enforcement of permit conditions at existing farms.
- Contamination of water tanks.
- Devaluation of property values.
- Conflicts with Council funding commitments for tourism-based projects such as Victorian Goldfields Work Heritage Bid and Castlemaine Maryborough Rail Trail.
- Impact on availability of agricultural land.
- Risk to stock on road from trucks.

- Damage to roads from trucks.
- Noise pollution.
- Impact on mental wellbeing of the community.
- Impact on availability of groundwater for the bore.
- General proximity to dwellings including visual amenity impacts.
- Impact on viability of existing successful farm operation.
- Pavilion Farms have transported large litter stockpiles of over 200 tonnes from Central Goldfields Shire to Mount Alexander Shire and it has included dead birds.
- Breached previous plan to landscape around poultry sheds at other sites.
- Concern that truck movement figures supplied by the applicant have been underestimated.
- Heritage Overlay and area of cultural heritage sensitivity are compromised by buffers.
- Increase in vermin including mice, rats, and foxes.
- No topographical detail provided with the applications.
- Concerns with mortality composting pad – odour and leaching.
- Avian flu risk.
- Impact on Moolort Plains and need for a detailed environmental impact assessment.
- Submitted flora and fauna assessment fails to identify significant flora and fauna taxa including state and federally listed species.
- Concern that the rodent baits identified in the application as being environmentally safe – are not.
- Concern with broiler farms in the area not complying with permit requirements and one facility has been fined by the EPA.
- Impact on landscape amenity.
- No cost benefit analysis of the proposed development.
- Impacts on air quality.
- Impact on viability of the Castlemaine Maryborough Rail Trail
 - reputational risk
 - economic loss
 - loss of social benefit
- Drain on Council's budget with future road maintenance
- Limits the ability to use land for soil-based farming

Summary of EPA Victoria submission

The EPA response notes that the proposed broiler farm is a Class B Broiler Farm and also identifies the four (4) nearby existing broiler farms and their separation distances. The minimum separation distance between the existing broiler farms and the proposed Class B broiler farm is 1536 metres.



The EPA advise that the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms (the Code) provides the basis for the planning, assessment, and approval of broiler farms in Victoria and that compliance with the Code is mandatory. The Code also establishes minimum separation distances and in accordance with Formula 1 of the Code the required minimum separation distance is 686m. This distance is met by the proposal with the closest receptor being 1116 to the broiler sheds.

In accordance with the Code as the development meets the minimum separation distance there is no mandatory requirement for an Odour ERA.

Regardless, the applicant has submitted an Odour ERA which will be discussed separately in this report.

Summary of VicTrack submission

A rail reserve is located on the site's northern boundary and this land is owned by VicTrack and leased to V/Line, the Rail Operator. Pursuant to the *Transport Integration Act 2010*, VicTrack manages rail land, infrastructure and assess on behalf of the State.

VicTrack noted that to date whilst they are aware of a rail trail proposal, no lease has been granted for the rail trail at this stage. They also note that:

"In relation to any concerns relating to amenity impacts on the future rail trail proposal within the Transport Zone, we believe these have no basis in the planning scheme."

As the Transport Zone is not a residential zone or a location for sensitive uses, they do not have any significant concerns relating to the proposed broiler farm use.

VicTrack recommended two (2) conditions be included in a planning permit should one be granted. These relate to no access to their land without consent and no drainage, effluent waste or other materials must enter or be stored on their land.

It is noted that the subject site does not directly abut the rail line, however if a permit is granted then the conditions should be applied unless otherwise advised by VicTrack.

Summary of Agriculture Victoria submission

Agriculture Victoria provided advice relating to:

- The planning context.
- An assessment against the *Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 Plus 2018 Amendments* (the Code).
- A review of the application against the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme strategic objectives.
- With respect to the planning context Agriculture Victoria confirm officers' advice in this report that the proposed use is a Section 2 (permit required) use

- Agriculture Victoria identified some concerns and anomalies with the application material including:
 - Different bird numbers identified. The planning report states a capacity up to 400,00 birds. The submitted Broiler Farm Proposal Summary and submitted Odour ERA refer to numbers that equate to 452,574 birds.
 - The planning application and report identify the proposal as a Class B broiler farm with a capacity of up to 400,000 birds, whereas the Odour ERA classifies the proposed farm as a Special Class farm with a capacity in excess of 400,000 birds.
 - The EMP is not submitted in an auditable form in accordance with Element 6, Standard E6 S1 of the Code.
 - The EMP does not identify the responsible parties or provide contact information.
 - The EMP does not detail management and contingencies for emergency disease or catastrophic mortalities.
 - The EMP does not identify and or provide contact information in the case to emergency disease outbreaks.
 - The Planning Report states that dead birds will be composted on the Broiler Farm Property and all compost generated will be retained on the Broiler Farm Property in accordance with EPA Regulations. The EMP states that dead birds whilst on the farm are stored on closed containers and are generally removed from the farm daily or at a maximum of 36 hours.

Agriculture Victoria are of the view the proposal has the potential to meet the requirements of the Code but does not do so at the moment.

Assessment

Odour impacts

An Odour Environmental Risk Assessment (Odour ERA) was submitted with the application dated 4 December 2024 and prepared by GHD. The Odour ERA included a Level 3 assessment in accordance with EPA Victoria Publication 1883: Guidance of Assessment Odour and AgriFuture 2021 Planning and environment guideline for establishing meat chicken farms: Guide 1 – Assessment Guide.

The Odour ERA identified a number of assumptions including:

- *Odour is the primary emission of concern from the broiler farm.*
- *Odour generated from the broiler farms are linearly proportional to the throughput of the facilities.*
- *GHD relied on EPA Publication 1883 and AgriFutures 2021 to undertake air dispersion modelling.*
- ***The existing farm fan numbers were updated as per client's instruction, after the dispersion model was ran. The increase in fan numbers will result in an increase in odour emission rates. The modelled results were scaled linearly to account for the increase in odour emissions as a result of fan number increase. (emphasis added)***
- *Odour surveillance data for Sale-Toongabbie Farm is considered representative for broiler farms with similar shed size and ventilation set up. Based on this, GHD has relied on odour surveillance data from Sale-Toongabbie Farm to undertake odour risk assessment for broiler farms in Carisbrook.*
- *All information provided is correct and representative of the proposed operations at the site.*
- *Data obtained from Bureau of Meteorological (BoM) stations is correct.*

The Victorian Code for Broiler Farms – 2009 also sets out the following stages for an Odour ERA.

- Stage 1 – Odour dispersion modelling is required to assess the cumulative odour emissions from all broiler farms within the site. The dispersion model calculates the predicted peak odour levels exceeding 5 odour units (5OU) at the site boundary. If that criterion is met at and beyond the broiler farm boundary then the responsible authority should accept the risk of odour amenity impact is low and no further assessment is required.
- Stage 2 – If the criterion above is not met then an analysis is required to determine the frequency of the odour impact, duration, and extent on surrounding sensitive uses (i.e. dwellings). This information is then used to determine if the risk of adverse odour impacts beyond the broiler farm is acceptable.

- Stage 3 – if the risk of adverse odour impacts beyond the broiler farm boundary is considered unacceptable then the design of the broiler farm needs to be modified. This could involve reducing the number of birds or relocating the sheds.

The submitted Odour ERA included an assessment of Farm 11 subject to the planning permit being considered by this officers' report and Farm 10 which is subject to a separate planning permit application, only recently lodged with Council that is currently subject to a request for further information.

A limitation is that it is difficult to discern increased odour impact from proposed Farm 11 only. The Odour ERA does though take into account existing Farms 7, 8 and 9 which is helpful.

The five-odour unit (OU) 99.9th percentile 3-minute average of odour modelling results is generally used to assess the predicted downwind odour concentrations during short time worst-case, poor dispersive meteorological conditions. The 99.9th percentile is generally taken as the level that if the odour is obvious has an offensive character and may lead to nuisance and complaint.

Figure 4.0 (extract below) in the Odour ERA is a useful graphic as it shows existing and proposed farms and sensitive receptors within a 2km distance of the proposed broiler farms.



Legend

Pavilion Farm properties

Existing farm sheds

Sensitive receptors

Proposed farm sheds

The modelling undertaken in the submitted Odour ERA identified that all seven (7) receptors would experience an increase in odour from the additional broiler farms, with Receptor R7 experiencing the greatest increase with odour units increasing from 8.8 to 24.9, so an increase in odour units of 16.1. Receptor R1 experiences the highest impact from the current farms at 24.9 OU with an increase to 32.5 OU with the addition of Farms 10 and 11. (Table 9).

Perceived odour strength is measured from 0 (not perceptible) to 6 (extremely strong) with various concentrations of odour units allotted to each intensity level accordingly.

Receptors R1 and R7 have the highest impact from odour and when considering the additional Farms 10 and 11 their odour units are 32.5 and 24.9 respectively placing them between the strong and very strong odour strength categories. (Table 10).

Table 13 in the submitted Odour ERA identifies that R1, R5, R6 and R7 each have a high-risk odour exposure potential, with a moderate risk of offensive odour when considering the impact of the existing farms and proposed Farms 10 and 11. The increase in odour risk is the highest for R7.

The Odour ERA notes that moderate risk *“can be practically and effectively managed”* however it does not provide any advice on what changes could be made to mitigate this risk.

The Odour ERA also states that the increase in odour would need to treble to be perceived by receptors.

The Odour ERA also reviewed the complaint history between 2018 and April 2024. The EPA records show that most recently there were two (2) complaints made along Carisbrook-Baringhup Road Carisbrook. There were ninety-two (92) complaints made in 2019 to Central Goldfields Shire Council, with the Odour ERA attributing these complaints to non-Pavilion Farm operations.

An officer's review of the Council's database identifies a history of complaints in more recent years with respect to existing Pavilion Farms operations. This includes twelve (12) complaints to date in 2025 and a further thirty-one (31) complaints from mid-2019 – end 2024. Complaints relate to odour, dust, contaminated water tanks, stockpiled litter including dead birds in the litter, a lack of landscaping, wastewater leaving the site, non-compliance with permit conditions, uncovered trucks and noise disturbance from trucks, road safety and road damage from trucks.

Given the increase in odour to sensitive receptors, the proposal is likely to result in an unacceptable outcome if a planning permit was to be granted.

Visual/landscape impacts and landscaping

A viewshed analysis was not submitted with the permit application. The landscape concept plan does show screen planting and elevations of the sheds with the plantings, however there is no information submitted with respect to long sight lines into the development.

The site and surrounds are generally characterised by a relatively flat landscape where long sight lines become very important. Although the sheds are relatively low profile, with the zincalume roof materials they have the potential to reflect the sun and be visually dominant.

The landscape buffer is relatively modest and will not necessarily provide an adequate screen. The establishment and ongoing maintenance of the landscape buffer is also a concern, particularly in what are relatively harsh conditions for growing.

In *Lewis v Central Goldfields SC [2015] VCAT 410* which considered applications for review against the Council decision and conditions for a proposed broiler farm at 141 Clarkes Road Strathlea the Tribunal provided considerable discussion and guidance pertaining to landscape impacts including:

“We agree with the Objectors that the bund and proposed plantings would introduce a landscape form that is not typical of the Plains and would be discordant to a degree. The glare from sheds would add to that visual presence and impact. A particular outstanding concern is, as discussed, how the sheds appear on the escarpment in some public views mindful that the sheds cannot be positioned further to the west, and still be on the subject land, as setbacks from Clarkes Road would then change.” (emphasis added)

The Tribunal was not persuaded that zincalume roofs was an appropriate outcome and would have a detrimental amenity impact.

The Tribunal concluded that there were unacceptable amenity impacts including odour and visual impact that could not be addressed by permit conditions and directed that no permit issue.

“The risk of amenity impacts as a consequence of odour is a critical issue with respect to broiler farms. The landscape impacts are also an important element within the Code and,

more broadly, the Scheme although it is fair to say our concerns on this point are secondary to those of odour risks.

The benefits and acceptable outcomes we have found could be achieved by this permit application do not outweigh our conclusion that some elements of the Code have not been fully complied with and that we cannot be satisfied that the proposal achieves an acceptable outcome. The concerns are not ones that we find can be addressed by permit conditions and have led us to set aside the Council's decision and direct no permit issue."

Given the lack of a landscape visual impact assessment, the (at best) modest landscape response provided in the submitted landscape plan and the Tribunal's position in *Lewis v central Goldfields*, it is considered the proposal is likely to result in an unacceptable outcome if a planning permit was to be granted.

Noise and other amenity impacts

An acoustic report was not submitted with the permit application. There is potential for noise from truck movements, particularly when most of the truck movements occur during the night for the bird removal. At night, the background ambient noise is less, and people are also trying to sleep and are more likely to be disturbed by noise.

Cumulative impact

Clause 12.01-1S requires the consideration of the cumulative impact of land use and development on Victoria's biodiversity.

Clause 13.07-1S of the planning scheme includes relevant strategies including ensuring that the use or development of land is compatible with adjoining or nearby land uses.

Clause 14.01-1S of the planning scheme requires the consideration of land capability when assessing a proposal to use or develop agricultural land.

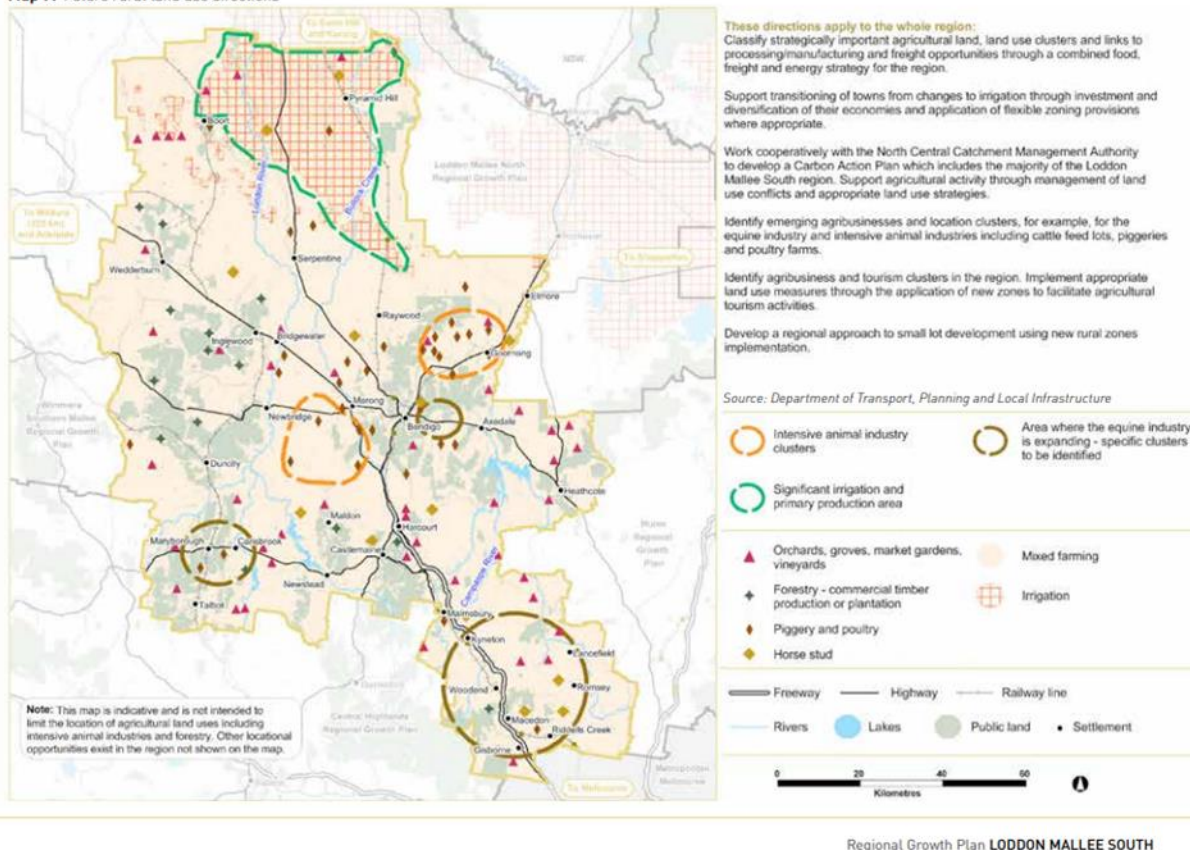
Clause 14.01-1L of the planning scheme includes a strategy to locate poultry abattoirs and finished poultry product processing facilities where they do not adversely affect any dwelling or agricultural land.

Clause 14.01-2S of the planning scheme includes a strategy to facilitate the establishment of poultry farms in a manner consistent with orderly and proper planning and protection of the environment.

The Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan (regional growth plan) identifies that intensive animal industries are a significant economic contributor. Intensive animal industries are expressly encouraged in the north and west of the region where there are large farms that can provide appropriate separation distances. It is noted that this does not prevent them from locating in other areas when appropriate separation distances can be achieved.

Map 7 in the regional growth plan shows the preferred location for intensive animal industry clusters around Goornong and Newbridge, north and west of Bendigo. Whereas it identifies the area around Carisbrook and Maryborough as a location where the equine industry is expanding.

Map 7: Future rural land use directions



Given the number of existing and approved broiler farms in the immediate vicinity of the proposed farm at the subject site, the cumulative impact is considered to represent an unacceptable risk with respect to offsite amenity impacts.

North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27

This regional catchment strategy is an overarching strategy for all involved in managing land, water, and biodiversity. It sets a vision for integrated management across the region and identified priorities and targets, providing a framework to co-ordinate effort. Key themes include:

- Water
- Land
- Biodiversity
- Community
- Traditional Owners

Carisbrook is located within the Upper Loddon Plains area which includes the Cairn Curran and Tullaroop Reservoirs, Tullaroop Creek and Moolort Plains Wetlands.

An identified challenge is the concerns with water quality with significant and frequent Blue Green algae outbreaks in Tullaroop Reservoir.

The management of runoff and stormwater

The application was accompanied by a Hydrogeological assessment and outlines the details relating to water supply and drainage control. It states that the proposed measures are satisfactory and that monitoring measures can be implemented.

A number of objectors raise concerns with the risk of surface water escaping the site and potentially contaminating groundwater.

It is agreed that there is indeed a risk, and that the applicant has failed to demonstrate adequate risk mitigation. There is conflicting information in the application material and particular concern with spreading litter on the balance of the site and the composting of dead birds.

Farming zone

Under the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme, a 'broiler farm' is included in the definition of 'animal production' which in turn is included in the definition of 'agriculture.'

Clause 35.07-1 of the Farming Zone requires a planning permit for the use of 'animal production' and Clause 35.07-4 of the Farming Zone requires a planning permit for the associated buildings and works.

Use of the site for the purpose of a 'broiler farm' is a legitimate use within a Farming Zone and meets the purpose of the zone which primarily relate to providing for the agricultural use of the land.

The 'broiler farm' does provide additional opportunities for local employment to support the local rural community. A 'caretakers house' is *"a dwelling on the same site as a building, operation, or plant, and occupied by a supervisor of that building, operation, or plant."*

The 'broiler farm' operates 24/7 and needs constant supervision to ensure the safety and welfare of the birds. It is therefore reasonable for there to be a caretaker's house to ensure that constant supervision.

The caretakers house needs to comply with the requirements of Clause 35.07-2 relating to:

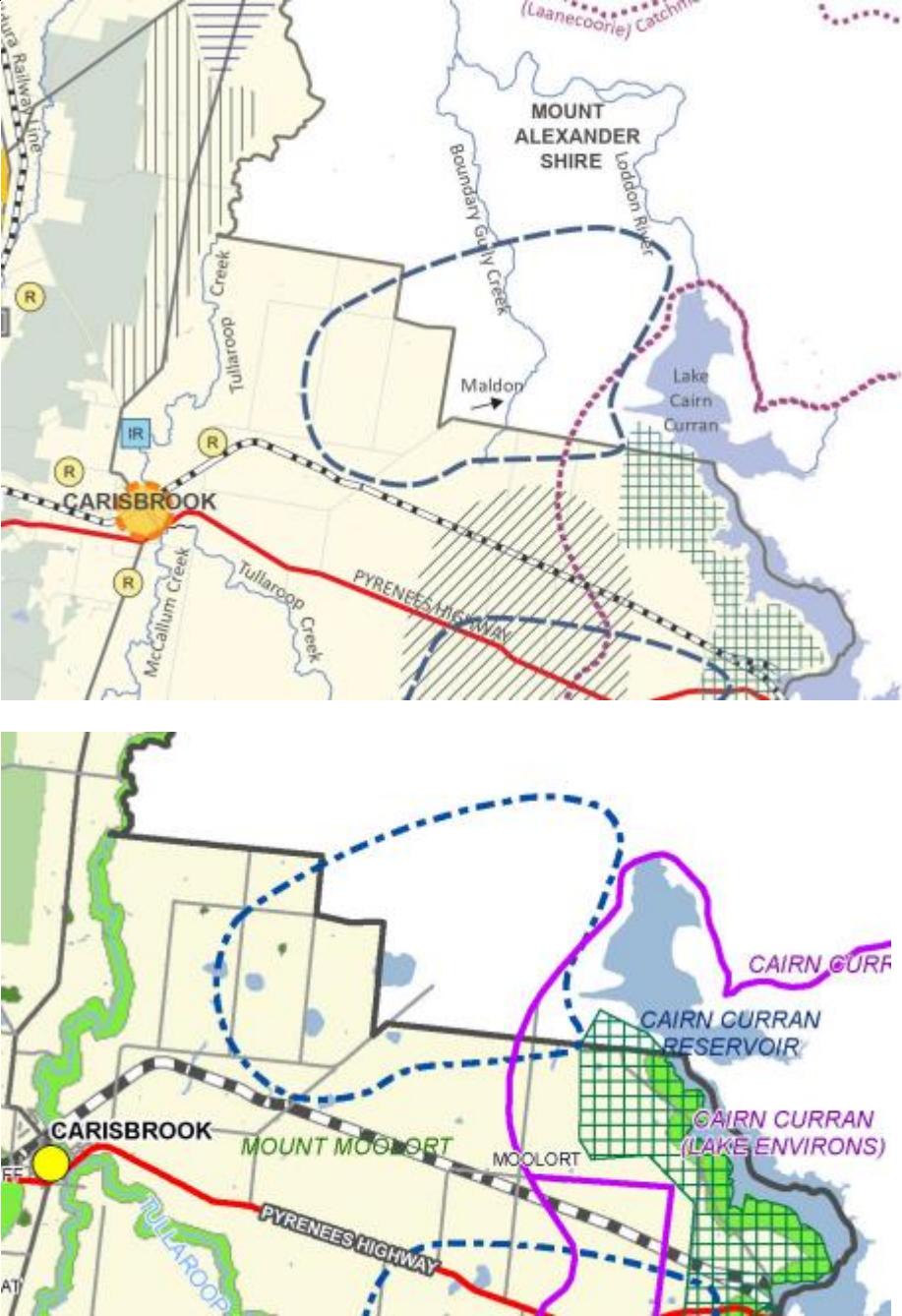
- Access via an all-weather road with dimensions adequate to accommodate emergency vehicles.
- Connection to reticulated sewerage or if not available wastewater from each dwelling must be treated and retained within the lot.
- Connection to reticulated potable water or an alternative potable water supply with adequate storage for firefighting purposes.
- Connection to reticulated electricity supply or have an alternative source.

A Land Capability Assessment submitted with the application prepared by Provincial Geotechnical Pty Ltd and dated 20th March 2024 (v2) addressed the requirements of the caretaker's house and staff amenities. It recommended a septic tank and effluent field location and size. The LCA recommendations can be included in a planning permit should one be granted.

The following table provides an assessment against the relevant decision guidelines of the Farming Zone:

General Issues	Response
<u>Clause 02.02</u> Council's vision "is to be a vibrant, thriving, inclusive community which has a supported and healthy community, a vibrant local economy and celebrates its heritage and sustainable environment"	The proposed development is not likely to contribute to the health and wellbeing of the community. It also represents a risk to the environment. Although it does offer the opportunity for additional employment, it is only very limited and poses a risk to other employment opportunities such as existing agriculture and tourism potential.
<u>Clause 02.03-2</u> Environmental and landscape values	The landscape response is considered inadequate, and the proposed buildings and structures are likely to be visible from long distances and have an industrial appearance. Large rural outbuildings are not unexpected in a rural landscape, however not as large or as many as those proposed.

<u>Clause 02.03-3</u> Environmental risks and amenity	This clause recognises that emerging industries such as intensive agriculture can create amenity conflicts between land uses. The proposed use and development is considered to represent an unacceptable risk to the environment and is likely to result in unacceptable off site amenity impacts.
<u>Clause 02.03-4</u> Natural resource management	<p>This clause relates primarily to agricultural land and water. It recognises the emerging industry of intensive agriculture and the conflict this can cause with nearby residential uses and the impact this can have on the productive capacity of the farm.</p> <p>This clause also recognises the need for sustainable land management in water supply catchments.</p> <p>We note that GMW provided conditional consent, and the EPA have not objected.</p> <p>Agriculture Victoria has raised concerns with conflicting information. The composting of dead birds, although can be acceptable if operated in accordance with relevant regulations and the EPA is not considered to be best practice and should be avoided.</p> <p>The spreading of litter is also unacceptable and not permitted by GMW. It is considered the proposed broiler farm provides an unacceptable risk.</p>
<u>Clause 02.03-7</u> Economic development	Rural enterprises are recognised for their employment opportunities. Intensive agriculture is recognised as a growing area of interest.
<u>Clause 02.03-8</u> Transport	<p>The road network is recognised for its important role in the Shire. A traffic impact assessment has assessed the impact of not only this application but a further two planning permit applications for broiler farms and determined the road network has adequate capacity.</p> <p>It does make some recommendations with respect to this proposal about reducing the speed along Baringhup Road, rumble strips or 'trucks entering' signage.</p> <p>It also recommends a road maintenance agreement to address future deterioration of road pavement.</p>
<u>Clause 02.03-9</u> Infrastructure	<p>This clause includes integrated water management.</p> <p>The proposed development has drainage swales around the sheds and the perimeter to prevent any runoff from escaping the site.</p> <p>There is no evidence supporting the use of dead bird composting pads as having no environmental risk from run off or leaching.</p> <p>The spreading of litter on the site is also considered to present a risk.</p>
<u>Clause 02.04</u> Strategic Framework Plan	The Central Goldfields Shire Strategic Framework Plan and Environmental and Landscape Values Plan identify the subject site as being included in a Significant Wetland Area and also identifies a water body towards the south/west corner of the site and immediately to the east of Baringhup Road.

	 <p>The management of surface water and groundwater is therefore of high importance.</p> <p>The application does not provide sufficient information to be certain there will be no impact on the identified wetland or water bodies.</p>
<p><u>Clause 12.01-L</u> Protection of biodiversity</p>	<p>This clause seeks to protect and enhance remnant vegetation and wildlife corridors for the biodiversity value in the Box Ironbark Forests. It is not proposed to remove or impact native vegetation. There are planted non-local native trees located adjacent to the former farm dwelling and access driveway. The applicant was asked to provide arboricultural advice regarding these trees, particularly those adjacent to the driveway. He did provide advice from his ecologist – that they were not native and planted and therefore exempt from planning control, however that missed the purpose of the request.</p>

	The application has not demonstrated if the upgraded internal driveway/access track will impact the health of these trees. TPZ's have not been identified or assessed in the context of the proposed works. These trees provide habitat and contribute to the landscape. Given the extent of the proposed development and concerns with visual impact, the potential loss of these trees is a concern.
<u>Clause 12.01-2S</u> Native vegetation management	In consideration of no removal of native vegetation the planting of 4,000 trees and shrubs, the proposed development will likely result in a net gain for biodiversity. The concern is that regardless of relevant planning permit conditions, the landscaped outcome as proposed may not be achieved. The landscape response is also considered modest and if a planning was granted it should be more robust.
<u>Clause 12.03</u> Water bodies and wetlands	The proposed development provides insufficient information to be certain there will be no impact on water bodies or wetlands.
<u>Clause 14.01</u> Agriculture	The proposed use is a legitimate agricultural use.
<u>Clause 14.01-2L</u> Sustainable agricultural land use – Central Goldfields	The integrated water management strategy to manage surface water is considered robust. The Central Goldfields Planning Scheme identifies the subject site as being included in a significant wetland area.
<u>Clause 14.02-2S</u> Water quality	The objective is to protect water quality, and the submitted Hydrogeological report shows drainage swales around the sheds and perimeter. It also identifies the dam capacity has been increased by 2ML to prevent a repeat of water escaping the site – as has happened at another Pavilion Farms operation nearby. There is no information on measures to protect the dams from leaching into the groundwater and there is additional concern with the dead bird composting.
<u>Clause 14.02-2L</u> Water quality – Central Goldfields	A LCA submitted with the application assessed the needs of the caretaker's house and staff amenities and identifies the location of a septic tank and size and location of an effluent field.
<u>Clause 17.01-1L</u> Diversified economy – Central Goldfields	Does not apply to the Farming Zone
<u>Clause 18.02-4S</u> Roads	Council engaged a Traffic Engineer to undertake an assessment based on the number of existing broiler farms and the those proposed.
<u>Clause 19</u> Infrastructure	
Any Regional Catchment Strategy	North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-2027 (RCS) is relevant. The subject site is included in the Upper Loddon Plains area and is within a declared special water supply catchment area including the Cairn Curran and Tullaroop Reservoirs. These reservoirs provide irrigation supplies to downstream users. The RCS identifies the Moolort Plains wetland as a key environment asset within the Upper Loddon Plains. There is a water body identified in the south/west of the subject site and to the east side of Baringhup Road.

Land capability	Refer to response to Clause 14.02-2L
How the use or development relates to sustainable land management	Stormwater is harvested and reused for drinking water for the birds. Water is treated before entering the dam and then goes through a chlorination process prior to being made available to the birds for drinking.
Whether the site is suitable for the use or development and whether the proposal is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.	It has been established previously at VCAT that broilers are a suitable use in a farming zone. A broiler farm is included in the planning scheme's definition of 'agriculture.'
How the use or development makes use of existing infrastructure and services.	The existing road infrastructure is identified as having sufficient capacity, although some recommendations are made to improve intersection safety and sight lines. Recommendations were made about reducing the speed limit on Baringhup Road and to improve sight lines at the intersection of Baringhup Road and Bald Hill Road.
Agricultural issues and the impacts from non-agricultural uses	Response
Whether the use or development will support and enhance agricultural production.	The proposed broiler farm will increase the agricultural production of the subject site however it is considered likely to have a negative impact upon the productivity of nearby land. Concerns have been raised by objectors relating to their ability to apply fertilisers and the impact of odour on sales undertaken on the land nearby.
Whether the use or development will adversely affect soil quality or permanently remove land from agricultural production.	Measures to prevent the 'dirty dam' leaching into the groundwater are unknown. The caretaker's house does arguably remove land from agricultural production, however given the intensity of the proposed use this is considered satisfactory.
The potential for the use or development to limit the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.	This is not considered likely given the potential impact of offsite amenity impacts such as odour and the potential for surface water to escape the site.
The capacity of the site to sustain the agricultural use.	The submitted hydrogeological report does not provide sufficient advice to satisfy Council that the site has the capacity to sustain the agricultural use. There is little to no detail on the mortality composting pad, catchment swales, perimeter swales and dams such as capacity and methods to prevent leaching.
The agricultural qualities of the land, such as soil quality, access to water and	Section 2.2 of the hydrogeological report advises there are two water sources for the water used in the sheds: 1. Water is pumped from Boundary Gully into a 'dirty water dam' treated at the site's water treatment plant and then stored in a 'clean water dam.'

access to rural infrastructure.	<p>2. A groundwater bore is an alternative if the first method is unavailable.</p> <p>The water treatment plant is not shown on the plans (Rev I) or any information pertaining to the treatment plant.</p> <p>It is also proposed to spread litter on the balance of the site as fertiliser and there is concern with the impact this could have on groundwater and the risk of air borne particles.</p>
Accommodation issues	Response
Whether the dwelling will result in the loss or fragmentation of productive agricultural land.	As stated elsewhere it is considered the caretakers house will support the success of the agricultural use of the land.
Whether the dwelling will be adversely affected by agricultural activities on adjacent and nearby land due to dust, noise, odour, use of chemicals and farm machinery, traffic, and hours of operation.	The occupier of the caretaker's house will be a Pavilion Farms employee responsible for the day-to-day operations of the broiler farm.
The potential for the proposal to lead to a concentration or proliferation of dwellings in the area and the impact of this on the use of the land for agriculture.	There is an existing dwelling on the subject site. If a planning permit was granted, then a condition should be included requiring the demolition of one dwelling should the broiler farm cease use.
Environmental issues	Response
The impact of the proposal on the natural physical features and resources of the area, in particular on soil and water quality.	As discussed elsewhere there is concern with the risk of contaminated waste from the site impacting soil and water quality. Objectors have also raised concerns with air borne particles contaminating their water tanks used for human consumption.
The impact of the use or development on the flora and fauna on the site and its surrounds.	No native vegetation is proposed to be removed.
The need to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the	It is not proposed there be any removal of native vegetation. A modest landscape response is proposed around the sheds, but none is proposed

area, including the retention of vegetation and faunal habitat and the need to revegetate land including riparian buffers along waterways, gullies, ridgelines, property boundaries and saline discharge and recharge area.	around the property boundaries. The latter would assist in increasing biodiversity and mitigating the visual impact of the proposal.
The location of on-site effluent areas to minimise the impact of nutrient loads on waterways and native vegetation.	The LCA submitted with the application was satisfactory for the purpose of the caretaker's house and staff amenities.
Design and siting issues	Response
The need to locate buildings in one area to avoid any adverse impacts on surrounding agricultural uses and to minimise the loss of agricultural land.	The building infrastructure for the broiler farm is generally located quite close, leaving the balance of the site available for cropping or similar.
The impact of the siting, design, height, bulk, colours, and materials to be used, on the natural environment, major roads, vistas and water features and the measures to be undertaken to minimise any adverse impacts.	Although large sheds and silos are not unusual in a rural landscape. The sheds are low scale in height but have very large floor areas and six will have a significant impact on the landscape with the additional impact of the silos and reflective materials. They are considered an inappropriate response in a rural landscape, particularly given the landscape response which is considered unacceptable. No visual analysis was submitted with the application.
The impact on the character and appearance of the area or features of architectural, historic, or scientific significance or of natural scenic beauty or importance.	Refer above

<p>Whether the use or development will require traffic management measures.</p>	<p>The use and development of the land has a Traffic Management Plan, including that access to and from the broiler farm site must be from Baringhup Road. Alternative routes without approval from the responsible authority are likely to create localised issues.</p> <p>All loading/unloading of vehicles and collection/delivery of goods to and from the site must be undertaken entirely within the boundaries of the site and conducted to cause minimum interference with other traffic, to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.</p> <p>The surface of parking and loading areas as well as internal access roads must be constructed to a relevant specification and maintained to the satisfaction of the responsible authority to prevent dust and drainage run-off causing a loss of amenity to the site or broader area. All such surfaces, areas and roads must be constructed to ensure all-weather use and access.</p> <p>Prior to the commencement of any crossover/driveway works, any permit must submit detailed construction plans and make further application for, and have approved, a driveway crossing permit(s). All works constructed or carried out must be in accordance with the approved plans/permit(s) and to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.</p> <p>Once constructed, the crossover must be thereafter maintained by the landowner(s) in good condition to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.</p>
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The Farming Zone is considered a suitable zone for a 'broiler farm' as it is an agricultural use and provides opportunities for separation distances due to the generally larger landholdings.

In this case the proposed broiler farm relies upon adjoining lots for separation distances, including an adjoining lot that is 100% within the separation distance. This is considered to impose an unacceptable impost.

The proposed broiler farm is also considered to pose unacceptable offsite amenity impacts with respect to odour, dust/airborne particles, visual impact, and environmental risks. The impacts from lighting and noise have not been addressed by the applicant.

Overlays

Heritage Overlay 133

HO113 relates to the Havilah Co. Deep Lead Mine, Baringhup Road Moolert. It is not included on the Victorian Heritage Register but is included in the Heritage Inventory (H7263-0002). No tree controls apply.

HO113 extends in a north/south direction along the eastern boundary of the site and across part of the adjoining site at 835 Baringhup Road.



A planning permit is required for the proposed works within the HO113, and this includes an upgrade to the existing internal track and some fencing.

A Heritage Impact Statement prepared by Kylie Howe, Conservator & Heritage Consultant, dated 26 March 2025 was submitted to Council to support the application.

HO113 is the location of the former Havilah Co mine site, the first deep lead mine in Carisbrook, with some surface remains of the activity visible. The Heritage Inventory site card identifies *“large mullock heap, partially quarried dump of washed gravel, little surviving machinery footings barring a small concrete slab and some timber scraps.”*

The heritage advice notes that the subject land was the main focus of activity for the New Havilah Consolidated Mining Company Limited and provides a summary of the history of the site including the need for a large injection of funds, the difficulties of extraction and the ultimate closure of the mines in this area.

“By 1909, the difficulties of extraction had been conceded as a barrier to further mining operations in the Charlotte Plains area. All of the original mines ceased operations and traces of their existence were gradually erased. Very little trace remains at the surface of any of the mines, beyond mullock heaps and some concrete footings. It is assumed that the capped shafts remain, and that these may yield additional artefacts.”

Most of the works associated with the proposed broiler farm are located outside HO113 except for the upgraded internal accessway and fencing. These works are separated from the surface remains such as the mullock heaps which are located on the adjoining site at 825 Baringhup Road.

The heritage report goes on to advise that any impact on the heritage place is considered negligible.

Traffic safety and efficiency

Council engaged a Traffic Engineer (Impact) to prepare a Traffic and Transport Assessment (November 2024) (TTA) to examine the cumulative traffic impacts of the five existing broiler farms and the three proposed broiler farms, including the subject site.

The TTA assessed the impact on the existing road network including:

- Pyrenees Highway.
- Rodborough Road.
- Clarkes Road.
- Locks Lane.
- Moolort-Baringhup Road.
- Baringhup Road.

Baringhup Road was observed to be flat with minimal potholes. Sight lines were observed to be limited around bends within the road and noted that yellow chevroned signs are placed to warn motorists of the bend. A speed reduction could be beneficial to the reduced sight lines.

One hundred (100) vehicle movements per day was adopted as an assumed current vehicles per day.

Crash statistics indicated that most incidents occur during the evening period/late at night with crashes involving collision with a fixed object.

Baringhup Road is pre-approved for B-doubles and Higher Mass Limit vehicles.

The haulage route identified for the proposed broiler farm is Bendigo-Maldon Road – Allans Road – Lowther Street – Bridgewater-Maldon Road – Baringhup Road – Moolort Road – Moolort-Baringhup Road.

It is noted that Moolort-Baringhup Road is not approved for B-doubles and HML vehicles and separate application for approval would be needed to travel on this road.

The intersection of Baringhup Road and Bald Hill Road does not meet the required sight distance of 300m in both directions. A speed reduction could address this and would need to be reduced from 100km/hr to 90km/hr and to 70km/hr from the westbound approach.

Additionally warning signs such as ‘trucks entering’ or reduced speeds along with rumble strips or solid centrelines near the intersection is recommended to enhance driver awareness and safety.

Repair and road maintenance is also identified as an issue, and the report recommends an inspection assessment for a suitably qualified pavement engineer.

The traffic report makes the following recommendations:

Organise / undertake a review of pavement conditions (e.g. potholes and general conditions) on all roads associated with the primary delivery/haulage route for the Broiler Farms. In addition, review and monitor pavement conditions as dilapidation is expected to occur.

Review potential dust and noise impacts from the increase in vehicle movements, especially on unpaved road and consider possible mitigation measures to either upgrade the pavement to sealed/paved or reduced speed limits.

Implement or undertake traffic counts along the primary routes to regularly monitor traffic volumes and road conditions after the Broiler Farms have become operational.

The assessment identified that Moolort Road and Moolort-Baringhup Road was a primary route for access to the Broiler Farm sites. A review of the appropriateness of this road will need to be undertaken and this route is currently not approved for B-Double or HML access. Further, it is recommended that if operational vehicles are of 26m in length then alternative routes should be considered (e.g. along pre-approved routes).

Encourage collaboration between the Broiler Farms and Council to provide schedules and delivery routes.

Review the appropriateness of sight distances at the intersections which are below the Austroads threshold. In addition, provide appropriate traffic management measures to address the sight line issues such as reduced speeds and signage.

Car parking

The use of land for a broiler farm is not a listed within Table 1: Car Parking Requirements at Clause 52.06-5 of the Planning Scheme. As such, and in accordance with clause 52.06-6, car parking spaces must be provided to the satisfaction of the responsible authority before the use commences. The Traffic Management Plan submitted with the application and the plans (Rev I) do not address or show any carparking. There is sufficient land for this to be dealt with, however in the absence of this being dealt with as a part of the planning permit application material, the carparking can only be considered to be inadequate.

Water and environmental impacts

The application was accompanied by a Hydrogeological Risk Assessment dated March 2025, prepared by Sustainable Project Management Pty Ltd (SPM).

This report noted the proposed broiler farm will include the construction of an onsite stormwater dam with a total capacity of 7ML designed to cater for the 1 in 10-year event. It is noted that the submitted plans show two (2) dams with a capacity of 25ML and 10ML.

Water used for the chicken sheds is to come from two (2) sources:

Water is pumped from Boundary gully into a 'dirty water dam', treated at the site's water treatment plan, and then stored in a 'clean water dam' for distribution to surrounding farms.

Water is pumped for a groundwater bore (Bore ID WRK087741) and processed through a desalination plant. Groundwater is only used if the first method is unavailable.

The nearest surface water receptor is Boundary Gully that runs from south to north, approximately 1.5km to the east. Tullaroop Creek runs parallel to Boundary Gully but is located approximately 4km west of the site. Both rivers discharge into the Loddon River, approximately 9km and 11km downstream respectively.

Other potential discharge points for overland water flow include several off stream private dams at adjacent properties, with the nearest approximately 3km north/west. The hydrology report notes that the environmental values in the Environment Reference Standard do not apply to off stream private dams, however given these are likely used for stock and irrigation it is relevant to consider the agricultural and irrigation environmental values relevant for these dams.

The hydrology report notes the subject site is not affected by land subject to inundation.

The hydrology report also identified thirty-three (33) bores within 3km of the subject site with the nearest offsite bores, not used by Pavilion Farms, and two (2) bores within 1km downgradient of the site and constructed to depths of 65m and 104m.

The hydrology report notes that operational areas at the site are underlain by concrete and do not include routine water discharge. Operation dams contain untreated and treated water sourced from the nearby creek and this does not introduce any contamination sources.

Contamination sources are limited to stormwater held within onsite swales and retention dams and the contaminants of primary concern in waters leaving the site are from stormwater contaminated with chicken litter, faecal matter, or other effluent.

There are two (2) main drainage capture systems:

Catchment Swales running parallel to each shed to capture runoff from roofs as well as any litter, straw or other materials that escape the sheds.

Perimeter Swales that capture other surface water runoff around the perimeter of the site.

With respect to surface water there is no deliberate discharge to surface waters from the site. Any offsite contamination is therefore limited to stormwater overflow from the onsite dams, which would likely drain to the north. The area directly north is cultivated farmland would significantly inhibit movement of overland water flow.

The hydrology report goes on to discuss the historical overflow events from farm stormwater dams at Farm 9 (683 Baringhup Road) and how the proposed development has addressed this by adding 2ML capacity to the onsite dam, which will be further supported by a 1 in 10-year stormwater capacity assessment.

The report concludes that it is unlikely that contamination from the site would enter groundwater or surface water and that the proposed development does not pose a risk to groundwater or surface water receptors. The report states that proposed control measures are considered sufficient to manage risks and have been effective at the existing farms.

The report recommends that visual inspections of stormwater dam quality and groundwater bore monitoring be undertaken.

Biodiversity impacts

The application was accompanied by a Flora and Fauna Assessment dated October 2023, prepared by Mark Trengrove Ecological Services.

This report noted that the native vegetation within the vicinity of the study area accords with EVC 803 Plains Woodland.

A total of three (3) native plant species were recorded including Buloke, Buloke Mistletoe and Small-flower Loosestrife. The latter is of local significance and the former two are of State significance and are critically endangered in Victoria and protected by the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*.

The native vegetation identified presented as patches and scattered trees as follows:

Asset	Common Name	DBH (cm)	TPZ (M)	Impact
Patch 1	Buloke	35 (largest tree)	4.2	No
Patch 2 (Tree A)	Buloke	43 (largest tree)	5.2	No
Patch 3	Buloke	39 (largest tree)	4.7	No
Scattered tree B	Buloke	64	7.7	No
Scattered tree C	Buloke	66	7.9	No
Scattered tree D	Buloke	46	5.5	No

None of the native vegetation is proposed to be impacted by the development. As no vegetation protected by the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* is proposed to be removed a referral to DEECA was not required.

Ten (10) local significant native bird species were identified during the survey.

The Broiler Code

The *Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009* (the Code) provides a basis for the planning, design, assessment, approval, construction, operation, and management of broiler farms in Victoria.

The purpose of the Code is to:

- *Deliver sound environmental performance in the planning, design, construction, operation, and management of broiler farms.*
- *Protect local amenity from adverse impacts, including offensive odours, dust, noise, and visual impacts.*
- *Protect the surrounding environment from adverse impacts.*
- *Permit an economically viable, competitive, and sustainable broiler farm industry.*

To achieve these outcomes the Code sets requirements for:

The size and siting of broiler farms.

