



Council Meeting Agenda

Wednesday 22 April 2026 at 6:00pm

Maryborough Town Hall, 71 Clarendon Street, Maryborough and livestreamed on the internet.

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1 Welcome

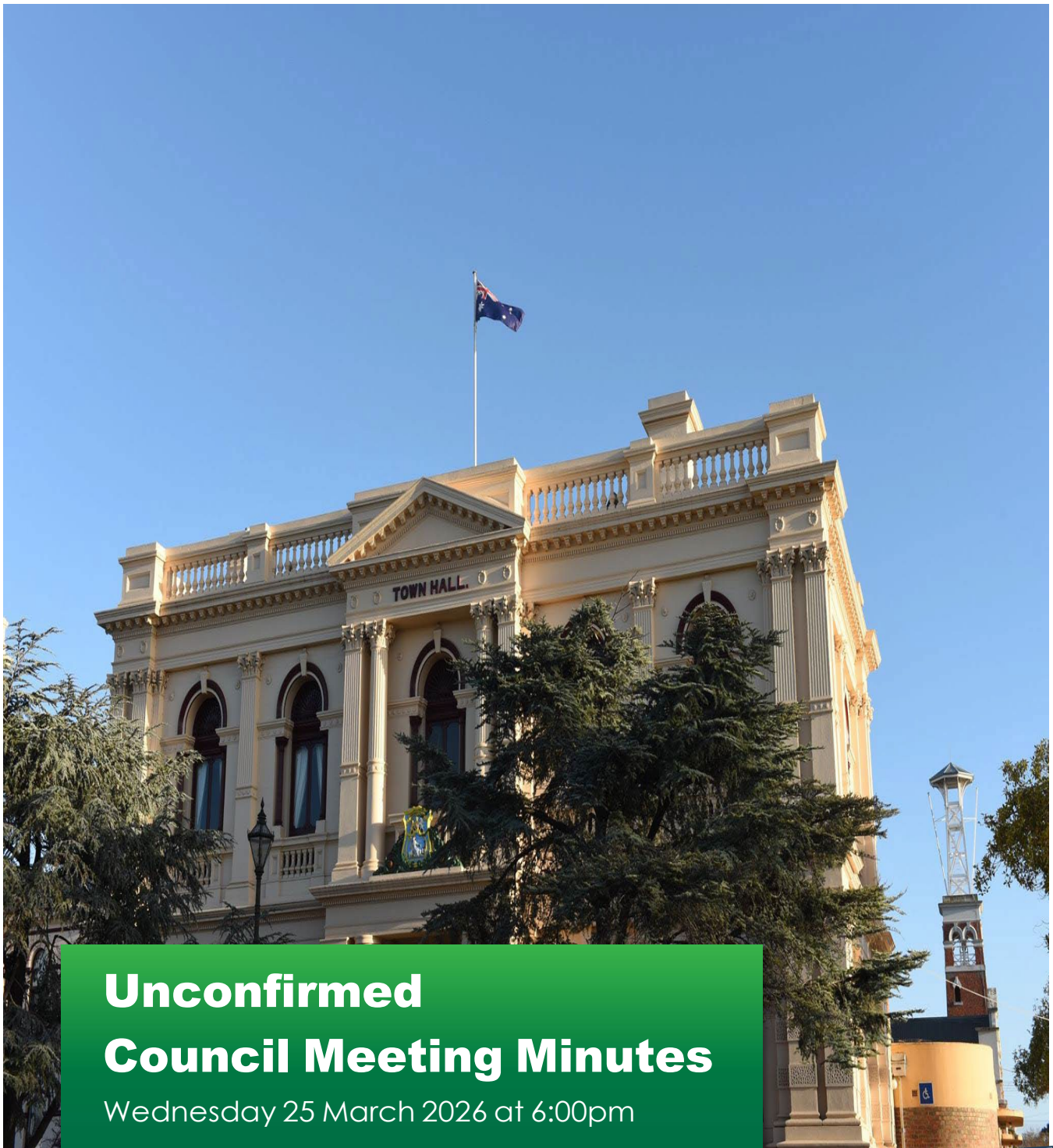
2 Apologies and Leave of Absence

3 Declarations of Conflict of Interest

4 Confirmation of Minutes from Previous Council Meetings

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on March 25, 2026, be confirmed.



Unconfirmed Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 25 March 2026 at 6:00pm

Maryborough Town Hall, 71 Clarendon
Street, Maryborough.



Unconfirmed Council Meeting Minutes - Wednesday 25 March 2026

The meeting commenced at 6:00pm.

Attendees

PRESENT

Councillors:

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

Officers:

Chief Executive Officer, Peter Harriott
General Manager Community Wellbeing, Emma Little
General Manager Assets Infrastructure and Planning, Amber Ricks
General Manager Corporate Performance, Liam Routledge
Interim Manager Governance and Risk, Rob Duoba

1 Welcome

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

2 Apologies and Leave of Absence

There were no apologies or leave of absences noted.

3 Declarations of Conflict of Interest

Cr Murphy declared a conflict of interest for Item 7.1; Contract G1083-16: Management of Maryborough Sports and Leisure Centre and Swimming Pools as they are the Director of Unified Community Sports and Leisure Pty Ltd.

Peter Harriott declared a conflict of interest for item 10.3; Confidential Item Contract Extension due to the Contract Extension relates to the CEO.

4 Confirmation of Minutes from Previous Council Meetings

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 25 February 2026 be confirmed. **Moved:**

Cr Bartlett

Seconder: Cr de Villiers

CARRIED

Cr Bartlett requested a change to the 25 February 2026 minutes to include that Item 7.2, note that a Division was called.

5 Minutes of Delegated and Advisory Committees

5.1 2 March 2026 Unconfirmed Audit and Risk Committee Minutes

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That Council note the Unconfirmed Minutes of the 1 March 2026 Audit and Risk Committee attached to this item.

Moved: Cr Bartlett

Seconder: Cr de Villiers

CARRIED

Cr Bartlett requested an acknowledgement of the former Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, John Watson's leadership and contribution to the Audit and Risk Committee.

6 Petitions

No petitions were received or noted.

Cr Murphy left the Council Chambers at 6:07pm due to their declared conflict of interest for item 7.1 as stated in Item 3 of the agenda.

7 Council Reports

7.1 Contract G1083-16: Management of Maryborough Sports and Leisure Centre and Swimming Pools

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That Council:

1. Exercise the contract option to extend Contract G1083-16 for the management of the Maryborough Sports and Leisure Centre and Swimming Pools with Unified Community Sports and Leisure Pty Ltd for a further three-year term, to 30 June 2029, noting the total contract value for the extension period is \$2,281,945.45 (excl. GST).
2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, to execute the formal contract extension and complete all associated documentation required to give effect to this decision.
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, during the three-year term, to approve and execute variations to Contract G1083-16, provided any such variation is consistent with Council's budget, Procurement Policy, and delegations.
4. Note that detailed legal advice, financial schedules, and supplier-provided information are contained in Confidential Attachments A–E, designated confidential under the Local Government Act 2020 because they comprise legal privileged information and private commercial information; the grounds for confidentiality will be recorded in the minutes in accordance with section 66(5).

Moved: Cr La Vella

Seconded: Cr de Villiers

CARRIED

Cr Murphy returned to the Council Chambers at 6:14pm after the discussion and voting of item 7.1 had concluded.

7.2 Draft FY26-27 Budget Endorsement for Community Engagement

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That Council:

1. Endorse the draft 2026/27 Budget (incorporating the four-year Budget) at Attachment 1 to this report for community consultation.
2. Gives public notice of the draft 2026/27 Budget on Council's website and invites written submissions from Thursday, 26 March 2026 until Thursday, 16 April 2026.
3. Notes that in accordance with Section 93 and 96(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, consultation will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy.
4. Notes that any person who makes a written submission in relation to the draft 2026/27 Budget may be heard by Council on Wednesday, 29 April 2026.
5. Notes that the 2026/27 Budget (incorporating the four-year Budget) will be considered for adoption at the Council Meeting to be held Wednesday, 27 May 2026 at 6.00pm.

Moved: Cr La Vella

Seconded: Cr de Villiers

CARRIED

7.3 Quarterly Finance Report December 2025

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That Council receives and notes the Quarterly Finance Report December 2025 attached to this report.

Moved: Cr de Villiers

Seconded: Cr Bartlett

CARRIED

7.4 Domestic Animal Management Plan

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That Council:

1. Endorse the draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026–2029 for the purposes of public consultation to be conducted from 6 April to 1 May 2026.
2. Authorise officers to consider and incorporate community feedback into the final Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026–2029 and present the final Plan to Council for adoption in May 2026.

Moved: Cr Long

Seconder: Cr de Villiers

CARRIED

7.5 Customer Charter

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That Council:

1. Endorse the Draft Customer Charter for community feedback;
2. Note the Draft Customer Charter has been prepared to replace the 2018 Service Charter;
3. Note the Draft Customer Charter aligns with the Local Government Act 2020, the Council Plan, the Financial Plan, Asset Plan, Unreasonable Customer Conduct Policy, and the Complaints Policy;
4. Note that as prescribed under Sections 55 and 56 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, community feedback will be invited in accordance with Council's Community Engagement policy;
5. Note that community feedback will be considered and incorporated into the final Customer Charter where appropriate
6. Note the Customer Charter will be considered for adoption at the Council meeting to be held on Wednesday, 27 May 2026 at 6pm.

Moved: Cr La Vella

Seconder: Cr de Villiers

CARRIED

7.6 Audit and Risk Committee Charter update

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That Council;

1. Notes the completion of the annual review of the Audit and Risk Committee Charter in accordance with Section 54 of the Local Government Act 2020;

2. Approves the proposed amendment to Section 5.6 (Remuneration) of the Charter contained in the report;
3. Adopts the revised Audit and Risk Committee Charter for 2026.

Moved: Cr Bartlett

Seconder: Cr de Villiers

CARRIED

8 General and other Urgent Business

There were no Councillor Reports or General Business Presented.

9 Notices of Motion

There were no noticed of motion presented.

10 Confidential Business

10.1 Move into Confidential

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That Council;

1. Close the meeting to the public in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020 to consider confidential information and;
2. The Ordinary Council meeting will conclude at the completion of the confidential items.

Moved: Cr Murphy

Seconder: Cr Long

CARRIED

Peter Harriott left the Council Chambers at 7:16pm due to their declared conflict of Interest as stated in Item 3 of the agenda.

10.2 G1850-2023Q Contract Extension Independent Chairperson for the Chief Executive Officer Employment Matters Advisory Committee

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That Council:

1. Approves the extension of Contract G1850-2023Q *Independent Chairperson for the Chief Executive Officer Employment Matters Advisory Committee* with Wenzler Family Trust trading as Sal Corp Pty Ltd for a further two (2) year term for the contract sum of \$9,000 (exclusive of GST);
2. Confirms the appointment of Ms. Christine Mileham of Wenzler Family Trust trading as Sal Corp Pty Ltd as the Independent Chairperson of the Chief Executive Officer

Matters Advisory Committee for the extended term; and

3. Authorises the General Manager Corporate Performance to do all things necessary to execute the Contract G1850-2023Q Extension on behalf of Council.

Moved: Cr Bartlett

Seconder: Cr Meyer

CARRIED

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That Council:

1. Acknowledge that the circumstances requiring Item 10.2 to be considered in a closed session under as defined under section 3(a)(f)(g)(ii)(h)(K) of the Local Government Act 2020 have now been resolved.
2. Resolve that the report, including all attachments and subsequent resolutions, be removed from "Confidential Cover" and reclassified as a Public Item.
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to publish the document on the Council's website and include it in the minutes of the 25 March 2025 Ordinary Council Meeting.

Moved: Cr de Villiers

Seconder: Cr Bartlett

CARRIED

10.4 Move out of Confidential

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That the meeting be reopened to the public.

Moved: Cr Bartlett

Seconded: Cr Meyer

CARRIED

11 Meeting Closure

The Mayor, Cr Green closed the Council Meeting at 7:37pm.

5 Minutes of Delegated and Advisory Committees

Nil.