- *Application of best practice in the design, construction, operation, and management of broiler farms to satisfy relevant environmental standards.*
- *Preparation, assessment, and determination of broiler farms development proposals through the planning permit system.*
- *Ongoing monitoring of broiler farm operations through routine audits.*

A detailed assessment against the following elements has been provided:

- Element 1 Location, Siting and Size
- Element 2 Farm Design, Layout and Construction
- Element 3 Traffic, Site Access, On-farm Roads, and Parking
- Element 4 Landscaping
- Element 5 Waste Management
- Element 6 Farm Operation and Management (EMP)

Each element refers to the objective, relevant standards and approved measures and provides advice in relation to each.

The Code was referred to Agriculture Victoria who provided a detailed response to the applicant's assessment of the proposed broiler farm against the Code.

Agriculture Victoria's response is discussed elsewhere in this report however they advise that the submitted information was not satisfactory largely due to some inconsistencies and the presentation of material. They did advise the proposal had the potential to be compliant with the Code subject to further information being provided to clarify some of the inconsistencies.

Other matters raised in objections and submissions

Public notice of the planning permit application received thirty-nine (39) objections from nearby residents and their concerns have been listed earlier in this report. The objections have been considered in detail against the technical reports and supporting material submitted with the planning permit application and the relevant considerations of the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme.

Some matters raised in objections are not relevant planning considerations.

These include:

- Compliance issues with existing broiler farms.
- Proposal should be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment.
- Impacts on property values.
- Animal welfare

Council has sought legal advice regarding the impact of known breaches, on its consideration of a current planning permit application. The legal advice was clear in that any known breaches are a separate matter and cannot be taken into consideration when assessing a current planning permit application.

The equivalent in Victoria of an Environmental Impact Assessment is an Environmental Effects Statement (EES), legislated by the *Environmental Effects Act 1978*. Section 3 of the *Environmental Effects Act 1978* identifies what projects require an EES. One is not required for a broiler farm application. The relevant regulatory test is the *Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009* (plus 2028 amendments).

Impact on property values has long been held by VCAT not to be a relevant planning consideration. The Code does not regulate animal welfare. Animal welfare standards are given effect in State regulations such as the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986* and the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Domestic Fowl) Regulations 2006*.

Relevant objections followed some key themes including:

- Offsite amenity impacts from odour, noise, lighting, and air quality.
- Visual impact to nearby dwellings and the landscape character.
- The impact of heavy vehicles on local roads.
- Environmental concerns relating to impact on biodiversity and nearby wetlands.
- Impact on water quality including drinking water, groundwater, and the wider catchment.
- Suitability of the land use in an agricultural area.
- Compatibility with existing agricultural uses.
- Biosecurity concerns.

The permit application was accompanied by a number of reports prepared by suitably qualified consultants to assess the offsite amenity impacts. These included an Odour Environmental Risk Assessment, an EMP, a Landscape Plan, a Hydrogeological Assessment, and an assessment against the Broiler Code.

Odour

Odour is recognised as the primary potential for offsite impact and nuisance which is why the Broiler Code establishes a framework to help to mitigate this risk.

As a Class B Broiler Farm, it was not a mandatory requirement under the Code to provide an Odour ERA. However, the applicant did provide one and Council would have required it regardless to enable an assessment against other requirements in the planning scheme.

Many of the objectors already experience odour impact from existing broiler farms and despite the Odour ERA stating there would need to be a trebling of odour to be discernible, there is no doubt that some receptors will experience an increase in odour.

Agriculture Victoria advised the proposal was unsatisfactory at the moment, however, did believe it could become compliant.

Given the current level of information provided with the application and concerns particularly relating to the management of litter, including spreading it across the balance of the subject site, and the composting of dead birds, odour is considered to represent an unacceptable risk to the community.

Noise

No information was submitted with the application to assess off site impact from noise. Noise sources could include the ventilation fans and truck traffic.

Lighting

The application has not provided information regarding lighting. It is expected there will be external lighting to the sheds, but the type, lumens and expected use are unknown.

Air Quality

The risk of airborne contaminants from both the ventilation fans and spreading of litter are on the balance of the subject are a relevant planning consideration and the application fails to address this adequately.

Landscape Impact

Large rural structures in a Farming Zone are not unexpected. The sheds are large, albeit with a relatively low profile, and the silos are high. With the proposed materials they are expected to be quite dominant on the landscape and appear more as an industrial development as opposed to one typical in a rural context.

A landscape visual assessment was not submitted with the application which has not helped in the assessment of this application.

A landscape plan was submitted but proposes a relatively modest landscape response, whereas if Council was to support the proposal a far more robust landscape response would be required.

Biodiversity and Impact on Moolort Wetlands

The Flora and Fauna Assessment has failed to acknowledge the environmental significance of the Moolort Wetlands and impact the proposed use, and development could have upon them.

Similarly, the Hydrogeological Assessment has also failed to recognise the Moolort Wetlands and does not identify the subject site is included in a recognised wetland or recognise the water body in the south/west corner of the site and to the east of Baringhup Road.

To understand if there is an impact on the Moolort Wetlands it is important to know if the site is connected hydrologically and this cannot be determined from the submitted application materials. Figure 3.5 Surrounding Geological Formations (source not identified) does show 'swamp and lake deposits' nearby but does not show the Moolort Wetlands and its extent.

GMW provided no objection to the proposal and require conditions to be placed on a planning permit should one be granted.

Proposed Use Within the Farming Zone

A broiler farm is a legitimate agricultural use and is most appropriately located within a Farming Zone. It is nested within the definition of agriculture in the planning scheme, not within industrial. A farming zone typically is comprised of larger parcels of land and provides the opportunity for greater separation distances than in other zones. Offsite impacts from normal agricultural activities such as odour and dust are not unexpected in a farming zone, whether they be from ploughing and cropping or the application of fertilizers.

In the case of the proposed broiler farm it is considered the offsite impacts would be substantially greater for impacted properties than could ordinarily be expected in an agricultural context, particularly with respect to odour and dust.

Impact on Drinking Water, Groundwater, and the Wider Catchment

Objectors are concerned that airborne particles from dust could contaminate their drinking water (tanks). The applicant does propose to spread litter on the balance of the site as fertiliser, and this can increase dust. The risk of airborne particles contaminating drinking water is considered a legitimate concern.

With respect to groundwater contamination, the Hydrogeological Report submitted with the application identifies the onsite stormwater retention dams as providing the greatest risk through leaching of water (Section 4.2.2). It states that the depth to the water table is likely greater than 20m below ground level. *"The groundwater percolation and movement through fractured rock is unpredictable, the basaltic clays above are typically low in permeability and have high cation exchange capacities, both of which would assist in attenuating the expected CoPC."*

Contaminants of Primary Concern (CoPC) are from stormwater contaminated with chicken litter, faecal matter or other effluent and can include:

- Nutrients
- Pathogens (including E. coli and Salmonella)

The hydrology report notes that nutrients in water are generally non-toxic, but nitrogen can oxidise in groundwater to form nitrates which may pose a risk to human health.

Table 5.1 in the hydrology report provides a risk matrix and identifies off site risks as low and that management measures to minimise *"contamination of stormwater with litter, manure and other washdown water is crucial to reducing the severity of the consequences."*

As with the potential impact on drinking water, the objectors concerns regarding the risk to groundwater and the wider catchment are considered to be reasonable and need to form part of Council's consideration of this matter.

Caretakers House

The caretaker's house allows for a Farm Manager to live on site and be available 24/7 to deal with all usual operations and any unexpected operational requirements. This will help to ensure the satisfactory operations of the proposed use.

Given the intensive nature of the agricultural use the footprint of the caretakers' houses is not considered to inhibit the agricultural use of the land.

The caretaker's house is located on the same parcel of land as the proposed broiler farm. Given there is already an existing dwelling on the site, should a planning permit be granted, a condition should be included requiring one of the dwellings be removed if the broiler farm was to cease use.

Not in accordance with the Broiler Code

An assessment against the requirements of the *Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009* (plus 2028 amendments) was submitted with the application and this was referred to Agriculture Victoria who undertook a detailed assessment.

They noted a number of anomalies in the application material and the proposal does not yet meet the requirements of the Code, but has the potential to do so

Pest Impacts and Risk of Disease

The risk of avian flu is not a relevant planning consideration and Council must confine its consideration of the planning permit application to those matters covered by the Victoria Planning Provisions.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

As set out earlier within this report, notice of the application was given in the prescribed form in accordance with section 52 of the Act. Notice was given by placing a sign at the site, by publishing a notice in the Carisbrook Mercury, and sending it by post. Notice was given to the owners and occupiers of adjoining and surrounding land as well as to the EPA Victoria, while informal notice was also provided to Agriculture Victoria.

As a result, thirty-nine (39) objections were received alongside three (3) neutral submissions from the EPA Victoria, VicTrack and Agriculture Victoria. The matters raised in both the objections and submissions have been addressed in the preceding assessment.

Council's decision position on the matter will be communicated to all relevant parties following the Council meeting. Regardless of whether Council decides to grant or refuse a permit, the permit applicant as well as all objectors and submitters will receive a letter advising them of Council's decision position and setting out their appeal (or review) rights to VCAT under the Act. It is re-affirmed that a decision on the permit is now with VCAT.

FINANCIAL& RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The assessment of this planning permit applications is additional to the normal operational budget of Council.

The permit applicant has lodged an appeal to VCAT pursuant to Section 79 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 for review of Council's failure to grant the permit within the prescribed time. This will incur additional costs for Council for representation at VCAT.

RISK MANAGEMENT

This report addresses Council's strategic risk Governance - Failure to transparently govern and embrace good governance practices by ensuring our assessment of the application meets all relevant legislation and regulations.

There is a current and ongoing risk to Council that, pursuant to section 79 of the Act, the permit applicant can apply to VCAT for review of Council's failure to determine the permit application within the prescribed time. Expediently determining the permit application will help to mitigate this risk.

Should a permit be granted by Council and/or VCAT and the proposed broiler farm becomes operational, there is a risk of non-compliance with permit conditions. Council has various enforcement options and powers under the Act to mitigate this risk and ensure that the use and development of the land suitably avoids detriment to the community. Council, as the responsible authority, is required by law to efficiently administer and enforce the planning scheme.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning permit application 061-24 seeks approval for the use and development of the land for a Class B broiler farm for up to 400,000 birds, a caretaker's house with associated buildings and works, including works within a Heritage Overlay, at 705 Baringhup Road Carisbrook.

A Council resolution/determination is sought on the application as thirty-nine (39) objections and three (3) neutral submissions have been received.

Pursuant to section 61 of the Act, Council, as the responsible authority, may decide either:

- a) To grant a permit.
- b) To grant a permit subject to conditions.
- c) To refuse to grant a permit on any ground it thinks fit.

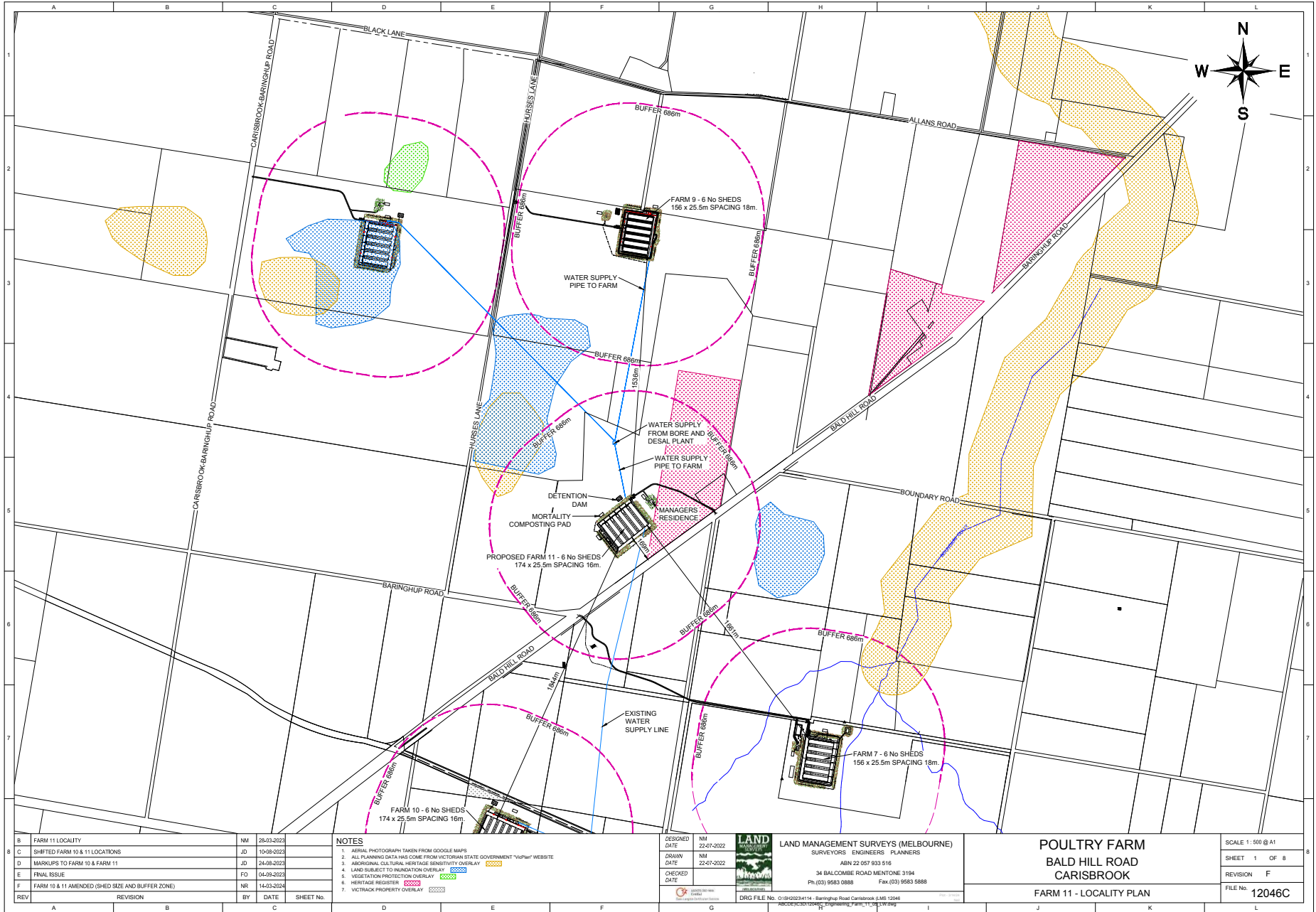
The recommendation of this report is that Council, as responsible authority, decides a position on whether Council would have resolved to refuse to grant a permit on the ground(s) that are outlined. That Council, as the responsible authority and pursuant to section 61 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, determine that had an application for review under Section 79 of the Act not been made, would have issued a Notice of Decision to Refuse a Permit in respect of planning permit application no. 061-23 for the use and development of a Class B broiler farm for up to 400,000 birds and a caretakers house with associated buildings and works at 705 Baringhup Road Carisbrook on the following grounds.

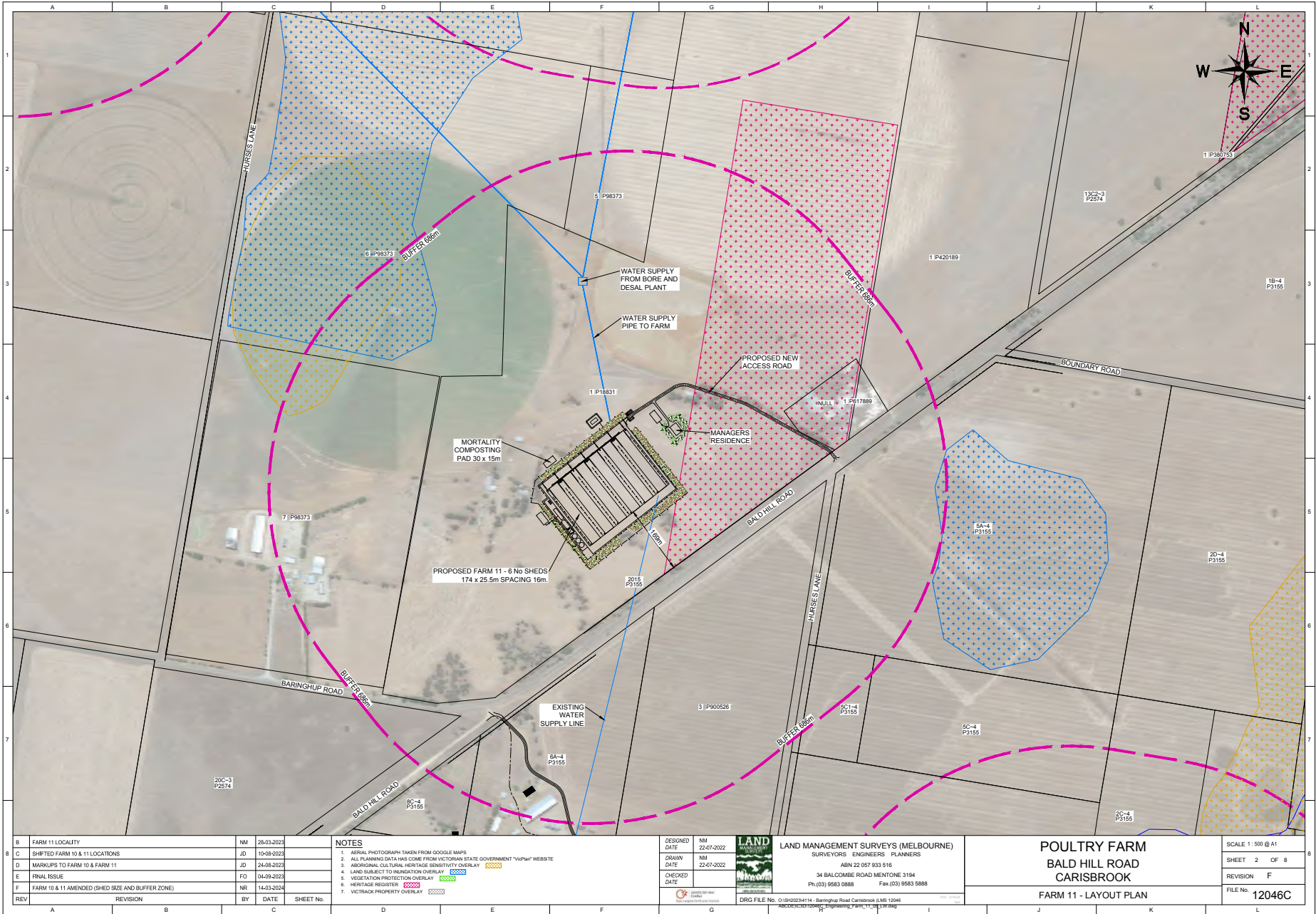
1. The proposal is inconsistent with the Municipal Planning Statement and Planning Policy Framework of the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme including Clause 02.04 (Central Goldfields Strategic Plan), Clause 12 (Environmental and Landscape Values), 13 (Environmental Risks and Amenity), 14 (Natural Resource Management) and 15 (Built Environment and Heritage), as the proposed Class B broiler farm would be contrary to policy framework that respectively seeks to protect landscape values, residential amenity and environmental values.
2. The proposal is not compliant with the purpose and decision guidelines of Clause 35.07 (Farming Zone) of the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme, as the proposed Class B broiler farm would be incompatible with the amenity of nearby dwellings, would result in detrimental environmental impacts including to soil and water quality as well as impacts to water bodies and biodiversity, and by the location and design of the proposal in a rural landscape.
3. The proposal is not compliant with the purpose and decision guidelines of Clause 53.09 (Poultry Farm) of the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme due to the appearance of the buildings and works, the need to protect the amenity of adjoining and nearby land uses, the impact of emissions from the site, impact on wetlands and water bodies and the impact upon biodiversity.
4. The proposal is not compliant with the purpose and decision guidelines of Clause 65.01 (Decision Guidelines - Approval of an Application or Plan) of the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme, as the proposal would be contrary to orderly planning, and would result in detrimental amenity, and environmental impacts.
5. The proposal is contrary to the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms (Department of Primary Industries 2009, plus 2018 amendments), an Incorporated Document within the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme, including standards of the Broiler Code that relate to stormwater drainage, waste management and landscape qualities.

6. The proposal would result in an inappropriately high population of birds to be produced by the additional broiler farm sheds.
7. The proposal would result in detrimental impacts to the landscape values of the site and surrounds and the significant built form of the broiler farm sheds.
8. The proposal would result in detrimental amenity impacts to residential properties in vicinity of the subject land by way of inappropriate visual, odour, lighting, and noise effects.
9. The cumulative effect of odour and noise from the proposal, in addition to existing broiler farms, would undermine the amenity of the area. Cumulative odour emissions would not achieve the ambient air quality standards in the Environment reference standard, contrary to clause 13.06-1S. Noise emissions associated with the use would undermine the rural amenity of the area when assessed individually or cumulatively.
10. The proposal would undermine the landscape significance of the Moolort Plains wetlands contrary to the Municipal Planning Strategy.
11. The effluent disposal associated with the shed wash out represents an unacceptable risk to the water quality and ecological values of the Moolort Plains.

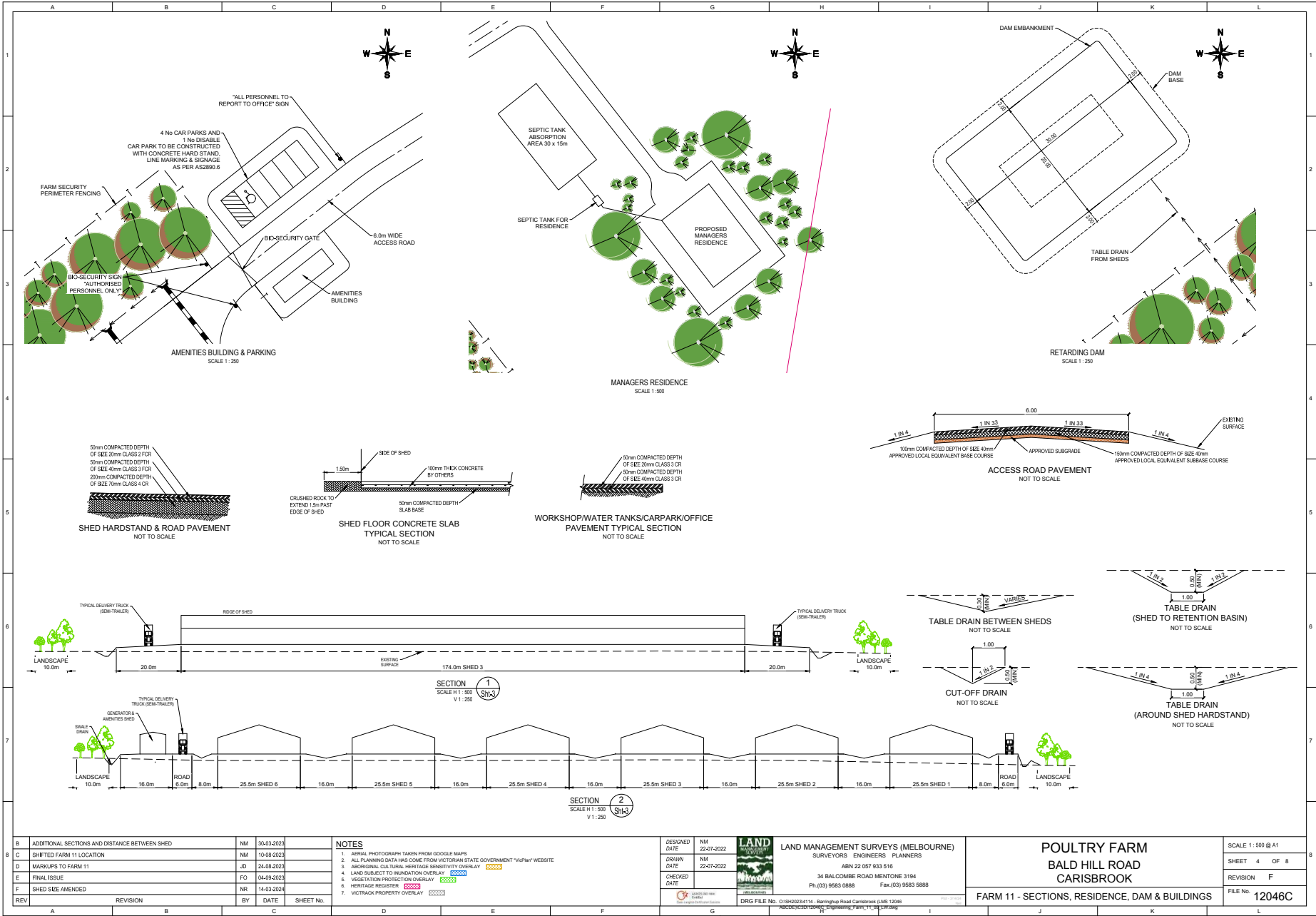
ATTACHMENTS

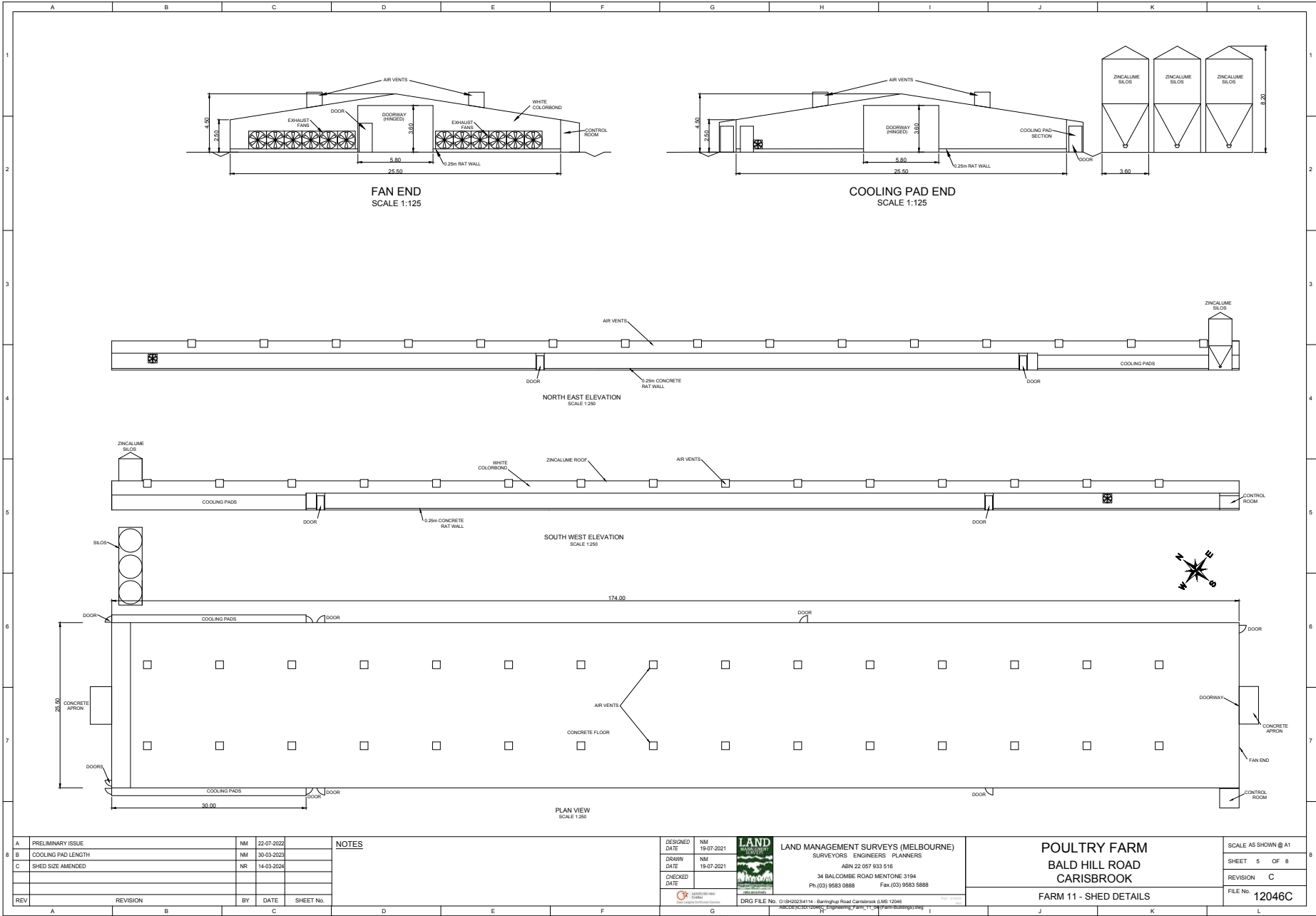
1. Attachment 1 - 061-23 - 705 Baringhup Road Carisbrook - Proposed Plans [7.1.1]
2. Attachment 2 - 061-23 - 705 Baringhup Road Carisbrook - Site and Surrounding Locality Map [7.1.2]
3. Attachment 3 - 061-23 - 705 Baringhup Road Carisbrook - GMW Referral Response 3 sr 9 fh 1 VS E 6 j [7.1.3]
4. Attachment 4 - 061-23 - 705 Baringhup Road Carisbrook - EPA Victoria Submission [7.1.4]
5. Attachment 5 - 061-23 - 705 Baringhup Road Carisbrook - Vic Track Submission [7.1.5]
6. Attachment 6 - 061-23 - 705 Baringhup Road Carisbrook - Agriculture Victoria Submission [7.1.6]

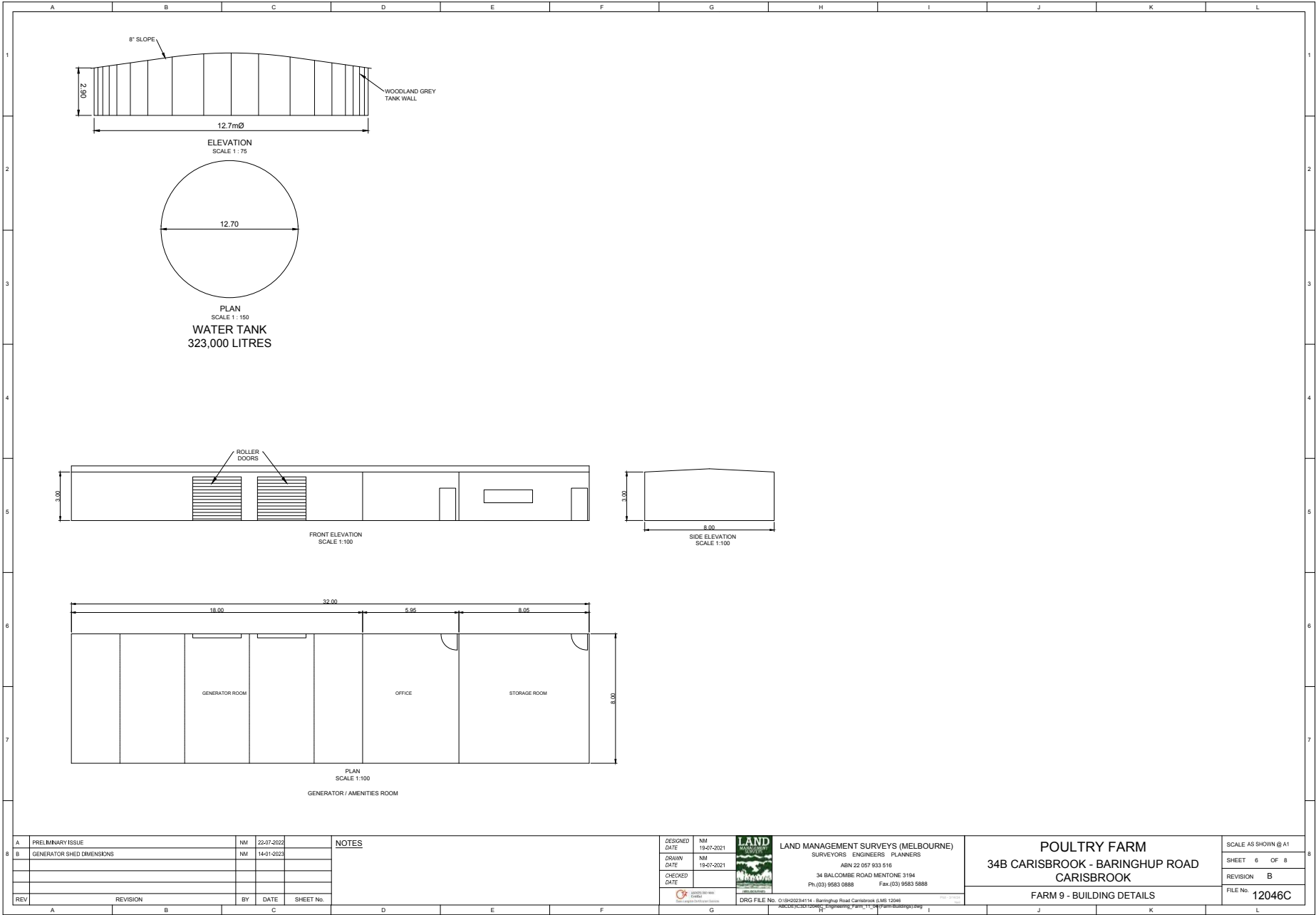


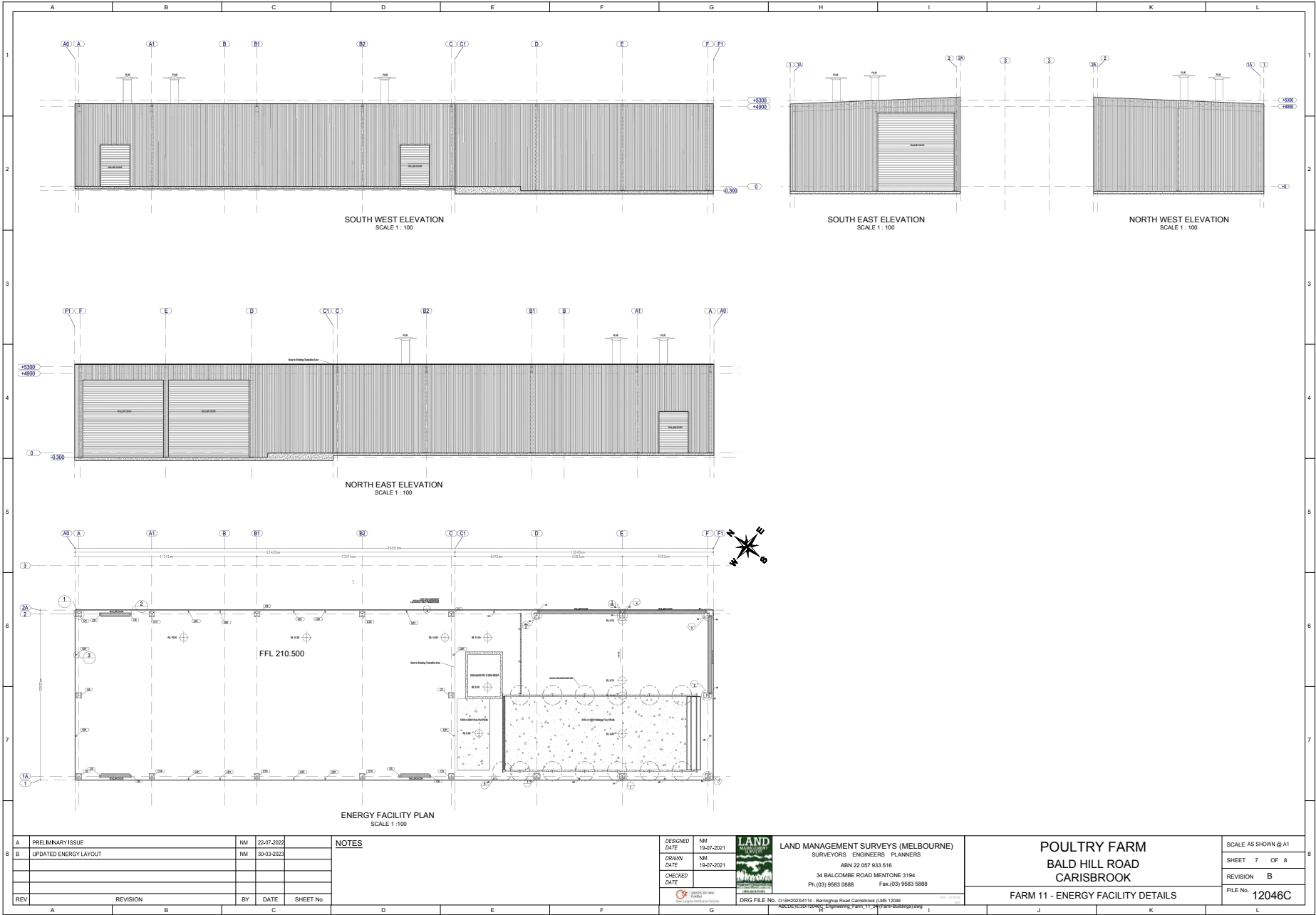


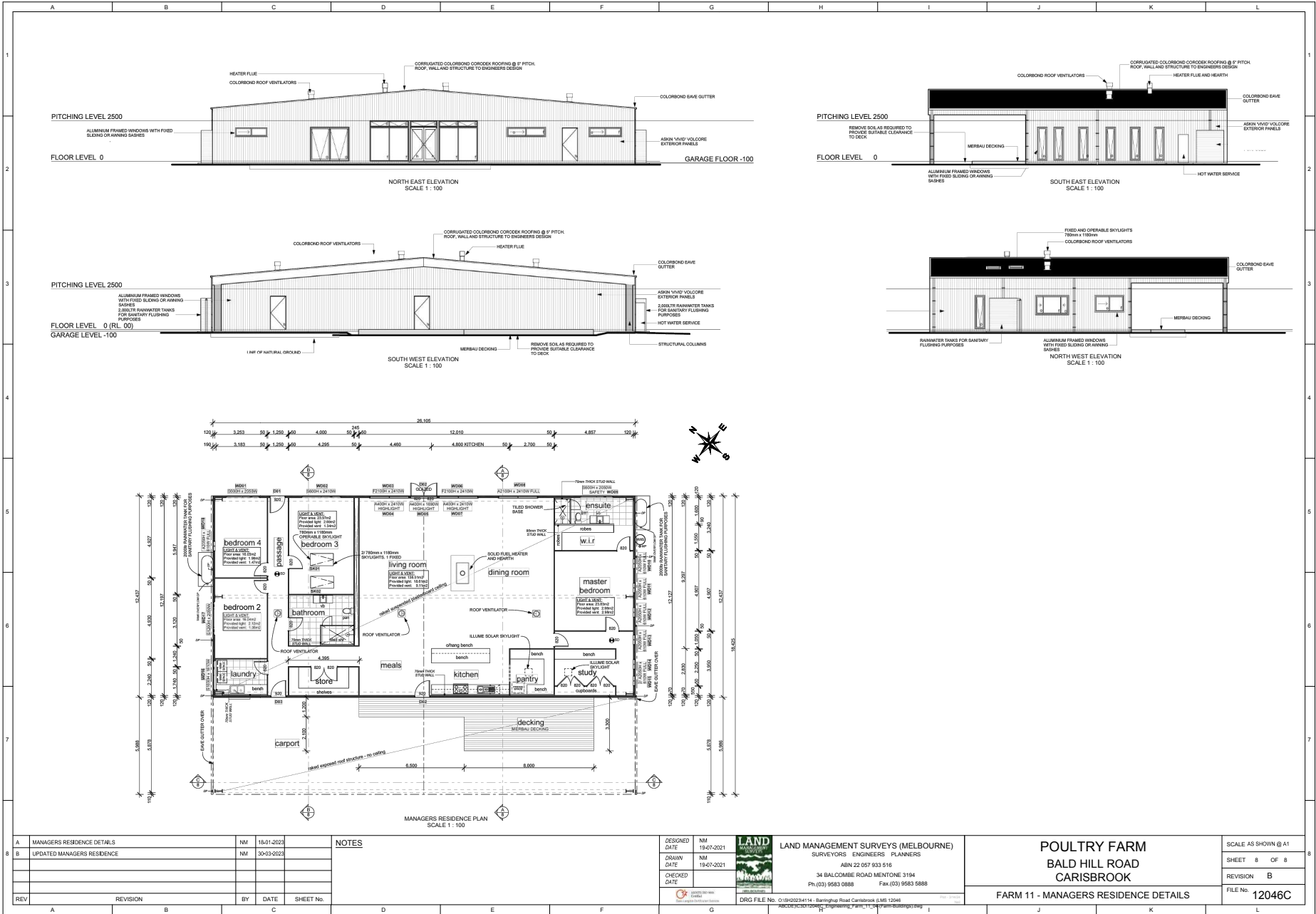
















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GMW Ref: PP-24-00466
Doc ID: A4935630

Central Goldfields Shire Council
Planning Department
mail@cgoldshire.vic.gov.au

16 May 2024

Dear Sir and/or Madam,

Planning Permit Application - Agriculture - Animal Husbandry - Broiler Farm, Caretakers House & Associated Buildings & works

Application No. 061-23
Applicant: Pavilion Farms C/- Michael Vukadinovic
Location: 705 Baringhup Rd CARISBROOK VIC 3464
V 10529 F 776 Lot 1 Plan 018831S

Thank you for your letter and information received 29 April 2024 in accordance with Section 55 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Goulburn-Murray Water's (GMW's) areas of interest are surface water and groundwater quality, use and disposal. GMW requires that development proposals do not impact detrimentally on GMW's infrastructure and the flow and quality of surface water and groundwater. Applicants must ensure that any required water supplies are available from an approved source.

GMW understands that the applicant is seeking planning permission for a 6 shed broiler farm, caretakers dwelling, a water retention dam, a amenities and generator room and a hot water heating facility room. The property is zoned FZ, is subject to HO and is located in the Loddon River (Laanecorie) Special Water Supply Catchment area. A Land Capability Assessment has been provided outlining that the site can accommodate a conventional wastewater treatment system.

Based on the information provided and in accordance with Section 56 (b) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, Goulburn-Murray Water has no objection to this planning permit being granted subject to the following conditions:

1. All construction and ongoing activities must be in accordance with EPA Publication 1834.1 Civil Construction, Building and Demolition Guide (September 2023).
2. All domestic wastewater from the dwelling and amenities buildings must be treated and disposed of using an approved system. The system must have a certificate of conformity issued by the Conformity Assessment Body (or equivalent approval) and be installed, operated and maintained in accordance with the relevant Australian Standard and EPA Code of Practice.

ABN: 46 761 336 846

- 1 -

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PO Box 165 Tatura Victoria 3616 Australia

reception@gmwater.com.au

1800 013 357

www.gmwater.com.au



3. All wastewater disposal areas must be located at least: 100m from any waterways, 40m from any drainage lines, 60m from any dams, and 20m from any bores.
4. The development must be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms, 2009 (including 2018 amendments).
5. The broiler sheds must be located at least 50m from all waterways/drainage lines.
6. The floor of the sheds must be constructed with an impervious surface such as concrete or of clay compacted to achieve a design permeability of 1×10^{-9} m/sec. The shed must be designed to ensure that all litter can be retained within the shed until removal is required.
7. Contaminated litter removed from the sheds must be transported off site by an approved contractor to an approved site.
8. There must be no spent litter from the sheds stockpiled on the site. Any temporary storage areas for wet litter must have an impermeable base and bunding to ensure contaminated run-off does not discharge from the temporary storage area.
9. No land application of contaminated litter is to occur.
10. Stormwater and drainage from hard stand areas and the areas around the shed must be directed to a retention dam which must be designed with a capacity and freeboard to enable the run-off from a 1 in 10 year storm to be retained. Any overflow from the dam must not cause erosion.
11. The retention dam must be lined with an impervious liner and if clay is used it must be compacted to a seepage rate of not greater than 1×10^{-9} m/sec. The dam must be operated to a minimum level to ensure the liner does not dry out and crack. There must be no overflow of water from the dam directed to any waterways.
12. All soil removed during construction of the dam must be reused, stabilized or vegetated on-site to ensure that no sediment can be transported off-site.
13. All dead birds must be disposed of off-site or managed on-site to the satisfaction of the Environment Protection Authority.
14. Any chemicals stored on-site must be kept in accordance with the EPA Publication 1698 Liquid Storage and Handling Guidelines (June 2018).

If you require further information please e-mail propertyservices@gmwater.com.au or contact 1800 013 357.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature block]

Tim Wild

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 15 May 2024 4:25 PM
To: Tim Wild
Subject: EPA Response REQ004849 Response (061-23 | 705 Baringhup Road Carisbrook 3464)

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments in this message unless you recognise the sender and know the contents are safe.

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Good afternoon Tim,

Thank you for your referral of Planning Application 061-23.

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) understands that the application relates to the use and development of the land for a Class B broiler farm and caretakers house with associated buildings and works, located at 705 Baringhup Road Carisbrook 3464.

The proposal

The application documents provided detail that the proposed broiler farm will have a capacity for less than or equal to 400,000 birds. The birds are to be housed within the six proposed sheds, which are to be developed 169 metres north of Bald Hill Road, north of the existing dwelling located on the property. The proposal involves the development of a dwelling for staff and associated infrastructure for the broiler farm. The farm is proposed to operate 24 hours a day 365 days a year. The application states that most work, and traffic generation will occur between the hours of 7am and 7pm weekdays and 7am and 1pm on Saturdays. The collection of birds for slaughter is to be undertaken at night. The proposal will incorporate three full time staff and seasonal staff on an as needs basis.