6 Petitions

6.1 Petition Report - Objections to the proposed closures of Dunolly, Bealiba and Talbot transfer stations.

Author: Governance Officer

Responsible Officer: 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

To present a petition opposing the proposed closures of the Dunolly, Bealiba and Talbot transfer stations and seek Council's resolution to refer the petition to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration in accordance with the Governance Rules.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. receives and notes the petition submitted on 2 April 2026 containing a total of 693 signatures objecting to the proposed closures of the Dunolly, Bealiba, and Talbot transfer stations; and;
2. receives and notes the petition submitted on 16 April 2026 containing 106 signatures objecting to the proposed closure of Talbot transfer station
3. Refers the petitions to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration as prescribed by section 53.9 of the Governance Rules.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2025-2029:

The Community's vision:

Informed and engaged community

3. Strengthen community engagement and belonging through Shire-wide participation.

Sound leadership and financial management

6. Embed good governance in all aspects of the organisation to create the fundamentals of fair, open and equitable decision making.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 2 April 2026, Council received a petition containing 693 signatures objecting to the proposed closures of the Dunolly, Bealiba, and Talbot transfer stations. On 16 April, Council received a petition containing 106 signatures objecting to the proposed closure of the Talbot transfer station. The petitions were submitted in accordance with Council's Governance Rules.

Under Division 9 – Petitions and Joint Letters of the Governance Rules, Council may receive the petition but must refer it to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration where the matter relates to an operational issue.

REPORT

When a petition is received, Council must follow the process set out in the Governance Rules.

Under section 53.1, Council may receive and note a petition but may not determine the matter as urgent business unless resolved by Council.

Additionally, **section 53.9** requires that where a petition relates to an operational matter, it must be referred to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration.

The matters raised in the petition relate to the operational management of Council's waste and resource recovery services.

It's therefore appropriate for Council to formally acknowledge the petition and refer it to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration in accordance with these requirements.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Governance - Failure to transparently govern and embrace good governance practices

Community engagement

This risk is mitigated by managing the petition in accordance with the requirements of the Governance Rules, ensuring the petition is formally received, assessed for validity, and referred to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration as prescribed.

This approach supports transparent, consistent, and defensible decision-making.

Inadequate stakeholder management or engagement impacting brand reputation and community satisfaction in Council decision

This risk is mitigated by formally acknowledging the petition, ensuring the views of petitioners are appropriately recorded, and referring the matter for consideration through established operational processes.

This demonstrates Council's commitment to listening to community concerns and engaging in a fair and respectful manner.

CONCLUSION

The petitions received by Council meets the requirements set out in the Governance Rules.

In accordance with these requirements, it is appropriate that the petition be formally acknowledged and referred to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration as it relates to an operational matter.

This approach ensures transparency, procedural compliance and appropriate consideration of the matters raised by the petitioners.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Dunolly Residents Re Closure of Transfer Stations Redacted [6.1.1]
2. Petition regarding the closure of the Talbot Transfer Station Redacted [6.1.2]



Dunolly Rural Transaction Centre Inc

[REDACTED]

To: Central Goldfields Shire Council
Attention: [REDACTED]

Date: 2nd April 2026

CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SHIRE	
DOC ID:	
2 APR 2026	
REFER TO:	
LIBRARY:	DB:

Dear [REDACTED]

Regarding: Transfer Station Closures

It is with great concern that we have learnt of the intended closures of Dunolly, Bealiba and Talbot. Transfer Stations.

I represent the people of Dunolly who wish to prevent the closures, and to this end we have obtained signatures for your consideration. As you can see, a great many people think that this move is a mistake. We all need to dispose of rubbish and the township transfer stations are the perfect way of doing this.

While consolidating to Carisbrook may be considered a smart move initially to save costs, many are of the opinion that travelling that far, particularly now during the fuel crisis (duration unknown), will result in people simply dumping in the bush.

This will impact our wildlife and the beauty of our bush, but in the long run will result in added expenses to have the waste removed.

We hope that Council will reconsider and keep the transfer stations open.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

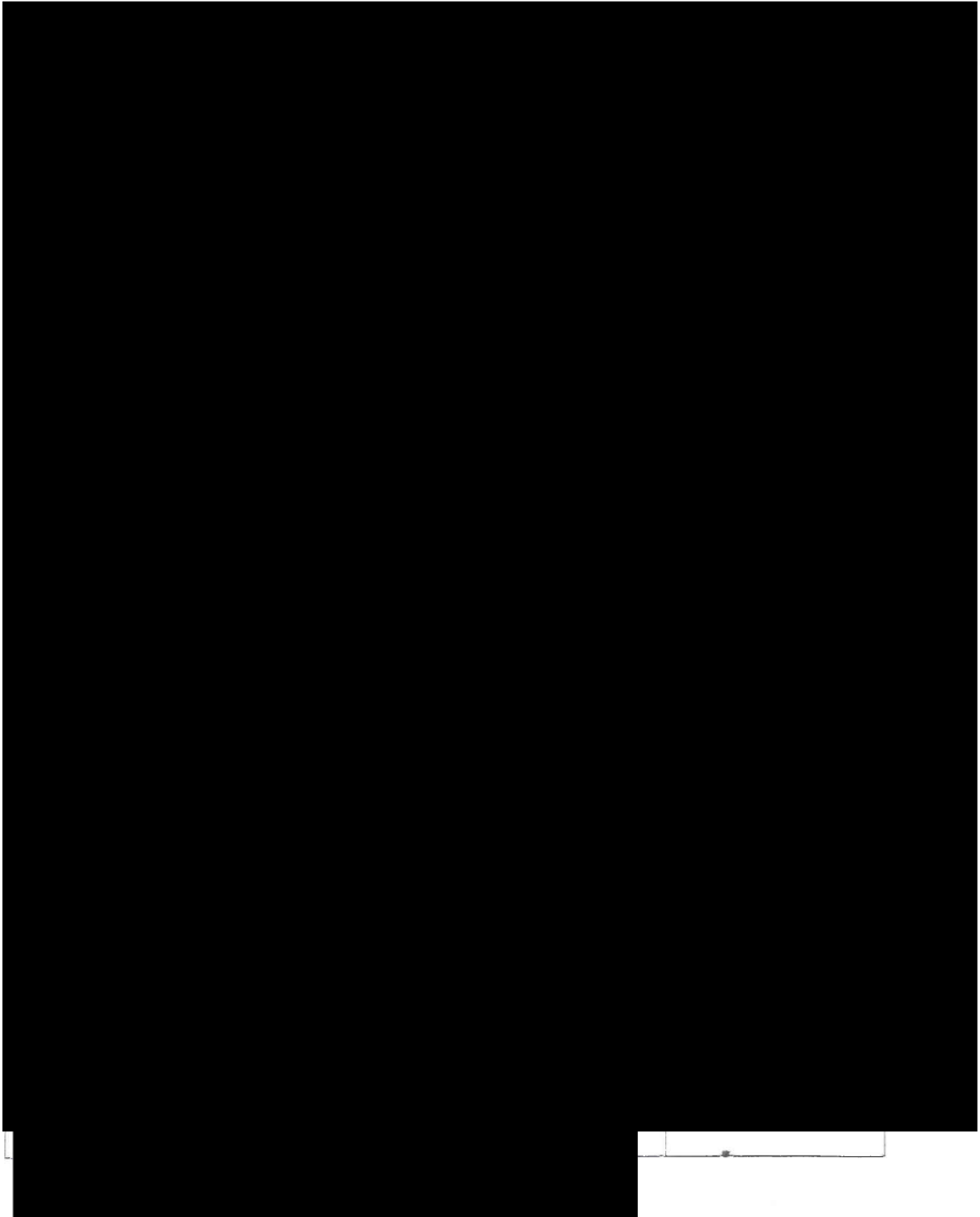
SAVE OUR LOCAL TIPS
PETITION TO COUNCIL

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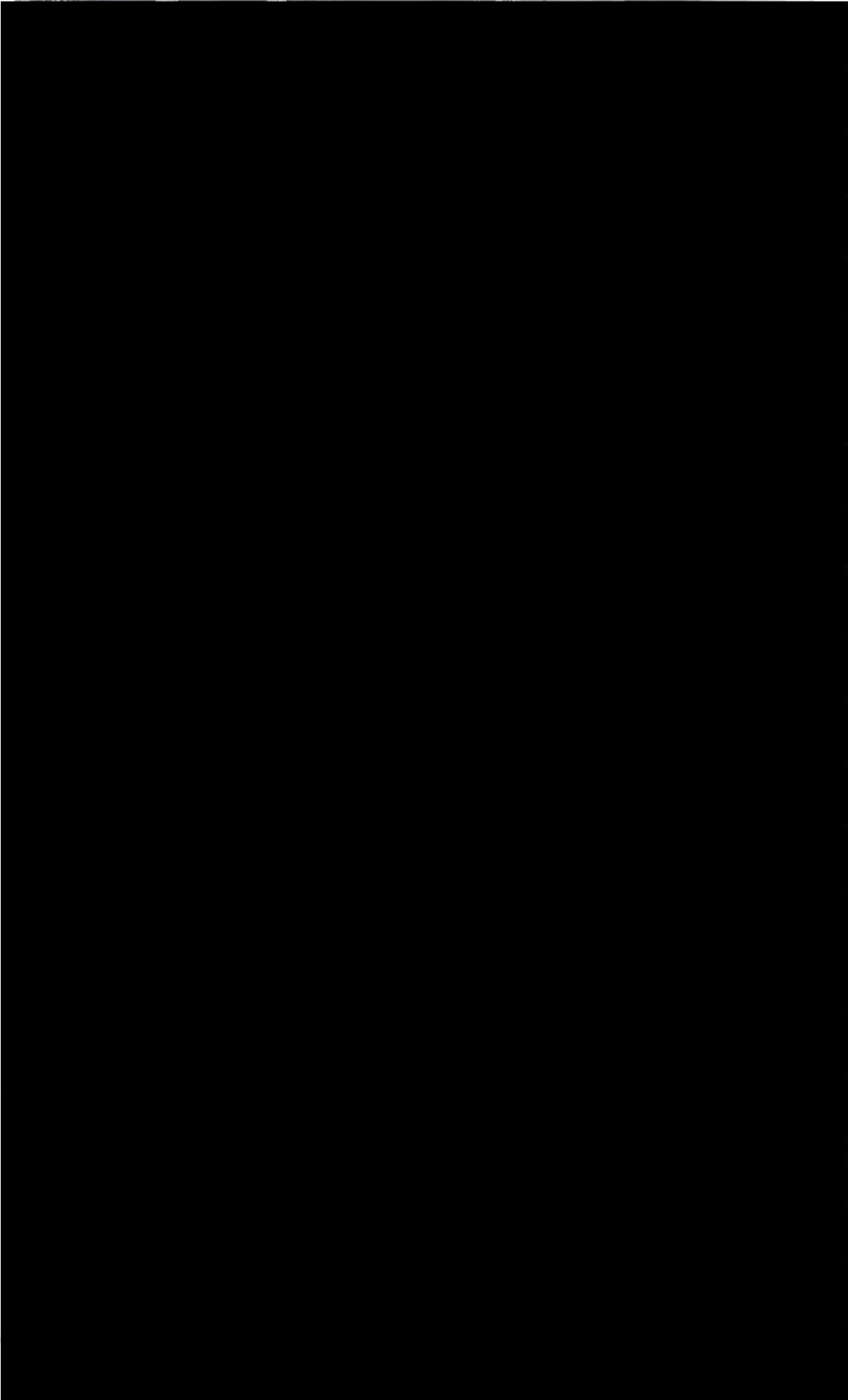
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[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	CONTACT [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