Site and context

The nearest residential zone is located over 6km west of the site boundary within the Township of Carisbrook. The nearest dwelling, not in the same ownership, is located approximately 2100 metres to the west of the site when assessed using method 2 within EPA Publication 1518 relating to separation distances. As depicted in the image

below, there are four neighbouring broiler farms in the vicinity of the site. The minimum separation distance between the existing broiler farms and the proposed Class B broiler farm is 1536 metres.



Figure 1 Site context plan (separation distances from abutting broiler farms noted)

Farm classification and recommended minimum separation distances.

The “Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 (the Code)” provides a basis for the planning, assessment, and approval of broiler farms in Victoria. Compliance with the Code is mandatory for the establishment of all new broiler farms in Victoria. The Code classifies broiler farms and applies differing assessment requirements, notification, and review rights depending on this classification.

The Code establishes minimum separation distances required between broiler farms and sensitive uses to minimise any off-site impacts of the industry. In accordance with Formula 1 of the Code and a farm capacity of up to 400,000, the required distance for this proposal is calculated to be 686m. This distance is met by the proposal, with the closest sensitive receptors being 1116m to the broiler sheds.

Under the Code, the proposed farm is therefore classified as a Class B Broiler Farm as:

- The proposed farm capacity will not exceed 400,000 birds; and
- The development can meet the minimum separation distance requirement (as defined by Formula 1 of the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009), with this distance not being fully contained within the broiler farm boundary.

Therefore, the farm does not require an Odour Environmental Risk Assessment (Odour ERA) for the development to proceed.

State of Knowledge and Expectations under the General Environmental Duty

EPA advises that the *Environment Protection Act 2017* came into effect on 1 July 2021.

The general environmental duty (GED) forms the centrepiece of the new laws. It describes that all Victorians have an obligation to prevent risks to human health or the environment by understanding those risks and taking reasonably practicable steps to eliminate or minimise them. This includes being familiar with the state of knowledge associated with a practice.

The concept of ‘state of knowledge’ describes the body of accepted knowledge that is known, or ought to be known, about the risks to human health or the environment which a specific practice or industry presents, including any knowledge relating to industry best practice methods of risk minimisation or management.

EPA considers that the publication “Planning and Environment Guideline for Establishing Meat Chicken Farms (2021) (the Guideline)” produced by AgriFutures is key to the current state of knowledge relating to broiler farms:

- Guide 1: Assessment guide (Australian industry standard), <https://agrifutures.com.au/product/planning-and-environment-guideline-forestablishing-meat-chicken-farms-guide-1-assessment-guide/>
- Guide 2: Applicant guide (Australian industry standard), <https://agrifutures.com.au/product/planning-and-environment-guideline-forestablishing-meat-chicken-farms-guide-2-applicant-guide/>

EPA considers it may therefore be appropriate for Council to ensure that the permit applicant is familiar with the publication, and additionally understands and is fully aware of their duties under the GED in the management of their business.

Conclusions and Recommendations


In line with the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 (plus 2018 amendments), EPA confirms that:

- The proposal is classified as a Class B Broiler Farm.

EPA is working with industry and the community to help them understand how to fulfil their obligations under the amended *Environment Protection Act 2017* and GED, by providing guidance, advice, and other support. Abiding by the GED is vital to proper management of risk in this proposal, both during and after development. Current state of knowledge relating to broiler farms suggests that the proponent may make themselves familiar with the Guideline in addition to the Code, and Council may wish to remind or notify them of their duties under the GED.

EPA advises that the proposal should adhere to any and all requirements set out by AgVic.

On the basis that an Odour ERA is not triggered, EPA have no further comments.


Planning Advisor
Development Advisory




A 200 Victoria St, Carlton

epa.vic.gov.au



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Our Ref: 82375
Your Ref: D061-23
23 May 2024

Mr Tim Wild
Principal Planner
Central Goldfields Shire Council
PO Box 194
MARYBOROUGH VIC 3465
Emailed to: mail@cgoldshire.vic.gov.au
Tim.Wild@cgoldshire.vic.gov.au

Dear Mr Wild

RE: 3280 Pyrenees Highway CARISBROOK VIC 3464 (App no: D022-23)
705 Baringhup Road CARISBROOK VIC 3464 (App no: D061-23)

We refer to two planning applications received by Council, currently on advertising.

The applications seek approval for proposed use and development of the land for a class B broiler farm and caretakers house with associated buildings and works.

VicTrack is owner of the majority of Victoria's railway land and infrastructure, including the land abutting the application sites.

Pursuant to the *Transport Integration Act 2010*, VicTrack manages rail land, infrastructure and assets on behalf of the State. As such, our interest in this application relates to the proposed interface arrangement with railway land and to ensure that during construction and on an ongoing basis that rail infrastructure and services are protected to minimise damage and delays.

Background context and detail to the issues raised in this letter are provided in the **VicTrack Rail Development Interface Guidelines** that can be found on the VicTrack website: [Build next to the rail corridor | VicTrack](#)

We understand that Council has received an objection from the member of the public in relation to the impact of the proposed broiler farms on a future rail trail.

Please note that while VicTrack is aware of the rail trail proposal, no lease has been granted for the rail trail at this stage.

In relation to any concerns relating to amenity impacts on the future rail trail proposal within the Transport Zone, we believe these have no basis in the planning scheme.

VicTrack
Level 8, 1010 La Trobe St Docklands VIC 3008
GPO Box 1681 Melbourne VIC 3001
T +61 3 9619 1111
victrack.com.au

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VicTrack

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The Transport Zone is not a residential zone nor is it generally a locale for sensitive uses. Accordingly, we do not have any significant concerns relating to the proposed broiler farm use.

3280 Pyrenees Highway CARISBROOK VIC 3464 (App no: D022-23)

The rail reserve is located on the application site's northern boundary. This land is leased to V/Line, the Rail Operator.

VicTrack recommends the following conditions be applied to the permit to protect railway land, infrastructure and services:

1. No entry to railway land is permitted without the written consent of VicTrack.
2. No drainage, effluent, waste, soil or other materials must enter, be stored or be directed to the railway land.

END CONDITIONS

705 Baringhup Road CARISBROOK VIC 3464 (App no: D061-23)

Railway land is located on the application site's eastern boundary and separates the subject site from direct access to Baringhup Road.

A new access road from the proposed farm to Baringhup Road forms part of the application. The proposed access to the site is reliant upon traversing VicTrack land. As such, an access license will be required to be obtained from VicTrack.

To initiate this process, please contact the VicTrack Leasing team via leasing@victrack.com.au.

VicTrack recommends the following conditions be applied to the permit to protect railway land, infrastructure and services:

1. Prior to the commencement of the development, the owner must enter into a license agreement for access over VicTrack land.
All costs associated with implementation of the license agreement must be borne by the owner and at no cost to VicTrack.
2. No drainage, effluent, waste, soil or other materials must enter, be stored or be directed to the railway land.

END CONDITIONS

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Given the importance of these issues to VicTrack, I would be grateful if you will use your discretion and apply our suggested conditions to each respective permit, should the Responsible Authority's decision be to issue.

For our records, we would appreciate a copy of Council's decision be forwarded to VicTrack at your earliest convenience.

Should you have any queries, please contact me on 03 9619 0222 or

[REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Planning Manager



Agriculture Victoria

12 November 2024

Tim Wild
Principal Planner, Statutory Planning
Central Goldfields Shire Council
PO Box 194
MARYBOROUGH VIC 3465

Email: mail@cgoldshire.vic.gov.au

Dear Tim,

RE: Planning Permit Application 061-23 Use and development of the land for a class B broiler farm, caretakers house and associated buildings and works.

**Land at: 705 Baringhup Road CARISBROOK 3464
Lot 1 TP18831**

Reference: 061-23

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment pursuant to a notice of application under Section 52 of the *Planning and Environment Act, 1987*.

The advice provided in this letter relates to:

1. Planning context
2. Assessment against the *Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 Plus 2018 Amendments*
3. Review of the application against Central Goldfields Planning Scheme strategic objectives.

1. Planning Context

The subject land Lot 1 TP18831 is approximately 138.41 hectares in area and is zoned Farming Zone (FZ), Clause 35.07 of the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme, and is affected by:

- Heritage Overlay (HO113) – Havilah Co. Deep Lead Mine

Agriculture Victoria would characterise the use as a Broiler farm, defined in Clause 73.03 Land use terms as: Land used to keep broiler chickens for the production of meat.

Broiler farm is included in Poultry farm and is part of the Agriculture group (sub-group of Animal Production) as illustrated in Clause 73.04-3.

Within the Farming Zone, a Broiler farm is a Section 2 use – Permit required.

Agriculture Victoria notes that the site is in the vicinity of three (3) other broiler farms run by the same operators and additional farms are proposed.

Particular Provision Clause 53.09 Poultry farm outlines the planning requirements for Poultry farms including Clause 53.09-3 Requirement – Broiler farm, that states *an application to use land or construct a building or construct or carry out works for a broiler farm must comply with the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 Plus 2018 amendments*.

This Planning Application 061-23 is for the *use and development of the land for a class B broiler farm, caretakers house and associated buildings and works*.

The *Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 Plus 2018 amendments* states that: A broiler farm is classified as Class B if all of the following apply:

- *The farm capacity is between 10,000 and 400,000 birds*

- *The development can meet the minimum separation distance requirement (as defined by Formula 1) but this distance is not fully contained within the broiler farm boundary.*

2. Assessment against the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 Plus 2018 Amendments

Agriculture Victoria has reviewed the following provided supporting documentation:

- *061-23 Broiler Code Application Checklist*
- *061-23 Broiler Farm Proposal Summary*
- *061-23 Environmental Management Plan*
- *061-23 Flora and Fauna Report*
- *061-23 Land Capability Assessment*
- *061-23 Landscape Plan*
- *061-23 Odour Environmental Risk Assessment*
- *061-23 Planning Permit Application Form*
- *061-23 Planning Report*
- *061-23 Plans*
- *061-23 Title*
- *061-23 Traffic Management Plan*

3. Review of the application against Central Goldfields Planning Schemes strategic objectives

Agriculture Victoria considers that the following clauses of the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme are relevant to this application:

- Clause 02.03-4 Natural resource management
 - *Agricultural land - Council aims to protect agricultural and environmental values by:*
 - *Promoting sustainable agricultural activities and land management practices that minimise adverse impacts on the primary production and environmental values of surrounding land and the catchment.*
 - *Water - Council aims to protect the viability of natural resources by:*
 - *Discouraging the subdivision of land or conversion to land uses that take the land out of productive use.*
 - *Promoting alternative cropping, intensive agriculture and value adding enterprises.*
 - *Minimising conflicts between agriculture and residential uses to ensure productive agricultural capacity is not reduced.*
 - *Supporting emerging agricultural industries that are compatible with existing agricultural practices, including horticulture, intensive animal production, niche agriculture, value adding industries and renewables.*
 - *Protecting the environs and water catchments of Tullaroop and Laanecoorie Reservoirs and Lake Cairn Curran.*
- Clause 13.07-1S Land use compatibility, Strategies
 - *Ensure that use or development of land is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses*
- Clause 14.01-2S Sustainable agricultural land use, Strategies
 - *Support agricultural investment through the protection and enhancement of appropriate infrastructure.*
 - *Facilitate ongoing productivity and investment in high value agriculture.*
 - *Facilitate the establishment and expansion of cattle feedlots, pig farms, poultry farms and other intensive animal industries in a manner consistent with orderly and proper planning and protection of the environment.*
 - *Policy documents, Consider as relevant:*

- *Victorian Code for Broiler Farms (Department of Primary Industries, 2009, plus 2018 amendments)*
- Clause 14.01-2L Sustainable agricultural land use - Central Goldfields, Strategies
 - *Ensure intensive agriculture is located to minimise risks associated with effluent disposal and protect the amenity of adjacent land uses.*

Conclusion.

Central Goldfields Shire Council as the responsible authority will have to make a determination as to whether the application for the proposed Broiler farm meets the purpose of the zone and the strategic objectives of the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme.

Agriculture Victoria notes that:

- *061-23 Planning Permit Application Form* proposes a six shed Broiler farm with no stated farm capacity.
- *061-23 Planning Report, Planning Application Report - Development and Use of Land for a 6 Shed Broiler Farm 705 Baringhup Road, Carisbrook, VIC 3464, September 2023*, specifies a Class B Broiler farm with a capacity of 400,000 birds and a total floor area of the 6 sheds at 26,622m².
- *061-23 Broiler Farm Proposal Summary* notes a Class B farm, farm capacity 400,000 birds and a bird stocking density of 17 birds/m² with tunnel ventilation. At 17 birds/m² x 26,622m² = **452,574** birds
- *061-23 Odour Environmental Risk Assessment, Carisbrook Broiler Farm – Farm 10 and Farm 11 expansion Odour Environmental Risk Assessment Pavilion Farms 24 October 2024*, prepared by GHD Pty Ltd, notes the proposal as a Special Class farm of 450,000 birds where the proposed farms are expected to have the placement density of 17 birds/m². This would equate to 452,574 birds based on the total shed floor area. Table 2 also states 75,429 birds per shed totalling 452,574 birds.
- The Odour ERA refers to: *proposed expansion of the existing broiler farms at 394 Bald Hill Road Carisbrook, 3464 (the site), to understand odour risks associated with proposed operations*. This would appear to refer to existing Farm 7.
- *061-23 Environmental Management Plan, Pavilion Farms Farm 11 March 2024*, is not presented in an auditable format consistent with Element 6, Standard E6 S1.
- The EMP does not detail management and contingencies for emergency disease or catastrophic mortalities.
- The EMP does not identify the responsible parties and or provide contact information.
- The EMP does not identify and or provide contact information in the case to emergency disease outbreaks.
- The Planning Report states that *dead birds will be composted on the Broiler Farm Property and all compost generated will be retained on the Broiler Farm Property in accordance with EPA Regulations*. The EMP states that *dead birds whilst on the farm are stored on closed containers and are generally removed from the farm daily or at a maximum of 36 hours*.

Agriculture Victoria considers that:

- The proposal has the potential to meet all the requirements of the *Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 Plus 2018 Amendments* but does not yet do so.
- The supporting materials provided do not follow the format of, or directly address, the criteria of the *Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 Plus 2018 Amendments*.
- The documentation as presented lacks the clarity and consistency to make an effective assessment of the merits of the proposal and it would be difficult for council officers to hold any permit holder to account.

Recommendations

Agriculture Victoria recommends that:

- The application material be consolidated and revised to consistently present the proposed farm class and capacity in bird numbers for the purpose of clarity.
- The applicant be given the opportunity to revise the application materials to address all the Elements, Objectives, Standards and Approved Measures of the *Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 Plus 2018 Amendments*, that follows the structure as set out in the Code, in line with the requirements of Clause 53.09 Poultry Farm, and address the comments provided above through a formal request for further information. Agriculture Victoria has no objection to this letter of advice being provided to the applicant to assist them in the revision of their application materials.
- Once Council has obtained further information from the applicant, Agriculture Victoria will be able to provide a more a more detailed assessment of the application.

This letter of advice is provided to Council to assist their assessment of the above planning permit application and any requirement in seeking further information from the applicant as part of its assessment process. The information provided should be considered as advisory in nature to inform Council's determination as the Responsible Authority.

Please provide a copy of Council's decision for our records.

Please contact me if you require any further clarification.

Regards



Agriculture Victoria Planning and Advisory Service
Agriculture Victoria
Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
255 Ferguson Road, Tatura, Victoria 3616



7.2 Quarterly Finance Report March

Author: Manager Finance

Responsible Officer: Acting General Manager Corporate Performance

The Officer presenting this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the Quarterly Finance Report for March 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Quarterly Finance Report for March 2025.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2021-2025:

The Community's vision: **Leading Change**
4. Effective and sustainable financial management.

Initiative: Review budget and financial reporting processes to improve monitoring of financial performance

This report is prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 97 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The finance report is provided for the period ended 31 March 2025.

The report compares the year-to-date results against the adopted budget.

The council adopted the 2024/25 Budget on 25 June 2024, and this report provides a comparison between the budgets and actuals for the period ended 31 March 2025.

The report explains variances to date for the reporting period including the anticipated impact on Council's adopted operating and capital works budgets.

REPORT

In accordance with *Section 97 of the Local Government Act 2020* a quarterly budget report must be presented to Council.

The attached reports include a comparison of the operating and capital works budgets with actuals for the period ended 31 March 2025, as well as a cash flow statement and balance sheet.

Council's operating result for the period ended 31 March 2025 as per the income statement is a deficit of \$0.2m compared to a year-to-date budgeted surplus of \$0.5m.

Capital works expenditure for the period ended 31 March 2025 as per the capital works statement is \$5.3m compared to the full year capital works of \$13.8m.

Variances from the budget are explained in some detail in the tables below.

The Quarterly Finance Report includes:

- Income Statement.
- Balance Sheet.

- Cashflow Statement.
- Statement of Capital Works
- Rates and Charges Receivables Analysis February 2025

Income Statement

The Income Statement for the period ended 31 March 2025 shows a deficit of \$0.2m.

This is a \$0.7m variance on the year-to-date budget.

The March quarterly financial result has been impacted by several factors.

1. Capital grant income is \$3.4m compared to the budget of \$5.6m (\$2.2m variance) due to the current project underspend in relation to the following capital grants:
 - Goldfields Reservoir Dam Stabilisation \$670k
 - Deledio Recreation Reserve Pavilion Upgrade \$592k
 - TAC - Multiple Projects \$512k
 - Rural Council Transformation Program (RCTP) \$407k
 - Maryborough Tennis Centre Multi Use Courts Development \$142k
 - Tiny Towns – Multiple Projects \$43k
 - Carisbrook Drainage Mitigation Levee (NFMIP) \$288k
 - Creative Station - Infrastructure Project \$120k
 - Betterment Bridges and Culvert \$700k
 - Unsuccessful grant application for Bridge renewal (Christian St) Trench 7 \$500k and \$245k Tiny Towns
 - Withdrawn \$1m of Outdoor Pool (Growing Regions Fund)
2. \$1.1m - Federal Assistance funding received which was budgeted to be received in the prior year. Whilst \$4.3m of cash was received in July 2024, this is recognised in line with accounting standards across the financial year.
3. User Charges is \$1.2m compared to a budget of \$1.1m. The favourable variance is due to:
 - Increase \$40k in scrap metal income (Budget is zero as this is a new income stream)
 - Increase \$22k in container deposit scheme (Budget is zero as this is a new income stream)
 - Increase \$31k in fire ban standby (Recovery from employee and plant hire cost)
4. Employee costs to date are \$11.3m in line with budget.
5. Other unfavourable variances compared to budget include:
 - Depreciation costs of \$303k due to the following revaluation and additional assets capitalised at year end, 30 June 2024.
 - Increase in Workcover costs of \$125k (\$167k full year impact)
 - Increase in Software Licensing \$308k (Total Budget \$500k)
 - Increase in re-active road maintenance expenditure of \$273k (Total Budget \$397)
 - Increase in re-active building maintenance expenditure of \$68k (Total Budget \$67k)
 - Increase in maintenance surrounds expenditure of \$99k (Total Budget \$122k)

Balance Sheet

Council's balance sheet shows a cash and cash equivalents position of \$3.6m and working capital ratio of 59.4%.

Unrestricted cash is currently \$1m but is expected to increase over the year.

Capital Works

Capital Works expenditure for the period, July 2024 – March 2025 is \$5.3m. This represents expenditure of 38% of the full year budget, and 105% of the year-to-date budget.

It must be noted that these figures include payments made to suppliers (and accrued where appropriate). If initial scoping of works is underway but no invoices are received to date, this will not show as expenditure in the capital works statement. Please refer to the Quarterly Capital works update for a true reflection of the progress of projects.

Summary

The finalised operating result for Central Goldfields Shire Council for the period ended 31 March 2025 was a deficit of \$0.2m with an unfavourable variance of \$0.7m.

The balance sheet shows a working capital ratio of 59.4% and unrestricted cash of \$1m.

Working capital and council's cash position remains a key focus for Council.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

The attached reports and comments have been prepared in collaboration with various Council officers.

FINANCIAL& RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The financial statements were prepared internally by Council officers.

The reports provide a financial snapshot of Council's performance for the period ended 31 March 2025, noting the impact on the adopted budget.

The financial position of Council will continue to be monitored and managed.

RISK MANAGEMENT

This report addresses Council's strategic risk:

Financial sustainability - Failure to maintain our long-term financial sustainability

Any risks in relation to this report have been discussed in the report above.

CONCLUSION

Council's Income Statement for the period of July 2024 – March 2025 is a deficit of \$0.2m (budget of \$0.5m surplus), this is explained by grant timing. Without the timing difference capital grant spend and unsuccessful grant application, Council's result is in line with budget.

Cash and cash equivalents are \$3.6m.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Finance Reports March 2025 [7.2.1]
2. Rates and Charges Receivables Analysis Feb 2025 [7.2.2]

Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda – 28 May 2025

Central Goldfields Shire Council Income Statement to March 2025

INCOME STATEMENT	Notes	2023/24 June YTD Actuals	2024/25 Total Budget	2024/25 YTD Budgets March	2024/25 YTD Actuals March	2024/25 YTD Variance March
Income		33,532,974	38,245,412	26,391,160	26,631,301	240,141
Rates and service charges		17,522,551	18,083,773	13,487,760	13,652,668	164,908
Contributions - monetary		275,652	209,724	169,608	308,387	138,779
Grants - capital	1	5,161,548	7,512,231	5,634,162	3,435,585	(2,198,577)
Grants - Operating	2	7,486,048	9,741,109	5,330,423	7,313,240	1,982,817
Other Income		942,433	726,386	215,427	292,005	76,578
Statutory fees and fines		477,200	510,894	415,260	405,136	(10,124)
User Charges	3	1,667,542	1,461,295	1,138,520	1,224,281	85,760
Expenses		(39,087,043)	(34,941,610)	(25,923,081)	(26,822,715)	(899,014)
Bad and doubtful debts		(12,355)	(1,000)	0	(619)	0
Borrowing costs		(121,073)	(99,320)	(74,493)	(91,415)	(16,922)
Depreciation		(8,009,553)	(8,263,602)	(6,197,679)	(6,500,701)	(303,022)
Employee costs	4	(16,029,779)	(15,337,566)	(11,505,940)	(11,372,044)	133,896
Materials and services	5	(13,823,311)	(10,861,473)	(7,898,477)	(8,666,085)	(767,608)
Net loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		(739,624)	0	0	13,796	13,796
Other Expenses		(351,348)	(378,649)	(246,492)	(205,646)	40,846
Grand Total		(5,554,069)	3,303,802	468,079	(191,413)	(658,873)

*Report Contains Filters

Central Goldfields Shire Council
Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2025

BALANCE SHEET	As at 30 June 2024	As at 31 March 2025
Assets	432,305,023	437,798,154
Current Assets	4,595,443	11,282,152
Cash and cash equivalents	676,309	3,632,572
Inventories	14,628	124,091
Non-current assets classified as held for sale	0	0
Other financial assets	800,214	1,235,089
Trade and other receivables	3,104,292	6,290,400
Non-current assets	427,709,580	426,516,002
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	427,709,580	426,516,002
Liabilities	(13,610,080)	(19,240,564)
Current Liabilities	(13,304,531)	(18,979,053)
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	(2,089,000)	(2,089,000)
Provisions	(3,487,988)	(3,525,586)
Trade & other payables	(7,040,383)	(11,438,747)
Trust funds & deposits	(687,160)	(1,925,720)
Non Current Liabilities	(305,549)	(261,511)
Other NC Liabilities	(305,549)	(261,511)
Prepaid Revenue	0	0
Provisions	0	0
Equity	(418,694,943)	(418,557,590)
Accumulated Surplus	(128,661,085)	(128,412,172)
Accumulated Surplus	(128,661,085)	(128,412,172)
Reserves	(290,033,858)	(290,145,418)
Other Reserves	(450,000)	(450,000)
Asset Revaluation Reserve	(289,328,007)	(289,382,068)
Open Space Reserve	(255,850)	(313,350)
Net Assets	418,694,943	418,557,590

*Report Contains Filters

Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda – 28 May 2025

Central Goldfields Shire Council

Cash Flow Year Ended 30 June 2024 and YTD 31 March 2025

CASH FLOW	As at 30 June 2024	As at 31 March 2025
	\$'000	\$'000
Cash Flows from Operating Activities		
Rates and charges	15,235	15,051
User fees, statutory fees and fines	2,297	1,629
Grants - operating	5,647	7,313
Grants - capital	5,161	4,356
Contributions - monetary	531	308
Interest received	540	292
Trust funds and deposits taken	34	1,239
Net GST refund/(payment)	2,202	87
Employee costs	(15,996)	(11,372)
Materials and services	(17,840)	(9,533)
Other payments	(351)	(297)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	(2,540)	9,073
Cash flows from investing activities		
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(13,502)	(5,778)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	11,500	14
Payments for other financial assets	0	0
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	(2,002)	(5,765)
Cash flows from investing activities		
Finance costs	93	(91)
Repayment of borrowings	0	0
Repayment of lease liabilities	(55)	(262)
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	38	(353)
Net increase (decrease) in cash	(4,504)	2,956
Cash at the beginning of the financial year	5,180	676
Cash at the end of the period	676	3,632
Term Deposits held	0	0
Total Cash	676	3,632

*Report Contains Filters

Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda – 28 May 2025

Central Goldfields Shire Council Capital Works as at 31 March 2025

Ledger No	2024/25 Total Budget	2024/25 YTD Budgets March	2024/25 YTD Actuals March	Comment
Infrastructure	6,465,258	1,490,862	1,988,828	
Drainage	270,001	222,681	201,635	
63271.01. Kerb & Channel Renewal	50,000	44,280	98,971	
64306.21. Drainage Renewal	100,000	84,619	3,693	
64306.25. Tabledrain Renewals	70,000	56,282	18,230	
64306.253. Drainage Renewal Main Drain Carisbrook and Maryborough	50,000	37,500	6,818	
64306.347. Carisbrook Drainage Mitigation Levee (NFMIP)	0	0	73,924	Grant funded project - Carry Forward from FY24-25
Other Infrastructure	2,094,259	70,695	557,020	
60999.01. Betterment Bridges and Culvert	1,000,000	0	0	\$700k received in advance
60999.02. Bridge Renewel (Christian St) Tranch 7	1,000,000	0	0	Application not successful
63251.01. Street Furniture Renewal	15,000	11,250	1,967	
63261.01. Signs Renewal	0	0	30,198	Sharing the Signs New Budget
63360.01. Signs New	20,000	15,003	5,535	
63410.03. (LRCI 4) Christian Street Road Upgrade	0	0	354,172	Grant funded project - Carry Forward from FY24-25
63510.06. Aerodrome Regional Airport Program Round 3	59,259	44,442	165,148	
Parks, Open Spaces and Streetscapes	5,000	3,753	0	
63352.01. Streetscape Renewal	5,000	3,753	0	
Pathways	240,000	167,900	177,801	
63291.01. Pathways Renewal	100,000	74,997	10,824	
63390.01. Pathways New	120,000	92,903	110,018	
63390.0103. Pathways New 2024/2025 Alice Street (Thompson to Bull)	0	0	29,089	Sharing the Pathways New Budget
63390.42. Maryborough Rail Trail (Auspice Mt Alex)	20,000	0	27,870	
Roads	3,855,999	1,025,833	1,052,372	
60363.02. NDFA Flood Works October 2022 Project Management	0	0	(7,645)	Reverse of incorrect transaction
61511.61. TAC Multiple Intersections Maryborough	280,000	0	2,197	
61511.62. TAC Burns & Nolan Street Roundabout	280,000	0	657	
61511.63. TAC Napier and Brougham Street Roundabout	280,000	0	657	
61511.64. TAC Avoca Road Talbot Speed Limit Reduction	280,000	0	637	
61511.65. TAC Clarendon, Dundas & Palmerston Street Splitter Island	280,000	0	657	
63200.01. Design Capital Works	100,000	74,997	48,519	
63210.141. Road Renewal Dunolly Avoca Road Construction FY24-25 (DRFA \$1.026m)	680,000	0	4,995	
63210.142. Road Renewal Frederick Street FY24-25 (R2R \$406K)	406,000	0	189,938	
63210.143. Road Renewal Stuart Mill Road FY24-25 (R2R \$180K)	120,000	0	4,421	
63210.4. Major Patches RG	135,000	108,124	78,991	
63212.01. Sealed Road Shoulders Renewal	100,000	77,933	30,685	
63215.01. Unsealed Roads Renewal	340,000	281,679	216,106	
63220.01. Seals Renewal Reseals	450,000	384,454	481,557	
63220.011. Seals Renewal Asphalt	125,000	98,646	0	
Plant and Equipment	2,120,755	1,532,561	1,023,155	
Fixtures, Fittings and Furniture	1,055,755	813,814	163,740	
64751.04. PC Network/Hardware	150,000	112,500	88,072	
64751.33. Business Systems Uplift	328,000	245,997	56,023	

*Report Contains Filters

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Central Goldfields Shire Council Capital Works as at 31 March 2025

Ledger No	2024/25 Total Budget	2024/25 YTD Budgets March	2024/25 YTD Actuals March	Comment
64751.37. Field and Mobility Services Module	88,000	88,000	0	
64751.44. Rural Council Transformation Program (RCT)	489,755	367,317	19,645	
Plant and Equipment	1,065,000	718,747	859,415	
63820.91. Operating Plant WIP	745,000	558,747	859,415	
63820.93. Vehicles Cars WIP	200,000	100,000	0	
63820.94. Vehicles Utes WIP	120,000	60,000	0	
Property	5,247,846	1,956,371	2,241,079	
Buildings	3,705,000	719,244	1,060,484	
60217.24. Worsley Cottage - Internal and external wall repairs	0	0	65	Completed - last transaction
60217.25. Building Renewal - Unallocated	250,000	187,497	130,759	
60217.26. Maryborough Railway Station Activation Project	0	0	8,750	Completed - last transaction
60217.41. Creative Station - Infrastructure Project	0	0	19,392	Grant funded project - New Project after the budget process
61511.083. Deledio Recreation Reserve Pavilion Upgrade	2,000,000	0	14,827	
61511.2. (LRCI) Hall Improvements - Talbot	0	0	13,470	Completed - last transaction
61511.26. (LRCI4) Maryborough Town Hall - Building Upgrade	300,000	225,000	320,156	
61511.28. Carisbrook Town Hall (Design and Scoping)	30,000	22,500	0	
61511.29. Dunolly Town Hall (Design and Scoping)	30,000	22,500	0	
61511.31. Talbot Town Hall (Design and Scoping)	30,000	22,500	0	
61511.41. Tiny Towns - Adelaide Lead Hall	13,000	0	4,508	
61511.42. Tiny Towns - Tullaroop Leisure Centre Upgrades	75,000	0	58,738	

*Report Contains Filters

Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda – 28 May 2025

Central Goldfields Shire Council Capital Works as at 31 March 2025

Ledger No	2024/25 Total Budget	2024/25 YTD Budgets March	2024/25 YTD Actuals March	Comment
61511.43. Tiny Towns - Talbot ANA Hall Restump	100,000	0	577	
61511.44. Tiny Towns - Dunolly Senior Citizens Hall Upgrade	41,400	0	24,006	
61511.45. Tiny Towns - Bealiba Historic Horse Trough Relocation	28,750	0	21,549	
61511.46. Tiny Towns - Bowenlae Playground	100,000	0	79,376	
61511.47. Tiny Towns - Majorca Historic Cemetery Beautification	50,000	0	6,721	
61511.48. Tiny Towns - Not Success Application	267,850	0	0	Not Successful Application
61565.03. Talbot Museum Design (Repair Works)	0	0	617	
61611.22. Art Gallery - Indigenous Interpretive Garden - Stage 2 & 3	69,000	51,750	1,551	
62121.74. MSLC Roof Renewal (Design and Scoping)	0	0	57,822	Carry forward unspent budget from FY23/24
62470.55. Deledio Reserve Netball Courts Redevelopment	0	0	(5,234)	Reverse of incorrect transaction
62470.72. Recreation Reserves Sports Lighting Upgrade Strategy	70,000	0	0	
64225.02. Rene Fox Gardens Toilet Refurbishment	150,000	112,500	173,932	
64751.014. Building Upgrades Civic Centre	100,000	74,997	128,905	
Land Improvements	1,542,846	1,237,127	1,180,595	
60216.21. Bike Racks New	25,000	18,747	0	
62121.7. Recreation Planning - Splash Park	0	0	12,500	Carry forward unspent budget from FY23/24
62121.73. Whirrakee Rise Public Space Enhancement	90,000	67,500	86,504	
62316.03. Maryborough Outdoor Pool - Octagon Pool, Pavilion & Plant Room Heritage Works	0	0	510,831	Completed - Carry forward unspent budget and grant from FY23/24
62316.04. (LRCI 3) Pool Upgrades Dunolly, Talbot and MSLC Pool Maintenance Works	0	0	11,072	Completed - last transaction
62316.16. Pools Equipment	0	0	4,515	Re-active
62400.16. Parks Renewal	10,000	7,497	0	
62411.03. Gordon Gardens Master Plan Works	0	0	63,377	Carry forward unspent budget from FY23/24
62421.21. Rubbish Bins Renewal General	10,000	7,506	0	
62430.01. Renewal Playgrounds	15,000	11,250	0	
62430.06. Playground Works Bowenvale	0	0	(35,431)	Reallocate expense error
62470.3. Maryborough Skate and Scooter Park	30,000	22,500	0	
62470.31. Goldfields Reservoir Dam Stabilisation	782,846	587,133	25,912	
62470.32. Maryborough Tennis Centre Multi Use Courts Development	320,000	320,000	0	
62495.26. Princes Park Grandstand and Changerooms (Design and Scoping)	100,000	74,997	105,467	
62495.27. Princes Park Cricket Wicket Rebuild Project	160,000	119,997	0	
62671.09. Goldfields Reservoir BBQ Upgrade	0	0	10,084	New contribution project after budget process
63820. Asset Clearing Account	0	0	6,512	
64110.81. Compost SV Grant CECFR3 C13028	0	0	379,252	Carry forward unspent grant from FY23/24
Grand Total	13,833,859	4,979,794	5,253,063	

*Report Contains Filters

Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda – 28 May 2025

KPI TRACKER	2023/24 ACTUAL	2024/25 BUDGET (FULL YEAR)	2024/25 ACTUAL (YTD)	Commentary
Underlying Surplus/(Deficit) \$	(10,715,617)	(4,208,429)	(3,626,999)	On track as anticipating to recognise unearned income (capital grants) as projects are completed.
Underlying Surplus/(Deficit) %	-41.1%	-14.8%	-18.8%	Below target due to timing of grants.
Working Capital %	34.5%	209%	59.4%	Below full year target with expectation it will improve by year end.
Unrestricted Cash	(2,962)	3,144	1,015	Below full year target. Final Roads to recovery payment in May 25 together with the 4th rates instalment.
Expenditure Level (Rates efficiency)	4,457	3,984	3,058	On track.
Revenue Level (Rates efficiency)	1,535	1,546	1,035	On track.
Rates Concentration	83.90%	86.15%	85.96%	On track.
Indebtedness	1.5%	1.2%	1.7%	Indebtedness impacted by timing of 4th rates instalment.

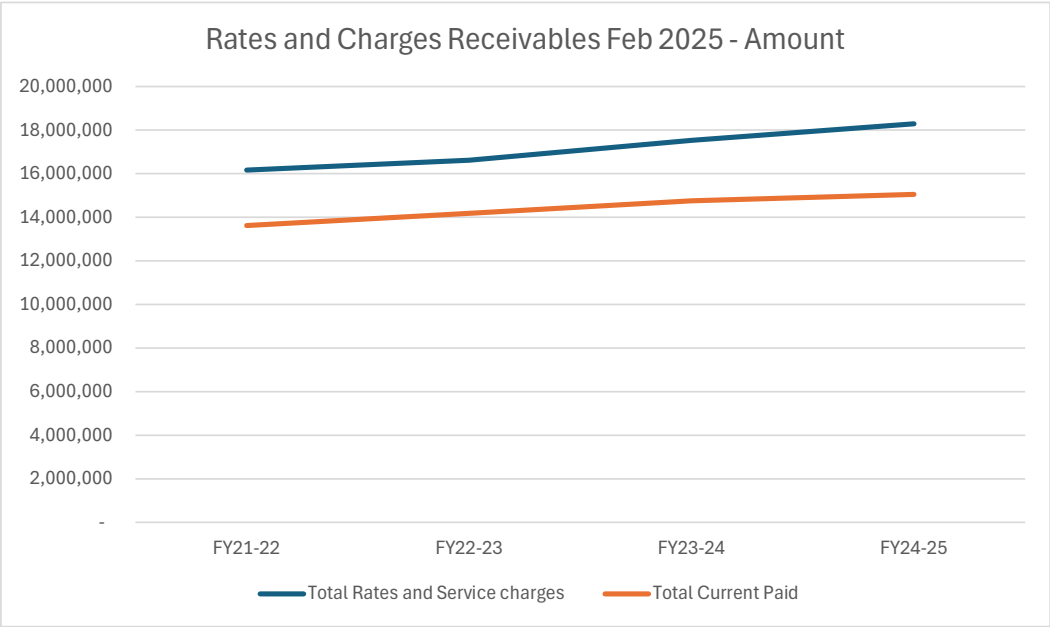
Definitions

Underlying Surplus	The result if we remove Capital Grant funding
	Adjusted underlying result/Adjusted underlying revenue
Working Capital %	Councils ability to meet their debts as they fall due
	Current Assets/ Current liabilities
Unrestricted Cash	Cash balance available for Council to use at their discretion
	Cash balance less prepaid grants
Expenditure Level (Rates efficiency)	Council expenditure per property
	Total expenses/number property assessments
Revenue Level (Rates efficiency)	Average rate amount per property assessment (excluding waste)
	Total rate revenue/number properties
Rates Concentration	Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue
	Rate revenue/ adjusted underlying revenue
Indebtedness	The ability for Council to repay their borrowings
	Non current liabilities/own sourced revenue

*Report Contains Filters

Data as at last day of February of each year (which is after Full payment of rates due and third instalment)

Financial Year	Total Rates and Service charges	Total Current Paid	Total Rates and Service charges	Total Current Paid %	Total outstanding	Total Current outstanding	Total Arrears from previous years
FY21-22	16,166,155	13,620,833	100%	84%	4,253,945	2,545,322	1,708,623
FY22-23	16,627,081	14,184,552	100%	85%	4,138,885	2,442,529	1,696,355
FY23-24	17,522,551	14,746,952	100%	84%	4,596,283	2,775,599	1,820,684
FY24-25	18,290,780	15,051,113	100%	82%	5,359,734	3,239,668	2,120,066



7.3 VEC Election Report on CGSC 2024 Elections

Author: Governance Advisor
Responsible Officer: Acting General Manager Corporate Performance

The Officer presenting this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to table the Victorian Electoral Commission’s report on the conduct of the Council Election held Saturday 26 October 2024.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the VEC’s Election Report on the Council Election held 26 October 2024.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Central Goldfields Shire Council’s Council Plan 2021-2025:
The Community’s vision: **Leading Change**
4. Good planning, governance, and service delivery.
Initiative: N/A

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Victorian Electoral Commission is appointed to conduct all Council Elections in Victoria. As part of its legislative obligations under Regulation 83(1) of the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2020, the VEC must prepare a report on the conduct of the 26 October 2024 Council Election, to the Council’s CEO within 6 months after the election day. Equally, the CEO is obliged to ensure that the report is submitted to Council at the earliest practicable meeting of the Council held after the report is received by the CEO.

REPORT

The VEC’s report commences with a summary of the election operational changes and a timeline for Election dates. The VEC report then provides in detail, relevant information covering its management of the election process, including:
Advertising and Communication campaign;
Election Manager and Election Office;
Candidates;
Voting – Ballot Pack preparation, mail-out and replacement; Early Votes; Unenrolled Votes;
Results and Post Election matters.
A copy of the VEC Report is provided as **Attachment 7.3.1**, to this report.

For the benefit of Council, a snapshot of core information comparing the Council Election held in 2020 to the one held in 2024, is summarised below:

Description	2020	2024
Total Number of Candidates	16 (1 Candidate unopposed)	13 (2 Candidates unopposed)
Total Number of Enrolled Voters	11,169	10,886

Overall Voter Turnout	84.40%	81.84%
Informal Voter Rate	4.46%	4.25%

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

The nature of this report does not necessitate any specific consultation or communication initiative to be undertaken.

FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The nature of this report does not have any financial or resource implications.

RISK MANAGEMENT

This report addresses Council's strategic risk:

Legislative compliance - Failure to manage our compliance with relevant legislative requirements by satisfying Regulation 83(3) of the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2020.

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that Council receive and note the VEC's report on its conduct of the Council Election held on Saturday 26 October 2024.

ATTACHMENTS

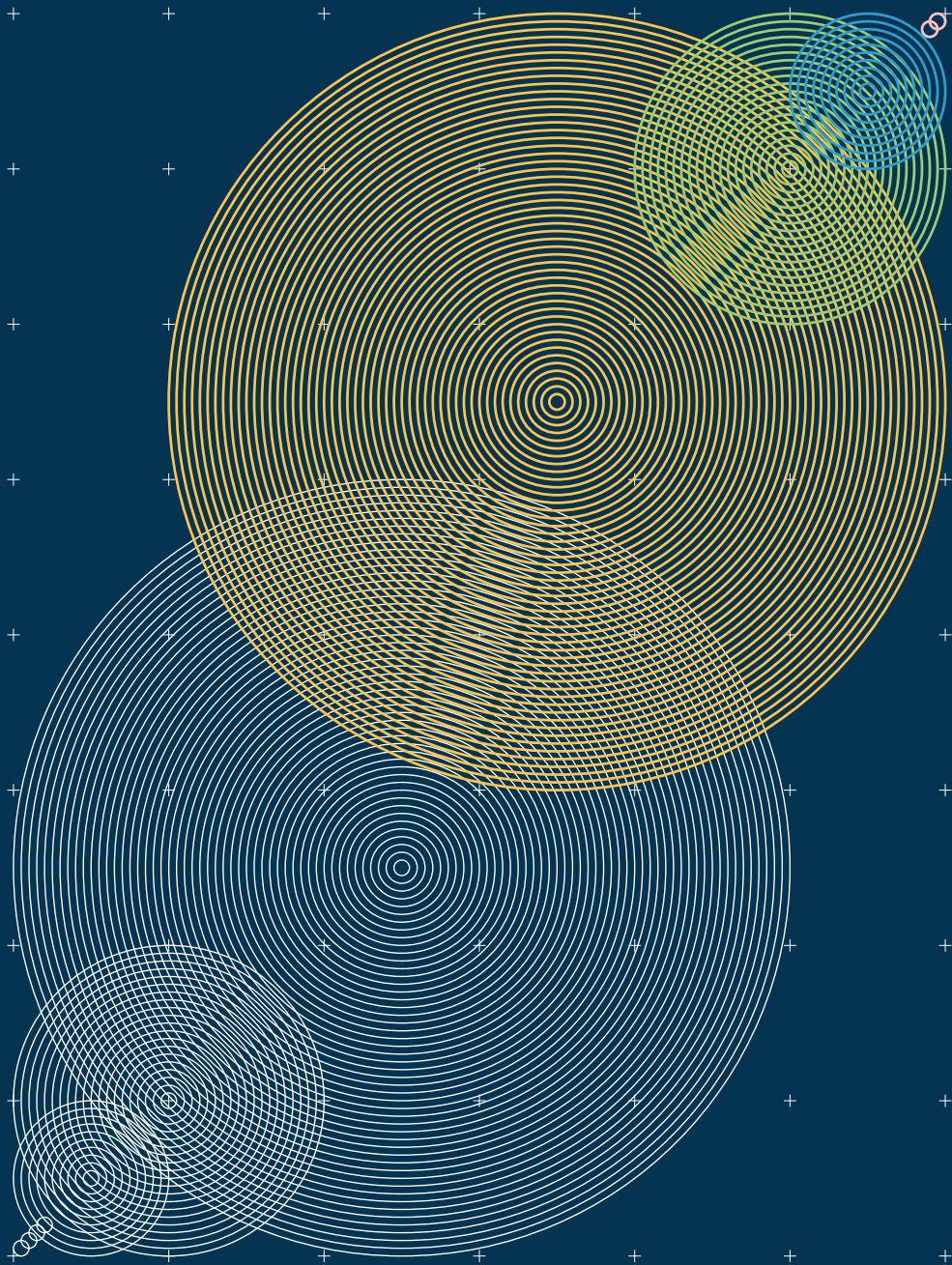
1. VEC Election Report - CGSC (2024 Elections) [7.3.1]

Election report

Central Goldfields Shire Council

2024 Local government elections

April 2025



Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda – 28 May 2025

Letter of Transmittal

14 April 2025

Ms Sally Jones
Interim Chief Executive Officer
Central Goldfields Shire Council
PO Box 194
Maryborough VIC 3465

Dear Ms Jones

Pursuant to Regulation 83 of the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2020, I submit this report to the Chief Executive Officer of Central Goldfields Shire Council on the general election held in October 2024.