SAVE OUR LOCAL TIPS PETITION TO COUNCIL

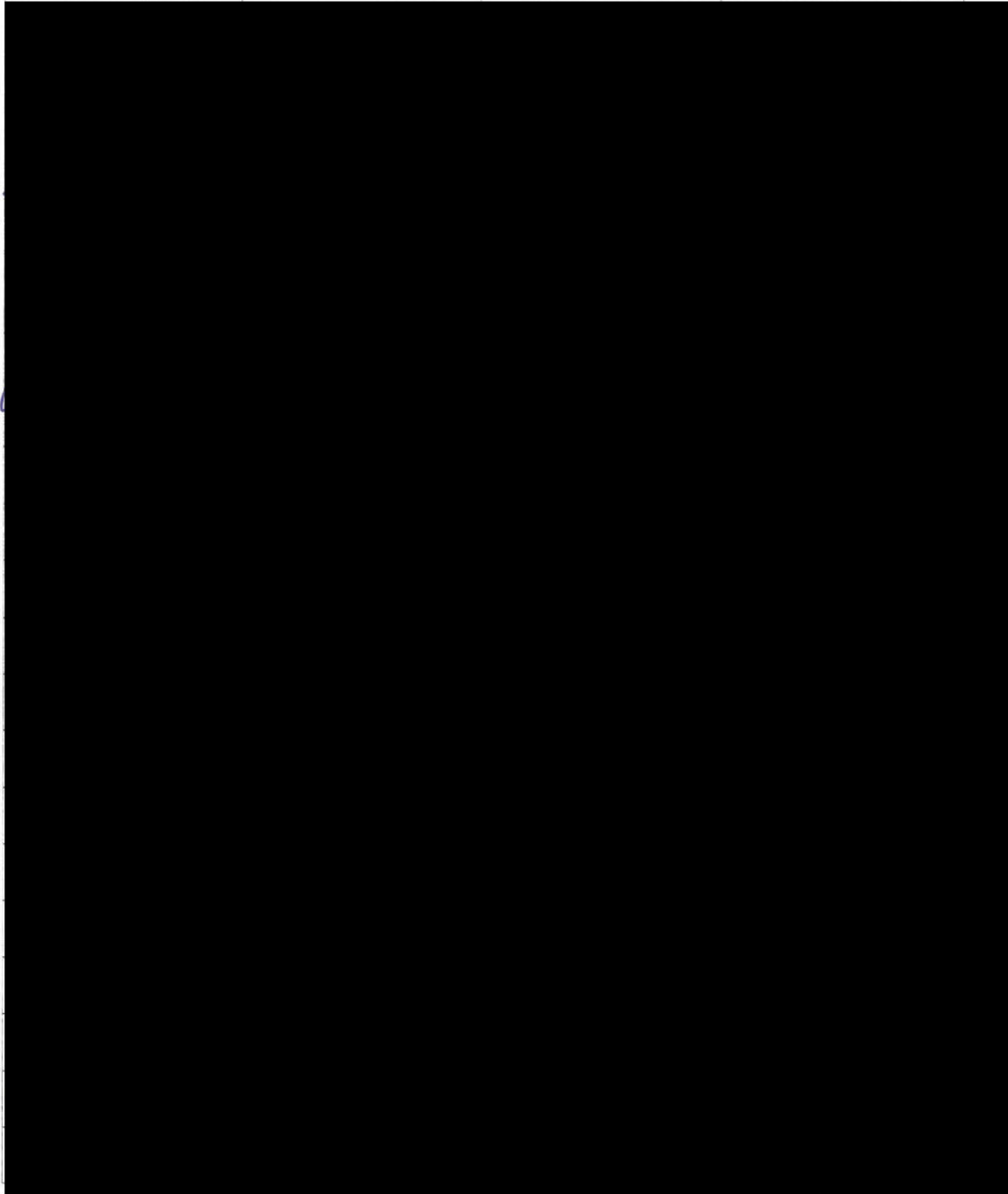


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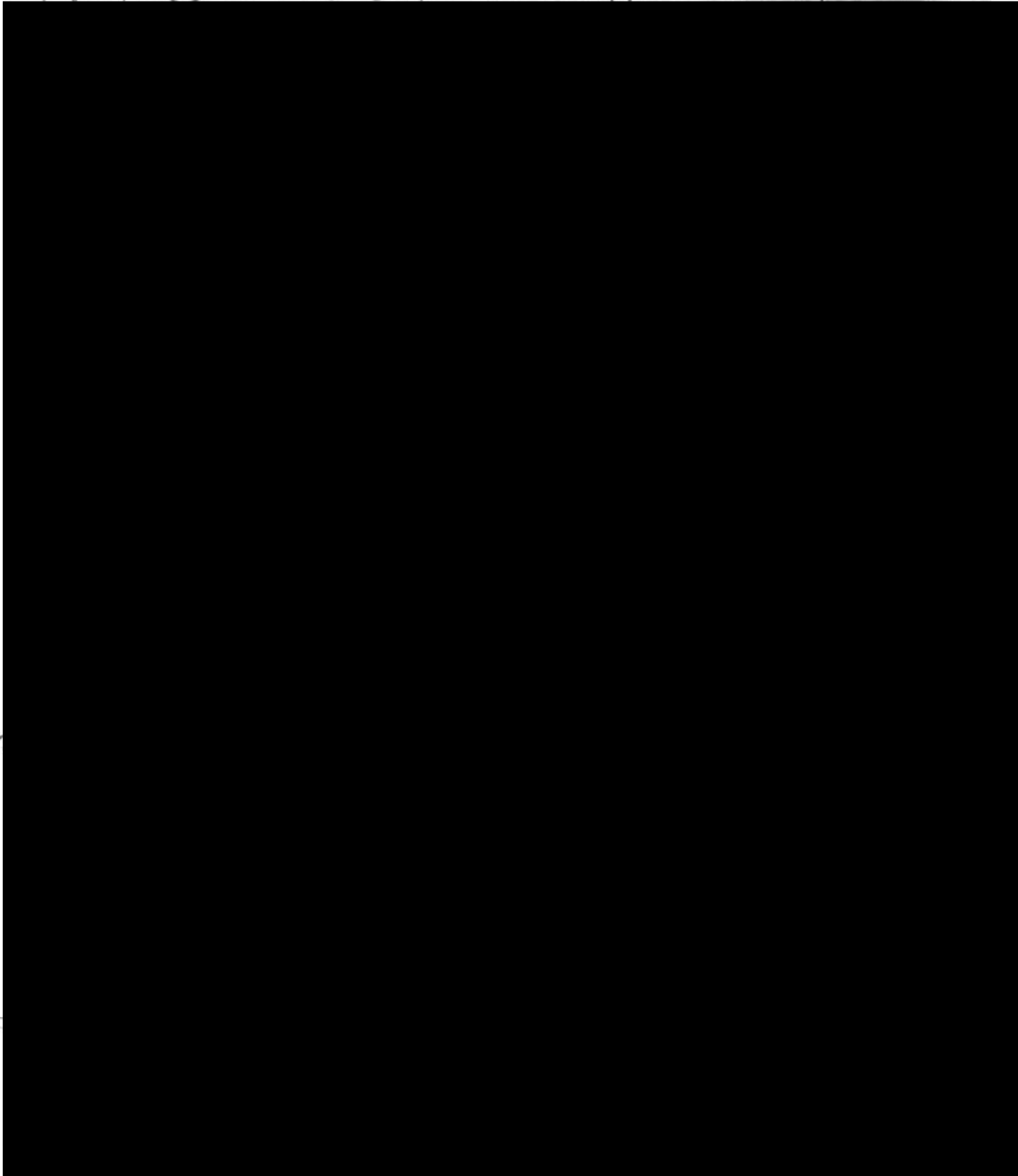


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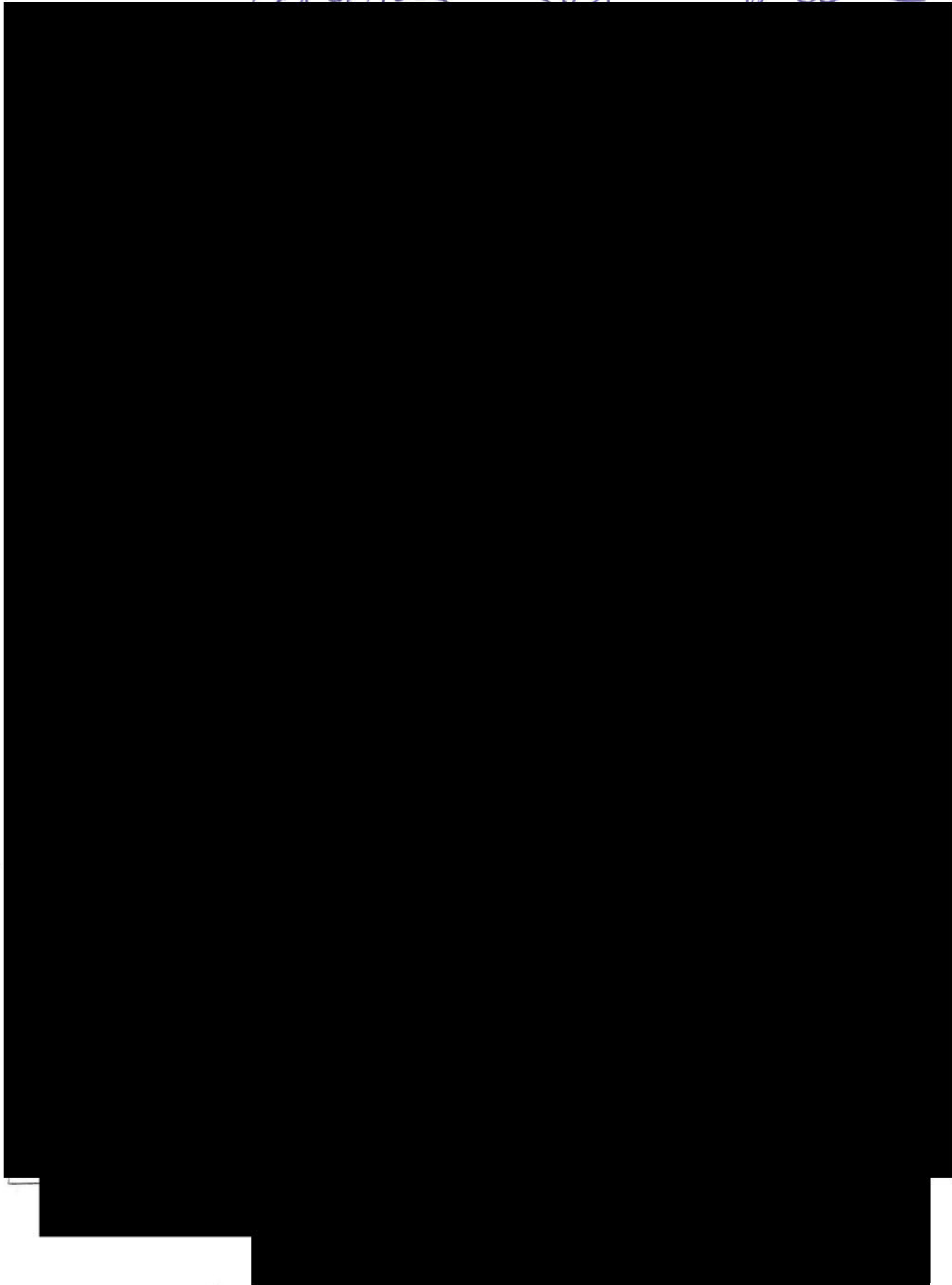
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Name Town Sign #