Yours sincerely



Sven Bluemmel
Electoral Commissioner

Acknowledgement of Country

The Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of this nation, as the traditional custodians of the lands on which the VEC works and where we conduct our business. We pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past, present, and emerging. The VEC is committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society.

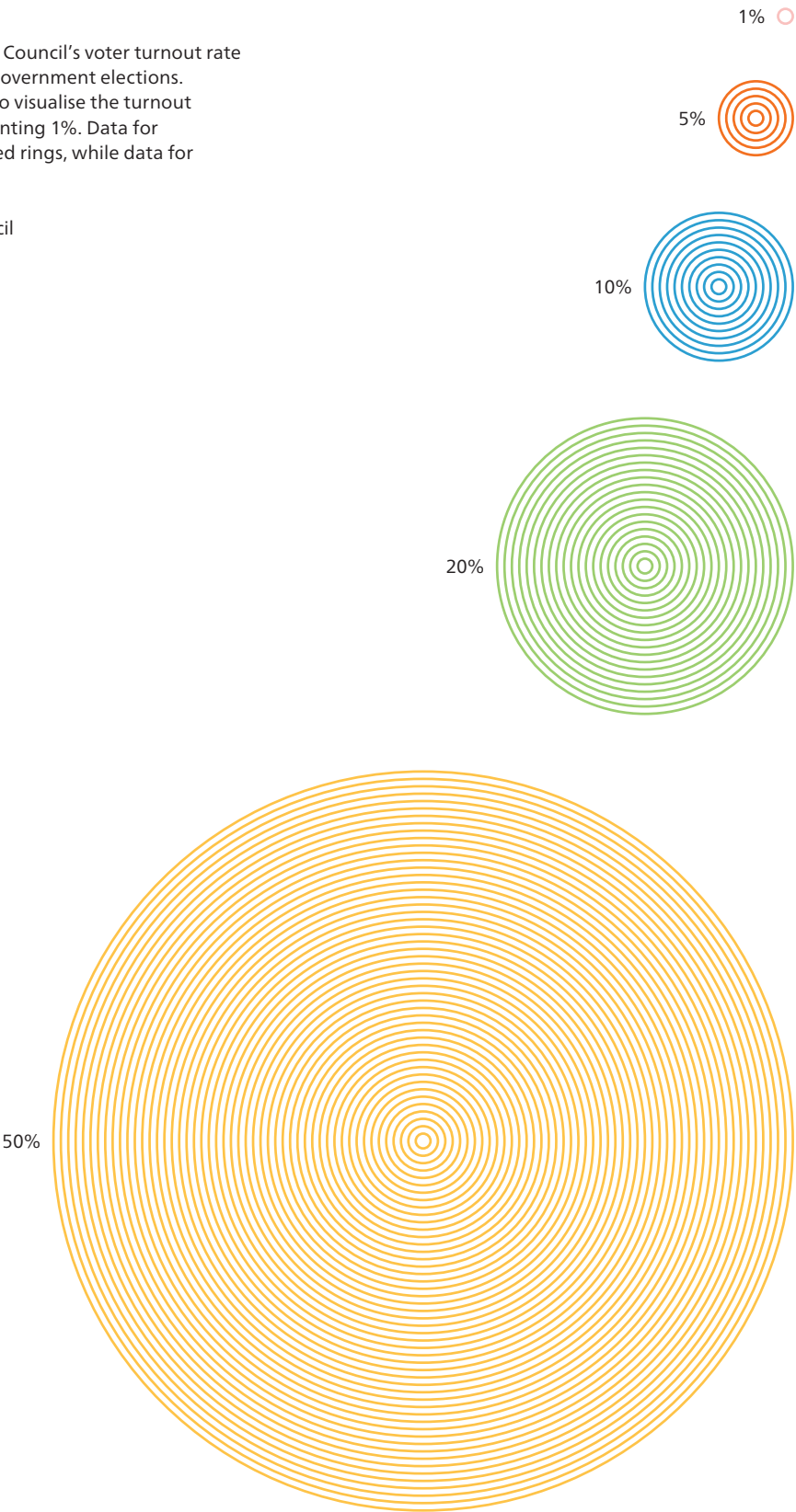
Election report
Central Goldfields Shire Council
2024 Local government elections

Voter turnout (front cover)

Graphic representation of the Council's voter turnout rate for the 2024 and 2020 Local Government elections. Rings are grouped into units to visualise the turnout percentage, each ring representing 1%. Data for 2024 is depicted using coloured rings, while data for 2020 is shown in white.

Central Goldfields Shire Council

Turnout (2024): 81.84%
Turnout (2020): 84.40%



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1. Introduction

The Victorian local government general elections are held every 4 years as set out in the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic) (**LG Act**). In 2024, general elections were held for 78 of the 79 Victorian councils with Saturday 26 October marking election day. In accordance with section 263(1) of the LG Act, the Victorian Electoral Commission (**VEC**) is the statutory election service provider for the conduct of local government elections in Victoria.

This report provides information on the 2024 Central Goldfields Shire Council general election including details of the end-to-end service delivery of electoral activities throughout the election timeline. This report also provides details of post-election activities including compulsory voting enforcement.

About the Victorian Electoral Commission

The VEC is an independent statutory authority established under the *Electoral Act 2002* (Vic) (**Electoral Act**). The VEC's principal functions are to conduct State elections, local government elections, certain statutory elections and polls, commercial and community elections, and to support electoral representation processes for local councils and the Electoral Boundaries Commission for State electoral boundaries. The VEC is also responsible for maintaining the Victorian register of electors and administering political funding and donation disclosure laws. The VEC has a mandated role to conduct electoral research, provide communication and education services, and inform and engage Victorians in the democratic process.

Sven Bluemmel is the appointed Electoral Commissioner and Dana Fleming is the appointed Deputy Electoral Commissioner. The Electoral Commissioner and Deputy Electoral Commissioner report to the Victorian Parliament in relation to the VEC's operations and activities.

The Electoral Commissioner heads the VEC's Executive Management Group that comprises the Deputy Electoral Commissioner, the Executive Director, Corporate Services and 7 Directors, each leading the main functional areas of the VEC. Each Director acts as subject matter experts and oversees legislative responsibilities under the LG Act and the Electoral Act.

The VEC has a dedicated local government election program framework that incorporates a range of programs, projects and activities that are supported through strategic planning, project management, and process mapping. The program is overseen by the VEC's Delivery Group and has sponsorship from the Executive Management Group.

2. Key changes

Changes in legislation

The *Local Government Amendment (Governance and Integrity) Act 2024* (Vic) received royal assent on 25 June 2024 and introduced a number of changes to local government electoral legislation.

The VEC implemented the necessary changes to the 2024 local government election program in response to the reforms as they applied to the elections.

Key changes from *Local Government Amendment (Governance and Integrity) Act 2024*

Close of roll	<p>The date for the close of roll was extended from 57 days to 80 days before the election. For all elections after the October 2024 general elections, including by-elections, the date for the close of roll will be 73 days before election day.</p> <p>The previous timelines were no longer viable due to an increase in the scale and complexity of local government elections, including changes to enrolment entitlements, population growth, higher number of wards, likely increase in the number of candidates, and reduction in mail services offered by Australia Post.</p> <p>By moving this date earlier, other key dates including nomination day, the lodgement date for candidate statements and questionnaires, and the period for mailing out of ballot materials have been brought forward through the <i>Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2020</i> (Vic) (LG Regulations) providing more time to ensure they are sustainable.</p>
Certification of the roll	<p>The timeframe for roll certification was increased to 23 business days (previously 13 business days) to ensure CEOs (or their delegates) and the VEC have adequate time to process enrolment applications and complete related roll certification processes.</p>
Candidate statement word limit	<p>In response to the pandemic, the LG Regulations permitted candidate statements to be increased from 200 to 300 words for the 2020 local government elections, acknowledging that candidates at the 2020 elections would face restrictions in campaigning.</p> <p>As candidates would no longer face pandemic-based barriers to campaigning activities, the word limit was reverted to 200 words. Equivalent amendments were also applied to the <i>City of Melbourne (Electoral) Regulations 2022</i> (Vic).</p> <p>Returning to the original word limit allowed the VEC to produce smaller candidate statement booklets, reducing associated printing costs and administrative burden.</p>
Rejection and amendment of candidate statements	<p>The time allowed for a candidate to amend their statement was reduced by one day to now be the day after the close of nominations (or 38 days before election day). This aligned the periods for rejections and amendments with the earlier deadline for lodging a candidate statement, allowing additional time to print ballot packs.</p>
Close of candidate statements, photos and questionnaires	<p>The deadline for submitting a candidate statement, photograph and questionnaire was amended to close the same day as the close of nominations at 12 noon, facilitating a more efficient process for candidates and allowing the VEC more time to print ballot packs.</p>
Mailout of ballot pack	<p>The timeline for conducting the mailout of ballot materials was extended from occurring over 3 business days to 4 business days, allowing the VEC to manage the risk of mail service level reductions and provide additional safeguards against election fraud.</p>

3. Election dates

Key timelines for the 2024 local government elections	
Deadline fixed by the VEC for council primary enrolment data	Monday 15 July 2024
Close of roll	4 pm Wednesday 7 August 2024
Opening of the election office to the public	Monday 9 September 2024
Certification of the voters' roll and opening of nominations	Monday 9 September 2024
Close of nominations	12 noon Tuesday 17 September 2024
*Deadline for lodging candidate statements, photographs and questionnaires	12 noon Tuesday 17 September 2024
*Ballot draw	From 10 am Wednesday 18 September 2024
*General mail out of ballot packs to voters	Monday 7 October to Thursday 10 October 2024
*Close of voting	6 pm Friday 25 October 2024
Day prescribed as Election Day	Saturday 26 October 2024
*Close of extended postal vote receipt period	12 noon Friday 1 November 2024
Declaration of election results	No later than Friday 15 November 2024

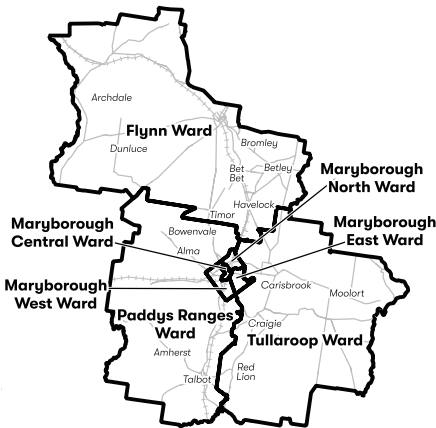
*Dates with asterisks relate to contested elections only.

4. About Central Goldfields Shire Council

Central Goldfields Shire Council is comprised of 7 councillors elected from a subdivided structure.

The electoral structure of Central Goldfields Shire Council was last reviewed in 2023. The electoral structure was confirmed in May 2024 under the new Act.

Figure 1: The electoral structure of Central Goldfields Shire Council at the general election held on 26 October 2024.



5. Voters' roll

The VEC prepared the voters' roll for the election under section 8(2)(c) of the Electoral Act and in accordance with section 249 of the LG Act. The close of roll for the election was 4 pm on Wednesday 7 August 2024. Pursuant to section 249(4) of the LG Act, the VEC certified the voters' roll on Monday 9 September 2024.

At certification, the voters' roll for the 2024 Central Goldfields Shire Council general election included 10,886 enrolled voters.

Composition of the voters' roll

Section 249 of the LG Act specifies that the voters' roll for a local government election is formed by combining 2 separate lists of voters:

1. The Electoral Commissioner's list (EC list) – list of State electors that are enrolled within that local government area.
2. The Chief Executive Officer's list (CEO list) – list of council-entitled voters.

Refer to **Appendix 1** for a breakdown of the Central Goldfields Shire Council general election voters' roll.

Amendments to the voters' roll

In accordance with section 250 of the LG Act, the VEC is able to amend any error or omission in the preparation, printing or copying of the voters' roll, or correct any misnomer or inaccurate description of any person, place or thing on the voters' roll. Amendments to the voters' roll are to be certified by the VEC.

All voters added to the roll were issued with a ballot pack. Where a voter was removed from the roll after the mail-out of ballot material, the VEC had systems in place to ensure that returned ballot papers from the deleted voters could be identified and excluded from the extraction and count. Where roll amendments were required, the total number of voters on the roll was updated.

Following the close of roll, no amendments were required to the council's voters' roll.

6. Advertising and communication campaign

State-wide advertising

The VEC delivered a state-wide advertising campaign to maximise public awareness and participation amongst all eligible voters. Campaign activities and consistent messaging were delivered across 2 phases – enrolment and voting – and through multiple traditional and emerging mediums, including radio, digital and social media, and offline/outdoor advertising.

Public notices

The VEC published a series of public notices on the VEC website throughout the election as required by the LG Act. The notices included critical information relevant to each milestone of the election timeline.

For the 2024 general election, Central Goldfields Shire Council nominated the following newspapers for the public notices:

- › The Carisbrook Mercury
- › The Welcome Record
- › The Maryborough District Advertiser

Refer to **Appendix 2** for further information in relation to the public notices.

VEC website

The VEC provided council specific information regarding the election on its website. The VEC website went live for the local government elections in early July 2024. Whilst some council-specific data remained static during the election, the website was regularly updated with content relevant to the election and at each key milestone such as close of roll, nominations, voting and results.

Media liaison

An online media briefing was held on Monday 29 July 2024. The briefing was made available to view on the VEC website for media representatives unable to join the live event. The media briefing provided an overview of the planning, timeline, legislative changes and other key information for the 2024 local council elections.

Media outlets were provided with a media handbook that outlined the election timeline and key information, and provided the VEC's head office media contacts.

This was made available along with other resources from the VEC's media centre webpage. The VEC's communication team supported each election manager with managing media interest locally in their council area.

The VEC's media liaison program principally featured scheduled state-wide and tailored council-specific media releases aimed at highlighting key milestones during the election and capitalise on existing general news coverage.

More information on the VEC's media release schedule is available at **Appendix 3**.

The media program also involved a responsive media enquiry service, as well as the translation and distribution of 3 key media releases for multiple non-English news outlets in Victoria.

Social media campaign

As part of its state-wide advertising campaign, the VEC used paid promotions on social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok and WeChat, targeting voters through audience segmentation.

This advertising was supported by a defined timeline of organic social media posts on the VEC's channels, designed to cover each of the key messages of the communication campaign to further extend the reach to the community and promote conversation about the democratic process.

VoterAlert advisories

State-enrolled voters can sign up to VoterAlert, our free SMS and email service, to receive reminder messages about elections that affect them. They can subscribe to messages via SMS, email, or both.

During the general election, we used VoterAlert to send direct messages on:

Wednesday 17 to Wednesday 31 July 2024 –

5,155 voters were contacted by VoterAlert messages sent by SMS and/or email reminding voters to enrol or update their details by the close of roll.

Wednesday 25 September to Tuesday 1 October 2024 –

1,499 voters were contacted by VoterAlert messages sent by SMS and/or email advising voters in wards where an election was uncontested that they are not required to vote.

Monday 7 October to Monday 14 October 2024 –

3,693 voters were contacted by VoterAlert messages sent by SMS and/or email advising that we had commenced posting ballot packs.

Tuesday 22 October to Wednesday 23 October 2024 – 1,992 voters were contacted by VoterAlert messages sent by SMS and/or email reminding voters that it was the last week to post their ballot material back to us.

More information on VoterAlert is available at **Appendix 4**.

Voter engagement

The VEC delivered an extensive voter engagement program throughout Victoria, specific to local demographics.

Appendix 5 contains the full list of initiatives for the 2024 local government elections.

Democracy ambassadors

The VEC delivered education sessions conducted by our Democracy Ambassadors to a range of councils. The sessions focused on enrolment and voting for the election. These sessions were offered to councils in priority areas and delivered at no cost to council. Where resourcing allowed, requests for sessions that were not in the priority area were also fulfilled.

The VEC did not deliver any sessions for the Central Goldfields Shire Council election.

Blind and low-vision services

Braille and large print ballot material was available to blind and low-vision voters who registered for these products by 5 pm on Tuesday 17 September 2024.

The election manager did not receive any requests for braille or large print ballot material for the election.

Interpreting services

The VEC engaged the Victorian Interpreting and Language Services' Language Loop to provide a telephone interpreting service for telephone enquiries from voters who had a first language other than English. The VEC advertised direct lines for 20 languages other than English and a general line for all other languages.

Public enquiry service

A centralised contact centre was established to respond to telephone public enquiries. This ensured consistency in messaging, early identification of themes and trends along with the opportunity to enable election offices to focus on election administration. The call centre was also responsible for emails received during the local government elections. Any calls regarding CEO list applications were referred to the relevant councils. Outside the call centre hours of operation, a recorded service was available that provided information on enrolment and voting.

Election offices fielded phone queries from local candidates on issues directly related to their candidacy (as separate to general queries about running as a candidate).

A total of 102 telephone calls were recorded for Central Goldfields Shire Council during the 2024 local government elections. An overall total of 11,758 email queries were received for all councils.

7. Election manager

The VEC maintains a pool of trained senior election officials from across Victoria to fill election management roles for State and local government elections. Election-specific training is provided to senior election officials before they are appointed for each election.

The size of election management teams depends on the size of the council. Under the LG Act, an election manager is appointed to conduct each council's election and is supported by one or more assistant election managers.

In accordance with regulation 21(1) of the LG Regulations, the VEC appointed Angela Ang as the election manager for the 2024 Central Goldfields Shire Council general election.

The appointed assistant election manager was Des Holmes.

8. Election office

The election manager was responsible for establishing and managing the election office at Former Visitor Information Centre, 53 Burns Street, Maryborough. The premises were provided by the Council.

9. Candidates

Nominations opened at 9 am on Monday 9 September and closed at 12 noon on Tuesday 17 September 2024. Candidates were required to lodge their nomination forms in person at the election office. The nomination fee was \$250.

Candidate information

The VEC developed resources to support prospective candidates with the nomination process, including a candidate handbook. From mid-July, candidates could access information about nominating as a candidate for the election. The online Candidate Helper, accessible via the VEC website, went live on Tuesday 20 August 2024. Candidate Helper enabled candidates to complete most of their nomination forms and other forms online before lodging them in person with the election manager.

For the Central Goldfields Shire Council 2024 elections, the VEC's candidate information sessions were delivered in person by the election manager. Additionally, a candidate information video was available on the VEC website from Tuesday 20 August 2024.

Nominations

At the close of nominations, 13 candidates had successfully nominated for the elections, which includes any candidates who retired after the close of nominations. Candidates who withdrew before the close of nominations are not included.

The following is a breakdown of candidate nominations per ward:

- › Flynn Ward - 2 nominations
- › Maryborough Central Ward - 2 nominations
- › Maryborough East Ward - 2 nominations
- › Maryborough North Ward - 2 nominations
- › Maryborough West Ward - one nomination
- › Paddys Ranges Ward - 3 nominations
- › Tullaroop Ward - one nomination

Ballot draws to determine the order of the names on the ballot paper were held at the election office following the close of nominations using the VEC's computerised ballot draw application.

See **Appendix 6** for the list of candidates in ballot draw order.

Candidate statements and photos

In accordance with regulation 39 of the LG Regulations, candidates were able to submit a 200-word statement and a recent photograph for inclusion in the ballot packs sent to voters. The deadline for these items was 12 noon on Tuesday 17 September 2024.

See **Appendix 6.1** for a breakdown of submitted statements and photos and **6.2** for sample ballot material.

Candidate questionnaires

In accordance with regulation 43 of the LG Regulations, candidates could also submit answers to a set of prescribed questions. The election manager accepted questionnaires from 13 of the 13 candidates at the election.

Voters could read the completed questionnaires on the VEC website or access them by contacting the election office.

Uncontested elections

As Maryborough West Ward and Tullaroop Ward were uncontested, an uncontested election leaflet was mailed out to voters in those wards. The VEC mailed out all uncontested ward leaflets between Monday 7 and Thursday 10 October 2024.

See **Appendix 6.3** for the sample version of the uncontested leaflet product and **Appendix 7.1** for a breakdown of the leaflets mailed out on each day during the general mail out.

Retirement of a candidate

In accordance with the LG Regulations, at any time after the close of nominations and before election day, a candidate may retire, or be retired by the VEC. A candidate can only retire if it will result in an uncontested election or if they are not qualified to be a Councillor. If the VEC believes a candidate was not entitled to nominate, it must formally query the candidate's qualification and invite written reasons why they are entitled. If the VEC remains satisfied that the candidate is not entitled, it must retire the candidate from the election.

When a candidate is retired from an election, the VEC is required to take all practicable steps to remove the retired candidate's name from ballot papers. If it is not practicable to do so, during the counting of votes the retired candidate's votes are passed on to other candidates according to voters' preferences.

There were no candidate retirements at the Central Goldfields Shire Council elections.

10. Voting

Ballot pack preparation and redirection

Artwork for ballot papers and candidate statements is generated using the VEC's automation tool. This tool selects from a range of pre-defined artwork templates and populates them with the relevant candidate information directly from the VEC's election management system database.

Following an extensive quality assurance process, print-ready artwork files were securely transmitted directly to the VEC's contracted ballot material printer ready for production. The VEC's contracted mail house directly printed the voters' addresses (mailing and entitlement address) and barcodes on the ballot paper envelopes in preparation for assembly and delivery of ballot packs. The VEC utilised multiple third party providers to assemble the ballot packs prior to the mail house lodging with Australia Post. The mail house allocated a secure area within its operations that was used solely for the printing, insertion, and dispatch of ballot material. This ensured the highest standards of security were met.

Electors could apply to have their ballot material redirected to an address other than their entitlement address. Voters had until the certification day for the voters' roll (also the day that nominations open) to apply for their ballot material to be redirected. The VEC arranged for ballot material to be delivered to any voter applying for redirection to the address specified in their request. For the 2024 local government elections, voters had until Monday 9 September 2024 to submit redirection requests.

The election manager received 8 requests for redirection of ballot packs for the election.

Early votes

Voters could request an early postal ballot envelope (early vote) before the general mail out of ballot packs. The election manager processed requests and issued early votes where the request was assessed as reasonable. Requests for early votes could be processed from Wednesday 18 September 2024, the day after nominations closed, until the start of the general mail out of ballot packs on Monday 7 October 2024.

Due to the timing of early votes, some early voters may not have had access to the candidate statements, photographs or questionnaires.

The election manager issued a total of 5 early votes for the election.

Mail-out of ballot packs

The VEC mailed 7,683 ballot packs between Monday 7 and Thursday 10 October 2024.

See **Appendix 7** for a breakdown of the packs sent on each day of the general mail out. The VEC did not mail ballot packs to voters who passed away between the close of roll and generation of the mail-out file.

This included 8 ballot packs which were redirected to alternative addresses for voters who had applied to redirect their ballot pack by Monday 9 September 2024.

In accordance with regulation 49(3) of the LG Regulations, no more than 35% of ballot packs were mailed or delivered to voters on any one day during the mail-out period. All ballot packs were lodged with Australia Post under the priority paid delivery timetable.

The VEC liaised closely with Australia Post during the mail-out period to confirm that ballot packs had been delivered to voters. Australia Post confirmed all ballot packs had been delivered by Tuesday 15 October 2024.

During the voting period, 149 ballot packs were returned to the election office by Australia Post as return-to-sender mail. In most cases, this was likely due to the addressee no longer residing at the address.

Unenrolled votes

The election manager issued unenrolled votes to people whose names could not be found on the voters' roll but said they were entitled to vote at the election. The unenrolled ballot pack included a declaration for the voter to sign. The election manager assessed the declaration and decided to admit or disallow the vote.

The election manager issued 4 unenrolled votes and following relevant checks, one was admitted to the count.

Replacement ballot packs

Following the general mail out of ballot packs, a voter who claimed that their ballot pack had not been received, or had been lost, spoilt, or destroyed, could apply for a replacement vote by completing an online application form or contacting the public enquiry service.

A centralised team processed applications and mailed replacement ballot packs to the postal address provided. Voters also had the option to attend the election office in the council for which they hold entitlement, to have a replacement vote issued over the counter.

199 replacement ballot packs across all wards during the voting period were issued. Please refer to **Schedule 1** for further information on replacement ballot packs issued.

11. Return of ballot paper envelopes

VEC provided voters with a priority reply paid envelope to return their completed ballot paper and ballot paper envelope. The return mail was delivered to the election office from local postal facilities or mail distribution centres. Voters could also put their ballot papers and envelope in a ballot box at the election office.

As ballot paper envelopes were returned, they were progressively checked by the election manager to ensure they had been signed by the voter. Additionally, processes were in place to ensure that only one returned ballot paper from any one voter could proceed to the extraction and count.

The election manager received a total of 5,871 returned ballot paper envelopes across all wards by the close of voting at 6 pm on Friday 25 October 2024.

In accordance with regulation 57(3) of the LG Regulations, the election manager could accept returned ballot paper envelopes until 12 noon on the Friday following the close of voting, if they thought the voter had signed the envelope before voting closed.

The election manager accepted 596 ballot paper envelopes across all wards during the extended postal vote receipt period.

The total returned ballot paper envelopes for Central Goldfields Shire Council was 6,467.

The election manager set aside 159 returned ballot paper envelopes that were not admitted to the extraction and counting process due to the voter not having signed the declaration envelope or, in the case of unenrolled declaration votes, an entitlement was not found for the person, or the declaration envelope was not returned with the vote.

Refer to **Schedule 1** for the total certified record of ballot papers and declaration envelopes across all wards for Central Goldfields Shire Council.

12. Results

Extraction

The extraction process involved separating the declaration flaps containing voters' details from each admitted ballot paper envelope, and then extracting the ballot papers from the envelopes. This 2-stage process maintains anonymity and ensures the VEC can track the number of envelopes for ongoing reconciliation.

A total of 6,308 ballot paper envelopes were admitted to the extraction process.

Ballot papers were extracted at Central Goldfields Shire Council Community Hub, 48 Burns Street, Maryborough and the election office from Tuesday 29 October 2024. The extraction of all admitted ballot paper envelopes was completed on Wednesday 6 November 2024, following the close of the extended postal vote receipt period.

If the VEC found any returned ballot paper envelopes that did not contain a ballot paper, contained more than one ballot paper, or did not contain the correct ballot paper, these were required to be rejected and not counted. There were 20 returned ballot paper envelopes rejected during the extraction activity.

Following the extraction of ballot papers from the ballot paper envelopes, a total of 6,288 ballot papers proceeded to the count.

Manual count

After extraction, the VEC counted ballot papers for 5 contested wards manually at the election office using the preferential method of counting.

Ballot papers for Flynn Ward, Maryborough Central Ward, Maryborough East Ward, Maryborough North Ward and Paddys Ranges Ward were counted manually using the preferential method.

The ballot papers were sorted to first preference votes for each candidate and to informal votes. At this point, the VEC counted the ballot paper votes sorted to first preferences.

If a candidate had not achieved an absolute majority of votes (>50%) on first preference votes, the VEC conducted a preference distribution. A preference distribution was required for Paddys Ranges Ward.

The VEC published provisional results on its website as they became available. Results were updated as finalised once declarations had taken place.

For a breakdown of first preference results by ward, refer to **Appendix 8**.

Recounts

At any time before a candidate is declared elected, the election manager or a candidate may initiate a recount. Election managers initiate recounts if margins in a preference distribution are close or critical. Candidates must ask for a recount in writing, with the reasons for their request. The election manager and head office staff assess candidate recount requests and either accept or deny them.

The election manager did not receive any requests for a recount following the count.

Scrutineers

Scrutineers help deliver fair and transparent elections by observing election activities. They contribute to electoral integrity and help build public trust. Scrutineers can observe all activities involved in ballot paper and envelope processing.

Candidates are not permitted in election venues during extraction and counting activities and instead appoint scrutineers. Each candidate could appoint one scrutineer per election official involved in an activity. To appoint scrutineers, candidates completed a hardcopy 'Appointment and declaration of scrutineer form', which the candidate signed and submitted to the election manager. All scrutineers then had to sign the form's formal declaration in front of an election official. The declaration meant the scrutineers committed to eligibility and legal requirements and the VEC's conditions of entry.

A *Scrutineer handbook* was made available to all candidates and scrutineers with information on the role and responsibility of scrutineers during election activities. It included overviews of the activities so that scrutineers could understand what to expect during election activities they may attend. When scrutineers attended election venues they were briefed on their responsibilities and the processes they would witness. Scrutineers were instructed when and how they could challenge activities when ballot paper formality was being decided and votes were being counted. Scrutineers were allowed to notify election managers if they disagreed with the decision made by an election official on ballot paper formality or whether votes were counted for the selected candidate. Election managers reviewed the challenge and made a final decision on the ballot paper.

Declaration of results

In the Service Plan, the VEC committed to complete all results declarations by Friday 15 November 2024.

The results of the 2024 Central Goldfields Shire Council general election were declared at 3 pm on Friday 8 November 2024 at Central Goldfields Shire Council, Community Hub, 48 Burns Street, Maryborough for all wards.

The VEC website was updated following the declaration to reflect the elected candidates.

13. Election statistics

Participation

Participation is measured by the number of voters marked off the roll as a percentage of the total enrolment and can vary from turnout. The overall participation rate in the Central Goldfields Shire Council election was 83.39%, which is lower than the state average of 83.79% (excluding Melbourne City Council) and lower than the 86.43% rate at the 2020 Central Goldfields Shire Council general election.

Analysis of voter participation for the different enrolment categories shows that participation is lower for voters who are enrolled on the EC's list (83.30%) compared to voters enrolled on the CEO's list (90.29%).

Refer to **Appendix 9** for further information on participation, including a breakdown by enrolment category.

Turnout

Voter turnout is measured by the number of formal and informal ballot papers counted in the election as a percentage of voters on the voters' roll for the election.

The overall voter turnout for the 2024 Central Goldfields Shire Council general election was 81.84%. This is compared to the state average turnout of 81.46% (excluding Melbourne City Council). The voter turnout at the 2020 general election for the council was 84.40%.

Informality

The overall informal voting rate recorded at the 2024 Central Goldfields Shire Council general election was 4.25%, compared with the State average of 3.47%. An informality rate of 4.46% was recorded at the Central Goldfields Shire Council general election held in October 2020.

14. Complaints

Type of complaints

At local government elections, complaints generally fall into 2 broad categories:

1. Election Administration

Complaints about the conduct of the election and services to voters.

2. Election participation and conduct

Complaints about candidates and other participants in the election, at times alleging a breach of the LG Act or local laws.

Most complaints at the 2024 local government elections related to the second category, and often alleged inappropriate or illegal action by a person or group associated with the election.

Complaints process

The VEC have a streamlined complaints process during elections, developed with local councils and enforcement agencies. Complaints must be lodged in writing, then processed at head office. For the 2024 local government elections, customers could provide feedback and complaints online.

Complaints alleging a breach of the LG Act are forwarded to the Local Government Inspectorate. Complaints relating to local laws are referred to council. Complaints about the VEC's services, or the behaviour or actions of VEC staff and election officials, are the responsibility of the VEC.

The VEC is committed to responding to each complaint within 5 working days.

Complaints received

The VEC received 6 written complaints relating to the election for Central Goldfields Shire Council.

Please see **Appendix 10** for a description of complaints received by the VEC.

15. Post-election activities

Storage of election material

The VEC will keep all records from the election safely and secretly in accordance with regulation 79 of the LG Regulations.

Refund of nomination fees

Nomination fees were refunded to eligible candidates on Tuesday 17 December 2024. Eligible candidates include those elected or who received at least 4% of the first preference vote. Any forfeited nomination fees were remitted to the council on Tuesday 17 December 2024.

Courts and tribunals

The Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) is responsible for hearing disputes on the validity of an election under section 311 of the LG Act.

Applications for a review of the declaration of the results of an election must be lodged within 14 days of the declaration and can be made by a candidate in the election, 10 persons who were entitled to vote at the election, or the VEC.

There were no applications to VCAT disputing the result of the Central Goldfields Shire Council general election.

16. Non-voter follow up

In accordance with section 267 of the LG Act, the VEC has commenced its compulsory voting enforcement program. Any person who was required to vote at the election and failed to vote will be issued with an 'Apparent failure to vote' notice in February/March. Apparent non-voters have 28 days to respond.

People who do not respond to the notice, or do not provide a satisfactory response, may be issued with an infringement notice in April/May that will incur a penalty. Further follow-up with a penalty reminder notice in July may also occur – this stage includes the original penalty and a penalty reminder notice fee. Penalties collected on behalf of council will be reimbursed at the end of the infringement and reminder notice stages.

Additionally, during the infringement and penalty reminder notice stages, non-voters may ask for their matter to proceed directly to the Magistrates' Court.

These requests will be actioned at the conclusion of the infringement and penalty reminder notice stages. The VEC will lodge the file of any remaining non-voters with Fines Victoria at the end of the penalty reminder notice stage.

17. Evaluating VEC services

The VEC is committed to providing high quality election services to its local government clients. Through a formal feedback and debriefing program, the VEC can gauge its performance and seek advice for future local government election projects.

Feedback from councils

The VEC invited feedback from councils on its services in December 2024 and acknowledges the receipt of feedback provided by Central Goldfields Shire Council. Additional feedback can be provided to the LG2024 Program Manager by emailing LGProgram2024@vec.vic.gov.au

Internal debriefing program

After every electoral event, the VEC conducts an internal debriefing program that includes input from all areas of its workforce. Internal debriefing following the local government elections began in December 2024. The VEC will publish a consolidated report on its performance and key statistics from the elections. This will be tabled in Parliament and available on the VEC website.

Appendices

Schedule 1: Record of ballot papers and declaration envelopes

Flynn Ward election	
Ballot papers printed	
Victorian Electoral Commission	2,000
Election manager	7
Total	2,007
Ballot papers issued	
General mail out	1,498
Early and replacement votes	28
Unenrolled declaration votes	1
Spoilt	0
Sub total	1,527
Unused	480
Total	2,007
Declarations returned	
General mail out admitted to the extraction	1,217
Early and replacement votes admitted to the extraction	24
Unenrolled declaration votes admitted to the extraction	0
Returned declarations unable to be admitted to the extraction	33
Declarations returned to sender	31
Sub total	1,305
Declarations not returned	222
Total	1,527

Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda – 28 May 2025

Schedule 1: Record of ballot papers and declaration envelopes

Central Goldfields Shire Council

Maryborough Central Ward election	
Ballot papers printed	
Victorian Electoral Commission	3,000
Election manager	6
Total	3,006
Ballot papers issued	
General mail out	1,617
Early and replacement votes	44
Unenrolled declaration votes	1
Spoilt	0
Sub total	1,662
Unused	1,344
Total	3,006
Declarations returned	
General mail out admitted to the extraction	1,310
Early and replacement votes admitted to the extraction	31
Unenrolled declaration votes admitted to the extraction	1
Returned declarations unable to be admitted to the extraction	21
Declarations returned to sender	30
Sub total	1,393
Declarations not returned	269
Total	1,662

Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda – 28 May 2025

Central Goldfields Shire Council

Schedule 1: Record of ballot papers and declaration envelopes

Maryborough East Ward election	
Ballot papers printed	
Victorian Electoral Commission	2,000
Election manager	5
Total	2,005
Ballot papers issued	
General mail out	1,538
Early and replacement votes	38
Unenrolled declaration votes	0
Spoilt	0
Sub total	1,576
Unused	429
Total	2,005
Declarations returned	
General mail out admitted to the extraction	1,152
Early and replacement votes admitted to the extraction	29
Unenrolled declaration votes admitted to the extraction	0
Returned declarations unable to be admitted to the extraction	44
Declarations returned to sender	28
Sub total	1,253
Declarations not returned	323
Total	1,576

Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda – 28 May 2025

Schedule 1: Record of ballot papers and declaration envelopes

Central Goldfields Shire Council

Maryborough North Ward election	
Ballot papers printed	
Victorian Electoral Commission	2,000
Election manager	5
Total	2,005
Ballot papers issued	
General mail out	1,564
Early and replacement votes	38
Unenrolled declaration votes	2
Spoilt	0
Sub total	1,604
Unused	401
Total	2,005
Declarations returned	
General mail out admitted to the extraction	1,289
Early and replacement votes admitted to the extraction	31
Unenrolled declaration votes admitted to the extraction	0
Returned declarations unable to be admitted to the extraction	30
Declarations returned to sender	34
Sub total	1,384
Declarations not returned	220
Total	1,604

Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda – 28 May 2025

Central Goldfields Shire Council

Schedule 1: Record of ballot papers and declaration envelopes

Paddys Ranges Ward election	
Ballot papers printed	
Victorian Electoral Commission	2,000
Election manager	5
Total	2,005
Ballot papers issued	
General mail out	1,466
Early and replacement votes	56
Unenrolled declaration votes	0
Spoilt	0
Sub total	1,522
Unused	483
Total	2,005
Declarations returned	
General mail out admitted to the extraction	1,187
Early and replacement votes admitted to the extraction	37
Unenrolled declaration votes admitted to the extraction	0
Returned declarations unable to be admitted to the extraction	31
Declarations returned to sender	26
Sub total	1,281
Declarations not returned	241
Total	1,522

Schedule 2:
Certification statement

In accordance with Regulation 77, I certify that Schedule 1 of this report on the conduct of the 2024 Central Goldfields Shire Council local government election is a true and correct account of the number of ballot papers issued, returned and not used in this election and declarations not returned.



Sven Bluemmel
Electoral Commissioner

Appendix 1: Breakdown of the voters' roll

Central Goldfields Shire Council election	Voters enrolled through an entitlement under section 241 of the LG Act	Voters enrolled through entitlements under sections 242–245 of the LG Act	Total voters enrolled
Central Goldfields Shire Council	10,754	132	10,886
Flynn Ward	1,460	38	1,498
Maryborough Central Ward	1,605	12	1,617
Maryborough East Ward	1,522	16	1,538
Maryborough North Ward	1,556	8	1,564
Maryborough West Ward	1,635	9	1,644
Paddys Ranges Ward	1,437	29	1,466
Tullaroop Ward	1,539	20	1,559

Appendix 2: Public notices

Schedule of public notices

Close of roll notice

VEC website/public notices	23 July 2024
The Carisbrook Mercury	25 July 2024
The Welcome Record	6 August 2024
The Maryborough District Advertiser	26 July 2024

Notice of election

VEC website/public notices	12 August 2024
The Carisbrook Mercury	15 August 2024
The Welcome Record	14 August 2024
The Maryborough District Advertiser	13 August 2024

Voting details notice

VEC website/public notices	20 September 2024
The Carisbrook Mercury	3 October 2024
The Welcome Record	2 October 2024
The Maryborough District Advertiser	4 October 2024

Reminder notice

VEC website	13 October 2024
The Carisbrook Mercury	17 October 2024
The Welcome Record	16 October 2024

Reminder notice	
The Maryborough District Advertiser	18 October 2024
Notice of result	
VEC website/public notices	8 November 2024
The Carisbrook Mercury	21 November 2024
The Welcome Record	20 November 2024
The Maryborough District Advertiser	22 November 2024

Close of roll

Notice of election

Sample Council postal election

My council, my vote

Vote by post this October

Ballot packs will be mailed to voters enrolled in the Sample Council general election from Monday 7 October. Complete and return your ballot material ASAP. Ballot material must be in the mail or delivered to the election manager by **6 pm on Friday 25 October**.

If you will be away

If you will be away when ballot packs are mailed, or your address has changed since Wednesday 7 August, you can request for your ballot pack to be redirected by completing the online redirection form at vec.vic.gov.au/redirections, or call 131 832.

Requests for redirection must be received by 5 pm on Monday 9 September.

Large print and braille ballot papers

Large print or braille ballot papers are available for voters who are blind or have low vision—please register by 5 pm Tuesday 10 September. To register, call 03 8620 1314 during business hours.

Early votes

If you will be away during the voting period (7–25 October), you can go to your local election office to vote in person, from 10 am on Wednesday 18 September.

The Sample Council election office is at:

Sample election office address

How to nominate as a candidate

To nominate as a candidate, you must:

- be an Australian citizen and enrolled on the voters roll for Sample Council AND
- be eligible to become a councillor should you be elected AND
- have completed the mandatory candidate training before lodging your nomination with the election manager.

To nominate, complete the nomination form and lodge it with the election manager together with the \$250 nomination fee. Nomination forms can be lodged by appointment during business hours from Monday 9 September until 12 noon on Tuesday 17 September at the election office.

Visit vec.vic.gov.au for more information and to pre-complete your nomination form using the online Candidate Helper. The online Candidate Helper will be available from Tuesday 20 August.

If you use the online Candidate Helper, print your pre-completed form and make an appointment to lodge it with the election manager along with the nomination fee.

Call the election manager from Monday 9 September on 131 832 to make a nomination appointment.

Nominations close 12 noon Tuesday 17 September.

Sample Council logo

Candidate information session

Sample time sample date at sample venue name, sample address

Candidate information kits containing nomination forms and other electoral information will be available online and from the election manager.

State-enrolled voters can register for free VoterAlert SMS and email reminders at vec.vic.gov.au

For enquiries in languages other than English:
العربية (Arabic) 8200 0150 • বাংলা (Bangla) 8200 0160 • Бирма (Burmese) 8200 0161 • 普通话 (Mandarin) 8200 0166 • 廣東話 (Cantonese) 8200 0121 • Hrvatski (Croatian) 8200 0162 • हिन्दी (Hindi) 8200 0163 • తెలుగు (Telugu) 8200 0119 •
Ελληνικά (Greek) 8200 0150 • Հայերեն (Armenian) 8200 0164 • Italiano (Italian) 8200 0154 • ಕನ್ನಡ (Kannada) 8200 0150 • 한국어 (Korean) 8200 0154 • македонски (Macedonian) 8200 0165 • नेपाली (Nepali) 8200 0163 • پارسی (Persian) 8200 0150 •
മലയാളം (Malayalam) 8200 0154 • தமிழ் (Tamil) 8200 0150 • ไทย (Thai) 8200 0165 • Tiếng Việt (Vietnamese) 8200 0111 • All other non-English languages 8200 0112
[@elections](http://vec.vic.gov.au/131-832) 131 832 Authorised by S. Baume, Electoral Commissioner, 520 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria.

VEC Victorian
Electoral
Commission

Voting details notice

Sample Council postal election

My council, my vote

An election will be held for Sample Council.

Check the mail for your ballot pack

Ballot packs containing voting material will be mailed to enrolled voters from **Monday 7 October**.

This is a postal election only.

If you do not receive your ballot pack by **Tuesday 15 October** please visit **vec.vic.gov.au** to complete the online replacement form, or call **131 832** to arrange a replacement.

Candidates

Candidates who have nominated for election are listed in the ballot packs and at **vec.vic.gov.au**.

A photo and candidate statement will also be included if provided by candidates. Responses to a candidate questionnaire, if provided, are available at **vec.vic.gov.au**.

How to vote correctly

You must complete your ballot paper correctly for your vote to count. Put the number **1** in the box next to the candidate you want to see elected, then number all the other boxes in order of your choice. You must number **every box** and only use each number once.

vec.vic.gov.au | 131 832

For enquiries in languages other than English:
* Arabic (Arabic) 9209 0100 * Azərbaycanca (Azerbaijani) 9209 0160 * বাংলা (Burmese) 9209 0161 * 普通话 (Mandarin) 9209 0106 * 廣東話 (Cantonese) 9209 0101
* Hrvatski (Croatian) 9209 0102 * דרוז (Dru) 9209 0193 * ไทย (Thai) 9209 0119 * Ελληνικά (Greek) 9209 0103 * Հայերեն (Armenian) 9209 0162 * Italiano (Italian) 9209 0104
* Kinyarwanda (Kinyarwanda) 9209 0105 * 한국어 (Korean) 9209 0194 * македонски (Macedonian) 9209 0105 * नेपाली (Nepali) 9209 0163 * ភាសាខ្មែរ (Khmer) 9209 0164
* Türkçe (Turkish) 9209 0110 * اردو (Urdu) 9209 0165 * Tiếng Việt (Vietnamese) 9209 0111 * All other non-English languages 9209 0102

Authorised by S. Bluemel, Electoral Commissioner, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria.

Sample Council logo

How to return your ballot pack

Put your completed ballot paper in the ballot paper envelope, complete the declaration, then post it ASAP using the reply-paid envelope provided, or hand deliver it during election office hours to:

Sample election office address

Voting is compulsory

Voting is compulsory for all voters who were enrolled at 4 pm on Wednesday 7 August. This includes state-enrolled and council-enrolled voters.

If you don't vote and don't have a valid excuse, you may be fined.

Your completed ballot pack must be in the mail or hand delivered by **6 pm Friday 25 October**.

State-enrolled voters can register for free VoterAlert SMS and email reminders at **vec.vic.gov.au**

Reminder notice

Sample Council postal election

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vec.vic.gov.au | 131 832

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* Hrvatski (Croatian) 9209 0102 * דרוז (Dru) 9209 0193 * ไทย (Thai) 9209 0119 * Ελληνικά (Greek) 9209 0103 * Հայերեն (Armenian) 9209 0162 * Italiano (Italian) 9209 0104
* Kinyarwanda (Kinyarwanda) 9209 0105 * 한국어 (Korean) 9209 0194 * македонски (Macedonian) 9209 0105 * नेपाली (Nepali) 9209 0163 * ភាសាខ្មែរ (Khmer) 9209 0164
* Türkçe (Turkish) 9209 0110 * اردو (Urdu) 9209 0165 * Tiếng Việt (Vietnamese) 9209 0111 * All other non-English languages 9209 0102

Authorised by S. Bluemel, Electoral Commissioner, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria.