SAVE OUR LOCAL TIPS PETITION TO COUNCIL

location sign phone

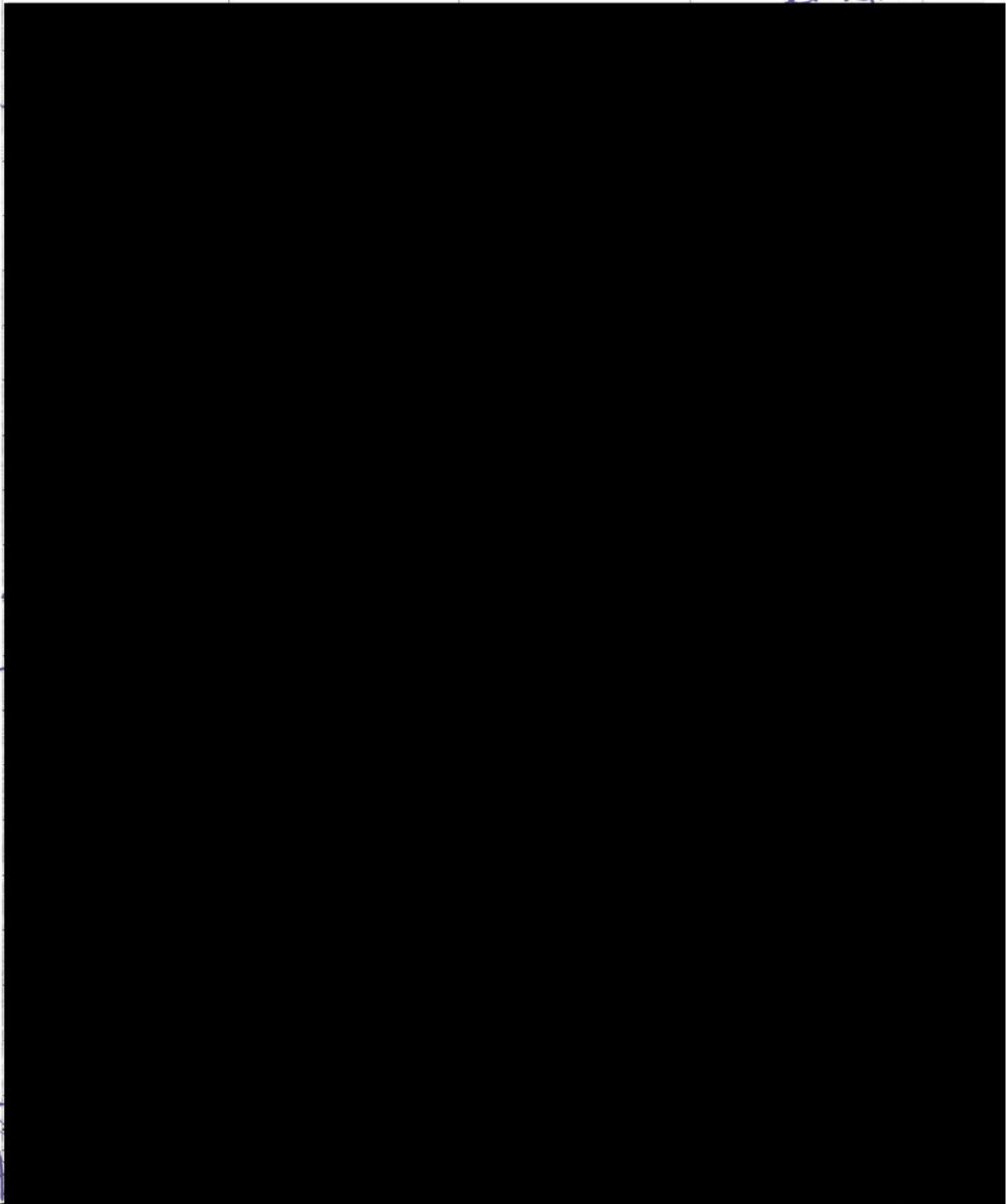


SAVE OUR LOCAL TIPS
PETITION TO COUNCIL

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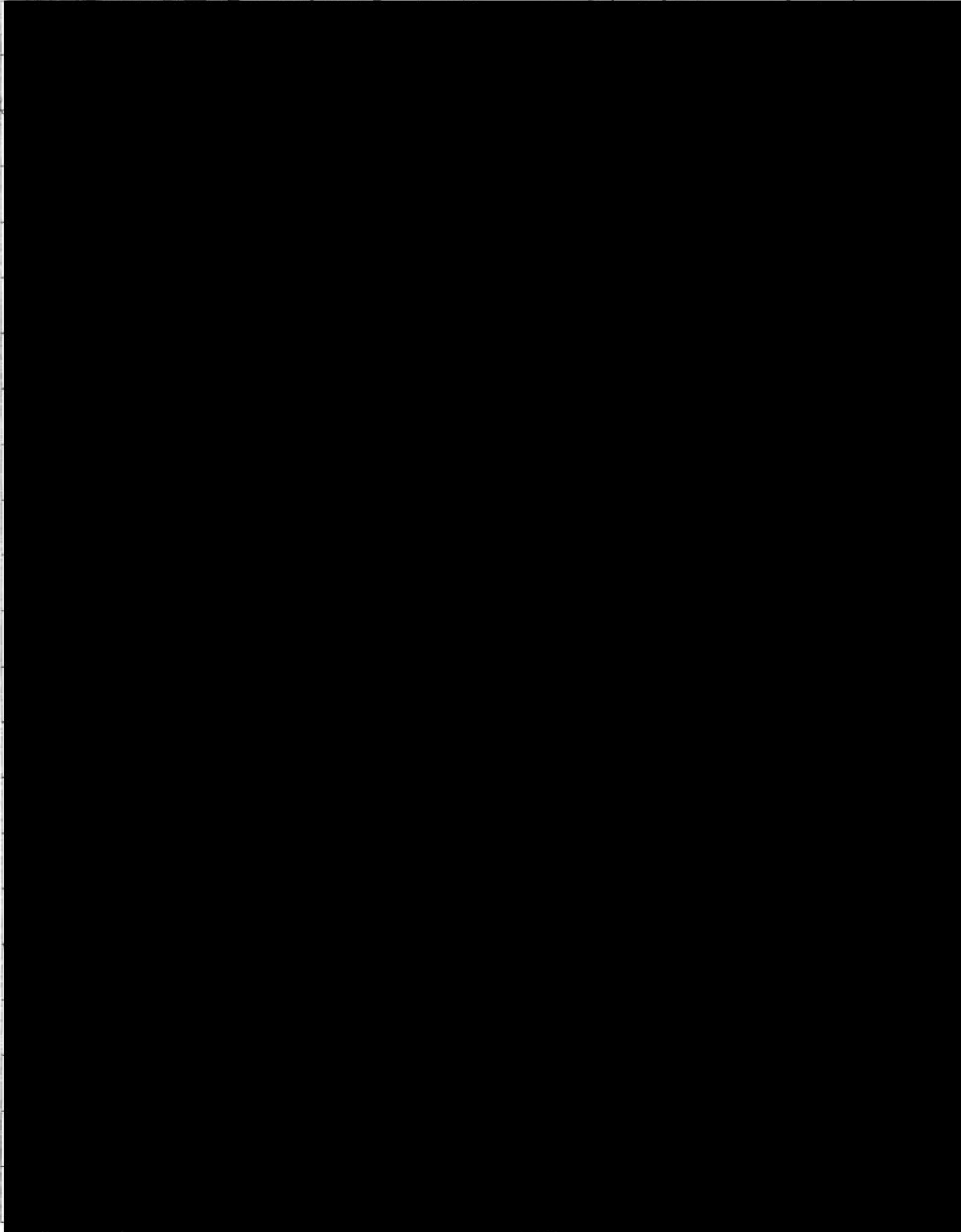
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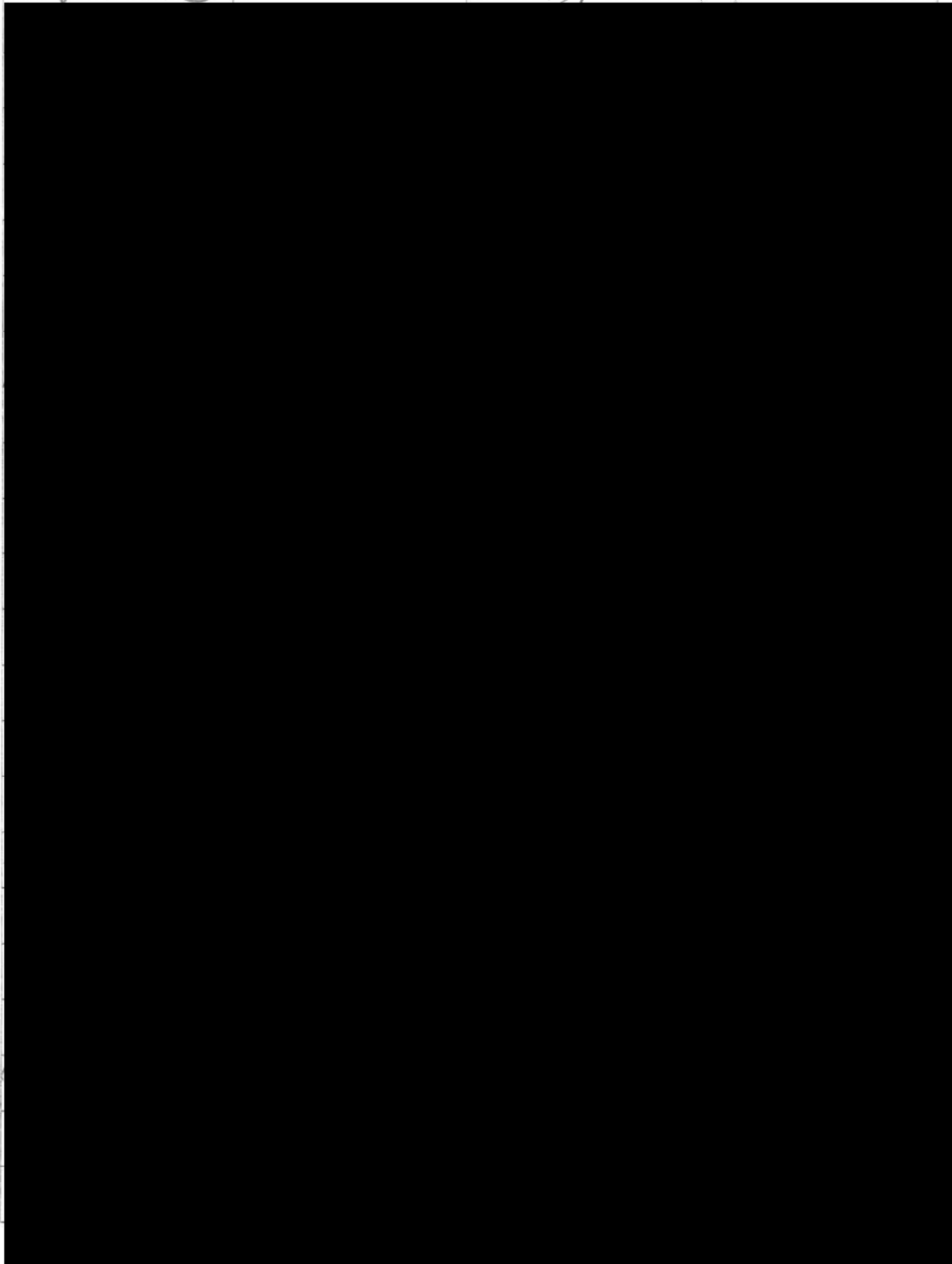
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NAME TOWN SIGNATURE



SAVE OUR LOCAL TIPS PETITION TO COUNCIL

Name: Town Sign Phone



SAVE OUR LOCAL TIPS PETITION TO COUNCIL

NAME Town Sign PHONE

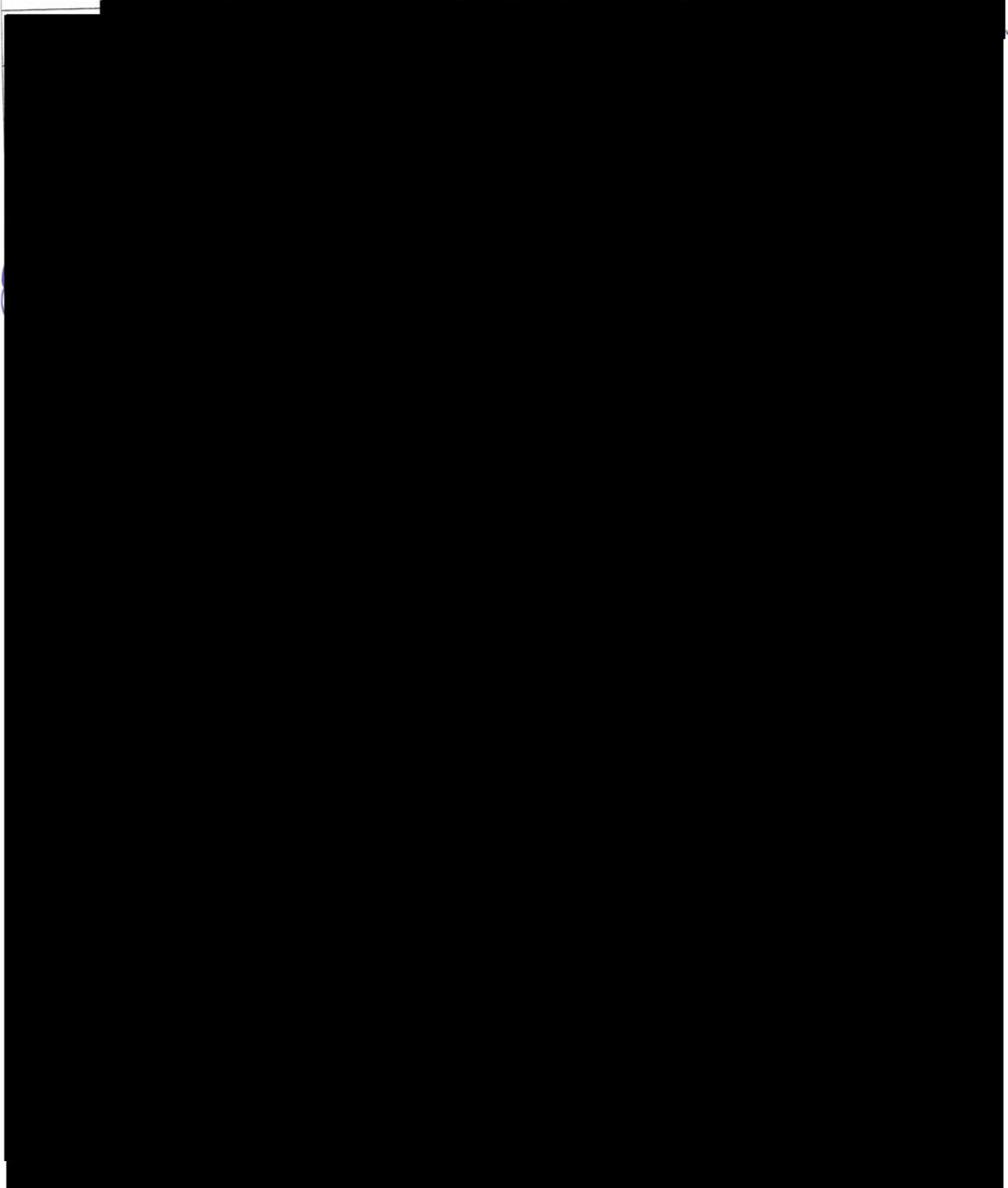
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SAVE OUR LOCAL TIPS
PETITION TO COUNCIL