Sample Council logo

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State-enrolled voters can register for free VoterAlert SMS and email reminders at **vec.vic.gov.au**

Declaration of results

Sample Council election

Declaration of results

Sample Council logo

The following candidates were elected to Sample Council at the general election held in October 2024:

Sample Ward 1	Sample elected candidate 4	Sample Ward 8
Sample elected candidate 1	Sample Ward 5	Sample elected candidate 8
Sample Ward 2	Sample elected candidate 5	Sample Ward 9
Sample elected candidate 2	Sample Ward 6	Sample elected candidate 9
Sample Ward 3	Sample elected candidate 6	
Sample elected candidate 3	Sample Ward 7	
Sample Ward 4	Sample elected candidate 7	




Further details about the results are available at [vec.vic.gov.au](#)

Sample Election Manager name


Election Manager

Sample declaration date

vec.vic.gov.au | 131 832 | @electionsvic

Authorised by S. Blumel, Electoral Commissioner, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria.

 Victorian Electoral Commission

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Victorian Electoral Commission

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Appendix 3: Schedule of media releases and advisories

Central Goldfields Shire Council council-specific media releases and advisories

Enrol now for the Central Goldfields Shire Council election	Monday 29 July 2024
Call for candidates for Central Goldfields Shire Council election	Thursday 22 August 2024
Ballot packs mailed for Central Goldfields Shire Council election	Monday 7 October 2024
Voting closes soon for Central Goldfields Shire Council election	Tuesday 15 October 2024
New councillors for Central Goldfields Shire Council	Friday 8 November 2024

Statewide media releases and advisories

Victorians urged to enrol for upcoming local council elections	Monday 22 July 2024
Media advisory: 2024 local council elections briefing	Monday 22 July 2024
Last chance to enrol for Victorian council elections	Friday 2 August 2024
News alert: Enrolment closes tomorrow for October's council local elections	Tuesday 6 August 2024
Nominations open soon for Victorian local council elections	Monday 26 August 2024
Media advisory: Accessing candidate information for the 2024 Victorian local council elections	Friday 6 September 2024
Nominations for the 2024 Victorian local council elections now open	Monday 9 September 2024
Over 4.6 million enrolled for local council elections	Tuesday 10 September 2024
Time is running out to nominate for this year's local council elections	Monday 16 September 2024
Electoral Commissioner calls for transparency in the use of AI in upcoming local council elections	Tuesday 17 September 2024
Media advisory: Media attendance at local council election ballot draw	Tuesday 17 September 2024
Nominations are in for October local council elections	Wednesday 18 September 2024
Democracy ambassadors help community voices 'Be Heard'	Thursday 19 September 2024
VEC retires 16 local council election candidates	Monday 30 September 2024
Voting starts next week for Victoria's local council elections	Friday 4 October 2024

Statewide media releases and advisories

Police investigate break-in at the Ballarat election office	Thursday 10 October 2024
Voters urged to request a replacement ballot pack following van theft	Friday 18 October 2024
Local council elections voting deadline looms	Monday 21 October 2024
Voters urged to request a replacement ballot pack following theft	Thursday 24 October 2024
Final day of voting	Friday 25 October 2024
Media advisory: Results timelines for Victorian local council elections	Friday 25 October 2024
Media advisory: Media attendance at results declarations	Wednesday 6 November 2024
Suspected postal vote tampering in 2 local council elections referred for inquiry	Wednesday 13 November 2024
Didn't vote in the 2024 local council elections?	Monday 17 February 2025
Non-voters asked to explain why they didn't vote in the 2024 local council elections	Friday 7 March 2025
Infringements sent to 2024 local council election non-voters	Scheduled for Monday 14 April 2025
Act on penalty reminder notice or risk enforcement action	Scheduled for Thursday 1 July 2025

Appendix 4: VoterAlert advisories

Appendix 4.1: SMS alerts

Close of roll – sent from Wednesday 17 July to Wednesday 31 July 2024

VoterAlert: Vic council elections will be held by post this Oct. Make sure your details are correct before 4pm Wed 7 Aug. More info <https://vec.vic.gov.au/LG24>. If you'd rather not open links in this message, look up the VEC website or call 131 832 to check. Unsubscribe <https://vec.vic.gov.au/voteralert>

Reminder close of voting – sent from Tuesday 22 October to Wednesday 23 October 2024

VoterAlert: return your council election ballot pack by 6pm Fri Oct 25. If your ballot pack hasn't arrived, find out how to get a replacement at <https://vec.vic.gov.au/LG24>. Ignore if you've already voted or asked for a replacement. If you'd rather not visit links in this message, look up the VEC website or call 131 832. Unsubscribe: <https://vec.vic.gov.au/voteralert>

Uncontested election – sent from Wednesday 25 September to Tuesday 1 October 2024

VoterAlert: the election in your area is uncontested, as only one person nominated per vacancy. You do not need to vote. More info: <https://vec.vic.gov.au/LG24>. If you'd rather not visit links in this message, look up the VEC website or call 131 832. Unsubscribe: <https://vec.vic.gov.au/voteralert>

Mail-out of ballot packs – sent from Monday 7 October to Monday 14 October 2024


VoterAlert: ballot packs for the local council elections are on their way, arriving by 15 Oct. Complete and return before 6pm on Fri 25 Oct. For more info visit <https://vec.vic.gov.au/LG24>, look up the VEC website or call 131 832. Unsubscribe: <https://vec.vic.gov.au/voteralert>

Appendix 4.2: Email alerts

Close of roll email

Do not reply to this email. Replies go to an unmonitored inbox. Contact us with any questions.

VoterAlert

 Victorian Electoral Commission

Hi

Victorian local council elections are being held by post this October. You must be correctly enrolled by **4 pm on Wednesday 7 August**.

What you need to do

Not sure if your enrolment details are up to date? You can check online at vec.vic.gov.au/enrolment

If you've changed your address or name since you last voted in an election, you should update your details. Please also check the postal address listed on your enrolment, as this is where we will send your ballot pack.

CHECK MY DETAILS

If your details **haven't changed** since the last time you voted, get ready to vote. All voting in this election is by post. We will start posting ballot packs out from Monday 7 October.

The full list of candidates will be available on our website from 12 noon on Tuesday 17 September.

[Find out more about your council election.](#)

Voting is compulsory – don't risk a fine.

If you own properties in more than one Victorian council

Some people are eligible to enrol in more than one council. If you own or pay rates on a property in a Victorian council other than where you normally live, you can apply to enrol with that council. This is known as council enrolment.

Contact the council directly for more information about council enrolment.

[Find out more about council enrolment.](#)

You **must** vote for all councils you are enrolled in.

Electoral structure changes

Over half of Victoria's local councils have new electoral structures or have changed internal ward boundaries. You may be voting in a new ward this October.

You can check your council's ward boundaries on our [interactive map](#).

Information in your language

You can find election information in 20 languages other than English on our website.

[Find in-language information.](#)

Security

If you would rather not click any links in this email, all this information and more is on our website at vec.vic.gov.au. You can also hover over links to confirm they go to a [vic.gov.au](https://vec.vic.gov.au) website before you click them.

Be aware of scams: all emails we send you will have 'Victorian Electoral Commission <voteralert@info.vec.vic.gov.au>' as the sender. We will never ask you to enter credit card details or make payments through a website.

More information




Visit vec.vic.gov.au or call us on [131 832](tel:131832) between 8:30 am and 5 pm Monday to Friday.

Authorised by S. Bluemel, Electoral Commissioner, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria.

Our mailing address is:
Level 11, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

This message was sent to you by the Victorian Electoral Commission because your contact details are listed on the Victorian electoral roll. Responses are not monitored.

UNSUBSCRIBE


  

[VEC website](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Legal](#)

Uncontested election email

Do not reply to this email. Replies go to an unmonitored inbox. Contact us with any questions.

VoterAlert

 Victorian Electoral Commission

Hi

The . Ward election is uncontested as there were the same number of candidates as vacancies at the close of nominations.

You are not required to vote this October.

If you own properties in any other Victorian councils

You will still get a ballot pack for any other councils you are enrolled in. Please complete and return all ballot packs you receive before **6 pm on Friday 25 October**.

If you don't vote you may risk a fine.

Check your enrolment online or contact the council directly to check your enrolment details.

Check my enrolment

Security

If you would rather not click any links in this email, all this information and more is on our website at vec.vic.gov.au. You can hover your mouse over links to make sure they go to a [vic.gov.au](https://vec.vic.gov.au) website before you click them.

Be aware of scams: all emails we send you will have 'Victorian Electoral Commission <voteralert@info.vec.vic.gov.au>' as the sender. We will never ask you to enter credit card details or make payments through a website.

More information




For more information visit vec.vic.gov.au or call us on [131 832](tel:131832) between 8:30 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday.

Authorised by S. Bluemel, Electoral Commissioner, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria.

Our mailing address is:
Level 11, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

This message was sent to you by the Victorian Electoral Commission because your contact details are listed on the Victorian electoral roll. Responses are not monitored.

UNSUBSCRIBE

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Victorian Electoral Commission

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Ballot pack mail-out email

Do not reply to this email. Replies go to an unmonitored inbox. Contact us with any questions.

VoterAlert

 Victorian Electoral Commission

Hi

You are enrolled to vote in the 2024 local council elections.

Your vote matters. Local council elections are your chance to vote on who represents you on the local community issues that you care about.

How to vote

Voting in these elections is by **post**.

We have started posting ballot packs to all enrolled voters. They will arrive by **Tuesday 15 October**.

Please follow the instructions in your ballot pack to complete your vote and mail it back to us as soon as possible.

If you're unsure, you can learn [how to fill out a ballot paper](#) on our website.

Voting closes at **6 pm on Friday 25 October**, but your local mail collection times may be earlier than this. We recommend you return your completed vote as soon as possible.

You can also drop your vote off at your local election office.

If you don't get a ballot pack

Ballot packs are in the mail and will arrive by **Tuesday 15 October**.

If you don't get a ballot pack by then, you can ask us to send you a replacement by calling [131 832](tel:131832) between 8:30 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday.

Moved house or away from your address

If you are away from your mailing address you can request a replacement ballot pack. You can:

- call us on [131 832](tel:131832) between 8:30 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday
- visit the election office of your **old address** to get a replacement on the spot. If you will be away during the election, you can fill in your vote there and return it straight away.

Find my election office

Find candidates

Information about candidates, including statements and candidate questionnaire responses are on our website.

Find candidates

Information in your language

Our website has information in more than 20 languages. There are also videos explaining how to vote in 10 different languages.

Find information in your language

Security

If you would rather not click any links in this email, all this information and more is on our website: vec.vic.gov.au. You can hover your mouse over links to confirm they go to a vic.gov.au website before you click them.

Be aware of scams: all emails we send you will have 'Victorian Electoral Commission <voteralert@info.vec.vic.gov.au>' as the sender. We will never ask you to enter credit card details or make payments through a website.

More information




For more information visit vec.vic.gov.au or call us on [131 832](tel:131832) between 8:30 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday.

Authorised by S. Blumenthal, Electoral Commissioner, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria.

Our mailing address is:
Level 11, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

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Last week to vote email

Do not reply to this email. Replies go to an unmonitored inbox. Contact us with any questions.

VoterAlert

 Victorian Electoral Commission

Reminder: voting for the 2024 local council elections closes at 6 pm this Friday 25 October.

Please ignore this email if you've already voted or asked for a replacement ballot pack.

How to vote

Voting in these elections is by **post**.

Please follow the instructions in your ballot pack to complete your vote and mail it back to us as soon as possible. You can find instructions on [how to fill out a ballot paper](#) on our website.

Voting closes at **6 pm on Friday 25 October**, but your local mail collection times may be earlier than this. We recommend you return your completed vote as soon as possible.

You can also drop your vote off at your local election office.

Find my election office

If you don't get a ballot pack

If you haven't received your ballot pack in the mail yet, you can ask us to send you a replacement by:

- visiting your election office* to get a replacement on the spot. You can fill in your vote there and return it straight away.
- calling us on [131 832](tel:131832) between 8:30 am and 6 pm, Monday to Friday
- filling in our [online form](#).

*This must be the election office for your enrolled address. [Check your enrolment details](#) if you've recently moved.

Find my election office

Information in your language

Our website has information in more than 20 languages. There are also videos explaining how to vote in 10 different languages.

Find information in your language

Security

If you would rather not click any links in this email, all this information and more is on our website: vec.vic.gov.au. You can hover your mouse over links to confirm they go to a vic.gov.au website before you click them.

Be aware of scams: all emails we send you will have 'Victorian Electoral Commission <voteralert@info.vec.vic.gov.au>' as the sender. We will never ask you to enter credit card details or make payments through a website.

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Appendix 5: Voter engagement program and initiatives

Program	Program details
Be Heard Democracy Ambassador program	This program provides free peer-led electoral education and information sessions to those under-represented in the electoral process. This includes people with disability and their carers, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, people experiencing homelessness and young people. A total of 238 sessions were provided across the state reaching over 10,000 participants.
Specialist mobile enrolment	This program delivered peer-led enrolment sessions in prisons, homeless services, schools and tertiary education settings to reach young people and Aboriginal community settings across Melbourne and regional Victoria.
CALD in-language social media videos	This project produced a series of videos in 11 different languages including Auslan. Languages were chosen to reach language groups most in need of additional support. The videos provided electoral information on how to enrol, how to vote by post, and how to respond to an Apparent Failure to Vote Notice. These were widely distributed and shared through the VEC's social media platforms, community networks, and partner organisations.
Active Citizenship program	Electoral and civics education workshops were delivered to CALD community leaders in 3 locations across regional Victoria.
Aboriginal engagement	This program delivered information and engagement sessions across the greater Melbourne area and regional Victoria. These were designed to raise awareness that voting was compulsory and taking place via post. Culturally appropriate resources were produced to provide information on how to respond to an Apparent Failure to Vote Notice, including a video which was distributed and shared through the VEC's social media platforms and partner organisations.
Easy English guide	This was produced for people with low English proficiency and designed as a co-read product where a person supports the reader. These were distributed by Democracy Ambassadors as a key resource, and also available for download from the VEC's website.

Appendix 6:
Final list of candidates
in ballot paper order

The candidates, in ballot paper order, were as follows:

Flynn Ward election
SEXTON, Raymond
LONG, Liesbeth

Maryborough Central Ward election
CLARKE, Lowen
MURPHY, Gerard Michael

Maryborough East Ward election
MEYER, Jacob
STEVENS, Trevor

Maryborough North Ward election
SPROULL, Wayne
BARTLETT, Geoff

Paddys Ranges Ward election
CORCORAN, Gregory Thomas
MEDDOWS-TAYLOR, Chris
GREEN, Ben

Appendix 6.1: Candidate statements and photographs

Central Goldfields Shire Council election	Total number of candidates at close of nominations	Number of candidates that lodged a candidate statement	Number of candidates that lodged a candidate photograph
Flynn Ward	2	2	2
Maryborough Central Ward	2	2	2
Maryborough East Ward	2	2	2
Maryborough North Ward	2	2	2
Maryborough West Ward	1	1	1
Paddys Ranges Ward	3	3	3
Tullaroop Ward	1	1	1

Appendix 6.2: Sample ballot material

Outer envelope

Sample Council


If undeliverable, return to
Locked Bag 0000
LOCALITY VIC 0000

POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA
PRIORITY

STAT-ENV/M338 06/24

Local council elections 2024
Postal ballot pack


Voting closes 6 pm
Friday 25 October

 Victorian
Electoral
Commission


Reply-paid envelope

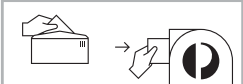
Sample Council
Sample Ward


Delivery address:
Locked Bag 0000
LOCALITY VIC 0000


PRIORITY

No stamp required
if posted in Australia


Sample Council
Sample Ward
STAT-ENV/M927 07/24



Post your completed ballot pack
before 6 pm on Friday 25 October
Local post box collection times vary. Check the
collection time on your post box to make sure your
vote is in the mail on time.



Election Manager
Sample Election Office
Sample Ward
Reply Paid 00000
LOCALITY VIC 0000


Ballot paper envelope


Ballot paper
envelope


How to vote

1. →


2. →


3. →



4. →


5. →


Voters unable to sign: Blind or low vision voters, or voters with low literacy or limited English can ask someone to sign for them. The authorised person must sign and write their name on the back of this envelope.

4. Put this ballot paper envelope into the reply-paid envelope and seal it.

5. Post it straight away.

 Victorian
Electoral
Commission

STAT-ENV-LG-003 06/24

Appendix 6.3: Sample uncontested ward leaflet


Sample Council election 2024
Sample Ward

At the close of nominations for the Sample Council, Sample Ward election, one nomination was received for one vacancy. Therefore, Candidate Name will be elected unopposed.

You are not required to vote.

Election Manager Name
Election Manager

For more information call 131 832



Appendix 7: Daily breakdown of the general mail out

Central Goldfields Shire Council election	7 October 2024	8 October 2024	9 October 2024	10 October 2024	Total general mail out
Central Goldfields Shire Council	2,612	2,612	1,230	1,229	7,683
Flynn Ward	509	509	240	240	1,498
Maryborough Central Ward	550	550	259	258	1,617
Maryborough East Ward	523	523	246	246	1,538
Maryborough North Ward	532	532	250	250	1,564
Paddys Ranges Ward	498	498	235	235	1,466

Appendix 7.1 Daily breakdown of the uncontested leaflet mail-out

Central Goldfields Shire Council uncontested election	7 October 2024	8 October 2024	9 October 2024	10 October 2024	Total uncontested mail out
Maryborough West Ward	559	559	263	263	1,644
Tullaroop Ward	530	530	250	249	1,559

Appendix 8: Result information

Flynn Ward count summary

Enrolment	1,498
Formal votes	1,175
Informal votes	63 (5.09% of the total votes)
Voter turnout	1,238 (82.64% of the total enrolment)

Candidates (in ballot paper order)	First preference votes	Percentage
SEXTON, Raymond	485	41.28%
LONG, Liesbeth	690	58.72%

Successful candidates

LONG, Liesbeth

Maryborough Central Ward count summary

Enrolment	1,617
Formal votes	1,283
Informal votes	52 (3.90% of the total votes)
Voter turnout	1,335 (82.56% of the total enrolment)

Candidates (in ballot paper order)	First preference votes	Percentage
CLARKE, Lowen	348	27.12%
MURPHY, Gerard Michael	935	72.88%

Successful candidates

MURPHY, Gerard Michael

Maryborough East Ward count summary

Enrolment	1,538
-----------	-------

Maryborough East Ward count summary

Formal votes	1,112
Informal votes	63 (5.36% of the total votes)
Voter turnout	1,175 (76.40% of the total enrolment)

Candidates (in ballot paper order)	First preference votes	Percentage
MEYER, Jacob	581	52.25%
STEVENS, Trevor	531	47.75%

Successful candidates

MEYER, Jacob

Maryborough North Ward count summary

Enrolment	1,564
Formal votes	1,270
Informal votes	50 (3.79% of the total votes)
Voter turnout	1,320 (84.40% of the total enrolment)

Candidates (in ballot paper order)	First preference votes	Percentage
SPROULL, Wayne	492	38.74%
BARTLETT, Geoff	778	61.26%

Successful candidates

BARTLETT, Geoff

Maryborough West Ward – uncontested ward

LA VELLA, Grace (Unopposed)

Paddys Ranges Ward count summary

Enrolment	1,466
Formal votes	1,181

Paddys Ranges Ward count summary		
Informal votes	39 (3.20% of the total votes)	
Voter turnout	1,220 (83.22% of the total enrolment)	
Candidates (in ballot paper order)	First preference votes	Percentage
CORCORAN, Gregory Thomas	212	17.95%
MEDDOWS-TAYLOR, Chris	485	41.07%
GREEN, Ben	484	40.98%
Successful candidates		
GREEN, Ben		
Tullaroop Ward – uncontested ward		
DE VILLIERS, Anna (Unopposed)		

Appendix 9: Election participation statistics

Participation is measured by the number of marks on the roll as a percentage of total enrolment and can vary from turnout (total ballot papers counted as a percentage of total enrolment).

Central Goldfields Shire Council election participation	2020	2024	Statewide LG 2024 – excluding Melbourne City Council
18–19	86.73%	83.61%	86.64%
20–24	78.42%	74.82%	80.02%
25–29	77.20%	71.29%	74.09%
30–34	78.80%	67.23%	73.31%
35–39	76.58%	70.45%	76.18%
40–44	82.51%	75.26%	78.99%
45–49	85.21%	79.91%	81.92%
50–54	88.31%	82.10%	84.69%
55–59	88.04%	89.01%	87.46%
60–64	91.84%	89.51%	89.16%
65–69	92.95%	90.35%	90.41%
70+	91.05%	88.96%	88.77%
Voters enrolled through section 241 of the LG Act	87.94%	83.30%	86.27%
Voters enrolled through sections 243–245 of the LG Act	61.11%	90.29%	60.96%
Total voters enrolled	86.43%	83.39%	84.12%

Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda – 28 May 2025

Central Goldfields Shire Council

Appendix 9: Election participation statistics

Flynn Ward election participation	2024	Statewide LG 2024 – excluding Melbourne City Council
18–19	91.67%	86.64%
20–24	74.24%	80.02%
25–29	79.37%	74.09%
30–34	67.19%	73.31%
35–39	66.67%	76.18%
40–44	73.61%	78.99%
45–49	82.19%	81.92%
50–54	81.51%	84.69%
55–59	88.81%	87.46%
60–64	84.88%	89.16%
65–69	87.50%	90.41%
70+	91.76%	88.77%
Voters enrolled through section 241 of the LG Act	84.38%	86.27%
Voters enrolled through sections 243–245 of the LG Act	81.58%	60.96%
Total voters enrolled	84.31%	84.12%

Maryborough Central Ward election participation	2024	Statewide LG 2024 – excluding Melbourne City Council
18–19	78.26%	86.64%
20–24	78.35%	80.02%
25–29	63.08%	74.09%
30–34	69.31%	73.31%
35–39	71.43%	76.18%
40–44	78.67%	78.99%
45–49	67.65%	81.92%
50–54	83.33%	84.69%
55–59	86.67%	87.46%
60–64	90.91%	89.16%
65–69	94.90%	90.41%
70+	88.45%	88.77%
Voters enrolled through section 241 of the LG Act	83.68%	86.27%
Voters enrolled through sections 243–245 of the LG Act	91.67%	60.96%
Total voters enrolled	83.74%	84.12%

Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda – 28 May 2025

Appendix 9: Election participation statistics

Central Goldfields Shire Council

Maryborough East Ward election participation	2024	Statewide LG 2024 – excluding Melbourne City Council
18–19	84.21%	86.64%
20–24	60.92%	80.02%
25–29	57.89%	74.09%
30–34	57.43%	73.31%
35–39	65.12%	76.18%
40–44	70.33%	78.99%
45–49	74.42%	81.92%
50–54	79.63%	84.69%
55–59	83.21%	87.46%
60–64	90.14%	89.16%
65–69	90.24%	90.41%
70+	88.64%	88.77%
Voters enrolled through section 241 of the LG Act	78.45%	86.27%
Voters enrolled through sections 243–245 of the LG Act	93.75%	60.96%
Total voters enrolled	78.61%	84.12%

Maryborough North Ward election participation	2024	Statewide LG 2024 – excluding Melbourne City Council
18–19	88.89%	86.64%
20–24	83.13%	80.02%
25–29	80.41%	74.09%
30–34	74.59%	73.31%
35–39	81.37%	76.18%
40–44	75.00%	78.99%
45–49	91.21%	81.92%
50–54	85.84%	84.69%
55–59	94.29%	87.46%
60–64	88.37%	89.16%
65–69	90.51%	90.41%
70+	86.21%	88.77%
Voters enrolled through section 241 of the LG Act	85.28%	86.27%
Voters enrolled through sections 243–245 of the LG Act	100.00%	60.96%
Total voters enrolled	85.36%	84.12%

Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda – 28 May 2025

Central Goldfields Shire Council

Appendix 9: Election participation statistics

Paddys Ranges Ward election participation	2024	Statewide LG 2024 – excluding Melbourne City Council
18–19	75.00%	86.64%
20–24	77.46%	80.02%
25–29	75.68%	74.09%
30–34	67.61%	73.31%
35–39	67.65%	76.18%
40–44	78.67%	78.99%
45–49	84.09%	81.92%
50–54	80.17%	84.69%
55–59	92.09%	87.46%
60–64	93.26%	89.16%
65–69	88.62%	90.41%
70+	89.72%	88.77%
Voters enrolled through section 241 of the LG Act	84.76%	86.27%
Voters enrolled through sections 243–245 of the LG Act	96.55%	60.96%
Total voters enrolled	84.99%	84.12%

Appendix 10: Complaints

Written complaints received by the VEC

Where an outcome is a follow-up response, the customer may have replied to the VEC's response and the VEC has therefore replied to that follow-up email.

Where an outcome has no action taken, this could be an anonymous submission that doesn't contain feedback and therefore can't be passed on to another team.

Date	Nature of complaint	Action taken by the VEC
Tuesday 1 October 2024	LGI Complaint - Unauthorised material; Conduct of candidate away from election office	Referred to LGI
Thursday 3 October 2024	LGI Complaint - How-to-vote cards; Postal material from candidates or parties	Referred to LGI
Monday 7 October 2024	VEC Complaint - Nomination instance	Response provided
Tuesday 15 October 2024	LGI Complaint - How-to-vote cards	Referred to LGI
Wednesday 16 October 2024	LGI Complaint - Misleading and deceptive material	Referred to LGI
Monday 21 October 2024	VEC Complaint - Misleading and deceptive material; False claims in material	Response provided

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(Victorian Electoral Commission)
April 2025

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Melbourne Victoria 3000
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info@vec.vic.gov.au
vec.vic.gov.au

7.4 Public Road Register Policy

Author: Asset and Development Engineer

Responsible Officer: General Manager Infrastructure Assets and Planning

The Officer presenting this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to discuss the future of the Public Road Register Policy (the Policy).

The Policy was endorsed in 2021 and is due for review, however as the Policy is not a legislated requirement, Council can instead, rely on the Road Management Act (2004) and Council's Road Management Plan to guide its obligations when administering the Register of Public Roads.

The current Policy was endorsed without an end date or sunset clause and this report gives Council the opportunity to formally discontinue the existing policy, after which Council will manage the Register of Public Roads in accordance with the Road Management Act (2004) and the Road Management Plan.

Should Council resolve to discontinue the existing policy, officers are proposing that several improvements identified in this report are incorporated into Council's Road Management Plan to ensure the Register of Public Roads is managed in the most efficient manner possible.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council rescinds its Public Road Register Policy (2021) and notes that Council Officers will manage the Register of Public Roads in accordance with the Road Management Act (2004) and Council's Road Management Plan.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

This policy assists the Council with meeting its obligation for supplying a Public Road Register as required in the Road Management Act 2004.

The Community's vision:

Leading Change

4. Good planning, governance, and service delivery.
4. Transparent decision making.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Under the Road Management Act (2004) (the Act) Councils are declared responsible road management authorities and as such are required to maintain a register of public roads.

The purpose of a register of public roads is to identify the public roads for which it is the coordinating road authority and, once adopted, the register must be made available to the public free of charge.

Council has an up-to-date Register of Public Roads and is maintaining it in accordance with the Act. The Act does not require Councils to have a Public Road Register Policy (the Policy), however this Council and several other Victorian Councils continue to maintain a Policy which in the case of Central Goldfields Shire Council, to a very large degree, references our obligations under the Act and our adopted Road Management Plan.

Whether Council maintains a Policy or not, a register of public roads will be supplied to the Department, at which time Council will have met its obligations under the Act.

The Public Road Register Policy was last updated in 2021 and while the Act does not require Councils to maintain a Policy, it has been custom and practice at Council to align the review of the

previous Public Road Register Policy and the register of public roads with the term of the new Council.

REPORT

As part of this process, officers have taken the opportunity to review whether the Policy remains fit-for-purpose, necessary and relevant.

As part of this process, it was identified that Council is not obligated to maintain a Public Road Register Policy by the Act. That Council maintains a Policy would appear to be for historic reasons and a desktop review of other Victorian Councils suggests that few Councils continue to maintain similar policies.

There is no obvious benefit to Council by having a Policy to inform its management of the Register of Public Roads as it is compelled to meet its legislative requirements under the Act and no local policy can override those obligations.

Beyond reinforcing what is required under the Act, the Policy acts largely as a procedure, and these procedures are informed by Council's Road Management Plan (last adopted in 2024) and which is a requirement of Sec. 50 of the Act.

Having regard to the above information, it is considered good practice to discontinue Council's Public Road Register Policy and administer the Register in accordance with the higher order documents.

As part of this process, several improvements have been identified, and it is proposed that these updates should instead be incorporated into Council's Road Management Plan when that document is reviewed later in 2025. They include:

- (a) The deletion of the road hierarchy table which has been replaced with a reference to the Road Management Plan. This will ensure that there is a single source of truth for road hierarchy definitions.
- (b) The addition of an item mentioning the procedure for removing roads from the public road register.
- (c) The addition of an item advising that Council is working on a GIS version of the Public Road Register. This will allow an interactive and visually appealing way of identifying ownership of roads within the Municipality.

Procedure for discontinuing a Policy

Because the 2021 Policy was adopted by Council and has no fixed term (after which it would lapse), it is not appropriate for Council to merely stop applying the Policy.

Instead, if the Policy is deemed to be no longer fit-for-purpose, necessary and relevant, it is appropriate for Council to determine that the Policy be discontinued and consider the alternative options for meeting its obligations under the Road Management Act.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

Public consultation on the Register of Public Roads is not applicable as the requirements of the register are legislated by the Road Management Act 2004.

The public does, however, have access to the register via the Council website.

FINANCIAL& RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The Register of Public Roads is a legislated requirement under the Act and administration of the register is covered within Council's operational budget.

There are no direct financial implications of Council discontinuing the Policy.

RISK MANAGEMENT

This report addresses Council's strategic risk:

Legislative compliance - Failure to manage our compliance with relevant legislative requirements by ensuring that the public road register contains all the necessary information as per the Road Management Act 2004.

CONCLUSION

Following a review of the existing Public Road Register Policy, it is recommended that the Policy not be updated and returned to Council for consideration.

Instead, it is recommended that the existing Public Road Register Policy be discontinued, and that Council manages the Register of Public Roads in accordance with the Road Management Act (2004) and the adopted Road Management Plan.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 20210407 Public Road Register Policy [7.4.1]



Public Road Register Policy

Category: Strategic
Adoption: Council Date: May 2021
Review Period: Align with Council Elections
Responsible Manager: Manager Infrastructure
Signed by CEO:
Date:

1. Purpose

The Road Management Act (the Act) places a mandatory requirement for road authorities to keep a register of public roads for which it is the coordinating road authority. (s19(1)).

The purpose of this policy is to;

- Ensure that all matters that are required to be contained in the Public Road Register are included in the Register.

The Road Management Act 2004 schedule 1 sets out that the matters which must be included in a Register of Public Roads are;

- The name of each public road or, if a road is unnamed, a description which enables the particular road to be easily identified;*
- If a road becomes a public road after 1 July 2004, the date on which the road became a public road;*
- If a public road ceases to be a public road, the date on which the road ceased to be a public road;*
- The classification, if any, of the public road;*
- The reference of any plan or instrument made on or after 1 July 2004 that fixes or varies the boundaries of a public road;*
- any ancillary areas;*
- a reference to any arrangement functions in respect of any part of public road or ancillary area is transferred to or from another road authority;*



(h) and (ha) refers to Melbourne City Link act and Eastlink project Act;

(i) any matter required to be included by the relevant Minister under section 22;

(j) any other matter required to be included by this Act

(k) any other matter which is prescribed for the purpose of this clause.

- Provide guidelines to assist in determining which municipal roads are to be included on the Public Road Register.

2. Scope

Intent

Council policy establishes guidelines to assist Council in determining which municipal roads are to be included on the Public Road Register to accord with the requirements of the Act.

CONTEXT

Roadways or pathways considered no longer required for general public use under this Policy, will result in road sections being excluded from the Public Road Register. As a result, Council will have no further responsibility for the coordination or operational management function.

Some roads included on the Public Road Register are listed to ensure that property accesses (refer to Policy item 3.4 below), are maintained and are based on land holdings detailed on the municipal rate register.

The register will remain a dynamic document subject to amendment to account for changes and trends in property development, land ownership and road usage, tested in accordance with the provisions of this Policy.

Note:

This Policy relates solely to Council's Public Road Register. It does not stipulate:

- ✗ Council's requirements as a Responsible Road Authority. (Refer to Council's Road Management Plan.)
- ✗ Guidelines for negotiating demarcation arrangements with other Responsible Road Authorities.



3. Policy

The following describes the circumstances that must be met for a road to be placed on the Public Road Register.

3.1. COUNCIL MUST BE CAPABLE OF BEING DEEMED THE COORDINATING ROAD AUTHORITY.

Note: Listed public roads can only appear on the register of a single Coordinating Road Authority.

Under provisions of the Act, Council will be the Coordinating Road Authority for any of the following:

- The road has been declared under Section 204 of the Local Government Act;
- The road has been declared by VicRoads to be a Municipal Road;
- The road is referred to in Section 205 of the Local Government Act 1989;
- The road is part of a crown land reserve and has Council as the Committee of Management;
- Roads which the Minister has assigned a designated road project to Council control under Section 16 of the Act;
- Roads that Council has agreed to have care and management;
- Roads which Council has decided are reasonably required for general public use.

Section 15 of the Act enables transfer of coordinating and/or operational functions from one road authority to another, subject to a formal agreement (eg Memoranda of Understanding (MOU)). In these instances, Council may deem a road to be a municipal road which may otherwise be a non-arterial road or the continuation of a municipal road which ventures onto crown land, crown reserve or freehold land.

When required, MOU's are to address the following matters:

Arterial Roads

Section 37 of the Act and the "Demarcation Code of Practice - Operational Responsibility for Public Roads", define the operational management VicRoads (Rural Roads Victoria) and municipalities on declared freeways and arterial roads.

In these instances, Council may negotiate with VicRoads (Rural Roads Victoria) to transfer the coordination functions of an arterial road alignment and thereby define the road to be a municipal road and included onto Council's Register.

Boundary Roads

Council currently has maintenance arrangements with adjoining municipalities in relation to boundary roads, which establish maintenance responsibilities for various road sections. Council is required to formalise these agreements, with the relevant adjoining municipalities, to establish the terms by which the coordination and/or operational responsibilities are distributed. Cost-sharing arrangements may also form part of a negotiated agreement and include isolated structures, such as bridges, where they relate to a road crossing or forming the municipal boundary.



Non-Arterial State Roads on Crown Land,

Municipal roads (including roadways and pathways), contained on crown land or crown reserve (i.e. not on a public highway) need to be formalised with the relevant State Authority (i.e. DELWP).

The Demarcation Code of Practice defines broad responsibility arrangements between Councils and state road authorities such as DELWP.

Site specific arrangements will need to be clarified in an MOU, to determine the nature and extent of coordination and/or operational management functions which may also include some form of cost sharing arrangement. A Coordinating Road Authority may fix the boundaries of a road in accordance with Section 13 of the Act.

Freehold Land,

Public roads, including ancillary areas, contained on freehold land will need to be formalised via an MOU with the relevant land owner.

Council may consider it necessary to either, purchase the land area required and declare the road, or enter into a long term lease agreement with the land owner to secure the ongoing use of the alignment for road purposes.

3.2. THE MUNICIPAL ROAD MUST BE ASSOCIATED WITH A COUNCIL 'ROADWAY' OR 'PATHWAY' OR 'ANCILLARY AREA'.

Council will only list a municipal road onto its Public Roads Register when that municipal road is associated with a roadway, pathway or ancillary area which has been constructed and maintained with the intention of functioning as a roadway, pathway or ancillary area.

To be included on the Public Road Register, a road must relate to a Council asset and be either:

- a roadway developed and maintained in some manner with the intention of being used by a motor vehicle, or
- a pathway constructed and maintained by Council, or
- an ancillary area developed and maintained with the intention of providing an ancillary function to a pathway and/or roadway (i.e. carpark, roadside stop etc.)

3.3. THE MUNICIPAL ROAD PROVIDES STRATEGIC ACCESS.

The road provides strategic access connections to points of industry, commerce, community or residential development. This would include all Rural / Urban Link and Collector routes defined under Council's road hierarchy. Strategic access extends to the provision of bus routes along the local road network. The hierarchical classification associated with bus routes are set at a minimum standard of an RA1 route.

Strategic access may also include low usage rural roads which provide a route of convenience in terms of travel time to connect with established collector or link roads. They may also be considered



necessary in terms of egress during or following emergency events, and depending on their degree of usage, can either be classified RA1, RA2 or RAT within Council's road hierarchy.

- The road is classified a Rural / Urban Link or Collector route defined under Council's road hierarchy, or
- The road has been approved as an established bus route, or
- The road has been identified necessary as a route of convenience or emergency egress.

3.4. THE MUNICIPAL ROAD PROVIDES A SINGLE CLOSEST POINT OF ACCESS TO A RATEABLE PROPERTY HOLDING.

These include the major portion of the roads listed on the Public Road Register and are associated with all Rural / Urban Access routes defined under Council's road hierarchy.

This will satisfy Council's Property Access Service Function whereby every rateable property holding adjacent to a connected network of public highways has an access point to a roadway listed on the Public Roads Register. The standard of construction and who should pay for the creation, or upgrade (if this is required or requested), is a separate question from whether the road is required as a municipal public road. These matters are addressed under Council's Responsible Road Authority requirements.

Council will have no property access service responsibilities where an existing property holding has access arrangements to a public road listed within a Public Road Register of another municipal or state controlled road authority.

Where property holdings currently have more than one connection point to a roadway, Council may or may not service the secondary access points, depending on the requirement for the alternate roadways for general public use. In urban areas where existing rear access via lanes provides the only practical means of vehicle access to the properties, Council will service these laneways.

In addition, where primary access is obtained from a roadway which forms an extension of the property driveway entrance, Council may not include the public road beyond the closest point of access onto the Public Roads Register, unless there is a demonstrated public access requirement. Council will honour existing arrangements in the case of public roads servicing access points (as at 1 July 2004) to rural developments such as farm dwellings, machinery sheds and shearing sheds.

Details of various common access arrangements and Council's corresponding position are listed in the property access criteria of this policy document (see 3.11.)

- The public road provides a single closest point of access to a rateable property holding not otherwise accessing onto another municipal controlled road or state controlled arterial or non-arterial road.



3.5. ACCESS/USE MUST BE 'REASONABLY REQUIRED FOR GENERAL PUBLIC USE'.

The following guidelines will assist in determining whether a road is “reasonably required for general public use”.

- The number and nature of the separately owned and occupied properties abutting onto the road or requiring the road for access purposes.
- A range of planning and land use and development considerations, including whether or not land abutting onto the road or requiring the road for access has been developed to its highest and best economic use.
- The type of properties abutting onto the road, including public open space, community facilities and car parking areas.
- Whether the roads connects into and forms part of the wider network of public roads.
- The usage patterns of the road in relation to the nature and frequency of past, present and likely future use.
- Whether the road is required for both vehicular and pedestrian use.
- Whether the Council or any of its predecessors or any other public authority constructed the road at public expense.
- Whether the council has cared for, managed or controlled the road.
- Whether the properties which enjoy an abuttal to the road or require the road for access purposes have alternative access rights.
- Whether there are designated car parking facilities and traffic control signs attaching to any public use of the road.
- Whether the road has ever been required to be set aside for public use as a condition of any planning approval.
- Whether the road has ever been formally dedicated or proclaimed to be public highway under the local government act or any predecessor legislation.
- Whether the road has ever been constructed under a special charge scheme or a private street scheme.
- Whether the use is occurring as of right in particular evidence of permission.
- Whether the road contains assets owned and managed by public service authorities, gas, electricity, telecommunications, sewerage, water.
- Whether the road has fencing, barriers, signage etc.

3.6. PROVISION OF FIRE ACCESS.

The creation and ongoing maintenance of declared fire access tracks listed within the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan is recognised as the responsibility of Council for periodic inspection and maintenance. **NB** This may relate to tracks venturing off public highways onto crown land/reserves or freehold land.

Under this policy, Council will include fire break roads which are also open for general public access onto its Public Roads Register. Limited access tracks listed for the intention of providing access to emergency vehicles only, are considered not open for general public access and will not be included on the Public Roads Register.



Limited access tracks will be referenced on Council road asset registers, for which Council will act as the Responsible Road Authority, and be associated with levels of maintenance service commensurate with standards referenced under the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan.

- The public road has been declared as a fire break road or fire access track open for general public use, and is listed within the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan.

3.7. PUBLIC ROAD HAS UNRESTRICTED PUBLIC ACCESS.

Public roads, not providing emergency access or not associated with a local law restricting access, which are fenced off or gated, are not considered available for unrestricted general public access, and are not included on the Public Roads Register.

- The public road has unrestricted public access.

3.8. ACCEPTANCE OF SUBDIVISIONAL ROADS.

Subdivisional roads, established as part of subdivisional development works, will not be listed on the Public Roads Register unless formally accepted by Council through the planning approval processes and until the satisfactory completion of all requirements listed under Council's hand over procedures.

- The subdivision road has been accepted by Council as a public road and is to be added to its register following issue of Title.

3.9. THE LAND IS CONSIDERED TO BE AN ANCILLARY AREA.

Ancillary areas can include car parks or roadside stops / toilet / picnic facilities which adjoin a public road and provide an intended service function for roadway or pathway users.

- The ancillary area is adjacent to a public road and provides an intended service function for the roadway or pathway users.

3.10 TOURISM / CULTURAL FOCAL POINTS OR RECREATIONAL ACCESS.

These are associated with roadways or pathways which service local tourism / cultural points of interest or provide a facility for active public recreation.

The criteria by which Council will include these on the Public Roads Register is based on the acknowledgement by Council through the funding, promotion, management, establishment and/ or



prior maintenance of the facility and associated infrastructure. Inclusion of public roads, not included on a public highway or Council owned land, will need to be subject to agreement and accompanying Memorandum of Understanding with the relevant land manager or land owner.

- The public road is acknowledged by Council as required for general public use as the result of its municipal related tourist attraction, cultural significance or recreational activity.

3.11. PUBLIC ROAD REGISTER – PROPERTY ACCESS CRITERIA

Property access roads account for the major portion of the roads listed on the Public Road Register and are associated with all Rural/Urban Access routes defined under Council's road hierarchy.

Clear definition is necessary to isolate the sections of access roads which do not provide an essential municipal related public access service function.

Council's "Public Access Service Function" obligation, in relation to property access, extends to the provision a single closest point of access to a "rateable property holding" which may consist of a single or contiguous series of individual land titles.

In this regard, "rateable property holding", as referenced under the "Valuation of Land Act 1960" is where **several parcels of land in the same municipal district are occupied by the same person and separated from each other only by a road or railway or other similar area across or around which movement is reasonably possible.**

The issue of access provision, and the extent to which Council will commit as the coordinating and/or responsible road authority, considers the following property access cases:

POLICY REFERENCE	PROPERTY ACCESS CASE	ADOPTED POSITION
3.11.1	An existing developed property (dwelling) holding has sited its rural addressed entrance beyond the closest point of access for which the roadway provides sole access.	<i>For all access arrangements existing as at the 1st July 2004 along public highways, Council will include the public road onto its Public Road Register to the rural addressed access point to the property dwelling.</i>



POLICY REFERENCE	PROPERTY ACCESS CASE	ADOPTED POSITION
3.11..2	An existing undeveloped property (vacant or sheds only) holding has sited its rural addressed entrance beyond the closest point of access for which the roadway provides sole access.	<i>For all access arrangements existing as at the 1st July 2004 along public highways, Council will include the public road onto its Public Road Register to the rural addressed access point to the property shearing or machinery sheds. This does not extend to points providing property access only.</i>
3.11..3	An existing undeveloped property (vacant or sheds only) holding fronting an unused public highway with no current Council acknowledged infrastructure.	<p><i>Applications for road access be considered in terms of whether providing multiple land holding access or sole land holding access:</i></p> <p><i>-Sole access instances handled in terms of providing a single closest point of access to the property holding.</i></p> <p><i>-Multiple land holding access arrangements handled in terms of providing the least cost option of gaining access to all land holdings involved, considering the single closest point philosophy.</i></p>



POLICY REFERENCE	PROPERTY ACCESS CASE	ADOPTED POSITION
3.11..4	An existing undeveloped (vacant or sheds only) or developed (dwelling) property holding with non-arterial roadway access controlled by another state road authority (e.g. DELWP). The property holding may or may not front onto an unused public highway.	<i>Reference is made to any prior planning scheme conditions /agreements entered into. Otherwise, Council will enter into an agreement with the other road authority in accordance with guidelines detailed in the “Demarcation Code of Practice – Operational Responsibilities for Public Roads” in terms of coordination and/or operational functions.</i>
3.11..5	An existing developed (dwelling) or undeveloped property (vacant or sheds only) holding with frontage access to a public road and abuts to an alternate side or rear roadway with no municipal related general public access requirements.	<i>Council does not included the alternate side or rear road onto its Public Roads Register.</i>
3.11..6	An existing developed (dwelling) property holdings which abut to rear/side lane property access.	<i>Where rear/side lanes provide existing points of property access, include the lane on the Public Roads Register. Where rear/side lanes do not provide property access, or where alternate access arrangements are possible, enter into negotiations in terms of possible lane closure and consolidation of lanes into adjoining land holdings.</i>



4.Roles and Responsibilities

Person/s responsible	Accountability
Chief Executive Officer	Is delegated with the authority to approve the update of the Public Road Register in accordance with the principles detailed in this policy.
Coordinator Strategic Asset Management	Will update the Public Road Register following approval of the update by the Chief Executive Officer

5.Definitions

What is a road?