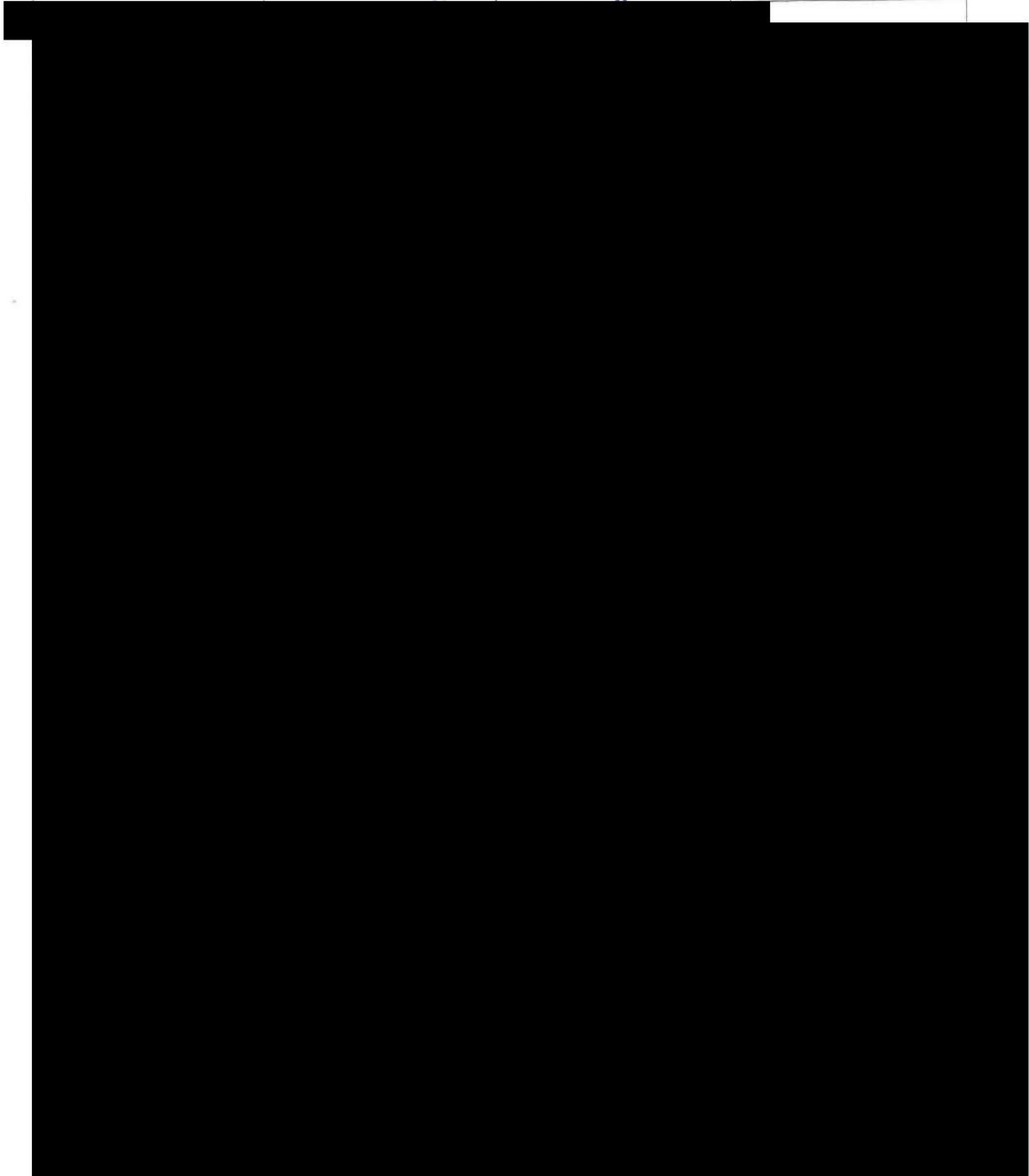
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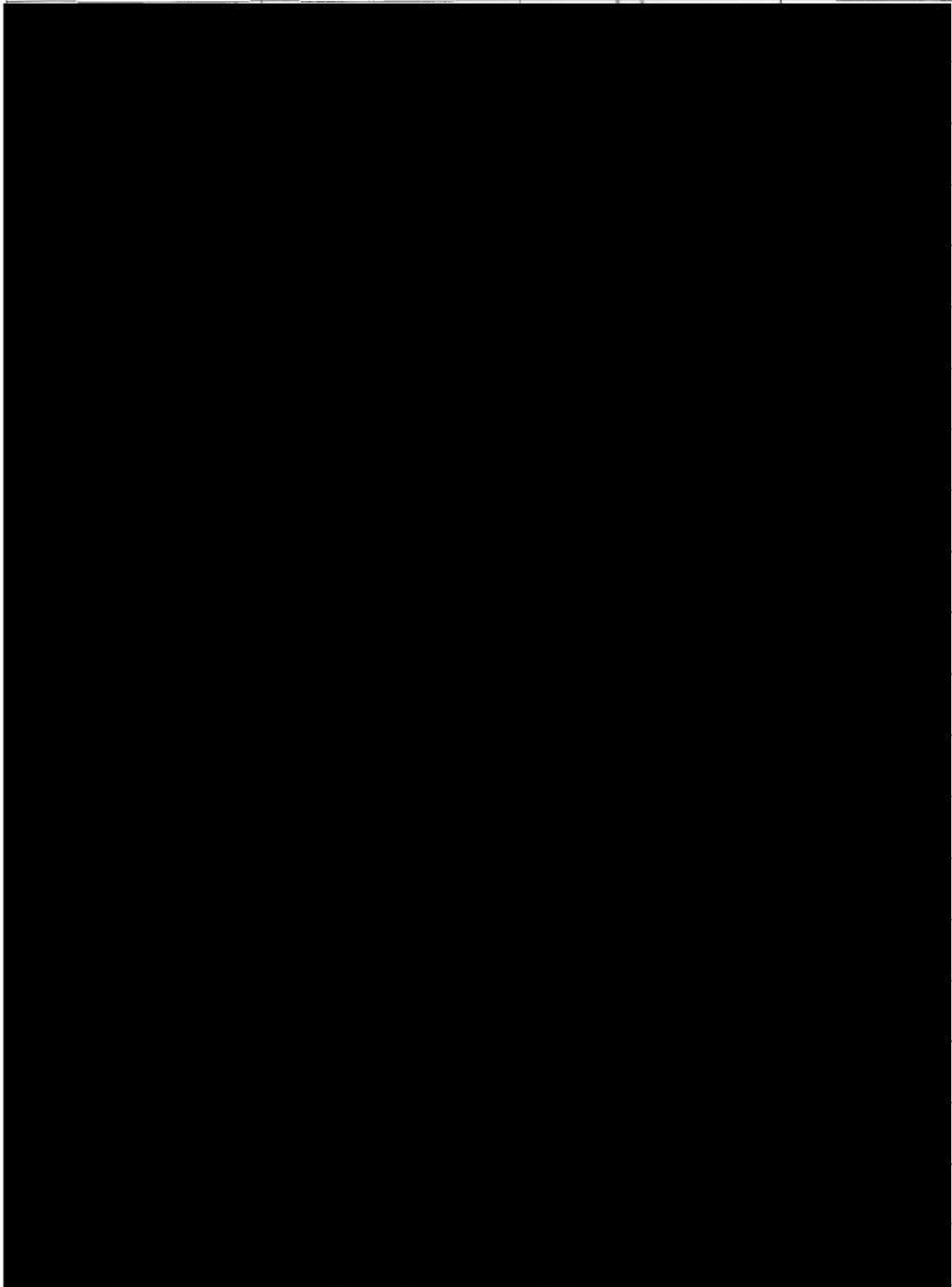
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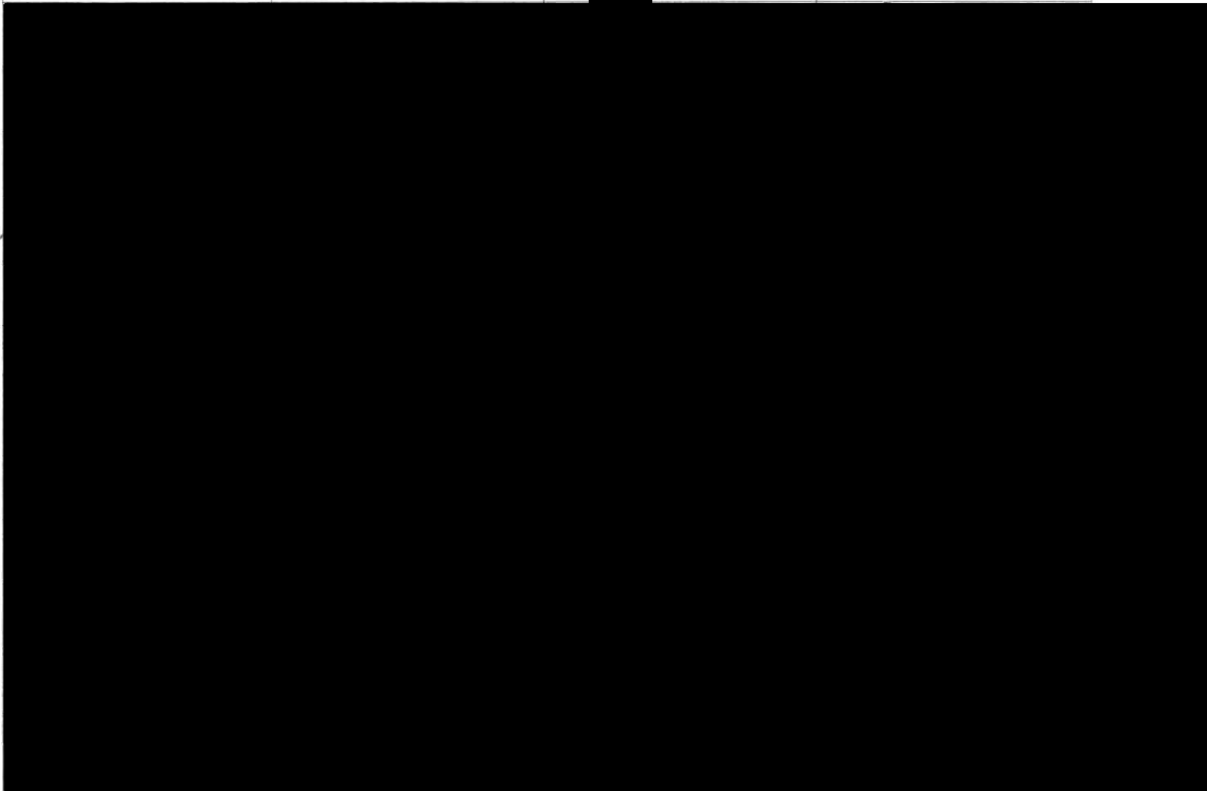
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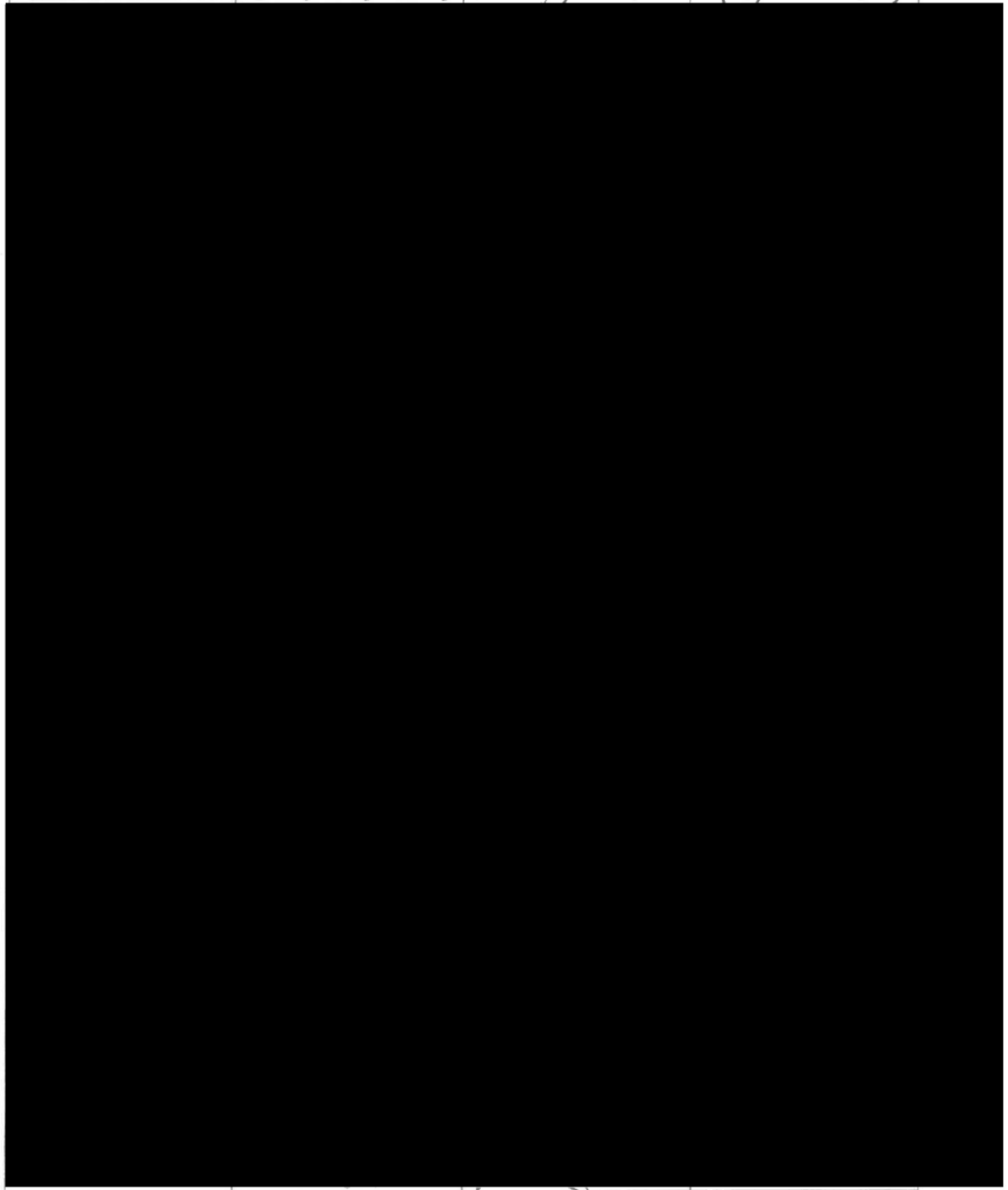
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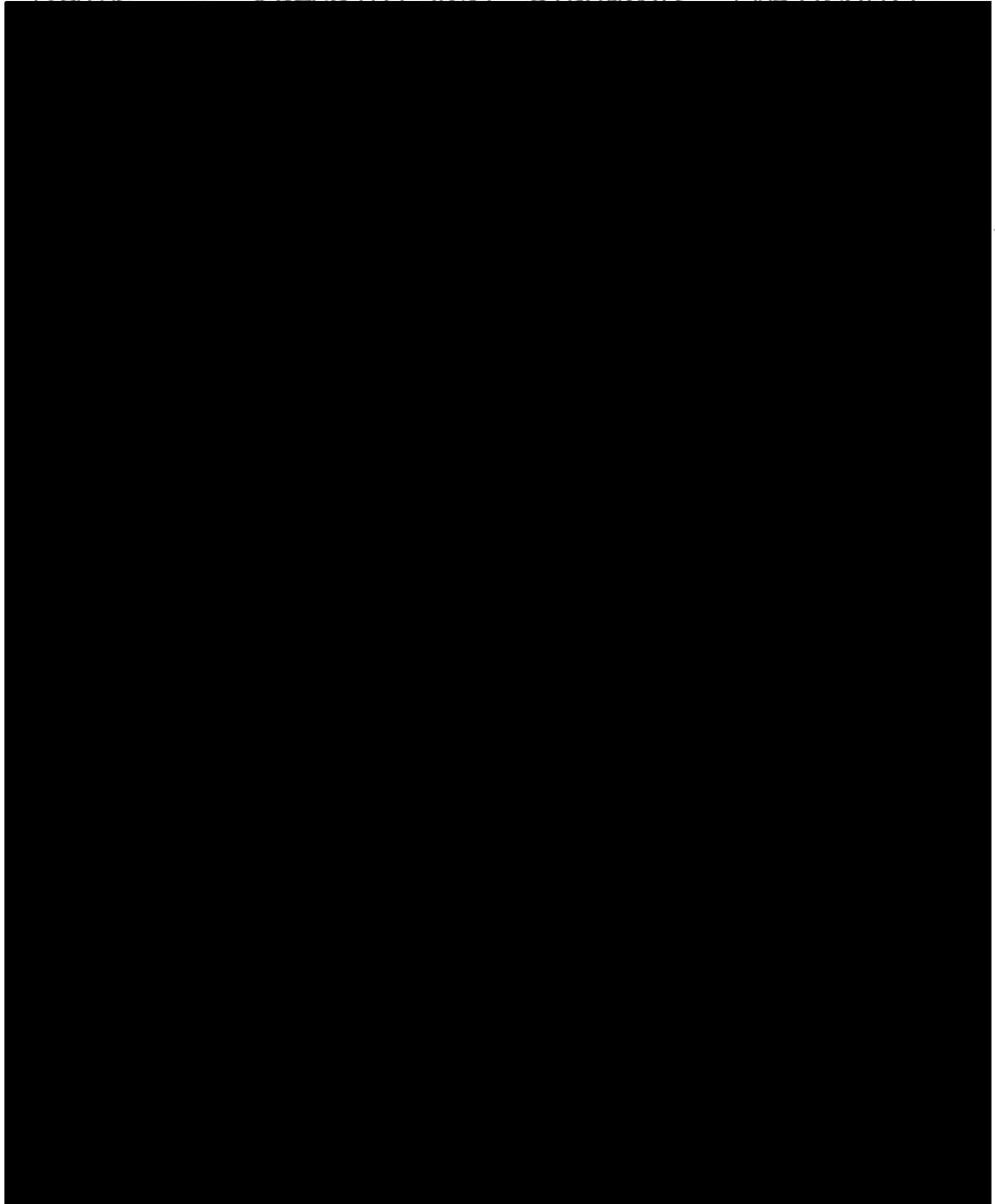
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(optional)