A “road” includes:-

- i. any public highway;
- ii. any ancillary area;
- iii. any land declared to be a road or forming part of a public highway or ancillary area.
Section 11 of the Act

What is a pathway?

'Pathway' means a footpath, bicycle path or other area constructed or developed by a responsible road authority, for use by members of the public other than a motor vehicle, but does not include any path which has not been constructed by the responsible road authority or which connects to other land.

What is a roadway?

'Roadway means:-

- in the case of a public road, the area of the public road that is open to, or used by members of the public, and is developed by a responsible road authority for the driving or riding of motor vehicles;
- in the case of any other road, the area of the road within the meaning of “road” in section 3(1) of the Road Safety Act 1986 – but does not include a driveway providing access to the public road or other road from adjoining land.

What is a motor vehicle?

'Motor vehicle' means a vehicle that is used or intended to be used on a highway and that is built to be propelled by a motor that forms part of the vehicle.



What are road classifications?

The Act defines four classifications of public roads which include:

- Freeways
- Arterial Roads
- Non-Arterial State Roads
- Municipal Roads

What are road hierarchies?

Road hierarchies are functional classifications which Council uses to isolate the range of municipal roads applicable to its network of roadways and pathways for which it is the Responsible Road Authority. These include:

RURAL ROADWAY NETWORK		
Hierarchy Type	Hierarchy Category	Primary Function
LINK ROADS	Rural Link (RL)	High usage strategic <u>Freight</u> linkage routes.(High usage is >100 vpd AADT and 6% CV) * Heavy vehicle <u>linkage</u> from the State Arterial Road network. * Also includes heavy vehicle bypass routes of major urban centres.
COLLECTOR ROADS	Rural Collector (RC)	High usage strategic Collector routes.(High usage is >100 vpd AADT and 6% CV). * Rural collector routes from local access roads to community centres or popular focal points. * High usage connector routes to the Arterial road network.
INDUSTRIAL ACCESS ROADS	Rural Industrial Access (RIA)	Heavy vehicle use roads linking industrial enclaves with Arterial or Link Road * Heavy vehicle <u>direct access</u> from the State Arterial Road network or link roads.
ACCESS ROADS	Rural Access 1 (RA1)	Medium usage property access routes.(>30 vpd AADT) * Provide property access to rural developed areas incorporating at least 5 permanent tenements. * Medium usage access to rural properties generating regular and consistent vehicle usage. * Bus Route minimum standard.



RURAL ROADWAY NETWORK		
Hierarchy Type	Hierarchy Category	Primary Function
	Rural Access 2 (RA2)	Low usage property access routes. * Provide property access to rural developed areas incorporating up to 5 permanent tenements. * Low usage access to rural properties generating spasmodic vehicle usage.(10 to 30 VPD AADT)
	Rural Access Track (RAT)	Occasional usage property access routes. * Occasional usage access to rural properties generating spasmodic vehicle usage.<10vpd AADT) * Strategic fire access routes or emergency access points. * Strategic access to state forest or crown land areas.
	Limited Access Track (LAT)	Specific purpose access tracks <u>not</u> intended for General access. * Strategic fire access.
OBSOLETE	Not Maintained (NM)	Road Reserve <u>not</u> intended for General access



URBAN ROADWAY NETWORK		
Hierarchy Type	Hierarchy Category	Primary Function
LINK STREETS	Urban Link (UL)	<p>High usage strategic <u>Freight</u> linkage routes. .(High usage is >1000 AADT)</p> <p>* Heavy vehicle <u>linkage</u> from the State Arterial Road network to local commercial or industrial focal points.</p> <p>* Also includes heavy vehicle bypass routes of major urban centres.</p>
COLLECTOR STREETS	Urban Collector (UC)	<p>High usage strategic Collector routes. .(High usage is >1000 AADT)</p> <p>* Urban collector routes from urban access streets to community, school or commerce centres or popular focal points.</p> <p>* High usage connector routes to the Arterial road network.</p>
INDUSTRIAL ACCESS ROADS	Urban Industrial Access (UIA)	<p>Heavy vehicle use roads linking industrial enclaves with Arterial or Link Road</p> <p>* Heavy vehicle <u>direct access</u> from the State Arterial Road network or link roads.</p>
ACCESS STREETS	Urban Access 1 (UA1)	<p>Property access streets.</p> <p>* Provide property frontage access to residential developed allotments.</p> <p>* Bus Route minimum standard.</p>
	Urban Access 2 (UA2)	<p>Property access streets.</p> <p>* Provide property frontage access to residential developed allotments.</p>
	Urban Access Lane (UAL)	<p>Low usage property access streets/lanes.</p> <p>* Provide alternate side or rear property access to urban residential or commercial allotments.</p>



PARKING	Carparks (UP)	Car parking areas * On or off street designated car parking areas.
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PATHWAY NETWORK	
HIERARCHY CLASS	PRIMARY FUNCTION
Commerce (CO)	Main shopping areas / Transport hubs
Business (BU)	Busy urban areas. Township main streets or zones immediately adjacent to or feeding schools, halls, churches etc.
Residential (RE)	Formed paths through urban residential areas or parks.
Rural (RU)	Formed paths through rural residential areas or parks.
Shared Path (SP)	Shared use bicycle and foot paths along defined pathways delineated by pavement markings and signs and furniture.
On Road Bicycle (OR)	Shared use bicycle paths along defined roadways delineated by pavement markings and roadside signs and furniture.

Who is the Coordinating and Responsible Road Authority?

Section 36 of the Act defines the Coordinating Road Authority to be:-

- i. if the road is a freeway or arterial road, VicRoads (Rural Roads Victoria).
- ii. if the road is a non-arterial State road, the relevant responsible road authority



- under sections 37(1) c or 37(1) d. (eg Parks Victoria, DEWLP)
- iii. 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.

Section 37 of the Act defines various arrangements of operational responsibilities between Council and other responsible state road authorities such as VicRoads and DELWP. The Ministerial Code of Practice “Operational Responsibilities for Public Roads” establishes general guidelines for the demarcation of responsibility between Responsible Road Authorities in terms of the management of road infrastructure.

Section 15 of the Act enables road authorities to transfer coordinating and/or operational management functions between road authorities.

What is a public road?

Section 17 of the Act defines a public road, in the case of municipal roads, if it is:-

- i. declared under section 204(1) of the Local Government Act 1989, **or**
- ii. a road declared by VicRoads to be a municipal road under S14 (1), **or**
- iii. a road where the coordinating road authority has made a decision that the road is reasonably required for general public use, and which may include
- iv. an ancillary area which is owned or managed by the coordinating road authority to be maintained by a responsible road authority as ancillary to a public road.

By definition:

- an “Ancillary Area” means an area designated as an ancillary area by the coordinating road authority under section 18.

What is a municipal road?

A “municipal road” means any road which is not a State road, including any road which:-

- i. is a road referred to in the Local Government Act 1989, Section 205, **or**
- ii. is a road declared by VicRoads to be a municipal road under Section 14(1) b; **or**
- iii. is part of a crown land reserve under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 and has the relevant municipal council as the committee of management.

6. Human Rights Statement

It is considered that this policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights Act (2007). Central Goldfields Shire Council is committed to consultation and cooperation between management and employees. The Council will formally involve elected employee representatives in any workplace change that may affect the health and safety of any of its employees.



7. Related Policies and Procedures

- Municipal Public Road Register.
- The Road Management Plan.

8. Relevant Legislation and Guidelines

- The Road Management Act 2004.
- The Local Government Act 1989.
- The Crown Lands (Reserves) Act 1978.

9. Review

The policy will be reviewed in conjunction with the review of the Road Management Plan.

DOCUMENT HISTORY (TO BE REMOVED BEFORE SIGNING)

	Date	Author
Initial Draft	6 June 2019	Stephen Wright
Approved by GM for EMT	June 2019	
Endorsed	June 2019	EMT with updates
Final Draft	2 April 2020	Sivathasan Sampasivam
*Audit Committee comments if needed		
*Amended after Audit Committee		
*Final Draft To Council Briefing	April 2021	Sivathasan Sampasivam
*Final draft to Council meeting		
Signed by CEO		

*Council Policies only

7.5 Building Compliance and Enforcement Policy

Author: Manager Statutory Services

Responsible Officer: General Manager Infrastructure Assets and Planning

The Officer presenting this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Council the adoption of a new Building Compliance and Enforcement Policy (Policy) following technical development.

The Policy provides rationale and a framework for an equitable, transparent, and consistent approach to building compliance activities undertaken by the Central Goldfields Shire Council.

The Policy provides a risk-based approach for Council in responding to non-compliance, and in the management of Council's obligations under the Local Government Act, the Building Act and Regulations.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt its Building Compliance and Enforcement Policy provided as attachment 7.5.1 to this report.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2021-2025:

The Community's vision:

Leading Change

4. Good planning, governance, and service delivery.
4. Transparent decision making.

Initiative:

Provide financial sustainability and good governance.

- Local Government Act 2020
- Building Act 1993
- Building Regulations 2018
- Victorian Building Authority Compliance and Enforcement Policy Framework
- CGSC Risk Management Framework

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Unsafe buildings and construction work has the potential to create serious health and safety risks for our community.

Council's building compliance services are supported by wide ranging enforcement and prosecution powers and responsibilities under the *Building Act 1993* (the Act) and *Building Regulations 2018* (Regulations).

Council's objective is to seek compliance with these regulatory instruments prior to enacting 'Enforcement' and the use of statutory powers under the Act to achieve or compel compliance.

Council is guided by the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) as the peak regulatory body. The VBA *Compliance and Enforcement Policy Framework 2024* provides Council with guidance and is included as an attachment to this report.

Council responsibilities

Section 212 of the Act establishes Council as responsible for the administration and enforcement of building standards and safety for the municipality.

Whilst the Act does not mandate Councils to undertake enforcement, there are court decisions where Councils have been found liable for failing to perform their statutory functions regarding the Act and Regulations.

Relevant examples included the case of *Pyrenees Shire Council v Day; Eskimo Amber Pty Ltd v Pyrenees Shire Council* (1998) 192 CLR 330, where the Pyrenees Shire was found liable for not properly responding to a building safety matter.

Furthermore, Councils have also been proven liable in the Coroner's Court where there was either a failure to properly discharge their duties, or where the coroner recommended that Council should improve on aspects of their building control procedures.

Community interests

Effective compliance to building regulations and/or standards is an essential component of the Councils' building service delivered for our community.

Council administers building controls to protect occupiers of individual buildings and the wider community from large scale building safety incidents. An example of such controls is the rapid assessment of structures following a fire, and to ensure safe access by emergency responders.

Additionally, Building officers control public safety for large scale public events through Place of Public Entertainment permits accordingly.

REPORT

The Policy confirms Councils building obligations and provides guidance to officers in their duties.

The Policy provides clarity on the role of Council's delegated officers and building owners within the municipality, in balance with the role of private building surveyors.

Currently, officers manage the risk of building compliance matters without a clear policy position.

As Councils building enforcement activity is subject to legal scrutiny, the establishment of a policy forms part of Councils broader governance and risk management frameworks.

The policy has been developed in line with legislation and the Victorian Building Authority's *Compliance and Enforcement Policy Framework*.

The Policy ensures officers manage case files in priority order, and the application of a consistent and transparent approach to building enforcement matters.

A complementary Prosecution Panel Policy is also under development. This will be designed to assist in the management of Council's prosecutions and other enforcement actions. This future proposed policy will provide overarching guidance to Councils compliance and enforcement units within the Statutory Services function.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

In the development of the draft Building Compliance and Enforcement policy, the Statutory Services unit has aligned the policy with Council standards, as reviewed by the Governance team. This ensures consistency and accuracy.

In preparing the report the Building Surveyor (limited) has consulted with Mount Alexander Shire Council.

FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Council employs a Municipal Building Surveyor and Building Surveyor (limited). The preparation of the Policy and associated procedures by officers has been completed using existing resources within the Statutory Services team.

Given the reactive nature of building enforcement issues, there are no provisions for reactive building compliance works in Councils operational budget. As such, issues that arise will be addressed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the Policy, and costs will be managed in balance with existing divisional budgets.

RISK MANAGEMENT

A failure to respond to complaints of dangerous or illegal building work may result in litigation and substantial reputational damage where a death or injury has resulted from Council's failure to act or caused a delay in making buildings and/or land safe.

Civil litigation from an affected person for damages to property may also result from a failure to act on building safety issues.

This report addresses Council's strategic risk:

Legislative compliance - Failure to manage our compliance with relevant legislative requirements by ensuring Council has a transparent and clear policy position to enable an effective building enforcement program.

Governance – Failure to transparently govern and embrace good governance practices by ensuring Council has a transparent and clear policy position, and associated procedures to mitigate the inherent risk involved in administering building enforcement matters.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of this Policy will enable officers to minimise and mitigate risks associated with the investigation and management of building compliance matters.

The Policy will authorise the creation and implementation of a building compliance and enforcement procedure and associated management tools.

By endorsing the reviewed Building Compliance and Enforcement Policy, Council is ensuring that the policy is in line with Council Policy requirements and community expectations.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Building Compliance and Enforcement Policy final draft (2) [7.5.1]

BUILDING COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT POLICY



Directorate: Infrastructure, Assets and Planning
Responsible Manager: Manager Statutory Services
Review Due: March 2025
Adoption: Council
Date Adopted:

Acknowledgement

Central Goldfields Shire Council acknowledges and extends appreciation for the Dja Dja Wurrung People, the Traditional Owners of the land that we are on.

We pay our respects to leaders and Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture, and the hopes of all Dja Dja Wurrung People.

We express our gratitude in the sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual, and cultural costs of sharing and out hope that we may walk forward together in harmony and in the spirit of healing.

1. Purpose

This policy details Councils legal responsibilities under the Building Act (Act) 1993 and the Building Regulations (Regulations) 2018.

This policy provides a compliance and enforcement framework for the Building Services unit.

2. Application and Scope

This Policy applies to Officers delegated under:

- S12 Municipal Building Surveyor Package
- S7 Instrument of Sub- Delegation by CEO
- I1 Financial Delegations from CEO to Staff

Council operates building compliance and enforcement provisions including:

- Building work undertaken without a Building Permit,
- Unsafe buildings and land, and
- Regulation of Places of Public Entertainment.

The policy instigates Council actions to oblige property and building owners to take responsibility for their private assets. Failure to act on Council orders to remediate building of

BUILDING COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT POLICY

non-compliance can lead to prosecution hearings in the Magistrates Court for Summary Offences.

This policy provides a framework for an equitable, transparent, and consistent approach to compliance and enforcement activities undertaken by the Central Goldfields Shire Council.

Council's Building Enforcement goals and a general overview of Council's preferred mode of conduct are discussed.

3. Definitions

Authorised Officer: means a person who is authorised by Council or the Chief Executive Officer under delegation to carry out specific functions under this and other relevant policies.

Community: means residents, rate payers, business owners, visitors and or property owners within the Central Goldfields Shire Council municipality.

Municipal Building Surveyor: means a professional who is responsible for ensuring that buildings are safe, accessible, and energy efficient. They are appointed by the local council and are involved throughout the building process.

Building Surveyor (limited): means a building surveyor (limited) in Victoria, Australia is a building professional who can oversee construction of Class 1 and 10 buildings that are up to three stories in height.

Commercial Builders: are responsible for managing and arranging the carrying out of all components of building work for the construction of commercial buildings and structures.

Domestic Builders: are associated with the construction, renovation, improvement, or maintenance of a home.

4. General Provisions

4.1. Building work undertaken without a Building Permit

The Building Act 1993 (Vic) states that building work must not be carried out unless a building permit is issued and in force, or unless the work is exempt from requiring a permit.

Consequences of Working Without a Permit:

- **Safety Risks:** Unregulated building work can compromise the safety of occupants and the structure itself.
- **Insurance Issues:** Insurance companies may refuse coverage for damages or claims if building work was done without the proper permits.
- **Resale Problems:** If a property is sold with illegal building work, it can lead to legal and financial problems for the seller.
- **No Retrospective Permits:** A building permit cannot be issued retrospectively for work that has already been completed

4.2. Unsafe Buildings and Land

Council is the first point of contact for reporting unsafe buildings or illegal building work.

- **Safety:** Unsafe buildings pose a risk to occupants and passers-by.
- **Compliance:** Building work without a permit is illegal and can cause problems with insurance, resale, and other legal matters.

BUILDING COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT POLICY

- **Enforcement:** Councils will investigate and work with owners to resolve issues.

4.3. Regulation of Places of Public Entertainment (POPE).

A person must not conduct public entertainment in a POPE unless an occupancy permit has been issued for the entertainment. A POPE cannot be used for public entertainment without a valid occupancy permit. To obtain a permit, an application needs to be made to the Municipal Building Surveyor.

Council regulates POPEs to ensure public safety and well-being by requiring permits, enforcing safety standards, and ensuring adequate facilities for events, particularly those with an elevated risk or large attendance.

- **Occupancy Permits:**

A Place of Public Entertainment (POPE) occupancy permit is required for public meetings or events that occupy a space or building greater than 500m².

- **Safety Requirements:**

These permits ensure events comply with safety requirements, such as exits, fire safety, and public amenities.

- **Conditions of Permits:**

Occupancy permits may include conditions regarding the use of the facility, such as the attendance of safety officers, fire safety equipment, evacuation procedures, and safe storage of flammable materials.

- **Temporary Structures:**

Large temporary structures also require occupancy permits from the VBA for the temporary structure.

5. Principles

5.1. Our Compliance Principles

We administer the Building Act 1993, having regard to its objectives and the functions of the Council specified in the Act. These include the protection of public health, safety, and amenity in the built environment.

All compliance and enforcement activities undertaken by Council will be undertaken in accordance with the following principles. They guide our leadership and staff in the delivery of a safe and well-built environment for our community.

Proportionate and Outcomes based:

Our compliance and enforcement approach is driven by clear outcomes which are articulated and measured to ensure that we are making a difference to the community.

Our effort is focused on addressing the most significant risks to the community and the environment to maximise the outcomes achieved. This approach accepts that risks or non-compliance should be treated according to their significance and therefore, should not all be treated in the same way.

Informed and evidence based:

We gather knowledge and evidence, including information provided by the community, and we use it to inform risk assessments and apply 'just in time' education or, where necessary, targeted, and proportionate regulatory interventions.

BUILDING COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT POLICY

Proportionate and graduated:

We consider factors such as whether breaches of the law were intentional, reckless, or repeated, and the impact of the breach in our decision making. This means that our approach will be tailored and proportionate to the circumstances, from providing information and advice about how to comply with the law through to imposing fines, cancelling licences and permits or prosecuting for serious offences.

Collaborative:

We collaborate with our community, First Nations Australians, stakeholders and with other regulators, providing opportunities to shape our approach to achieving suitable compliance outcomes.

Transparent:

We are committed to transparency in the application and delivery of our compliance policies, priorities, actions, and outcomes. We believe that being transparent works to hold Central Goldfields Shire Council accountable to the community and encourages compliance with the law. Officers operate in accordance with the Central Goldfields Shire Public Transparency Policy and Privacy Policy.

Safe:

We will ensure that our compliance activities are undertaken in a manner that is safe for our staff and the community.

5.2. Owner and builder obligations

Our principles reflect our commitment to delivering our regulatory role and the standard of conduct that we deliver. They apply to enforcement decision-making and how we coordinate our efforts and functions. We apply these principles when exercising discretion and using our regulatory powers.

Owners of buildings

Must ensure that building work carried out on their land has a building permit and that building work is overseen by a building surveyor as required.

Registered builders

Must ensure that the building work under a permit is carried out in accordance with the Act, regulations, and the building permit (s16(4A)). Must follow directions or orders of the MBS, including Directions to Fix.

Investigations are prioritised based on the risk profile of an individual enforcement matter. A risk assessment is used for all enforcement cases.

The cases escalated for investigation and sanctions are based on our risk criteria and strategic objectives.

We prioritise our compliance monitoring and enforcement actions across our operations:

- In compliance monitoring, this includes the targeting and depth of inspections and audits of compliance.
- When responding to reports from community or industry, this includes when reports are escalated and how we engage with practitioners to address non-compliance.
- When applying sanctions for non-compliances, actions can range from formal warnings to legal proceedings.

BUILDING COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT POLICY

Cases escalated for investigation and sanctions are based on our risk criteria and strategic objectives.

The is determined via investigations and are based on:

- Identified serious life, health, safety, or structural issues.
- Identified legal harms and regulatory priorities.
- Systemic issues with a practitioner such as repeat offences, or failures to follow directions.
- Failure of property owners and/or builders to discharge their fundamental obligations such as acting on non-compliances.
- A pattern of industry risk that must be addressed.
- An identified need to act to prevent future non-compliance.

5.2.1. Case triaging

Council prioritises cases according to a building enforcement procedure using a risk assessment methodology. Building case files are held in prioritised risk categories.

Councils risk assessment incorporates both physical and safety risks to occupiers and users of the land, or the health and safety risk to the users of adjacent buildings and land; and the legal and reputation risk to Council for failure to act.

5.2.2. Deterrence

Council acts to resolve building issues directly. In using compliance and enforcement, Council seeks an outcome that provides specific and general deterrence on non-compliance.

Deterrence is Councils primary aim as it provides the most efficient use of time and resources and ensures the best outcome for all parties. Enforcement action and penalties are designed to provide disincentives for an individual in undertaking any repeated future illegal activities.

The utility of a penalty can be increased by the publication of successful prosecutions.

Council will consider whether media releases and publication of penalties for offences under the Building Act will create and foster a level of general deterrence by the public.

5.2.3. Case management

Council will ensure a case is reviewed at regular intervals for procedural fairness and the viability of any proposed actions.

The reviewing of a file for procedural fairness and bias must be flagged at the major decision points (e.g. prior to the issuing of Building Orders, applications for search warrants and referral to the Prosecution Panel).

Councils internal review panel provides an unbiased independent review process for fairness and proportionality of an enforcement response.

A final review of procedural fairness, real or apprehended bias must be undertaken by Council's legal representatives.

BUILDING COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT POLICY

5.2.4. Limitations

Section 241 (7) of the Act prescribes the time limitations for a prosecution for the various offences in the Building Act.

Management of any file must track the time limitation that applies to any specific file, and action any responses within the statutory time frames

5.3. Council led building works

Section 121 of the Act authorises Council to carry out work following a Building Order or Emergency Order being issued by the Municipal Building Surveyor or delegate of the MBS.

Once the expiry date of an Order has passed then Council can carry out the works specified in the order. Council is permitted to recover the cost in the appropriate Court.

Consideration will be given to the use of section 121 of the Act in expediting urgent outcomes, to mitigate health and safety risks to the public and occupiers of a building, land, or a Place of Public Entertainment.

Council may consider legal advice in deciding the best outcome and mitigation of public risk, considering risk to Council, and fairness and equity to a building or landowner/occupier.

6. Review

This Policy must be reviewed a minimum of once every 4 years.

7. Human Rights Statement

It is considered that this policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006). Central Goldfields Shire Council is committed to consultation and cooperation between management and employees.

8. Relevant Legislation and Council Policies

- Building Act 1993
- Building Regulations 2018
- VBA Prosecution Policy
- Office of the Public Prosecutor – Prosecution Policy
- Interpretation of Legislation Act (act)
- VBA Practice Note 5
- VBA Compliance and Enforcement Policy Framework
- Public Transparency Policy
- Privacy Policy

7.6 2025 Local Laws - Final version for consultation

Author: Manager Statutory Services

Responsible Officer: General Manager Infrastructure Assets and Planning

The Officer presenting this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to recommend release of the General Local Law 2025 for a final round of public consultation prior to adoption.

The proposed Local Law 2025 incorporates changes that respond to identified community issues, feedback received on the current Local Law (2015), and community consultation completed in August 2024.

A legal review of these changes has been completed and a final draft formatted. The Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) empowers Council to make local laws. How they are made, and their application has been amended to improve the relevance and effectiveness of local laws.

The release of the final draft will circulate the new laws and validate the community impact for the proposed changes. This step will test confidence on the suitability of the proposed changes ahead of adoption and gazettal.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolves to release the final draft General Local Law 2025 for public consultation for the period 2 June to 27 June 2025.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2021-2025:

The Community's vision: **Leading Change**
4. Transparent decision making.

Initiative: Provide financial sustainability and good governance

Victorian Legislation:

- Central Goldfields Shire Council General Local Law 2015
- Local Laws – Local Government Act 2020, Division 3 of Part 3 (sections 71 to 87)
- Community engagement policy and principles – Local Government Act 2020 (sections 55 and 56)
- Common seal and local laws – Local Government Act 2020 (section 14(2)(b))
- Infringement Act 2006
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

Council Policies:

- Community and Compliance Enforcement Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Service Charter Policy
- Public Transparency Policy

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Local Laws are made by Local Government Authorities in response to perceived problems within the Council area and community. Councils' General Local Law is intended to mitigate or eliminate these problems and ensure the community is aware of local issues and compliance obligations.

Central Goldfields Shire Council (CGSC) General Local Laws were gazetted in 2015 under the Local Government Act 1989. Under the Local Government Act 2020, Section 84 (Sunset Provision), a Local Law expires after 10 years whether it has been amended in the meantime. This calendar year (2025) marks the 10-year expiry of the current local law, and the only way to 'renew' a Local Law is to develop a new one.

In late 2023 CGSC engaged the community on the current 2015 Local Laws, receiving 89 responses during this engagement. As part of the consultation, priority issues were identified for review and incorporation into new draft laws. Officers paid particular attention to common complaints and requests received by the compliance team in this work.

A briefing workshop with Councillors was conducted in May 2024 and approval to commence the consultation phase was adopted at the July 2024 Council meeting. The final General Local Law 2025 has been drafted by Council officers and reviewed by Macquarie Local Government Lawyers following the extensive online and in-person engagement process.

A community impact statement was prepared to assist in focusing community attention to the 32 proposed changes within the draft laws. This summary of amendments was provided and made available with the draft General Local Law throughout July and August 2024, with an online survey to gauge community opinion. The survey received 92 responses which are detailed in the response report and results were used to clarify some of laws or make minor modifications.

Council officers have worked with Macquarie Local Government Lawyers to incorporate community feedback and to draft the final Local Law 2025 for review of Council prior to seeking adoption before October 2025.

REPORT

The final draft General Local Law 2025 introduces thirty-eight (38) changes/amended clauses. This includes either a substantial rewrite of the law, the introduction of a new clause entirely or clause deletion. The changes are in response to community consultation, feedback and legal advice on identified issues where Council powers were limited or did not exist.

The changed laws will provide Council officers the ability to respond to both existing and emerging community issues. The judicious use of these powers is supported by Council's Community and Compliance Enforcement Policy. The policy was renewed and adopted at the December 2024 Council meeting.

The last phase of consultation provides our community with transparency in our law-making process. The 2025 General Local Laws will now be published on Councils engagement platform prior to certification, Council adoption and final Victorian Government gazettal.

To facilitate this, CGSC must have achieved legislative compliance in the creation and operation of the laws and obtain solicitor certification. In doing so, Council must have demonstrated best practice in the explanation of Local Laws matters to its community.

This report supports the renewal process, builds on the feedback from the community engagement process, and provides the final recommended clauses.

To ensure the renewed General Local Law is gazetted, the following steps will be followed:

- Certification from a solicitor stating that they are of the opinion that the proposed local law is consistent with the local law requirements.
- The certificate obtained is tabled at a Council meeting at which the proposed local law is to be made.
- After a local law is adopted, the Council must publish a notice stating the title of the local law, the objectives of the local law, the effect of the local law and that it is available for inspection at the Council's office and on the internet site of Council.
- The notice is to be published in the Government Gazette, on the council's internet site and in accordance with the regulations.

In reporting to Councillors on the project and preparing revised laws, officers have followed guiding principles, provided by Local Government Victoria:

- Identifying the problem sought to be addressed
- Relating the problem to council objectives
- Measuring the success of local law
- Considering alternatives to a local law
- Adopting a risk management approach
- Deciding the regulatory approach
- Ensuring least burden/greatest advantage
- Considering restrictions on competition
- Setting fees and penalty levels and dealing with permits and permit conditions
- Adopting a performance-based approach
- Effectively consulting with the local community

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

Throughout the project, Council officers delivered a community engagement plan that considered the following issues.

- The council must make a Local Law in accordance with its community engagement policy.
- Council must publish a notice stating the objectives of the proposed local law, the intended effect of the proposed Local Law and that a copy is available for inspection at the office of Council and on the internet and the community engagement that applies.
- A notice must be published on the Council's internet site and in accordance with the regulations.
- The council must ensure that a copy of the proposed Local Law is available for inspection at the office of the Council, and on the internet site.

- If notice has been given and it is proposed to alter the Local Law which will affect the rights or responsibilities of any person, the Council must go through the community engagement process in respect of that alteration.

Utilising Councils engagement platform, formal consultation on the proposed laws ran from the 26 July to 30 August 2024 and produced the following outputs:

- A survey responses report with graphical information without long written responses.
- Survey written responses including full written details of each question.
- Local Law review details spreadsheet information all summarised together.

The consultation and engagement yielded valuable information that has been incorporated into the revised laws.

Feedback on the key issues is summarised in the below table:

Issue	Community Feedback	Outcome
Motorised Recreation Vehicles	There was general support for this new law, however concerns were raised around the limited times of day allowed.	Officers reviewed this to align more closely with EPA guidelines around noise, allowing more time than in the draft Local Law.
Dogs on High St, Maryborough	There is clear support to allow dogs on High Street, Maryborough. The communities' biggest concern was cleanliness and control of dogs.	Based on community feedback, this Local Law will be removed in 2025. Officers will address the concern of cleanliness by placing signage on High Street and issuing fines to those not picking up after their dog.
Animals on land in residential areas	Land sizes and animal numbers were reviewed based on feedback. Council received many comments about cat curfews.	These are not included in the draft Local Law as this is covered under the Domestic Animals Act 1994.
Open air burning	This law covers issues outside of CFA legislation, as Council often receives complaints or safety concerns of smoke coming from neighbouring properties. There is some confusion with clause wording.	Officers have improved and clarified exceptions under this Law to ensure it clear for the community when and how lighting a fire is permitted.
Shopping Trolleys	This proposed new Law has been generally supported by the community.	Officers noted community care on streetscape issues. This clause will be communicated to local supermarkets ahead of the new Laws.
Drones	A new Law is designed to provide protection for Maryborough Aerodrome and to reduce air safety risks.	A new Law is designed to provide protection for Maryborough Aerodrome and to reduce air safety risks.
Charity Collection Bins	New Law in response to regulate the placement of charity collection bins in a public place	New Law in response to regulate the placement of charity collection bins in a public place

Table 1: Key issue feedback - CGSC Draft Local Laws 2025

FINANCIAL& RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Before a Local Law can be gazetted, a certificate from an Australian lawyer with at least five years in the legal profession must be obtained stating the proposed local law is consistent with the local law requirement.

The 2024/25 budget allocated \$10,000 for the remaining renewal process.

The project plan has allowed a maximum of six months for this completion

RISK MANAGEMENT

This report addresses multiple strategic risks from including:

Governance - Failure to transparently govern and embrace good governance practices by ensuring that the Council has a fair and transparent General Local Law.

Community Engagement - Inadequate stakeholder management or engagement impacting brand reputation and community satisfaction in Council decision making by ensuring our community has participated in the development of a new General Local Law.

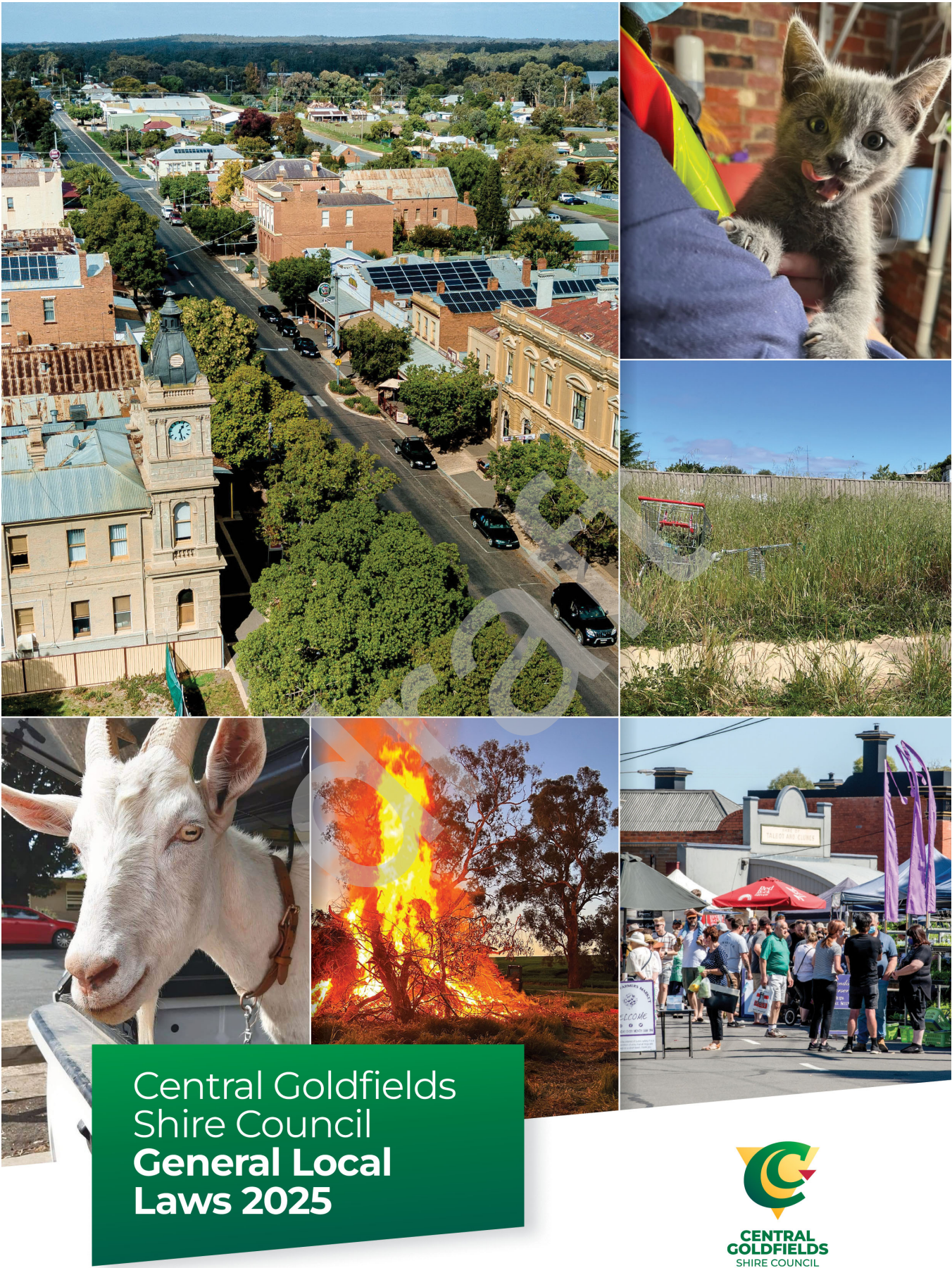
Legislative Compliance - Failure to manage our compliance with relevant legislative requirements by ensuring smooth transition from a sun-setting legal instrument to a new General Local Law
In addition to Councils' strategic risks, sound community engagement on the development of a new General Local Law will minimise the reputational risk to Council on what are substantial compliance changes.

CONCLUSION

The final draft CGSC Local Laws 2025 are prepared for public consultation. In consideration of the regulatory impact from the revised laws to the Central Goldfields community, it is recommended that Council resolves to release the final General Local Law 2025 for public consultation for a four-week public period, from the 2nd of June 2025 to the 27th of June 2025.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 CGSC General Local Law 2025 Revised [7.6.1]
2. Attachment 2 CGSC General Local Laws 2025 listed changes 2nd to 3rd draft [7.6.2]
3. Attachment 3 CGSC Local Laws Council Community Impact Statement Final changes [7.6.3]



Central Goldfields
Shire Council
**General Local
Laws 2025**



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Central Goldfields Shire Council General Local Law 2025

PART 1 – PRELIMINARY

1.1 Local Law

This General Local Law 2025 is made under section 71 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and section 42 of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of this Local Law are to provide for:

- (a) the peace, order, and good government of the municipality;
- (b) a safe and healthy environment so that the community can enjoy a quality of life that meets its expectations;
- (c) the safe, fair use and enjoyment of public places;
- (d) the protection and enhancement of the amenity and environment of the municipality;
- (e) the fair and reasonable use and enjoyment of private land; and
- (f) the uniform and fair administration of this Local Law.

1.3 Commencement

This Local Law commences on the day it is made by Council resolution.

1.4 Revocation of Local Law

On the commencement of this Local Law, Council's General Local Law 2015 is revoked, save that any notice or consent given, or any business, matter or thing commenced, made, or done under that Local Law, is not affected.

1.5 Application of this Local Law

- (1) This Local Law applies throughout the municipality.
- (2) This Local Law does not apply where any act or thing is authorised by any Act, Rule, Regulation or Planning Scheme.

1.6 Definitions

In this Local Law, the following words have the meaning given to them unless stated otherwise:

Act

means the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Advertising Sign

means a board, notice, banner, or similar device used for the purposes of soliciting sales, notifying people where goods and services may be obtained, advising or directing people to an event or festival or promoting elections or political campaigns.

Alcohol

means a beverage intended for human consumption with an alcohol content greater than 0.5 percentum by volume at a temperature of 20 degrees Celsius.

Animal Housing

means any building or structure used to contain or house an animal.

Authorised Officer

means a person appointed by Council under section 224 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Barbeque

means a structure, device, or contraption (not enclosed in a building) which is used primarily as a cooking facility.

Bird

includes poultry.

Building Site

means any land on which building work is carried out.

Built-Up Area

means an area in which there are buildings on the land next to the road, or there is street lighting, at intervals not over 100 metres for a distance of at least 500 metres or if the road is shorter than 500 metres for the whole road.

Bulk Rubbish Container

means a bin, container or other structure designed or used for holding a substantial quantity of rubbish that is unable to be lifted or relocated without mechanical assistance but does not include bins or containers used in connection with the regular collection of domestic, commercial, industrial or trade waste.

Camp / Camping

means erecting and occupying a tent or other similar structure but does not include a caravan or motor home.

Caravan

means a vehicle used or adapted for living and designed to be towed by another vehicle and includes vehicles without wheels or axles whether it is resting directly on the ground or on blocks or other supports, and any structure, awning, veranda, lean-to carport or other enclosed or partly enclosed area used in conjunction with a caravan while it is stationary.

Commercial Waste

means waste generated by businesses, institutions, and industries.

Council

means Central Goldfields Shire Council.

Chief Executive Officer

means the person appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of the Council, or person acting on their behalf.

Council Land

means land, buildings and facilities which are owned, occupied vested in, cared for or managed by the Council, and includes areas which the public may access, whether an entry fee is paid or not.

Dilapidated

means a building which is in a state of significant disrepair or has deteriorated or fallen into a state of partial ruin as a result of damage, age, neglect, poor maintenance, or misuse. This may be characterised by a state or condition of a building which, in the opinion of an Authorised Officer, has:

- (a) missing, broken or deteriorated exterior cladding;
- (b) deteriorated guttering or downpipes;
- (c) broken or missing windows, window-awnings, eave lining or doors;
- (d) missing or broken roofing;
- (e) deteriorated internal gates and fences;
- (f) inadequate or no maintenance; and/or
- (g) any other building condition in a state of significant disrepair or which is a detriment to the appearance of the surrounding area.

Farming area

means any part of the municipality in which farming activity is the predominant land use.

Farm animal

means any horse, cattle, camel, donkey, mule, deer, goat, ox, ostrich, emu, alpaca, llama, or pigs.

Fire Pit

means a pit dug into the ground or encased in a structure (of masonry or steel) in which a fire is kept burning for cooking or warmth.

Heavy Vehicle

means a motor vehicle or trailer that has a Gross Vehicle Mass greater than 4.5 tonnes.

Land

includes structures permanently fixed to the land.

Livestock

has the same meaning as defined in the *Impounding of Livestock Act 1994*, namely an animal (including a bird) of any species used in connection with primary production or kept for recreational purposes other than a dog or a cat.

Long vehicle

means a vehicle that, together with any load or projection, is at least 7.5 metres.

Municipality

means the municipal district of the Central Goldfields Shire Council.

Nuisance

includes any item, matter, animal, thing, or behaviour which is liable to be dangerous to health or is offensive.

Penalty Unit

has the same meaning as section 110 of the *Sentencing Act 1991*.

Permit

means a permit issued under the Local Law which authorises a use or activity.

Planning Scheme

means the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme.

Public Place

has the same meaning as in the *Summary Offences Act 1966* and includes the following:

- (a) parks, gardens, reserves or other places of public recreation or resort;
- (b) vacant land or vacant space adjoining any road;
- (c) roads; and
- (d) Council buildings.

Residential Area

means land zoned within one of the residential zones under the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme.

Road

has the same meaning as in the *Local Government Act 1989* and applies to roads for which the Council has responsibility under the *Road Management Act 2004* but does not include a State Road under the *Road Management Act 2004* unless a provision in the Local Law is expressly applied to a State road.

Rural Area

means land zoned within one of the rural zones under the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme.

Skip Bin

means a large open-topped waste container designed for loading onto a vehicle specifically designed for that purpose.

Toy Vehicle

means equipment designed to be propelled by (but not limited to) human power and includes a skateboard, scooter, roller skates and in line skates but excludes a bicycle.

Trading

means selling, offering exposing or promoting the sale, supply, exchange or hire of any goods, merchandise, commodity, article, thing or service or advertising for the purpose of soliciting sales, notifying people where goods or services may be obtained or advertising or directing people to an event or festival or a fundraising stall or activity operating to raise money for a community group charity or not for profit organisation (excluding highway collections).

Unsightly

includes land, which in the opinion of an Authorised Officer, may include:

- (a) excessive waste;
- (b) discarded, rejected, surplus or abandoned solid or liquid materials;
- (c) an accumulation of building waste and materials;
- (d) unregistered vehicles;
- (e) disassembled or incomplete vehicles, excessive machinery, machinery parts or similar;
- (f) excessive dead, diseased or dying vegetation;
- (g) excessively long grass and / or weeds;
- (h) a disused excavation; and / or
- (i) anything being built which is left incomplete or any other thing which is detrimental to the appearance of the surrounding area.

Vehicle

has the same meaning as motor vehicle in section 3 of the *Road Safety Act 1986*.

PART 2 – ROADS AND PUBLIC PLACES

2.1 Behaviour in the Municipality

A person must not, on Council land, on a road or in a public place:

- (a) commit any nuisance;
- (b) conduct an activity or behave in a manner that may likely interfere with another person's reasonable use and enjoyment of the municipal place;
- (c) act in a manner which endangers any person or animal;
- (d) damage, destroy or interfere with anything; or
- (e) act contrary to any conditions of use or Council sign.

2.2 Consumption and Possession of Alcohol

- (1) A person must not, without a permit, consume any alcohol or have in their possession an open container of alcohol on Council land or on a road unless one of the exemptions under sub-clause (2) applies.
- (2) The requirement to obtain a permit under sub-clause (1) does not apply to a person who is consuming alcohol or who has in their possession an open container of alcohol:
 - (a) (a) in a licensed or authorised premises under the *Liquor Control Reform Act 1998*;
 - (b) in an area designated by Council, as shown on Council's website, including picnic areas between sunrise and sunset, unless an Authorised Officer reasonably believes that:
 - i. the person in possession of an open container of alcohol is intoxicated; or
 - ii. the consumption of alcohol by a person or group of persons is causing a nuisance, is intimidating or is disturbing others in the vicinity;
 - (c) on a sporting field or reserve during a time when that sporting field or reserve is in the exclusive use and control of an incorporated body that has a hire agreement or other arrangement with Council except:
 - i. when the incorporated body has made a written request for an alternative arrangement as to times and Council has consented; or
 - ii. during and one hour immediately before and immediately after events intended for participants under 18 years.

- (3) In determining whether to grant a permit under sub-clause (1), Council must take into account:
 - (a) the nature of the event; and
 - (b) any other matter relevant to the circumstances of the application.
- (4) Where an Authorised Officer believes on reasonable grounds that a person is contravening or has contravened sub-clause (1), the Authorised Officer may direct the person to seal or dispose of the contents of any unsealed container of alcohol in that person's possession.

2.3 Street Parties, Festivals and Processions

A person must not, without a permit, organise, hold, or participate in or on any public place any:

- (a) street party;
- (b) procession;
- (c) rally;
- (d) demonstration;
- (e) circus;
- (f) wedding;
- (g) festival;
- (h) event;
- (i) other public gathering; or
- (j) commercial filming.