SAVE OUR LOCAL TIPS PETITION TO COUNCIL

Name Location-Town Signature Phone or Email
(Optional)



SAVE OUR LOCAL TIPS PETITION TO COUNCIL

PETITION TO COUNCIL Phone or Email
 Name Location-Town Address (Optional)

Total 375.

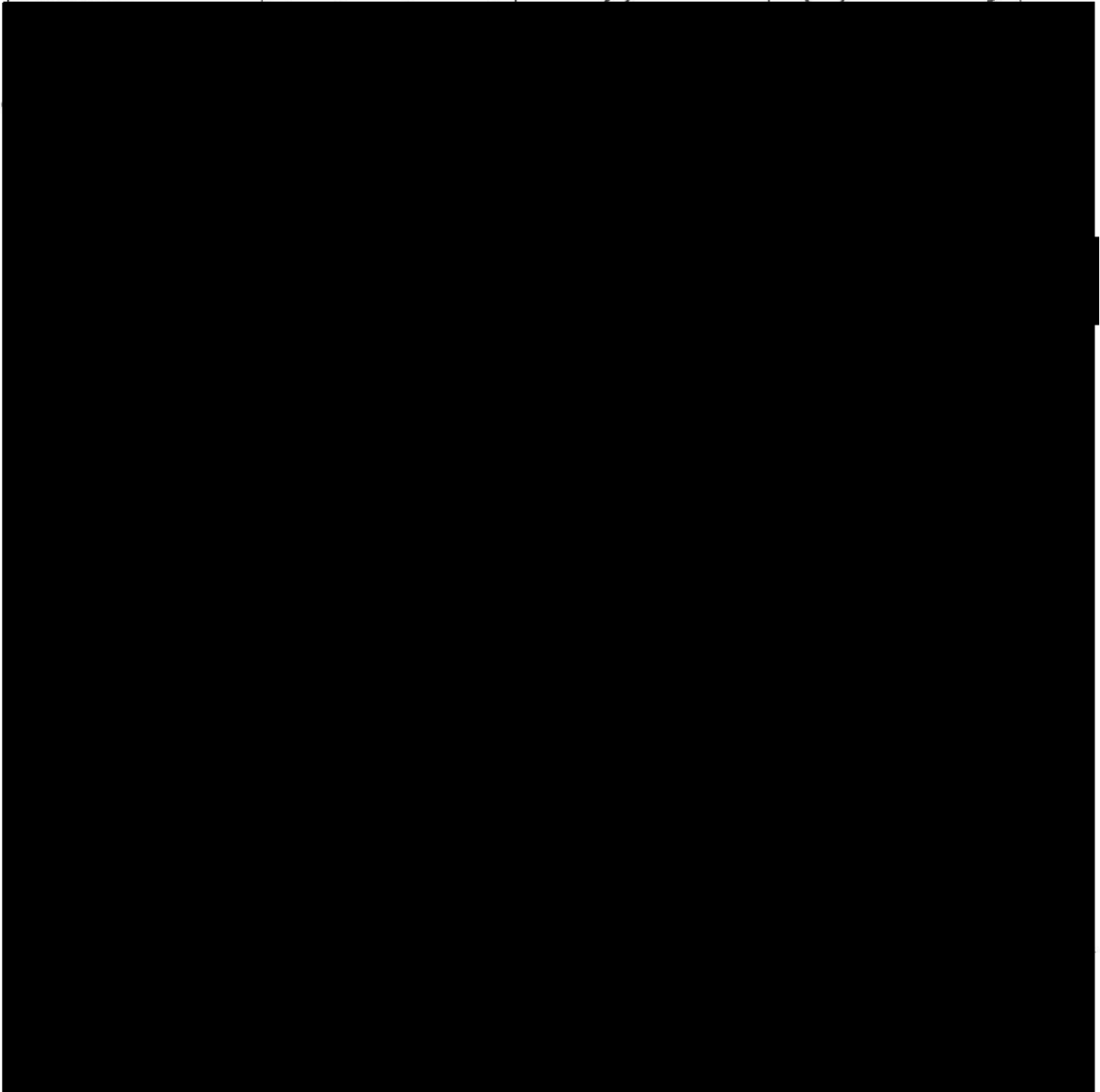
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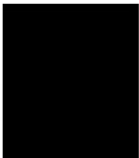


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Name Location-Town Signature Phone or Email
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SAVE OUR LOCAL TIPS PETITION TO COUNCIL



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SAVE OUR LOCAL TIPS PETITION TO COUNCIL