2.4 Fireworks

A person must not, without a permit, discharge, cause or allow to be discharged any fireworks, on private land or in a public place.

2.5 Trading Activities

A person must not, without a permit, on Council land or on a road:

- (a) place any temporary or permanent advertising sign;
- (b) display any goods;
- (c) place any outdoor eating furniture or associated facilities;
- (d) place any structure for the purpose of selling or offering to sell any goods or services;
- (e) sell or offer for sale any goods or services carried about or placed on the person or any other moveable thing;
- (f) solicit business or gifts of money or fundraise;
- (g) collect any waste materials; or
- (h) busk, or authorise another person to do so.

2.6 Bulk Rubbish Containers (Skip Bins)

A person must not, without a permit, place or authorise the placement of a bulk rubbish container on Council land or on a road.

2.7 Obstructions to the Safe Use of the Road

- (5) An owner or occupier of land must ensure that any vegetation, sign, structure, or the condition of anything on that land does not:
 - (a) obstruct or interfere with the safe and fair use of the road by pedestrians and vehicles by limiting visibility or affecting accessibility of the road, traffic control devices or other users of the road;
 - (b) cause a hazard to pedestrians or vehicles because of its location, condition or because it is unsafe; or
 - (c) encroach onto or over Council land or a road at a height less than 3 metres.

2.8 Commercial Waste

- (1) A person using a commercial waste collection service that is not provided by Council must provide evidence of that service when requested to do so by an Authorised Officer.
- (2) An owner or occupier of land must ensure that any commercial or trade waste bin kept on that land is:
 - (a) constructed of impervious materials, is watertight and fly and pest proof;
 - (b) emptied before it overflows but at least every 7 days or when an Authorised Officer directs;
 - (c) maintained and kept in a clean condition and free from offensive odours;
 - (d) kept in a manner which displays a sign indicating the type of waste or material which may be deposited and stating that it is an offence to deposit material not listed within that sign; and
 - (e) not stored or placed on Council land or a road without a permit.
- (3) A person must not place commercial waste in a public litter or recycling receptacle provided by Council.
- (4) A person must not contaminate any household bins with commercial or trade waste.

2.9 Asset Protection Permits

A person in charge of a building site, including the owner, builder, or developer of that building site to which a building permit applies, must obtain an asset protection permit before commencing building works on that building site.

2.10 Repair of Vehicles

A person must not dismantle, paint, repair or carry out maintenance on a vehicle on a road, except to the minimum extent necessary for the purpose of removing it.

2.11 Sale of Motor Vehicles

A person must not park a motor vehicle on Council land for the purpose of promoting the vehicle for sale.

2.12 Noise

A person must not, without a permit, use any sound amplification equipment:

- (a) in a public place: or
- (b) on land adjacent to a public place if the noise resulting from the use of the sound amplification equipment is capable of being heard in the public place.

2.13 Toy Vehicles

A person must not ride on, cause or allow to be ridden a toy vehicle in a public place, including in an area designated by Council for the use of toy vehicles as shown on Council's website, so as to inconvenience, obstruct, hinder, endanger, alarm or prevent the free passage of any person or other user of the public place or designated area.

NOTE: The use of electric powered scooters (e-scooters) is regulated within Victoria by the Road Safety Road Rules 2017.

2.14 Drones

A person must not use a drone within the reserve of the Maryborough Aerodrome, without prior, written consent from the Maryborough Aerodrome Manager.

NOTE: The use of drones within Australia is regulated by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) being the body which is responsible for administering and enforcing the Civil Aviation Safety Regulations 1998.

2.15 Displaying Property Number

- (1) Where Council has allocated a number to a property, the owner or occupier of that property must ensure that:
 - (a) the property is marked with the allocated number.
 - (b) the number is of a sufficient size and free from obstruction so that it can be clearly read under normal lighting conditions from the road immediately adjacent to the front boundary of the property; and
 - (c) in the case of a property in a rural zone the number is reflective.
- (2) An owner or occupier must ensure the Council allocated property number for a flat or unit is displayed on the front door or clearly visible from the front entrance of the dwelling.

2.16 Shopping Trolleys

- (1) A person who provides shopping trolleys for use by customers, must ensure that they are not left on any land, road or in public place unless it is in an area signed by the shopping trolley owner as designated for that purpose.
- (2) An Authorised Officer may impound a shopping trolley that has been left in an area that is not designated as an area for the return of shopping trolleys.
- (3) An owner of shopping trolleys must:
 - (a) ensure that the shopping trolleys belonging to the owner's business are not left in an area unless it is set aside for shopping trolley collection;
 - (b) demonstrate to Council's satisfaction that they have a regular collection system in place and undertake to respond to reports to collect shopping trolleys responsively;
 - (c) ensure that the shopping trolleys display appropriate business signage to identify ownership of the trolley; and
 - (d) collect a shopping trolley within 24 hours after being directed to do so by an Authorised Officer.

2.17 Refuse on Building Sites

During the course of carrying out building works, the owner of the building site, person in charge of carrying out the building works, and each employee, agent, contractor, or sub-contractor of the builder must ensure that:

- (a) a suitable refuse facility is placed on the building site for the deposit of building refuse into that facility;
- (b) the refuse facility is designed and constructed so as to prevent any building refuse within the refuse facility being blown out of it;
- (c) the lid on the refuse facility remains closed at all times except when placing building refuse within it;
- (d) the refuse facility is emptied immediately once it becomes full or when directed to do so by an Authorised Officer;
- (e) all windblown building refuse created or accumulated on the building site is deposited into the refuse facility upon the building refuse being created or accumulated;
- (f) the refuse facility is removed from the building site within 7 days of the cessation of building work; and
- (g) any vehicle exiting the building site does not carry any mud or slurry onto the adjoining or nearby road.

2.18 Damage or interfering with Roads or Council Land

A person must not destroy, damage, remove, interfere with, attach to, or change in any way anything in, on or under a road or Council land.

2.19 Drains and Storm Water Discharge

A person must not, without a permit, alter, modify, tap into, damage or destroy any public drain.

2.20 Planting on Nature Strips

A person must not, without a permit, on a nature strip:

- (a) plant or remove any vegetation (excluding the mowing of non-native grass);
- (b) undertake any landscaping; or
- (c) remove any soil.

PART 3 – ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Dangerous and Unsightly Land

- (1) An owner or occupier of land must ensure that the land:
 - (a) does not constitute a danger to health or property;
 - (b) does not constitute a fire hazard;
 - (c) is not unsightly or detrimental to the general amenity of the neighbourhood;
 - (d) does not permit or allow the land, including the nature strip, to be kept in an untidy or unsightly condition, state or manner which is detrimental to, or detracts from, the general amenity of the neighbourhood;
 - (e) is not used for the storage of any unregistered vehicle, derelict vehicle, plant, or other equipment which are detrimental to or detracts from the general amenity;
 - (f) does not display more than 2 unregistered vehicles, derelict vehicles, plant, or other equipment which are detrimental to, or detract from, the general amenity in a residential zone;
 - (g) is not kept as a haven for uncontrolled vermin, noxious weeds or insects which constitutes or is likely to constitute a danger, hazard or nuisance to any person or property; or
 - (h) is not used for the storage of any materials or other substances which is dangerous or likely to cause danger to life or property.
- (2) In determining whether land is dangerous or unsightly, an Authorised Officer may have regard to whether:
 - (a) there are any materials or substances on the land that are kept in such a way that they may be flammable or explosive;
 - (b) the way in which the land is kept or items are stored on the land may constitute or contribute to it being a health hazard;
 - (c) the condition of the land, or any part of it, may promote the presence of vermin and pests;
 - (d) the appearance of the land is one of neglect and is out of character with other land in the vicinity; or
 - (e) any other factor which in the opinion of the Authorised Officer renders the land to be dangerous or unsightly.

3.2 Vegetation

An owner or occupier of land must not allow any vegetation on that land, to grow in such a manner which:

- (a) overhangs onto or over the footpath or road to an extent where it impedes or obstructs its reasonable use;
- (b) obstructs traffic signage or impairs the vision of a person travelling along a road adjacent to the land; or
- (c) otherwise interferes with the safe and convenient use of the footpath or road adjacent the land.

3.3 Dilapidated Buildings

The owner of land, which contains any building or other structure which is unoccupied, unfit for occupation or normal use, or is not occupied most of the time, must:

- (a) not permit or allow any structure to become dilapidated or further dilapidated;
- (b) take all reasonable steps to secure the building and land from unauthorised access, including, if required, secure fencing, more adequate locks, and any other security options;
- (c) take reasonable steps to prevent or remedy the land from being a haven for regular anti-social or unlawful behaviour by unauthorised persons;
- (d) maintain any building in a state of good repair and appearance, including undertaking temporary repairs as required to ensure on-site safety and security and to avoid the appearance of neglect which is out of character with other allotments in the vicinity; and
- (e) not allow any graffiti to remain on any building, wall, fence, post or other structure or object erected on that land.

3.4 Burning in the Open Air on Council Land

- (1) In addition to the requirements in the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958* a person must not, without a permit, light a fire on Council land except where:
 - (a) the fire is in a permanent or portable barbecue being used for cooking food; or
 - (b) the fire is lit by an officer, employee, or authorised agent of a public authority in the course of their duty.

NOTE: During the declared fire danger period, open air burning and burning incinerators are regulated by permit requirements and other provisions contained in the Country Fire Authority Act 1958. The Municipal Fire Prevention Officer of Council is authorised under that Act to issue permits during that period. Lighting a fire on a day of Total Fire Ban is an offence under that Act.

3.5 Burning in the Open Air on Private Land

Size of land	Permit requirement	Conditions requirement
Less than 2,000 square metres (0.2 Hectares) (0.4 acres)	Not allowed	Not allowed
2001-4,000 square metres (0.2001-0.4 Hectares) (0.4 – 0.9 acres)	Permit required	With conditions
4,001-40,000 square metres (0.4- 4 Hectares) (0.9 – 10 acres)	No permit required	With conditions
Above 41,000 square metres (4.1 Hectares) (10 acres)	No permit required	With conditions

3.6 Burning in the Open Air – Land 2,000 Square Metres or Less

A person must not light or allow a fire to be lit in the open air on land owned or occupied by them regardless of whether they lit the fire, where the land size is 2,000 square metres or less.

3.7 Burning in the Open Air – Land 2,001 Square Metres or Less Than 4,000 Square Meters

- (1) A person must not, without a permit, light a fire in the open air on land or allow such a fire to be lit on land owned or occupied by them regardless of whether they lit the fire, where the land size is 2,001 square metres or more and is equal to or less than 4,000 square metres.
- (2) Clauses 3.6 and 3.7 do not apply to:
 - (a) a barbecue, pizza oven or other properly constructed appliance while it is being used for cooking food;
 - (b) a fire in a brazier, chimenea or fire pit while it is being used for heating;
 - (c) a tool of trade while being used for the purpose for which it was designed;
 - (d) a fire lit during the course of duty by a member of a fire and emergency services agency; or
 - (e) a fire where Council has granted a permit because it considers that the specific circumstances of the case enable it to provide an exemption.

3.8 Burning in the Open Air – Land Above 4,001 Square Metres up to 40,000 Square Metres

A person may light a fire in the open air on land, or allow such a fire to be lit on land owned or occupied by them regardless of whether they lit the fire, where the land size is 4,001 square metres or more and is equal to or less than 40,000 square metres, provided that:

- (a) the fire is lit or allowed to remain alight according to the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*;
- (b) no more than 3 cubic metres of vegetation is burnt at any one time;
- (c) the fire is not within 50 metres of any neighbouring dwelling;
- (d) water is easily accessible to put out fire or any embers; and
- (e) the fire is manned at all times.

3.9 Burning in the Open Air – Land 40,001 Square Metres or above

- (1) A person may light a fire in the open air on land, or allow such a fire to be lit on land owned or occupied by them regardless of whether they lit the fire, where the land size is 40,001 square metres or above, provided that:
 - (a) no more than 100 cubic metres (e.g. 5 metres wide x 5 metres long x 4 metres high) of vegetation is burnt at any one time;
 - (b) the fire is not within 100 metres of any neighbouring dwelling; and
 - (c) the fire is lit or allowed to remain alight in accordance with clause 3.10.
- (2) Where a person wants to burn in the open air under this clause and the requirements in subclause (1) cannot be complied with, a person must obtain a permit.

3.10 Nuisance from Open Air Burning

- (1) A person who has lit a fire in the open air, or the owner or occupier of the land on which the fire is lit, must ensure that the fire:
 - (a) is not offensive or a nuisance to another person in the vicinity or beyond the property boundary;
 - (b) does not cause a hazard to a person's health;
 - (c) does not have an adverse impact on visibility beyond the property boundary, in reducing the visibility of motorists and other users of a public road;
 - (d) does not create a hazard on or near a public road;
 - (e) the fire or use of the incinerator is supervised by an adult at all times.
 - (f) the vegetation to be burnt is dead and dry prior to lighting it; and
 - (g) at the site of the fire, the wind speed must not exceed 15 kilometres an hour (8 knots).
- (2) For the purpose of sub-clause (1):
A person must not light or allow a fire to remain lit on land owned or occupied by them regardless of whether they lit the fire, if the fire contains any of the following materials:
 - (a) green or wet materials;
 - (b) non timber based building materials;
 - (c) rubber or plastic, including plastic mulch, plant pots and packaging materials;
 - (d) furnishings and carpet;
 - (e) manufactured chemicals;
 - (f) petroleum or oil products;
 - (g) paint, including any container in which paint is kept;
 - (h) food waste;
 - (i) manure and straw;
 - (j) household waste;
 - (k) other offensive, noxious, or toxic matter; or
 - (l) animals or animal parts.

3.11 Issue of Permits to Burn

- (1) The Council or an Authorised Officer may issue an open-air burning permit with conditions or refuse to issue a permit based on the specific circumstances of the matter having regard to:
 - (a) the size of the land;
 - (b) the ability of the landowner to remove the vegetation via more appropriate methods;
 - (c) the proximity to other landowners and risk of smoke nuisance; or
 - (d) any other relevant thing.
- (2) A person who undertakes open air burning for which Council or an Authorised Officer has issued a permit, must comply with the conditions on the permit.

3.12 Motorised Recreation Vehicles

- (1) A person may use or allow others to use, a motorised recreation vehicle on land owned or occupied by them provided that:
 - (a) the land is 2 hectares (4.9 acres) or greater in size;
 - (b) the land is not in a residential zoned area under the Planning Scheme;
 - (c) it is possible to maintain a 50-metre distance from where the motorised recreation vehicle is being used and any neighbouring dwelling;
 - (d) no more than 4 motorised recreation vehicles are used at any one time on land that is 10 hectares (25 acres) or less in size;
 - (e) the motorised recreation vehicle is not used Monday to Friday before 7 am and after 8 pm or on weekends and public holidays before 9 am and after 8 pm;
 - (f) in the opinion of an Authorised Officer, the use of the motorised recreation vehicle does not create a nuisance due to sound, smell, dust, smoke, soil erosion or any other factor that causes a nuisance; and
 - (g) the day of use has not been declared a Total Fire Ban Day under the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*.

3.13 Heavy and Long Vehicles

- (1) A person must not park, store or repair or allow another person to park, store or repair a heavy vehicle or long vehicle on private land, in a residential area that is 2,000 square metres (0.2 hectares) or less in size.
- (2) A person must not, without a permit, park, store, or repair or allow another person to park, store or repair a heavy vehicle or long vehicle on land in a residential zone that is 2,001 square metres or greater in size.
- (3) A person must not cause a nuisance to any other person by parking, storing, or repairing a heavy vehicle or long vehicle on land in a residential zone.

3.14 Camping, Caravans, and Motorhomes

- (1) A person must not, without a permit, camp on, leave or occupy a caravan or motorhome on a road or Council land other than in an area designated by Council for that purpose or where the use is specifically authorised under the Planning Scheme.
- (2) A person may camp on, leave or occupy a caravan or motorhome on land which contains a habitable dwelling provided that:
 - (a) adequate sanitary facilities are provided for any occupant of the caravan, motorhome, or person camping;
 - (b) the caravan or motorhome is sited on the land so that it does not adversely affect the occupants of other properties; and
 - (c) the caravan or motorhome is only for private use and not commercial purposes.
- (3) A person must not, without a permit, leave or occupy a caravan or motorhome, or camp on land which does not contain a habitable dwelling.
- (4) If a permit is granted under sub-clause (3), the caravan or motorhome must:
 - (a) not be fixed to the ground;
 - (b) have grey water storage; and
 - (c) have adequate toilet facilities.
- (5) Where a permit is granted under clause 3.14(3), the owner of the land must apply for a planning permit for a permanent dwelling on that land, within 6 months of the date of issue of that permit.
- (6) Council may exercise its discretion and determine that a permit under sub-clause (3) is not required where an owner occupies a caravan or motorhome of recreational purposes only and for a period not exceeding a total of 90 days per year.

3.15 Domestic Waste and Recycling

- (1) An owner or occupier of land to which Council provides a bin and collection service for domestic waste must:
 - (a) deposit all refuse generated on the land into the bin provided by the Council;
 - (b) wrap waste to minimise windblown litter at the disposal facility;
 - (c) when in a residential zone, place the bin for collection on the nature strip or the kerb as advised by the Council not more than 24 hours before collection;
 - (d) ensure that the bin's lid is closed at all times;
 - (e) keep the bin in a clean, inoffensive, and sanitary condition;
 - (f) return the bin to the land as soon as possible after collection but no later than 24 hours after collection;
 - (g) remove any litter from a road or Council land which has spilled from the bin supplied to the land; and
 - (h) ensure that the land on which the bin is kept is adequately drained and kept in a clean, sanitary, and inoffensive condition; and comply with any requirements that the Council applies to the waste collection service.
- (2) An owner or occupier of land must not:
 - (a) place for collection any refuse other than in a garbage or recycling bin;
 - (b) place for collection more than 1 garbage bin and 1 recycling bin unless permitted by the Council; or
 - (c) damage any garbage or recycling bin.

3.16 Storing Machinery Materials, Goods or Vehicles on Land

- (1) A person must not without a permit, store, assemble or dismantle machinery, vehicles or second-hand goods or materials on land owned or occupied by them.
- (2) The requirement to obtain a permit under sub-clause (1) does not apply if the use:
 - (a) is specifically authorised in the Planning Scheme, or a permit has been granted under the Planning Scheme;
 - (b) is for recreational purposes and is not conducted for financial gain; or
 - (c) the items are not stored in a way that is unsightly or detrimental to the general amenity of the neighbourhood.

3.17 Shipping Containers

A person must not, without a permit, place or allow to be placed a shipping container on land in a residential zone, unless:

- (a) it is permitted under the Planning Scheme; or
- (b) a building permit has been issued under the *Building Act 1993*.

3.18 Charity Collection Bins

A person must not, without a permit, place or allow the placement of a charity collection bin in a public place.

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PART 4 – ANIMALS

4.1 Animal Keeping

- (1) An owner or occupier of land must not, without a permit, keep or allow to be kept, either permanently or temporarily, anymore in number for each type of animal than as set out in the table below:

Type of animal	Maximum allowance
Dogs	2 allowed on land less than 4000 square metres (1 acre) (0,4 hectares) 4 allowed on land 4001 square metres or greater in size <i>Note: Planning controls may apply.</i>
Cats	2 allowed on land less than 4000 square metres (1 acre). 4 allowed on land 4001 square metres or greater in size. <i>Note: Planning controls may apply.</i>
Small animals (rabbits, Guinea pigs, ferrets, and rodents)	6 allowed on land less than 4000 square metres (1 acre). 10 allowed on land 4001 square metres or greater in size <i>Note: Planning controls may apply.</i>
Poultry (other than roosters and peacocks)	10 poultry on land less than 2000 square metres (0.5 acre) 15 poultry on land between 2001 to 10,000 square meters (2.5 acres) <i>Over 10,001 square meters planning controls may apply.</i>
Roosters and Peacocks	0 allowed on land less than 4000 square metres (1 acre) A permit is required on land 4001 square metres (1 acre) or greater in size. <i>Note: Planning controls may apply.</i>
Pigs (including piglets)	0 allowed on land less than 10,000 square metres (2.5 acres) Permit is required for pigs on land from, 10,001 square metres to 40,000 square metres (10 acres) <i>Above 40,000 square metres planning controls may apply.</i>
Sheep	0 allowed on land less than 2,000 square metres or 0.5 acres Permit is required for 10 sheep greater than 2,000 square metres to 40,000 sq metres (10 acres) <i>Above 40,000 metres planning controls may apply.</i>
Other Farm Animals	0 allowed on land less than 4,000 square metres (1 acres) Three in total allowed on land more than 4001 square meters to 10,000 square metres

- (2) The requirement to obtain a permit under sub-clause (1) does not apply:
 - (a) to dogs and cats under 3 months of age;
 - (b) to land that is lawfully used for the purposes of a pet shop, veterinarian business, Council pound, animal breeding or boarding establishment or any other use permitted under the Planning Scheme;
 - (c) if the number of animals kept on land is because of a commercial undertaking on the land and the use is authorised under the Planning Scheme or a permit has been obtained under the Planning Scheme;
 - (d) if the dogs are kept for working stock on farmland which is greater than 40 hectares; or
 - (e) if farm animals are on the land for not more than 1 month and are being used for fire prevention or weed management purposes.

4.2 Keeping Excess Animals

- (1) Unless permitted under the Planning Scheme, an owner or occupier of land must obtain a permit to keep or allow to be kept on land, any more of each species or group of animals than is specified in the table under clause 4.1.
- (2) A permit issued under clause 4.1 is valid for the animals named in the permit at the address stated in the permit. A new permit is required if:
 - (a) any additional animals are acquired; or
 - (b) the animals are moved to a new address within the municipal district.
- (3) In addition to any other permit conditions required by Council, the standard conditions for a permit allowing an excess number of animals to be kept must require:
 - (a) the permit holder to comply with any applicable condition or standard imposed by the Planning Scheme now or in the future;
 - (b) that poultry or animal housing is located on the property so that the amenity of the area or other premises is not affected by nuisance, noise or odour experienced because of proximity of the poultry or animal housing;
 - (c) the permit holder to only construct or use poultry or animal housing that, in the opinion of an Authorised Officer, has adequate roofing, drainage, is rat proof and has a floor paved with impervious material; and
 - (d) all poultry and animal housing to be maintained so that it does not cause a nuisance or offensive conditions or harbour vermin.
- (4) A permit for the keeping of excess numbers of animals is valid for the life of those animals originally permitted.

4.3 Animal Housing

- (5) A person providing housing for animals kept on land must ensure that a nuisance or offensive condition is not caused to adjoining landowners or occupiers and that the animal housing is:
 - (a) constructed and maintained to the satisfaction of the Authorised Officer;
 - (b) kept clean and sanitary at all times;
 - (c) located at a distance from dwellings on other land to the satisfaction of the Authorised Officer; and
 - (d) located at a distance from property boundary to the satisfaction of the Authorised Officer.
- (6) An owner or occupier of land where animals are kept must ensure that food provided for animals is kept in fly and vermin proof buildings or containers other than baled, rolled sheaf hay or silage.
- (7) An owner or occupier of land where animals are kept must ensure that the land is kept free of materials, refuse and vegetation that may harbour or attract rats, mice, or other vermin.
- (8) A person must not feed or encourage the presence of feral, stray or pest animals or allow such animals access to food on the land on which the animals are kept.

4.4 Adequate Fencing

An owner or occupier of any land on which an animal is kept must ensure that the land is adequately fenced so as to prevent the animal's escape from the land.

4.5 Animal Excrement

A person in charge of an animal other than livestock must:

- (a) not permit the excrement of the animal to remain in a public place;
- (b) carry a device suitable for the immediate removal of any excrement that may be deposited by the animal;
- (c) produce the suitable device when requested to do so by an Authorised Officer; and
- (d) comply with a verbal direction given by an Authorised Officer to collect and dispose of the excrement in a proper and sanitary manner.

4.6 Pests, Stray Animals and Wildlife

- (9) An owner or occupier of land must not feed or encourage the presence of pest animals, stray animals, wild birds, or foxes on that land.
- (10) A person must not feed ducks, swans, and other wild birds in public places.

4.7 Wasps and Bees on Private Land

- (1) An owner or occupier of land must ensure that any English or European wasps nesting on the land are destroyed.
- (2) An owner or occupier of any land who keeps bees on that land must do so in accordance with the planning scheme and the relevant Apiary Code of Practice.
- (3) The owner or occupier of any land must ensure that any feral European honey bee hive is destroyed or must ensure that any feral European honeybees that are swarming on the land and are considered by an Authorised Officer to be causing a nuisance to any person, are removed from the land.

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PART 5 – LIVESTOCK

5.1 Grazing and Driving Livestock

- (1) A person must not, without a permit, move or drive any livestock in a public place unless the livestock are being:
 - (a) moved in order to travel a reasonable distance within the municipality from one property to another;
 - (b) relocated by an Authorised Officer;
 - (c) relocated in an emergency to avoid or minimise danger; or
 - (d) moved in accordance with VicRoads guidelines.
- (2) A person must not, without a permit, graze any animal or stock on a road reserve.

PART 6 – ADMINISTRATION

6.1 Applying for a Permit

- (1) A person who wishes to apply for a permit may do so by:
 - (a) lodging with Council an application that contains any information required by this Local Law; and
 - (b) paying to Council the appropriate fee.
- (2) An applicant may be requested to provide additional information before an application for a permit or for exemption is dealt with.
- (3) Council may require a person making an application for a permit to give public notice which will entitle any person to make a submission and to be heard.

6.2 Fees & Charges

- (4) Council may, from time to time, by resolution, determine security bonds, fees, and charges for the purposes of this Local Law.
- (5) In determining any security bond, fees and charges Council may establish a system or structure of fees and charges, including a minimum or maximum fee or charge, if it considers it is appropriate to do so.
- (6) Council may waive, reduce, or alter a fee or charge with or without conditions.

6.3 Issue of permits

Where Council receives an application for a permit, Council may:

- (a) issue a permit in the approved form with or without conditions; or
- (b) refuse to issue a permit.

6.4 Duration of permits

- (7) A permit issued under this Local Law is in force until the expiry date indicated on the permit unless it is cancelled before the expiry date.
- (8) If no expiry date is indicated on the permit, the permit will expire 12 months after the date of issue.

6.5 Conditional Permits

- (1) A permit may be issued with conditions which are considered to be appropriate in the circumstances including:
 - (a) the payment of a fee or charge;
 - (b) the payment of a security bond, other bond or guarantee to Council to secure the proper performance of conditions on a permit or to rectify any damage caused to Council assets as a result of the use or activity allowed by the permit;
 - (c) a time limit to be applied specifying the duration, commencement, or completion date;
 - (d) that the applicant be insured against the risk and to provide a written indemnification of Council against liability arising from the activity or use;
 - (e) the rectification, remedying or restoration of a situation or circumstance;
 - (f) where the applicant is not the owner of the subject property, obtaining the consent of the owner; and
 - (g) the granting of some other permit or authorisation.
- (2) Unless Council decides otherwise, a permit must contain the standard conditions.
- (3) An Authorised Officer may, during the term of a permit, amend the conditions of a permit if they consider it to be appropriate to do so.
- (4) In considering whether it is appropriate to amend the conditions on the permit, an Authorised Officer must have regard to:
 - (a) the purposes for which the conditions were imposed;
 - (b) whether those purposes are adequately achieved by the current conditions;
 - (c) the impact of the proposed amendment on the permit holder and any relevant third parties; and
 - (d) any other relevant matter.

6.6 Amending Permit Conditions

- (1) If an Authorised Officer proposes to amend the conditions on a permit, they must:
 - (a) give the permit holder an opportunity to make submissions on whether the amendment should be made; and
 - (b) consider those submissions before deciding whether to amend the permit.

6.7 Cancellation of Permit

- (1) An Authorised Officer may cancel a permit if they consider that:
 - (a) there has been a serious or ongoing breach of the conditions of the permit;
 - (b) a Notice to Comply has been issued, but not complied with within seven days after the time specified in the Notice to Comply;
 - (c) there was a significant error or misrepresentation in the application for the permit; or
 - (d) in the circumstances, the permit should be cancelled.
- (2) If an Authorised Officer proposes to cancel a permit, they must:
 - (a) give the permit holder an opportunity to make submission on whether the cancellation should occur; and
 - (b) consider those submissions in deciding whether to cancel the permit.

6.8 Council Record of Permits

Council must maintain a record of permits issued, refused, and cancelled, including details of corrections or amendments made to permits and the reasons why a permit was cancelled.

6.9 Exemptions

- (1) An Authorised Officer may by written notice exempt any person or class of persons from the requirement to have a permit, either generally or at specified times.
- (2) In considering whether to grant an exemption under this clause, an Authorised Officer must have regard to:
 - (a) the reasons for which the exemption is sought;
 - (b) the period for which the exemption is sought;
 - (c) whether it would be reasonable, in all the circumstances, to grant the applicant an exemption to apply for a permit;
 - (d) whether the grant of the exemption would be consistent with the purposes of this Local Law;
 - (e) any benefits or detriments that might arise from the grant of the exemption; and
 - (f) any other relevant matter.
- (3) An exemption may be granted subject to conditions.
- (4) A person must comply with the conditions of an exemption.
- (5) An exemption may be amended, cancelled, or corrected as if it were a permit.

PART 7 – ENFORCEMENT

7.1 Offences

A person is guilty of an offence under this Local Law if the person:

- (a) does something which a provision of this Local Law prohibits;
- (b) fails to do something which a provision of this Local Law requires to be done;
- (c) engages in activity without a permit where a provision of this Local Law requires that the person obtain a permit before engaging in that activity;
- (d) fails to comply with a condition of a permit issued under this Local Law;
- (e) fails to comply with a direction of an Authorised Officer under this Local Law;
- (f) makes a false representation or declaration or intentionally omits relevant Information in an application for a permit; or
- (g) fails to comply with conditions of use or a Council sign.

7.2 Penalties

A person guilty of an offence against this Local Law is liable to a penalty

- (1) not exceeding 20 penalty units; and
- (2) in the case of a contravention which continues after a finding of guilt the penalty is 2 penalty units for each day after the finding of guilt for the offence during which the contravention continues.

7.3 Compliance with Directions

A person must comply with any reasonable direction or instruction of an Authorised Officer, when requested to do so in urgent circumstances or for public safety reasons whether or not the person has a permit issued under this Local Law allowing them to do something, conduct an activity, or to occupy Council Land.

7.4 Urgent Circumstances

An Authorised Officer may act to remedy any circumstance which threatens a person's life, health or property, or an animal, without serving a notice under this clause, provided that:

- (a) the circumstance arises out of a person's use of a public place or failure to comply with a provision of this Local Law.
- (b) the action taken is no more than the minimum reasonably necessary to remedy the urgent circumstance; and
- (c) the person to whom a notice under sub-clause 7.6 would have otherwise been served is as soon as possible notified of the urgent circumstance and the action taken to remedy it.

7.5 Infringement Notices

- (1) Where an Authorised Officer reasonably believes that a person has committed an offence against this Local Law, the officer may issue to that person an infringement notice, in a form approved by Council, as an alternative to a prosecution for the offence.
- (2) A person to whom an infringement notice has been issued must pay to Council the amount specified in the notice within 28 days.
- (3) The amount to be paid under an infringement notice is listed in Schedule 1 of this Local Law.

7.6 Notice to Comply

- (1) An Authorised Officer may serve a Notice to Comply or provide a verbal or written direction under this clause on a person whom the Authorised Officer reasonably suspects to be in breach of this Local Law.
- (2) A Notice to comply under sub-clause (1) must be in writing and in a form approved by Council.
- (3) A Notice to Comply under sub-clause (1) must specify the date by which the person specified in the Notice to Comply is required to comply with the directions stipulated in the Notice to Comply.
- (4) In the event that a Notice to Comply is not complied with, an Authorised Officer may undertake any work required to be carried out to ensure compliance and recover any costs incurred.
- (5) A person must comply with any reasonable direction, instruction or signal of an Authorised Officer, member of Victoria Police, authorised litter authority, member or officer of an emergency services agency or fire prevention officer lawfully given in connection with this Local Law.

7.7 Appeals

- (1) A person may appeal to Council or a Council delegate against the decision of an Authorised Officer to issue a direction or Notice to Comply within 14 days of the direction or Notice being made.
- (2) Where an appeal is to be heard, the applicant must do all that is necessary to cooperate in the prompt and speedy hearing of the appeal.

7.8 Power of Authorised Officer to Seize and impound

- (1) An Authorised Officer may seize and impound any animal or item where there has been a contravention of this Local Law, and where seizing and impounding the animal or item is reasonably necessary to:
 - (a) prevent injury to any person;
 - (b) prevent the loss of or damage to any property;
 - (c) ensure that the amenity of the area in which the animal or thing is located is preserved;
 - (d) the responsible person for the animal has not complied with a compliance notice that has been issued in relation to compliance with this Local Law.
- (2) Within four days of impounding any animal or item an Authorised officer must, if the name and address of its owner is known, serve a notice of impounding on the owner.
- (3) Any impounded animal or item may be claimed by its owner after the payment of any fees fixed by Council unless reclaiming the animal or item would result in the original offence re-occurring or continuing.
- (4) If the identity or whereabouts of the owner of any animal, or item, impounded under this Local Law is or are unknown, Council must take reasonable steps to ascertain the owner's identity and/or whereabouts prior to exercising its powers under sub-clause (5).
- (5) If any animal or item has been impounded and:
 - (a) the owner of the animal or item has not paid the fees fixed by Council and claimed the animal or item within the time specified on the Notice of Impounding (or within 14 days of the impounding, if no other period is specified);
 - (b) returning the animal or item would result in the original offence occurring or continuing;
 - (c) the items impounded would be considered as waste, hazardous or perishable; or
 - (d) despite taking the steps required under sub-clause (4), Council has not been able to ascertain the owner's identity and/or whereabouts.
- (6) Council may deal with the impounded animal or item by selling, destroying, or disposing of the animal or item or recycling, or otherwise dealing with the impounded item, or using or applying the item as Council thinks fit.

7.9 Penalties in the Magistrates' Court

A person guilty of an offence under this Local Law may be subject to a maximum penalty not exceeding 20 penalty units.

Schedule 1 – Infringement notice penalties

Clause	Activity	Penalty Unit
2.1	Behaviour in the Municipality	2
2.2	Consumption and Possession of Alcohol	2
2.3	Street Parties, Festivals and Processions	2
2.4	Fireworks	2
2.5	Trading Activities	2
2.6	Bulk Rubbish Containers	2
2.7	Obstructions to the Safe Use of the road	2
2.8	Commercial Waste	2
2.9	Asset Protection Permits	5 (natural person) 10 (corporation)
2.10	Repair of Vehicles	2
2.11	Sale of Motor Vehicles	2
2.12	Noise	1
2.13	Toy Vehicles	2
2.14	Drones	2
2.15	Displaying Property Number	1
2.16	Shopping Trolleys	2
2.17	Refuse on Building Sites	3
2.18	Damaging or interfering with Roads or Council Land	2
2.19	Drains and Storm Water discharge	2
2.20	Planting on Nature Strips	2
3.1	Dangerous and Unsightly Land	3
3.2	Vegetation	2
3.3	Dilapidated Buildings	3
3.4	Burning in the Open Air on Council Land	2
3.5	Burning in Open Air on Private Land	2

Clause	Activity	Penalty Unit
3.6	Burning in the Open Air – 2,000 sqm or less	2
3.7	Burning in the Open Air – 2001 sqm and less than 4,000 sqm	2
3.8	Burning in the Open Air- above 4001 sqm and to 40,000 sqm	2
3.9	Burning in the Open Air – Land above 40,0001 sqm	2
3.10	Nuisance from Open Air Burning	2
3.12	Motorised Recreational Vehicles	2
3.13	Heavy and Long Vehicles	2
3.14	Camping, Caravans, and Motorhomes	2
3.15	Domestic Waste and Recycling	3
3.16	Storing Machinery Materials, Goods and Vehicles on Land	2
3.17	Shipping Containers	2
3.18	Charity Collection Bins	2
4.1	Animal Keeping	2
4.2	Keeping Excess Animals	3
4.3	Animal Housing	2
4.4	Adequate Fencing	1
4.5	Animal Excrement	1
4.6	Pests, Stray Animals and Wildlife	2
4.7	Wasps and Bees on Private Land	2
5.1	Grazing and Driving Livestock	1
7.1 (c)	Engage in an activity without a permit	2
7.1(d)	Fail to comply with a condition of a permit	2
7.1 (e)	Fail to comply with a direction of an Authorised Officer	2
7.1 (f)	Make a false representation, declaration, or omission	2
7.1 (g)	Fail to comply with a sign	2

draft



Central Goldfields Shire Council

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www.centralgoldfields.vic.gov.au/local-laws

Attachment 2

CGSC General Local Law 2025 - listed changes between consultation final draft following consultation.

Item	General Local Law August 2024	General Local Law March 2025
Front Page	Central Goldfields Shire Council Local Laws 2025	Central Goldfields Shire Council General Local Laws
1.3 Commencement	This local Law Commences on the day it is made	This local Law Commences on the day it is made by Council Resolution
Definition: Commercial Waste	Nil	Waste generated by businesses, institutions, and industries
Definition: Chief Executive Officer	Means person appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of Council	Means person appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of Council, or person acting on their behalf
Definition: Incinerator	Means a structure, device, or contraption (not enclosed in a building)	Removed Now banned in Victoria
Definition Heavy Vehicle	Nil	Means a motor Vehicle or trailer that has a gross vehicle mass greater than 4.5 tonnes
Definition Long Vehicle	Nil	Means a vehicle that, together with any load or projection, is at least 7.5 metres
Definition Planning Scheme	Nil	Central Goldfield planning scheme
2.3 Commercial Filming	Nil	(j) commercial filming
2.9 Amenities associated with Building Sites	Name change after consultation with Engineering and legal team	Asset Protection Permits
2.13 Toy Vehicles	Note: The use of drones within Australia is regulated by the CASA being the body which is responsible for administering and enforcing the CASA regulation 1998	Drones have their own Clause.
2.14 Drones	Nil	A person must not use a drone within the reserve of the Maryborough Aerodrome, without prior, written consent from the Aerodrome Manager.

		<i>Note: The use of drones within Australia is regulated by the CASA being the body which is responsible for administering and enforcing the CASA regulation 1998</i>
3.1 Dangerous or unsightly land (e)(f)(g)(h)	Remove: does not permit or allow the land or premises	Change of wording “Is not used”
3.4 Burning in the open air	Title change from Burning in the open air	Burning in the Open Air on Council land
3.5 Nuisance from Open Air Burning and Incinerators	Moved to Clause 3.10 -Name change - removed and incinerators	Clause 3.10 Nuisance from Open Air Burning
3.5 Burning in the Open Air on Private Land	Nuisance from Open Air burning and Incinerators	Burning in open air on private land (chart)
3.7 (2) Burning in the open Air- Land 2,001 Square Metres or less than 4,000 Square	Exemptions	Changed to “Clauses 3.6 and 3.7 wording change: do not apply to... as suggest by legal team to read clearer
3.8 Burning in the Open Air – land above 4,001 Square Metres up to 40,000 Square metres	Changes wording	More clarifying information added to Clause
3.10 Issue of Permits to Burn	Issue of Permit	Now Clause 3.11 content has not changed
3.11 Motorised Recreational Vehicles	(e) No more than six motorised recreation vehicles are used at any one time on land that is greater than twenty hectares	Now Clause 3.12 (e) the motorised recreational vehicle is not used Monday to Friday before 7am and after 8pm or on weekends and public holidays before 9 am and after 8pm
	(f) removed the motorised recreation vehicle is fitted with a spark arrester and a muffler that effectively reduces external noise emanating from that vehicle	(f) in the opinion of an Authorised Officer, the use of the motorised recreation vehicle does not create a nuisance due to sound, smell, dust, smoke, soil erosion or any other factor that causes a nuisance and

	<p>(g) the motorised recreation vehicle is only used between 10am and 6am Monday to Saturday or between 1 pm and 4pm on Sundays and public holidays (removed)</p> <p>(i) the day of use has not been declared a Total Fire Ban Day under the Country Fire Authority Act 1958</p>	<p>See (e) for times</p> <p>Is now (g)</p>
<p>3.12 Heavy Vehicles</p>	<p>Original content</p> <p>(1) A person must not</p> <p>(a) park, store or repair or allow another person to park, store or repair a vehicle over 7.5 metres in length (including any trailer and fittings and /or a vehicle with a gross vehicle mass in excess of 4.5 tonnes on private land, which is in a residential area</p> <p>(b) Heavy or long vehicles cannot be parked on a road in a built-up area for longer than one hour unless; parking signs say that it is allowed, or, the driver is picking up or setting down goods (long vehicle means a vehicle that together with any load or projection is 7.5 metres long, or longer. Heavy mean 4.5 Tonnes or over.</p> <p>(2) A person must not park, store or repair a heavy vehicle or a long vehicle on land in a residential zone that is 2,000 square metres or less in size.</p> <p>(3) A person must not, without a permit, park, store or repair a heavy vehicle or a long vehicle on land in a residential zone that is 2,002 square metres or greater in size</p>	<p>Now Clause 3.13</p> <p>New content</p> <p>(1) A person must not park, store or repair or allow another person to park, store or repair a heavy vehicle or a long vehicle on private land, in a residential area that is 2,000 square meters (0.2 hectares) or less in size.</p> <p>(2) A person must not, without a permit, park, store, or repair or allow another person to park, store or repair a heavy vehicle or a long vehicle on land in a residential zone that is 2,001 square metres or greater in size</p> <p>(3) A person must not cause a nuisance to any other person by parking, storing, or repairing a heavy vehicle or a long vehicle on land in a residential zone.</p>

	(4) Irrespective of whether a permit is required under this clause, a person must not cause a nuisance to any other person by parking, storing, or repairing a long vehicle on land in a residential zone	
3:13 Camping Caravans and Motorhomes		Clause 3.14 Added (4), (5) and (6) as directed by the legal team.
3.15 Storing Machinery, materials, good or vehicles on land		Clause 3.16 Reworded by legal counsel
4.1 Animal Keeping		Added Sheep. To add farm Animals Added: (2) the requirement to obtain a permit under the sub-clause (1) does not apply
6.1 Permit fees & Delegations		Clauses 6.1 and 6.2 merge all under 6.1 Re- Named “Applying for a permit”
6.2	Removed as merged with section 6.1	
6.4 Duration of permits		Reworded by legal counsel
6.7 Title: Process to be followed in amending conditions		Clause 6.6 title change to: Amending Permit Conditions
6.8 Title: Cancellation of permit/Power to cancel permit		Clause 6.7 title change to: Cancellation of Permit. Change Senior Officer to Authorised Officer
6.9 Title: Record of permits must be maintained		Clause 6.8 title change to: Council Record of Permits
6.11 Compliance with directions		Moved to Enforcement Clause 7.3
6.12 Power of Authorise		Moved to Enforcement Clause 7.4 Title change: Urgent Circumstances

Officer – Urgent Circumstances		
6.13 Impounding		Moved to Enforcement Clause 7.8 Title change “Power of Authorised Officer to Seize an impound Now includes animals and additional clauses
7.2 Infringement Notices	Clause (2) and (3) repeated (2) removed Wording Clause (4) refer to Schedule 1	Changed to Clause 7.5 Wording changed to Clause (3) to refer to website
7.3 Penalties in the Magistrates Court		Clause 7.2 title change to Penalties – content reworded by legal team
7.6 Notice to Comply	Nil	Addition

LOCAL LAW COMMUNITY IMPACT STATEMENT

General Local Law 2025

1. INTRODUCTION

Local Laws are a form of local regulation that enable Victorian Councils to put in place legislative controls that reflect the different circumstances of each municipality on matters relating to general amenity, safety and community wellbeing.

Local Laws help to protect public health, safety and amenity throughout the municipality. They are created in consultation with the community in order to meaningfully deal with local issues and meet emerging needs.

The following information is provided to the community in respect of Council's proposed General Local Law 2025.

2. THE REVIEW PROCESS

Council's current Local Law was adopted by Council on 27th October 2015. Under the *Local Government Act 2020 (LGA)*, Local Laws cease to have effect after 10 years, necessitating the adoption of a new Local Law in order to continue to protect community amenity. The proposed Local Law is being made under section 74 of the LGA and will operate throughout Council's municipal district.

This Community Impact Statement has been prepared to inform the community about the proposed Local Law and to assist any person who may choose to engage with Council as part of Council's community engagement process to understand the changes that are proposed.

Once the community engagement process has been finalised, the proposed Local Law will be further reviewed, before being presented to Council for adoption.

A copy of the proposed Local Law is provided with this Community Impact Statement.

3. OVERVIEW OF THE PROPOSED LOCAL LAW

The objectives of the proposed Local Law are:

- (a) the peace, order and good government of the municipality;

- (b) a safe and healthy environment so that the community can enjoy a quality of life that meets its expectations;
- (c) the safe and fair use and enjoyment of public places;
- (d) the protection and enhancement of the amenity and environment of the municipality; and
- (e) the fair and reasonable use and enjoyment of private land.
- (f) the uniform and fair administration of this Local Law.

In order to inform the preparation of the proposed Local Law, Council is enacting the following project tasks.