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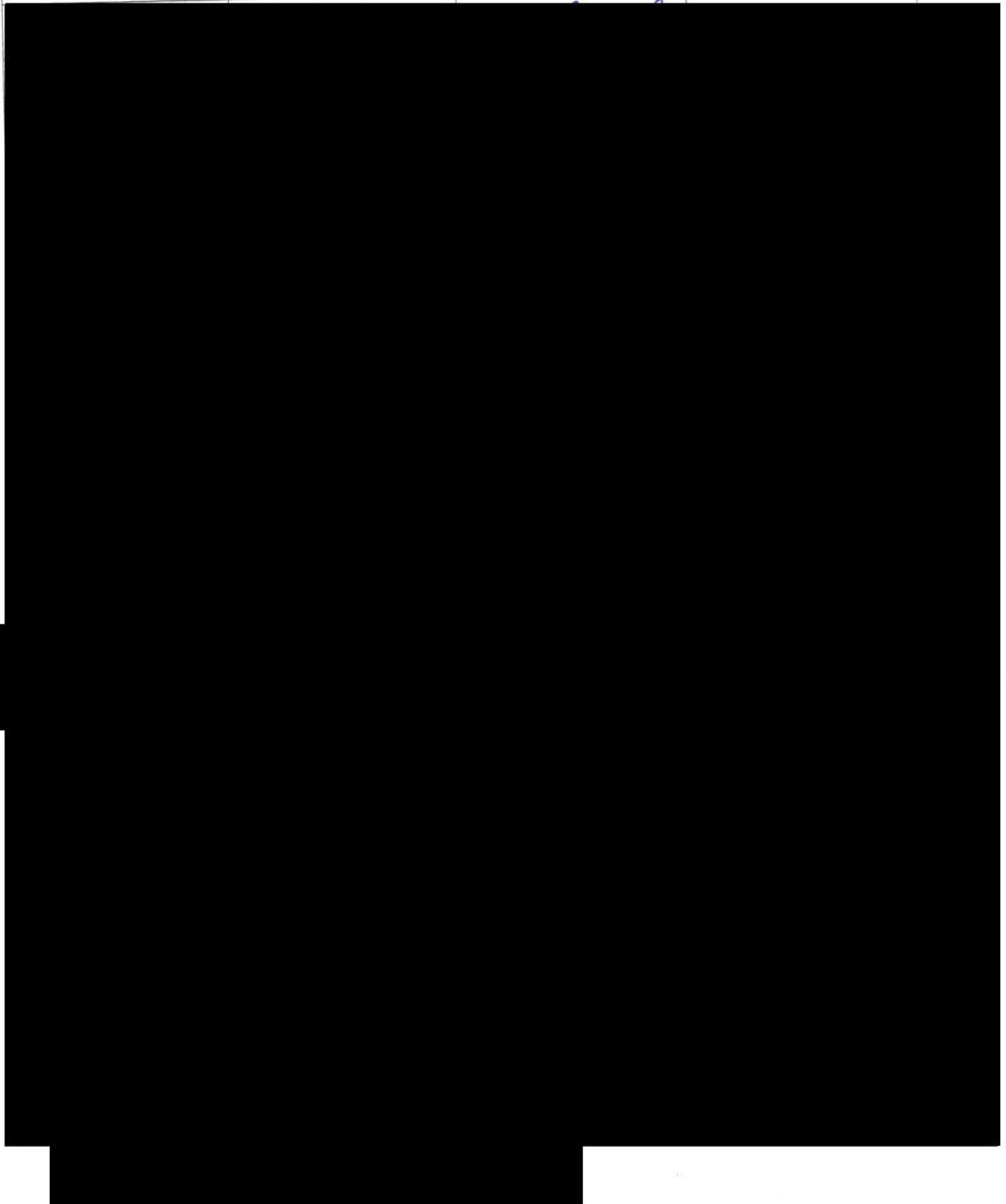
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PETITION TO COUNCIL

Name Location-Town Signature Phone or Email

[Redacted content]

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SAVE OUR LOCAL TIPS PETITION TO COUNCIL

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Petition To The Central Goldfields Shire

The Central Goldfields Shire is considering closing several refuse transfer stations (Tips) within the shire. The Talbot facility is one of these.

The Ratepayers of the Talbot area are concerned the closure would mean an escalation of illegal rubbish disposal in the forests and creeks of the shire, causing untold **Environmental Damage**.

Many ratepayers use the Talbot waste disposal facility on a regular basis. Rural Ratepayers mostly do not have a weekly garbage collection (for which they pay within their rates) unless they make alternative arrangements at their own cost, and rely on the tip for disposal of hard rubbish. Township rate payers also rely on the tip facilities for hard rubbish disposal.

We the undersigned urge the council to consider the above reasons to keep this facility open in the interest of all ratepayers in the area.

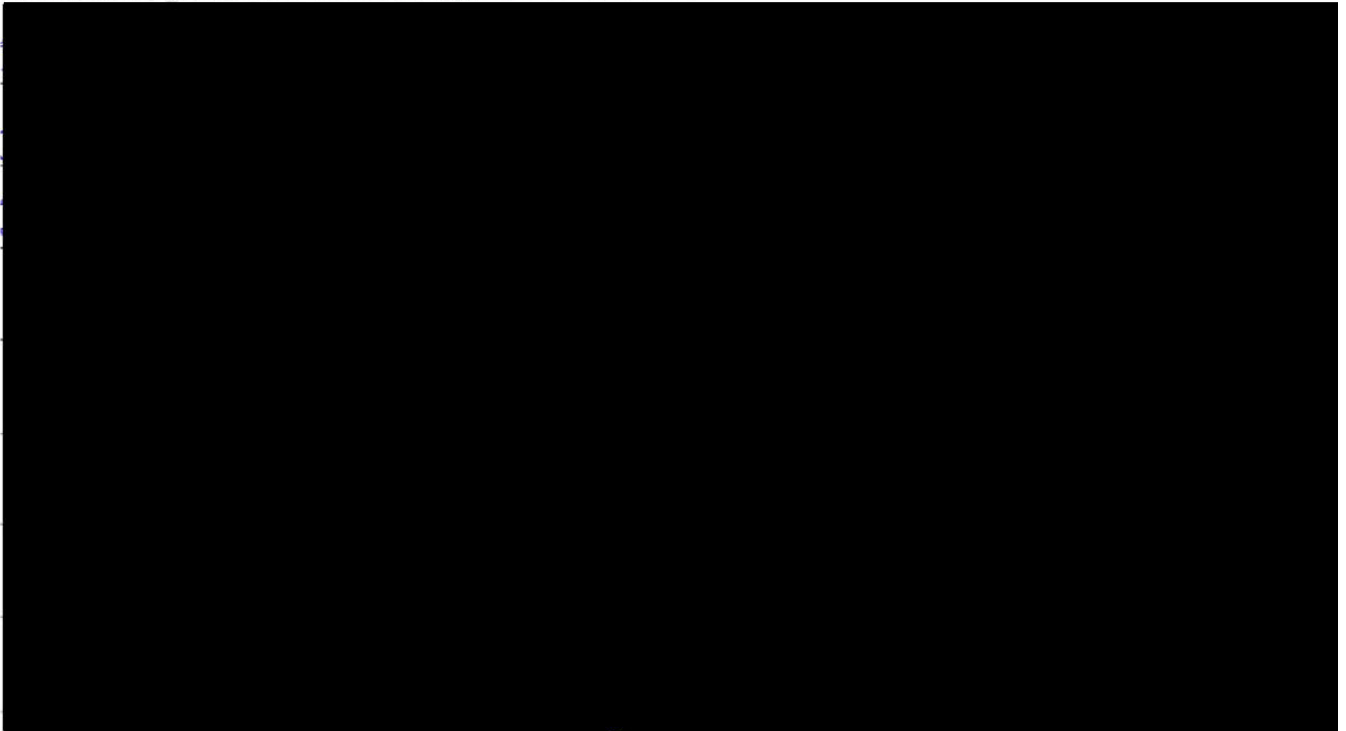
CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SHIRE	
RECEIVED AT CUSTOMER SERVICE	
DATE: 16/4/26 9:40am	
REFER TO:	CSO:

Name	address	phone no./email

Namir

ADAMS

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Petition To The Central Goldfields Shire

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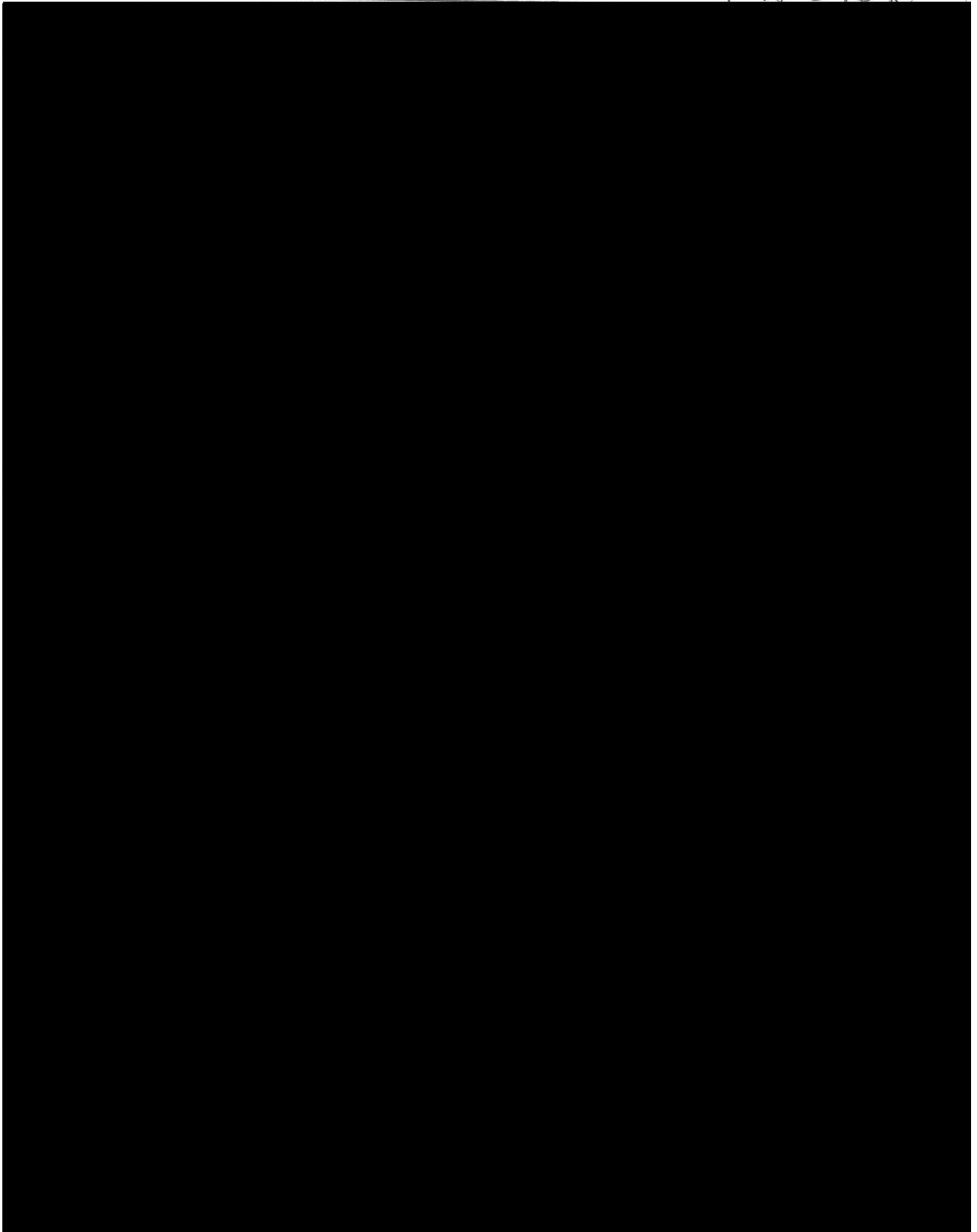
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Name	address	phone no./email
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NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE



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Name	address	phone no./email
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7 Council Reports

7.1 Deledio Recreation Reserve Design and Construct Tender Award

Author: Coordinator Project Delivery

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 present the outcomes of the tender evaluation for the Deledio Reserve New Modular Pavilion Project and to seek Council approval to award Contract G25-26-19. The value of the contract exceeds the Chief Executive Officer's financial delegation and therefore requires a decision by Council.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Awards Contract G25-26-19 Deledio Reserve New Modular Pavilion Project to MKM Building Group for the contract sum of \$2,522,000.00 (exclusive of GST), having regard to Confidential Attachment 1 – Tender Evaluation Panel Report for RFT G25-26-19 and Confidential Attachment 2 – Probity Report – Deledio Reserve New Modular Pavilion Project.
2. Notes that while the tender documentation contemplated delivery of a modular pavilion solution, the recommended tender proposes a non-modular construction methodology, which has been assessed by officers as meeting the intent of the original tender scope, functional requirements, funding conditions, and project outcomes.
3. Notes that the value of Contract G25-26-19 exceeds the Chief Executive Officer's financial delegation and therefore requires Council approval.
4. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) to:
 - a. Issue the Letter of Acceptance, subject to final negotiations; and
 - b. Approve contract variations within an agreed tolerance of up to plus or minus 10% of the original contract sum, provided the total contract value does not exceed \$2,774,200.00 (exclusive of GST), for the purposes of efficient contract administration.
5. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) to do all things necessary to execute Contract G25-26-19 on behalf of Council, including notifying all tender respondents of Council's decision.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2025-2029:

The Community's vision:

Infrastructure that supports growth and liveability

4. Provide and maintain inclusive, accessible, culturally safe, and sustainable community infrastructure that supports wellbeing at every life stage.