Milestones	Date
Compliance Team Review	February 22
Internal Stakeholder workshops	December 22
Draft workshop & development	June 23
Communication Plan	October 23
Community Engagement	December 23
Review feedback	December 23
1 st Draft 2025 Local Laws	February 24
Legal review	April 24
Council Briefing - Community Feedback & Project Update	14 th May 24
Council Meeting to endorse draft for community consultation (pre election)	August 24
Communication Plan	August 24
Community Engagement	October 24
Local Law gazetted	March 25

The following table provides a summary of the proposed main amendments to the General Local Law 2025:

Clause No.	Excerpt from Local Law	Explanation for Inclusion / Removal
1.6	Definitions	Old version had only 13. Now contains 32 definitions which reduce ambiguity in the use of the instrument
2.1	Behavior in Municipal Places	Provides staff with powers to approach people to resolve issues raised by the community not addressed by Victoria Police
2.2	Consumption and Possession of Alcohol	Changes to facilitate a Local Laws Permit for alcohol on Council managed land.
2.4	Fireworks	Identified gap in law
2.6	Bulk Rubbish Containers	Previous combined with industrial and commercial waste related local law
2.7	Obstructions to the Safe Use of the Road	Complaint driven law that council was previously unable to respond too.
2.8	Commercial Waste	Currently no control over amenity impacts from commercial waste and containment prior to disposal
2.10	Repair of Vehicles	Inclusion of vehicle maintenance to current law
2.11	Sale of Motor Vehicles	New law to respond to control use of public land for sale of motor vehicles.
2.13	Toy Vehicles	Clarification of external regulation of drones and e-scooters
2.14	Drones	Provides protection for Maryborough Airport
2.16	Shopping Trolleys	New law obliging trolley owners to maintain control over the location and use of shopping trolleys
2.17	Refuse on Building Sites	New law will allow Compliance Team to improve standards within building sites
2.18	Damaging or Interfering with Roads or Municipal Places	New law controls inappropriate use of council assets for personal use.
2.19	Drains and Storm Water Discharge	Issue identified within infrastructure and compliance
2.20	Planting on Nature Strips	Response to public complaints received.
3.1	Dangerous and Unsightly Land	Response to identified gaps
3.2	Vegetation	Current law silent on overhanging vegetation and obstruction of council assets
3.3	Dilapidated Buildings	Assists building department in the rectification of issues before they escalate to more complex building compliance issues.

Clause No.	Excerpt from Local Law	Explanation for Inclusion / Removal
3.4	Burning in the Open Air or Council Land	Provides instructions to the community on what could be burnt. Resolves confusion over the zoning of land and applicable law.
3.12	Motorised Recreation Vehicles	2015 law was silent in the control as noted by Councilors and external consultation
3.13	Heavy or Long Vehicles	Current law was contrary to state legislation
3.14	Camping, Caravans, and Motorhomes	Public complaints and questions to Compliance team in balance with housing pressure within the community and the use for occupancy without a dwelling.
3.16	Storing Machinery Materials, Goods or Vehicles on Land	Complaints increase on second hand trading and or recycling without permits and controlling defacto business
3.17	Shipping Containers	Additions to relation to building and planning controls
3.18	Charity Collection Bins	New law in response to complaints
4.1	Animal Keeping	A large number of properties with excess animals generating complaints for neighboring properties and identified welfare issues
4.2	Keeping Excess Animals	Improvements identified to permit system and animal numbers
4.3	Animal Housing	Outdated law improved to clarify owner obligations.
4.6	Pests, Stray Animals and Wildlife	Response to public complaints. New controls allowing flexibility with obligations
4.7	Wasps and Bees on Private Land	New controls
6	Administration	Improved permit application information, process, fees and charges, conditions, amendments and exemptions
N/A	Dogs in Public Places	Law removed entirely

4. COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED LOCAL LAW

Measuring Success	<p>Council will measure the success of the proposed Local Law by –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recording levels of compliance and non-compliance; • comparing levels of compliance with previous data collected by Council; • monitoring complaints and customer service requests; • assessing the resources required to administer and enforce the Local Law; and • considering any responses received from the community as part of Council's community satisfaction survey ratings.
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Existing Legislation	<p>The LGA gives Councils broad powers to make local laws for or with respect to any act, matter or thing in respect of which the Council has a function or power under legislation.</p> <p>The Local Law will supplement existing State legislation administered and enforced by Council whilst addressing matters within Council's functions and powers.</p>
State Legislation more appropriate	<p>In circumstances where Council has considered that State legislation is more appropriate to deal with particular issues, clauses have been removed in favour of relying on State legislation.</p> <p>The proposed Local Law does not contain any clauses where it is considered that State legislation alone would provide a more appropriate response to the issues concerned.</p>
Overlap of existing legislation	<p>Council believes the provisions of the proposed Local Law supplement State legislation without duplicating, overlapping or creating any inconsistency.</p>
Overlap of Planning Scheme	<p>Council does not consider any provision of the proposed Local Law overlaps, duplicates or creates an inconsistency with the Planning Scheme.</p> <p>The proposed Local Law is subordinate to the Planning Scheme.</p>
Risk Assessment	<p>Council has adopted a risk management approach to the review and development of the proposed Local Law, particularly with respect to the introduction of new clauses.</p> <p>Council does not consider that there are any risks associated with the proposed Local Law.</p>
Legislative approach adopted	<p>Council believes in the minimum imposition on the community with Local Laws. The proposed Local Law reflects this approach by providing for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reasonable penalties; • minimum possible number of provisions which create offences; • where possible, provision for permits rather than prohibition of activities; • reasonable and appropriate permit conditions which will be relied on if a decision is made to issue a permit under the Local Law; and • reasonable enforcement procedures including provision for the giving of warnings where appropriate and the exercise of the officers' discretion. <p>Council has ensured that the proposed Local Law is expressed plainly and unambiguously and in a manner which is consistent with the language of the enabling Act and in accordance with modern standards of drafting applying within Victoria.</p>

	<p>The Local Law has also been drafted in compliance with the Local Law requirements contained within s.72 of the LGA.</p> <p>In addition, the proposed Local Law:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not make unusual or unexpected use of the powers conferred by the Act under which the local law is made having regard to the general objectives, intention or principles of that Act; • does not embody principles of major substance or controversy or contain any matter which principles or matter should properly be dealt with by an Act and not by subordinate legislation; • does not unduly trespass on rights and liberties of the person previously established by law; • does not unduly make rights and liberties of the person dependent upon administrative and not upon judicial decisions; • is not inconsistent with principles of justice and fairness; and • does not duplicate, overlap or conflict with other statutory rules or legislation.
Penalties	<p>The penalties applying to all existing and new clauses were considered and reviewed.</p> <p>The penalty amounts stated in the proposed Local Law are designed as a deterrent and are considered appropriate. They have been intentionally scaled to reflect the impact of the offence on the community and the prevalence of this type of offending.</p> <p>A distinction has been made between offences committed by individuals and bodies corporate with the latter imposing higher penalties where stated.</p> <p>Council is satisfied that the included penalties are consistent in nature and amount with like and neighbouring municipalities.</p> <p>Due to changes in legislation, a penalty unit under the proposed Local Law is set by the State Treasurer and reviewed annually.</p> <p>Currently, a penalty unit in Victoria is valued at \$192.31.</p>
Permits	<p>A number of provisions in the proposed Local Law require permits for various activities to be obtained. This practice is consistent with the general approach to the issuing of permits within the Local Government sector.</p>
Fees	<p>Council will set any fees that are payable under the Local Law annually as part of the budget process. Council also has the discretion to waive, reduce or defer payment of fees and charges in whole or in part, with or without conditions.</p>
Performance standards or prescription	<p>Where appropriate and possible, Council has adopted a performance-based approach to Local Law provisions.</p> <p>All enforcement will be undertaken having regard to and seeking guidance</p>

	<p>from Council's Enforcement Policy which encourages the exercise of officer discretion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CGSC Community and Compliance Enforcement Policy
Comparison with neighbouring Councils	<p>In drafting the proposed Local Law, Council examined the local laws of the following neighbouring Councils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macedon Ranges Shire Local Laws 2023 • Mount Alexander Local Laws 2020 • Hepburn Shire Local Law No 2 2020 <p>The purpose of conducting this exercise was to assess the similarities and differences between the Councils so as to ensure a best practice approach was adopted in the drafting of Council's proposed Local Law.</p>
Charter of Human Rights & Responsibilities	<p>Council regards the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities as an important reference in the development of Local Laws to ensure that such laws do not encroach upon a person's basic human rights, freedoms and responsibilities.</p> <p>As a public authority, Council appreciates its obligation to ensure that Local Laws are interpreted and applied consistently with human rights.</p> <p>Council has assessed the proposed Local Law for compatibility with the Charter and has found that there are no inconsistencies.</p>
Community Engagement	<p>An engagement process will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy following the release of the draft Local Law to the community.</p>

7.7 Visitor Economy Partnership

Author: Manager Tourism, Events & Culture

Responsible Officer General Manager Community Wellbeing

The Officer presenting this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to brief Councillors on the future structure for the Central Victoria Visitor Economy Partnership (VEP) and seek approval for Central Goldfields Shire's participation and investment in the Partnership.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Approves membership to Destination Central Victoria Inc (working title) as the new Visitor Economy Partnership for the region.
2. Approves the legal incorporation to join Destination Central Victoria Inc (working title), as the official Visitor Economy Partnership for the region.
3. Notes that the annual contribution as presented in the report will be outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding, aligned with the State Government Funding Agreement.
4. Notes the Destination Central Victoria (working title) Management Plan as the key strategic document for Visitor Economy Partnership to implement.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2021- 2025:

The Community's vision: Our Growing Economy
2. Engaging and flourishing tourism.

Initiative: N/A

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Victorian Government's Visitor Economy Recovery and Reform Plan was commissioned in 2019 to ensure the regions get the support and opportunities they need to grow in the tourism market.

A key outcome from this Plan was to transition the existing network of Regional Tourism Boards into a new network of Visitor Economy Partnerships (VEP's) which would provide greater equity of support for all Councils.

Since 2013 Central Goldfields Shire has been a partner in what is now known as Bendigo Regional Tourism which includes four Local Government Areas (LGA's); City of Greater Bendigo, Loddon Shire, Central Goldfields Shire, and Mount Alexander Shire.

Progress towards this transition has been tracked in Council's Annual Action Plan for the last two years under action "Participate in the development of the Central Victorian Visitor Economy Partnership" which has been noted quarterly by Council at its Ordinary meetings of Council.

REPORT

Led by the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR), the proposed Destination Central Victoria VEP would link Central Goldfields with Mount Alexander Shire Council, Macedon Ranges Council and Hepburn Shire Council.

The partnership will support a more coordinated approach for the region in relation to advocacy, sustainable destination development, marketing support and capacity building.

There are strong linkages between the proposed VEP model and Council's strategic priorities, including the Community Vision, Council Plan, and the Tourism and Events Strategy. It is anticipated that Council would benefit from membership to the new VEP entity Destination Central Victoria (working title) which is consistent with evidence that visitation to Central Goldfields Shire is driven primarily from the south of the Central Victorian region.

Key advantages of the new Partnership

There are significant opportunities for Central Goldfields Shire as part of this new VEP which will provide additional marketing, advocacy and industry development with closer product alignment and the expertise of what was Daylesford Macedon Ranges Tourism (DMT), who will now form the basis of the new entity.

The Visitor Economy Partnership will:

- Provide strong leadership and links between community, councils, government, and industry.
- Advocate for and enable investment from state and local government.
- Support recovery, innovation, and growth.
- Position the region as a destination to visit and live.
- Ensure all parties are represented through an elected board with clear remit.
- Ensure services are delivered efficiently, without duplication and with clear roles and responsibilities.
- Position the region as a best practice example.

Formation and structure of the Partnership

All Visitor Economy Partnerships are required to form an independent entity to satisfy Victorian Government funding requirements.

Through the working group and co-design process, it was decided that the basis for the new entity Destination Central Victoria (working title) would be a re-working of the current Daylesford Macedon Ranges Tourism (DMT) entity to include Mount Alexander Shire Council and Central Goldfields Shire Council. DMT is an independent body, operating as a not-for-profit business. In providing services to the new entity, DMT will ensure that all profits are reinvested back into developing and promoting the region.

The governance model will be industry led and have strong industry representation at a Board level through the proposed model:

- 1 Independent Chair
- 4 Local Government Area Representatives (CEO or delegate)
- 3 Industry based representatives
- 3 Skills based representatives

Individual LGAs will retain responsibility for visitor servicing, local promotion, local networking, and support including the management of Visitor Information Centres for their regions.

Hepburn Shire, Central Goldfields Shire, Mount Alexander Shire, and Macedon Ranges Shire are all in the process of considering the change and endorsing the new partnership.

Pending ratification by the proposed member LGAs and endorsement by the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions, it is anticipated that Destination Central Victoria (Inc) will be fully-functioning by 1 July 2025.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

Extensive consultation has been undertaken through the Working Group over the past four years, run by independent facilitators and involving the local government areas of City of Bendigo, Loddon Shire, Hepburn Shire, Macedon Ranges Shire, Central Goldfields Shire, and Mount Alexander Shire; alongside the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions.

Council's participation in these discussions has included consideration of an opportunity to provide a greater focus on the smaller towns and regions and on greater tourism product alignment with our southern neighbours.

The Working Group proposed that a new Visitor Economy Partnership be formed between Hepburn Shire, Macedon Ranges Shire, Mount Alexander Shire, and Central Goldfields Shire called Destination Central Victoria (working title).

Led by DJSIR, a co design process for the new VEP was then facilitated via workshops in February and March 2025. Council Officer representation was undertaken from Central Goldfields Shire, Mount Alexander Shire, Hepburn Shire, and Macedon Ranges Shire Councils.

FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The current annual financial contribution for Council to be a part of Bendigo Regional Tourism is \$10,000 plus website costs.

The VEP agreement seeks an increase for year 1 to \$30,000, then year 2 and ongoing of \$40,000. While membership of the proposed Visitor Economy Partnership requires an increased contribution in comparison with the current arrangement, it offers Council a value for money proposition with a higher level of service and favourable strategic alignments.

BRT has a single officer based in Bendigo who seeks to service the four member LGAs. The proposed Visitor Economy Partnership will be based on an existing highly successful organisation (DMT) with significantly greater levels of servicing.

DMT have negotiated with the State Government an annual operating grant for the first two years of the new VEP. In addition, DMT anticipates that they will be able to leverage off this core funding to attract other state and federal grants to support the development and promotion of the visitor economy across the region.

Council's staff resources allocated to this project will be undertaken as part of existing EFT; this incorporates the General Manager Community Wellbeing, Manager Tourism, Events and Culture and Visitor Services Officers. The membership contribution of \$30,000 has been included in Council's draft budget 2025 – 2026.

If Council does not support Central Goldfields Shire Council joining as a member Council of Destination Central Victoria, there is no alternate State funding source or partnership agreement for tourism across the Shire.

RISK MANAGEMENT

This report addresses Council's strategic risk:

Community Well-being - Failure to recognise and manage the impact of changing social and economic conditions on the community.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

The officer who has authored this report declares that they are a current serving Councillor with Mount Alexander Shire Council. The report contains information in reference to the proposal to include Mount Alexander Shire in the Visitor Economy Partnership.

CONCLUSION

Council has participated in the development of the Central Victorian Visitor Economy Partnership as directed by the State Government and included in the Council Plan 2021-2025.

The proposed new Visitor Economy Partnership for the region Destination Central Victoria Inc (working title) reflects the strategic alignment of Central Goldfields with LGAs to the south of the Shire and will replace the current Bendigo Region Tourism partnership.

Destination Central Victoria Inc will build on the success of the established marketing and industry membership entity Daylesford Macedon Tourism (DMT) and is proposed to include Central Goldfields Shire, Mount Alexander Shire, Hepburn Shire, and Macedon Ranges Shire.

The new entity will provide a range of benefits to Council and CGS operators through consistent marketing, collaborative programs, and support for regional product development investment.

Subject to Council's annual budgetary process and adoption at the June 2025 Meeting of Council, it is proposed that a contribution of \$30,000 be allocated for financial year 2025/2026 to the partnership.

The annual contribution will then increase to \$40,000 (in 2026/2027 and ongoing) and will be outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding, aligning with the State Government funding agreement with the future entity. It is anticipated that the entity will be legalised and ready to commence operating by 1 July 2025.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

7.8 2024 Energy Breakthrough Evaluation

Author: Coordinator Events & Volunteer Development

Responsible Officer: General Manager Community Wellbeing

The Officer presenting this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide an update of the evaluation and review of the 2024 Energy Breakthrough Event as per the Terms of Reference for the Management Group.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorse the 2024 Energy Breakthrough Event Debrief Report.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2021-2025:

The Community's vision: Our Growing Economy
2. Engaging and flourishing tourism.

Initiative: Capitalise on tourism opportunities

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Energy Breakthrough (EB) is jointly managed and delivered by Council and Country Education Partnership (CEP) through a special committee of Council titled the Management Group (The Committee).

EB is the largest and longest running science, technology, engineering, and maths (STEM) educational program in the country.

The celebration event hosted in Maryborough each year for the last 34 years is the largest annual event in Central Goldfields Shire.

Following the challenges of the COVID pandemic and rising event costs (which increased by 20%-30%) the Committee introduced a new model in 2023, resulting in savings of over \$100,000 in overheads compared to the 2022 event.

In 2024, the Committee continued with this model and with increased sponsorship income, the forecasted deficit for the 2024/25 financial year - covered by Council's contribution - is \$250,000, which is \$30,000 less than the 2023/24 contribution.

The 2024 event saw a 10% increase in entries and school participation compared to 2023, with 262 teams from 108 schools registered. A total of 3,500 students, teachers, and families camped across the site during the five-day event, which contributed an estimated \$3.8 million to the local economy.

Following the 2024 event, RM Consulting Group (RMCG) facilitated a strategic planning session with 26 key stakeholders, including representatives from Central Goldfields Shire Council, the Country Education Partnership, and volunteers. This evaluation session was held on Monday, 2 December 2024.

REPORT

The major programme changes introduced in 2023 were maintained in 2024, expenditure remained within budget and the event secured additional sponsorship income, resulting in an extra \$30,000 in savings.

Sponsors

Even though attraction of sponsorship remains competitive, we were able to secure \$59,500 in new sponsorship for 2024.

New sponsors include:

- Department of Education - \$34,500
- Acciona - \$5,000
- McCafé - \$5,000
- Williamson Foundation - \$15,000

Overall, sponsorship contributed 46% (\$151,000) of total revenue, reflecting a \$67,000 increase from the 2023 event. This growth signals a strong rebound following the downturn after the 2022 event. An additional \$7,500 came from a \$2,500 increase in support from Bendigo Bank and a contribution from Department of Transport and Planning toward new Transport Victoria branding at the event.

The Williamson Foundation's contribution supported the establishment of the new Robotics section, funding the purchase of infrastructure, Sphero robots, and entry fees into the Sphero Global Challenge.

Entries

Registrations for Energy Breakthrough are gaining momentum post-pandemic with a 10% increase in 2024 bringing the total to 262. The growth highlights the event's continued relevance and appeal to participants.

Entry fees contributed 45% (\$146,000) of total revenue, marking an \$8,000 increase from the 2023 event. While entry fees were previously the largest revenue source, the growth in sponsorship now makes them the second-largest contributor.

The teams registered for the event come from a wide range of locations across Victoria, including the Mallee, the Wimmera, Central/North Central Victoria, Metro Melbourne, and Gippsland. Additionally, there are teams joining from as far as Orange in NSW, Ryde in Sydney, and Pembroke in Adelaide, showcasing the event's regional and interstate reach.

Volunteers

Volunteers continue to play an important role in the delivery of the event, with over 700 active volunteers contributing more than 2340 hours per annum, equivalent to \$77,000.

Bendigo Bank's support has been invaluable in enhancing our volunteer experience. Their funding has enabled us to create a welcoming and supportive environment, which has overwhelmingly positive feedback and is expected to encourage volunteers to return.

This was further complemented by the excellent catering provided by Carisbrook Lions Club, which was also supported through the bank's sponsorship.

Contractors

Local businesses continue to be engaged to provide various services for the event whenever possible. In 2024, a total of \$132,000 was paid directly to local contractors for their services, reinforcing the event's positive financial impact on the community.

Major contracts have been secured with local providers including Maryborough Transport Service, Hoopers Steel and Construction, and Troy Walker Electrical.

Additionally, a range of community groups have been contracted to deliver services such as catering, waste management, track setup and pack-up, and cleaning. These services are valued at \$32,000, further emphasising the event's support for local organisations and services.

In addition, some local community groups fundraise annually at the event with an estimated total of \$25,000 contributing to these groups ongoing sustainability.

Economic Impact

The estimated economic impact of Energy Breakthrough 2024 is approximately \$3.8 million, illustrating the significant contribution the event makes to the local economy and broader community.

Twilight Event

The Twilight Event at Energy Breakthrough 2024 was a success, drawing strong local participation and engagement. Held on the Saturday evening, the event featured inflatables, challenges, face painting, and food trucks.

The addition of festoon lights at the start/finish line created a warm and inviting atmosphere for spectators to relax and enjoy the track action, enhancing the overall experience.

Feedback from participants and attendees was positive, reinforcing the event's role in bringing the community together and providing an engaging event for all involved.

Debrief Workshop

RMCG facilitated a debrief workshop for the 2024 Energy Breakthrough event on December 2, 2024. The session aimed to reflect on event successes, identify areas for improvement, and develop recommendations for future events.

Workshop Structure:

- **Session 1:** Mixed group of volunteers and planning representatives discussed positives, challenges, and suggestions for improvement.
- **Session 2:** Focused on a debrief with the EB Action Group and specific operational aspects.

Key Highlights from Session 1:

Positive Reflections:

- Impressive fundraising by schools, with one raising \$18,000 and another \$2,500 by a child.
- Positive event atmosphere, with strong team spirit, excellent music, and entertainment.
- Volunteers felt valued with high-quality catering and an improved volunteer marquee.
- Event accessibility was praised, including wheelchair accommodations.
- Effective communication, including the MyEB app and social media engagement.
- Local support, especially from the Lions Club, was appreciated.
- Enhanced media and security teams contributed to the event's success.

1. Challenges & Suggestions for Improvement:

- **Site Layout & Access:** Difficulties with team camping at Jubilee Oval due to conflicts with primary school trials. Suggestions included allowing vehicle access near the pool and installing footbridges for better access during racing.

- **Site Access & Parking:** Improved organisation but recommended clearer signage for vehicle flow and designated parking areas. Improved access for disabled individuals and clearer communication regarding parking requirements.
- **Waste Management:** The wash against waste system worked but required better sorting, messaging, and volunteer guidance. Opportunities for incorporating a container deposit scheme and better communication of waste practices.
- **Heat Policy:** While the heat policy was well-received, suggestions for more shade, drink stations for volunteers, and improvements to cooling in medical areas were made.
- **Volunteer Retention & Succession:** Recommendations for improving volunteer support and attracting new volunteers included better rest areas, recognition initiatives, and leveraging universities and secondary schools for recruitment.

Key Highlights from Session 2 (EB Action Group Debrief):

1. Track Management:

- **Successes:** Organising team, security, medical support, and scrutineering were effective. New volunteers and team members performed well.
- **Improvements Needed:** Better crowd control at Turns 3 and 4, and more training for pit marshalling and scrutineering. Enhanced traffic management and improved emergency response signage needed.

2. Site Setup & Volunteer Coordination:

- **Successes:** Set-up schedule was well-managed, and volunteer coordination portal improved communication.
- **Improvements Needed:** Issues with rubbish sorting and clearer signage to avoid vehicle access problems. Upgrade to power supply and increased staffing for site management.

3. Triathlon:

- **Successes:** The early start due to the heat policy and smooth presentations at the end.
- **Improvements Needed:** Address safety issues for secondary school participants and streamline the last lap and presentation process.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

The Committee, EB Action Group and key stakeholders were invited to the Evaluation Meeting, 26 people attended the meeting to reflect on what worked well and what could be improved for the 2025 event.

FINANCIAL& RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

EB continues to require an annual investment from Council to support event logistics, set-up costs, event planning and management.

In 2023, the event underwent significant changes to its programme model, and with no unforeseen expenses, the Council investment totalled \$280,000.

In 2024, the event proceeded without unforeseen expenses and with an increase in sponsorship, Council's investment will be around \$250,000. Each year, Council's contribution includes \$70,000 for staff wages and salaries.

Funding for the fixed-term EB Partnership Coordinator position ceased in early 2024, and the responsibility for partnerships was transferred to the Event Site Director, with assistance from a local volunteer who contributed one day per week.

This approach has proven successful in attracting additional sponsorship. A new model will be developed for 2025 due to the unavailability of the volunteer.

RISK MANAGEMENT

This report addresses Council's strategic risk:

Community Well-being - Failure to recognise and manage the impact of changing social and economic conditions on the community

By annually reviewing the Energy Breakthrough event and identifying opportunities for improvement to ensure it remains viable.

CONCLUSION

The 2024 Energy Breakthrough event marked another successful year, reflecting the event's continued importance to the Central Goldfields Shire and its contribution to the local economy, with an estimated \$3.8 million impact.

The implementation of a new model in 2023, combined with increased sponsorship, has resulted in continued cost savings and improved revenue streams, with Council's investment decreasing by \$30,000 compared to the previous year.

With a 10% increase in participation, strong volunteer support, and positive community engagement, Energy Breakthrough continues to be an asset to the region.

Looking ahead to 2025, a new model will be developed for managing partnerships, and additional revenue from confirmed entries and increased sponsorship is anticipated.

With ongoing improvements and stakeholder consultation, the Energy Breakthrough event is well-positioned for continued success and growth.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Final Energy Breakthrough debrief report Mar 2025 [7.8.1]



Energy Breakthrough Planning Group – Debrief

Central Goldfields Shire Council

12 December 2024

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Dja Dja Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners of the Country on which this project has been conducted. We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture and pay our respects to their Elders past and present, and we acknowledge emerging leaders. Moreover, we express gratitude for the knowledge and insight that Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people contribute to our shared work in Australia.

We pay respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We recognise that Australia was founded on the genocide and dispossession of First Nations people and acknowledge that sovereignty was not ceded in this country. We embrace the spirit of reconciliation, working towards self-determination, equity of outcomes, and an equal voice for Australia's First People.

1 Introduction

1.1 OVERVIEW

RMCG facilitated a de-brief workshop for the Energy Breakthrough event on Monday 2 December 2024. The session was designed to reflect on aspects of the event that worked well, what could be improved and to develop a prioritised set of recommendations for the planning group to consider for the 2025 event and into the longer term.

1.2 REPORT STRUCTURE

This report provides a summary of the discussion at the workshop. It is structured in two parts:

- Session 1: This part of the workshop consisted of a mix of volunteers and planning group representatives
- Session 2: This part of the session was just held with the planning group and focussed on a de-brief with the area coordinators.

Appendix 1. Provides an overview of the agenda.

2 Session 1

2.1 POSITIVE REFLECTIONS ON THE EVENT

The workshop participants were asked to reflect on the event and share any positive reflections they had as outlined below:

- Fund raising efforts by some schools was impressive
 - One school had raised \$18,000 to fund their attendance and participation
 - One primary school aged child raised \$2,500 on his own to help their school participate
- The event vibe was positive and upbeat
 - The camping area was a buzz, and observers noticed the teams working together to set-up, cook and pack-up
 - The music and entertainment were excellent and assisted with maintaining the upbeat vibe

- The volunteers felt valued
 - The catering for volunteers was excellent
 - The Volunteer Marquee was the best it has ever been
- The event was accessible. The event accommodated for people in wheelchairs and enabled those kids to participate. The planning group will work with the parents to build on this into the future
- Communication and scheduling worked well
 - The *MyEB* application worked well, and most people were on time whether that was volunteers for judging or school teams who were participating in various activities
 - The communication about the event via social media was excellent
- Positive feedback from Sphero. Dr G was very impressed with the number of volunteers, the healthy catering for volunteers, enthusiasm shown by all and the children's approach to the challenges
- General enthusiasm shown by the schools, volunteers and competitors was great, especially considering the heat
- The support from local organisations was excellent, specifically the Lions Club contribution, the use of the trailer and the light tower
- Response from the media teams and security teams was much better than previous years.

2.2 SPECIFIC EVENT CHALLENGES

Workshop participants were asked to focus on five key challenges that the Energy Breakthrough planning team have recognised. In some cases, participants were also asked to reflect on what worked well. Their suggestions are outlined below.

SITE LAYOUT AND ACCESS AND JUBILEE OVAL

High school team camping set-up and bump-in at Jubilee Oval has been challenging as it clashes with the primary school trials. Timing and areas for access were considered by the workshop participants, their suggestions for improving access to Jubilee oval during the primary school trial were as follows:

- Allow vehicles to access an area near the pool so schools do not have to carry their equipment as far
- Change the schedule so primary schools can ride at night
- Install road bridges (Figure 2-1) so that vehicles can enter Jubilee while racing is underway. There are bridges available (3) that require welding to enhance the legs and improve rigidity.

These suggestions are indicated in red on the site map (Figure 2-1) below.



Figure 2-1: Map of Jubilee Park with suggested footbridge locations in red

SITE ACCESS – CAR PARKING, TRAILER PARKING, PIT SPACE SET UP, MEDICAL ACCESS AREAS

Aspects that worked well:

- New volunteers worked in well and were enthusiastic
- Marking out of ovals for camping
- Co-operation between campers/each other/set up crew
- It was very organised – great signage again, easy to get around.

Aspects of site access that could be improved:

- Designated areas for trailers and buses, delineated and clear
- Signs erected for:
 - One way traffic
 - Entry of vehicles – Gate 1 only
 - Exit of vehicles – Gate 2 only
- Camping volunteers' tent to be placed at Gate 1 outside oval's fence to avoid people going in the wrong direction (refer to plan)
 - Communication regarding parking cards at schools. It needs to be clearly stated that the card needs to be filled out/completed with phone numbers and displayed clearly in the car
- Car parking for volunteers – blue card for volunteers
- Car parking compliance, it should not be the responsibility of camping volunteers to check the tickets

- Jubilee oval
 - Camping volunteers had the key for disabled toilet but those who need it should / could be provided with their own key, for example as teams enter the event, they make it known they have a disabled team member and then they are issued with a swipe card to access the toilet.



Figure 2-2: Map of Jubilee Park with suggested tent location, camping, and marshalling area in red

WASH AGAINST WASTE SYSTEM

This is the first year that the event implemented its own wash against waste system instead of using the provider *B Alternative*. Workshop participants were asked to comment on how well the system was understood by volunteers, what challenges they encountered during its implementation, clarity of the messaging about the system, and opportunities for improvement.

Level of understanding of the wash against waste system:

- Quite well understood because it wasn't the first year, i.e. Be Alternative
- Kept up with demand.

Challenges encountered:

- Mixed rubbish placed in bins due to lack of sorting / compliance with guidance on what goes in each bin.

Clarity of messaging:

- Bins were displayed well
- Bins were in good locations and emptied regularly.

Opportunities for improvement to consider:

- If possible, have people at bins (clear pictures) / bin fairies and better messaging to encourage better sorting of waste and avoid contamination
- Opportunities for the Container Deposit Scheme – There was a missed opportunity with the CDS 10 cent refund
- Consider fundraising to get an Energy Breakthrough wash trailer
- Encourage those selling/providing food to briefly check that person knows what to do
- Communicate waste avoidance messaging in Term 2
- Provide information prior to arrival for participants and volunteers.

HEAT POLICY

There were high temperatures at the 2024 event so workshop participants were asked to reflect on the heat policy and its communication. The reflections and suggestions for improvement are outlined below.

Communication of the heat policy:

- The policy enabled volunteers to make changes if required
- All team managers had read the policy and had no complaints, they were in favour of the approach
- Wide brimmed straw hats were great for sun protection.

Reflections on volunteering in the heat:

- Common sense was used
- There were enough volunteers to cover each other and have a break
- There was a lack of water and food down at pushcarts. There were no cool drinks until lunch
- Whole program flowed nicely despite the heat
- TRYathlon – low number of volunteers but did do a great job of providing a break. Higher numbers would allow more rotations.
- Flexibility in programming was excellent to enable everyone to adapt to the heat
- We now have a stash of fans for future events
- It was good to have hats and sunscreen available for volunteers.

Areas for improvement in future:

- Gate volunteers struggled being out in the heat all day so an esky with drinks for these volunteers would be great instead of waiting for a delivery
- More shade protection (e.g. umbrellas) and drinks for push cart volunteers
- Water required for air conditioning in medical centre
- Pool would have added greatly to the atmosphere of event. Consider separating the two operating pools while the 50m pool is being repaired
- Display and presentation Judges' tent was very hot and it put the judges under pressure. For three years it has not been appropriate. Consider improvements to air conditioning
- Need separate tent for Design and Construction (D&C) judges to rest/eat etc.
- Track 2 improvements:
 - Limited shade – volunteers in starting area had no access to shade in afternoon
 - Stage looked like it had ability to attach an overhang that would provide a small amount of shade for volunteers
- Spread drinks out on different sites not just at the volunteer tent

- Water cooler in volunteer tent so water bottles can be refilled instead of always getting bottled water.

VOLUNTEER RETENTION AND SUCCESSION

Volunteer retention and succession is an on-going priority for the planning group. Suggestions for attracting and supporting volunteers are below.

To support volunteers into the future, consider:

- Shade for pushcart judges in hot weather
- Cool drinks in esky on the stage
- Keep up the food, rest areas, port-a-loo etc.
- Maintain shade areas, toilets, drinks, food
- Brief volunteers and show where and when they are required. Include a map of all areas
- Ensure breaks are frequent especially in hot weather.

To attract new volunteers consider:

- Tap into Asteria and see if some of their clients could help out
- "Alumni": publish good stories in the lead-up to the event e.g. success stories
- 'EB Money' – provide virtual money that can be exchanged for items, i.e. branded drink bottles based on number of shifts completed by volunteers
- Secondary school program for volunteers
- Develop short video of benefits/positive stories of volunteers for online distribution
- Promote the positives for volunteers
- Make a 2 minute video about volunteering that shows the interaction between volunteers and participants
- Liaise with universities for pre-service teachers.

To recognise volunteers, consider

- Provide certificates of appreciation and community service acknowledgements
- Hold a volunteer night to recognise the achievements and present certificates described above.

To facilitate volunteer handovers in the future, consider:

- Provide a written job description for volunteer roles before the event
- Get 'mentors' on board — people that been volunteers for a long time to buddy up with newcomers.

3 Session 2

3.1 AREA COORDINATOR DE-BRIEF

Area coordinators were asked to provide a de-brief for the area they are responsible for. They were asked to think about aspects that worked well and could be improved.

TRACK MANAGEMENT

Aspects that worked well:

- Scrutineering process and timeline
- D&C with Xavier – it was much more organised

- EEV — meter and batter scan was great
- Great new young team members
- New senior members stepping into key roles
- Security was great
- Medical was great
- Team was onto everything, and we were so well organised
- Track setup/site setup.

Aspects that could be improved:

- Turn 3 and 4 requires crowd control
- Thursday requires a specific track team for ½ day
- Pit marshalling and scrutineering training module to be developed
- Traffic lights on straight
- Flashing red and yellow indicates emergency, no overtaking and slow to 20 km/h – this needs to be better enforced
- Teachers' lounge could be reintroduced.

ORGANISING MARSHALL TENT 4

Aspects that worked well:

- Most volunteers did the 'right' things
- Some volunteers just walked up to help — they were good
- Good working with volunteers who'd done marshalling in the past.

Aspects that could be improved:

- Two clubs only provided two volunteers each so have a different group to supply volunteers
- Marshalls might need to do some training to focus on behaviours, e.g. stay off track where possible, speak to others respectfully
- Corner 4 is isolated – consider a water drop off
- Requires a rubbish bin.

SITE SET-UP AND PACK UP

Aspects that worked well:

- Set-up schedule worked well.

Aspects that could be improved:

- Emergency access behind pits
- Second ute is required earlier for set-up
- The team was reactive to jobs coming in
- Another staff member needed so the team can be more proactive to jobs that need to be done.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATION

Aspects that worked well:

- Volunteers' coordination portal made communications easier
- Engaged contractors early.

Aspects that could be improved:

- Sorting of rubbish – this needs work
- Signage before bridge to avoid collisions restrict heights at gates 4 and 5. Block the access after the trials and re-direct to tennis courts
- Upgrade the power in the first aid tent and the volunteer hub
- Need someone to coordinate EB central
- Capture marshal signing on and conduct marshal Team Manager briefings together.

TRYATHLON

Aspects that worked well:

- Primary finish with others at 6pm
- Secondary finish and presentation at 8pm — exit off track “red light”
- New obstacles
- Track 2 – Time trial and obstacles
- Started early due to the heat policy
- Managers/ New start place thanks to Graeme
- Presentations were done easily with Lachy and Kade's organisation.

Aspects that could be improved:

- Secondary school safety – warnings were sometimes ignored
- Last lap finish at the pit and then meet at BBQ by 8.30 for presentations
- Consider a Juniors/Secondary night time experience
- Try teams pitted together on Track 1
- Consider a facility for volunteers (Track 2).

PUSHCARTS

This summary was provided by Rob Higgins.

Aspects that worked well:

- Time slots and scheduling worked well
- Innovation is making a comeback and was great to see
- Judges did a great job
- Participants actively involved without long breaks
- Program catered for the younger students and a number of needs
- Volunteers were fantastic despite the struggle to get volunteers.

Areas for improvement:

- Scoring system – consider a google form
- Obstacles course to be moved up to the wider part of the track so 2 teams can run at one time.
- If the event increases in size, more volunteers will be required. A couple of volunteers willing to assess the video the week before.
- An additional day to align with HPV school needs (Wednesday).

ROBOTICS

This summary was provided by Rob Higgins.

Aspects that worked well:

- 21 teams of 5 competed in the EB State Championship leg of the Sphero *Global Challenge*.
- The visit by Dr.G and her team as well as Deb from Macgear
- The great volunteers who made the event possible
- 17 Primary teams and 4 Secondary teams
- Relationship developed with a number of local organisations.

Aspects that could be improved:

- We will have to work out a financial plan to allow teams to still compete. Consider asking the schools to pay for their *Global Challenge* separately and it is getting expensive, and the exchange rate is impacting the budget
- Work closely with Macgear to avoid the problems linked to importing materials from the USA and the associated Customs issues
- Have at least 6 volunteers appointed a week before the event so the Missions and Rubrics can be distributed for reading prior to the event
- Spread the event over 2 days. Primary on Thursday and Secondary on Friday
- Scrap the lunch plan
- Work on increasing Secondary numbers
- The venue is not adequate. The toilets are not sufficient and the kitchen is borderline suitable. Nothing electrical had been tagged or tested and could be a future safety risk.

DISPLAY AND PRESENTATION (D&P)

This summary was provided by Laurie Preston.

Aspects that worked well:

- The marquees were well set up and closer to the Volunteer Hub for easy access
- The attitude of the available judges. All approached the task professionally and in a positive manner. The food provided by Carisbrook Lions was a real positive
- Very few changes needed to be made to the schedule beforehand. Enabling individual schools to see where they were required, meant that the majority turned up when required.

Aspects that could be improved:

- The venue where the judges need to make their deliberations. As D&P is worth 25% of the score and is what makes this event different to other HPV events, then a more suitable venue needs to be found. For the last 3 years, this group has been placed in poor conditions. 2022 was very wet, 2023 was poor

lighting and noise from the nearby volunteer hub and 2024 was very hot. Pre-covid, there were none of these problems

- The availability of judges. There needs to be a serious attempt to attract teachers in-training. The philosophy is to have an education person, a local person and a young education person. This year, there was an education person and a local person but no trainee teachers. The event relies heavily on retired people because the event is run during the week
- Quite a few of the Secondary Schools did not have a display as part of their presentation. Judges need to use their imagination as we need to create a positive attitude. The planning team also need to think about schools that are funded directly by the school are considered and therefore they do not need to work with the community.

3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Workshop participants were asked to recommend improvements for the Energy Breakthrough event and categorise them into:

- Urgent recommendations to address for next year
- Important for the event long-term but not urgent for next year
- Nice to have but not essential.

URGENT (BEFORE NEXT YEAR)

- New timing loop
- Need new corner flags
- To work with tertiary institutions re pre-training teachers
- Traffic lights/yellow lights
- Rules
- Jubilee/Burns St access/bridge?
- Red and yellow flashing lights for emergencies
- Marshalling
- Training and focus on behaviours, e.g.:
 - Directive to stay off track
 - Speak to others respectfully
- Rubbish bin in tents
- Move marshal 7 further up the track – issues with crashes and fast bikes that do not stop early enough
- Turn 3 and 4 require crowd control
- Digitise D&C, scrutineering forms
- Defib on other side of track from First Aid tent
- Pushcarts
 - Facilities for volunteers
 - Move obstacle course
 - Host it on Wednesday
- Robotics – venue
 - Primary – host Thursday
 - Secondary – host Friday.

IMPORTANT FOR THE LONG TERM

- Design and construction redevelopment
- Pushcarts progression system
- Other events, etc
- Engage with schools to reduce mains power consumption
- Robotics
 - Revise entry fee considering the increased cost to enter *Global Challenge*
 - 2 years 2026 and then 1st year without grant
- Establish a robotics committee
- Finish of Secondary teams after presentation and to get off the track, as it was done this year
- Investigate the possibility of running a number of regional events prior to Energy Breakthrough. These are like a practice event, no scoring but feedback given. Successful teams could move up to the State event at Maryborough.

NICE TO HAVE, NOT ESSENTIAL

- Look at tablets to score for *Display and presentation*
- Teachers' lounge — create an area for teachers to relax
- Night riding (TRYathlon)
- Pit teams together (TRYathlon)
- Robotics
 - Google Forms for scoring.

3.3 FUTURE OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Workshop participants were asked to look ahead and consider *how might we refine the planning group's approach to ensure continued success?*

- Continue to think about succession planning and adding people in as they show interest
- Ensure the team stays decisive and acts, as it has been doing over recent years
- Consider how the team engages with the local community and businesses
- The meetings provide a great structure, and the meeting frequency is appropriate. Consider whether a project management tool may help to organise and delegate tasks e.g. Trello
- The WhatsApp chat is very helpful during the event.

Appendix 1: Agenda

BROADER GROUP – AGENDA 1PM–3PM

Time	Activity	Description
1.00pm	Welcome	Acknowledgement of Country Welcome to participants and set the scene
1.05pm	Agenda and Introductions	Purpose of the day: To reflect on the energy breakthrough event and what worked well, what didn't work well and what could be improved. Agenda: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Presentation from Nigel to provide a reflection of the event ▪ Feedback on specific challenges and the event model Participant introductions: Introduce yourself to the group
1.15pm	Presentation	Presentation: Overview the event <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Key changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sphero Global Challenge (one day program on Friday in Pipe Band Hall). - Pushcarts changed (one day program on Thursday) - TRYathlon consolidated to Obstacle and Time Trial on Friday on Track 2. ▪ Headline reflections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heat! We had temperatures between 30°C – 36°C - Overall, entries were up 10% year-on-year. Innovation is coming back. - Don't discount the value of many 1% improvements - Event model evolution ▪ Questions or reflections?
1.30pm (12 mins at each station)	Feedback on specific challenges	Stations / table groups, move every 8 - 12 minutes to a new station. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Site Layout</u> and access for Jubilee Oval during Primary trial on Thursday and Friday ▪ <u>Site Access</u> – car parking, trailer parking, pit space set up, medical access areas ▪ <u>Heat policy and hot weather</u> – communications to volunteers ▪ <u>Succession planning</u> for volunteers ▪ <u>Wash against waste system</u>
2.30pm	General feedback	Speed dating / progressive barn dance – Not completed as ran out of time Q. Have we got the model right for the event?
2.50pm	Next steps	
3.00pm	Close	

PLANNING GROUP 3PM–5PM

Time	Activity	Description
3.10pm	Welcome	Introduction, purpose, overview of agenda
3.15pm	Reflections	Reflections on the first workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Q. Key takeaways and observations from the discussion? ▪ Capture on the whiteboard
3.20pm	De-brief	De-brief for coordinators (e.g. track management, push carts, robotics, site set-up etc.)
3.50pm	Recommendations	Participants to write their recommendations – categorise as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Must be addressed urgently (i.e. next year) ▪ Important in the longer term ▪ Nice to haves but not essential
4.20pm	Future of the action group	Go for a walk in pairs and think about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Q. Looking ahead, how might we refine the group's approach to ensure continued success?
4.35pm	Report back	Report back: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Q. What were your key reflections?
4.50pm	Next steps	
5.00pm	Close	

Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda – 28 May 2025

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1.0	Draft	12/12/2024	M. Ludeman	M. Sangalli	J. Longford	M. Sangalli	Central Goldfields Shire Council
2.0	Final (one acronym edit)	12.03.2025	M. Ludeman	M. Sangalli	-	M. Sangalli	Central Goldfields Shire Council

8 Councillor Reports and General Business

9 Notices of Motion

Nil

10 Urgent Business

Nil

11 Confidential Business (Separately Circulated)

Pursuant to Section 66 (2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020, Council may consider that the meeting be closed to members of the public, as the two identified items of confidential business contain personal information, being information which, if released, would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.

11.2 Employment Matter

11.3 Committee Appointment Matter

12 Meeting Closure