Initiative:

Provide infrastructure to meet community need.

This report has been prepared in line with the *Local Government Act 2020*. Confidential Attachments 1 and 2 contain commercially sensitive tender information and probity advice. Making this information public could disadvantage Council and tender respondents and is therefore not in the public interest. These attachments are appropriately treated as confidential for the purposes of this decision.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Council is delivering a new pavilion at Deledio Recreation Reserve to replace the existing facility, which has reached the end of its useful life and no longer meets contemporary standards for safety, accessibility, or functionality.

Deledio Recreation Reserve is a key community asset for Dunolly and surrounding districts. The reserve includes football and cricket ovals, netball courts, cricket nets, an archery range and supporting facilities.

It is used by a wide range of sporting and community groups, including the Dunolly Football Netball Club, Laanecoorie–Dunolly Cricket Club, Golden Triangle Archers, local schools, CFA, and other community organisations.

The reserve also serves as a designated emergency staging area during bushfires and other emergencies.

The existing pavilion was constructed in 1977 and has deteriorated significantly.

Multiple inspections have confirmed the building can no longer be economically upgraded due to issues including asbestos, structural damage, non-compliant amenities, accessibility shortcomings, and food safety limitations.

The facility also fails to meet current expectations for female participation, universal access, and inclusive community use.

Provision of a new pavilion at Deledio Reserve has been identified as a long-standing priority through multiple strategic documents, including the Deledio Recreation Reserve Master Plan, the Dunolly and District Community Plan and Council's Priority Projects Plan.

The project supports Council's commitment to community wellbeing, gender equity, accessibility, and the provision of high-quality recreational infrastructure in rural townships.

The project has been made possible through a funding partnership comprising:

- \$1.5M from the Australian Government's Growing Regions Program
- \$1M from the Victorian Government's Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Program, and
- \$500K co-contribution from Council.

The new pavilion will deliver modern, inclusive, and accessible facilities, including female-friendly changerooms, accessible amenities, social and community spaces, compliant kitchen facilities and improved heating, cooling, and ventilation.

The building will be located closer to the netball courts to improve equity of access and functionality for all user groups.

In accordance with the Local Government Act 2020 and Council's procurement policy, a public tender process was undertaken for the design and construction of the pavilion. The tender assessment identified a preferred contractor that met the project objectives and represents value for money for the community.

REPORT

In accordance with the Local Government Act 2020 and Council's Procurement Policy, a public tender was undertaken for the design and construction of the new pavilion at Deledio Recreation Reserve.

A total of four (4) conforming and one (1) non-conforming tender submissions were received by the closing date.

All submissions were initially assessed for compliance prior to detailed evaluation.

Evaluation Process

The evaluation was undertaken by a panel comprising of:

- Coordinator Projects Delivery
- Manager Project Services and Asset Management, and
- Return to Work Officer.

An independent Probity Officer oversaw the procurement process to ensure probity principles were upheld, including fairness, confidentiality, and appropriate management of conflicts of interest, in accordance with Council policy and legislative requirements.

Council's internal Procurement Specialist also provided support throughout the process.

An independent third-party financial viability assessment was undertaken by Equifax as a mandatory requirement.

Following the first stage of evaluation, three tenderers were shortlisted for further consideration.

A detailed technical review of the shortlisted submissions was then undertaken with support from specialist consultants Ontoit and JMA Architects.

Assessment Criteria

Tender submissions were assessed against the following criteria:

Mandatory (Pass/Fail):

- Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)
- Insurance coverage
- Financial viability

Weighted Evaluation Criteria:

- Financial benefit to Council – 40%
- Capability – 20%
- Capacity – 15%
- Financial benefit to the community – 10%
- Environmental sustainability – 5%
- Social sustainability – 5%
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation – 5%

Tender Scope Clarification

Whilst the original tender documentation contemplated delivery of a modular pavilion solution, the preferred tenderer, MKM Building Group Pty Ltd, proposed a non-modular construction methodology as part of its submission.

This approach was assessed as a non-conforming element of the tender response.

Council officers undertook additional due diligence to confirm that the proposed construction methodology complies with the project's functional requirements, funding agreement deliverables, and performance outcomes.

This included verification that the proposal remains aligned with Australian and Victorian Government funding conditions, as well as compliance with applicable standards, approvals, and project objectives.

Officers are satisfied that the proposed approach achieves the intent of the original tender scope, delivers the required project outcomes, and represents best value for money for the community.

Recommended Tenderer

Based on the weighted assessment, MKM Building Group Pty Ltd achieved the highest overall score and demonstrated:

- Strong experience delivering comparable community infrastructure projects
- Clear capacity and capability to meet project timelines
- Robust safety, management, and quality assurance systems
- A sound understanding of Council and community requirements
- Commitment to local participation and positive social outcomes

The Evaluation Panel concluded that MKM Building Group Pty Ltd represents the most advantageous tender and is best placed to deliver the project successfully in line with Council's objectives.

As the value of the recommended contract exceeds the Chief Executive Officer's financial delegation, approval to award the contract is required by Council.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

The tender was advertised in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy 2023. The request for tender was published on Council's tender portal and advertised in The Maryborough and District Advertiser as part of Council's weekly public notices.

A representative from the Deledio Recreation Reserve Committee of Management sits on the Project Control Group, ensuring regular liaison and ongoing communication with key user groups throughout the delivery of the project.

Following Council's decision to award the contract, unsuccessful tenderers will be formally notified in accordance with Council's procurement procedures.

Council will provide information to the community through its website and social media channels throughout the course of the project.

FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The recommended contract sum of \$2,522,000.00 (exclusive of GST) is within the approved total project budget (\$3M) for the Deledio Reserve Pavilion Project.

The overall project is funded through a combination of external grant funding and a Council contribution, comprising:

- \$1.5 million from the Australian Governments Growing Regions Program
- \$1.0 million from the Victorian Government through the Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Program, and
- \$500,000 Council contribution.

Provision has been made within the total project funding envelope to accommodate potential contract variations within an agreed tolerance of up to plus or minus 10%, should this be required during delivery.

The project is being delivered as a multi-year project, with expenditure accounted for across the 2025/26 and draft 2026/27 budgets, ensuring sufficient financial capacity is available across the construction and completion phases.

Project delivery will be overseen by Council's Project Management Office, within the Project Services and Asset Management team.

Dedicated internal project management resources are allocated to the project, supported by specialist technical consultants to assist with design review, compliance, contract administration, and quality assurance.

Council officers are satisfied that appropriate financial provision, governance arrangements, and resourcing capacity are in place to deliver the project within the approved budget and funding conditions.

RISK MANAGEMENT

This report addresses Council's strategic risks:

Property & Assets: Failure to maintain, renew and expand infrastructure to meet community needs.

The existing pavilion at Deledio Recreation Reserve has reached the end of its useful life and no longer meets contemporary safety, accessibility, or functional standards.

Failure to replace the facility would increase the risk of asset failure, service disruption, restricted community access, and potential closure of an important community asset.

The project directly mitigates this risk by delivering a modern, compliant, and inclusive facility that supports current and future community use, extends asset life, and protects Council's investment in a key recreation reserve.

Financial Sustainability: Ensuring procurement represents value for money through a competitive tender process. Council has mitigated financial risk by undertaking an open and competitive public tender process in accordance with its Procurement Policy.

Tender submissions were subject to a structured evaluation process, including independent financial viability assessment and technical review of shortlisted proposals.

The recommended tender represents best value for money when assessed against price and nonprice criteria, including capability, capacity, social outcomes, and whole-of-life considerations.

The project is fully funded within the approved budget and supported by external grant funding, reducing Council's financial exposure.

Governance: Compliance with procurement policy and the Local Government Act 2020.

The procurement process has been undertaken in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council's Procurement Policy, and probity requirements.

An independent Probity Officer oversaw the process, and internal procurement specialists provided guidance throughout.

Due diligence was undertaken to assess a non-conforming aspect of the preferred tender submission, including confirmation that funding agreement requirements, performance outcomes and project objectives are met.

This approach is consistent with Council's risk appetite and ensures decisions are defensible, transparent, and compliant.

Awarding the contract to the most capable and value-for-money tenderer reduces the risk of cost overruns, delivery delays, and substandard workmanship, while supporting a successful project outcome aligned with Council's strategic objectives and community expectations.

CONCLUSION

A compliant and competitive procurement process has been completed for Contract G25-26-19 – Deledio Reserve New Modular Pavilion Project.

Following evaluation, MKM Building Group has been identified as the preferred tenderer, offering the most advantageous outcome and best value for money for Council and the community.

It is recommended that Council award the contract to MKM Building Group for \$2,522,000.00 (exclusive of GST) and authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) to issue a Letter of Acceptance and approve contract variations within an agreed tolerance of plus or minus 10%.

ATTACHMENTS

The attachments have been provided under separate cover as they are confidential as defined under section 3 of the Local Government Act 2020:

- a. Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released***
- g. private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—***
 - (i) relates to trade secrets; or***
 - (ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage***
- l. information prescribed by the regulations to be confidential information for the purposes of this definition***
- m. information that was confidential information for the purposes of section 77 of the Local Government Act 1989***

7.2 Council Plan Action Plan Update (September 2025 to March 2026)

Author Governance Officer

Responsible Officer: 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 Council with a consolidated progress update on the implementation of the Council Plan Annual Action Plan 2025–2026 for the period 30 September 2025 to 31 March 2026.

The report combines Quarter One and Quarter Two reporting to present a clearer and more meaningful overview of progress achieved to date, including completed, ongoing and deferred actions.

It also highlights key achievements, emerging issues, and the impacts of resourcing and budget constraints on delivery, to support Council's oversight, transparency, and informed decision-making.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the progress of the Council Plan Annual Action Plan 2025–2026 for the period 30 September 2025 to 31 March 2026, including the impact of resource limitations and budget constraints on delivery, as detailed in the attached report.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2025-2029:

The Community's vision:

Informed and engaged community

3. Provide our community with clear, transparent, and targeted communication and engagement opportunities that are bottom up, planned, and accessible.

Sound leadership and financial management

6. Embed good governance in all aspects of the organisation to create the fundamentals of fair, open and equitable decision making.

6. Lead with integrity, accountability, and transparency within the organisation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Council Plan Annual Action Plan 2025–2026 was developed to support delivery of the strategic objectives outlined in the Council Plan and to provide a structured framework for monitoring and reporting progress. Council adopted the Annual Action Plan at its meeting on 22 October 2025, with progress reports scheduled to be presented on a quarterly basis.

This report consolidates Quarter One and Quarter Two reporting due to timing considerations associated with the adoption of the Annual Action Plan and the availability of meaningful progress data early in the reporting cycle.

Combining the two quarters provides a more accurate and comprehensive overview of progress achieved to date, while maintaining alignment with Council's established quarterly reporting framework.

REPORT

Summary of Progress

The report presents a quarterly progress update on initiatives delivered during the 2025/26 period across economic development, community wellbeing, infrastructure, sustainability, governance, and organisational performance.

Economic Growth and Prosperity

- Work continues on local jobs and skills, including advocating for State Government support to develop a Learning Hub and the development of an online VET and Study Hub delivery model under the Local Skills Partnership Program.
- Council is strengthening regional tourism outcomes through Destination Central Victoria, including a new regional brand, website and visitor app.
- Some initiatives, such as a dedicated events funding stream and the Maryborough Station Creative Space, are on hold due to budget and building issues.

Informed and Engaged Communities

- Community communication has improved through a new fortnightly e-newsletter and review of engagement platforms.
- A Volunteer Policy has been adopted, providing a consistent framework to support and recognise volunteers.
- Youth engagement is progressing through establishment of a Youth Advisory Group, using co-design principles.

Infrastructure and Liveability

- Several key infrastructure projects have been completed, including Princes Park Cricket Wicket upgrades, Maryborough Tennis Court and Lighting, and flood recovery works.
- Road safety improvements and active travel initiatives are progressing well across the Shire.
- Some strategic planning projects, such as the Walking and Cycling Strategy and Outdoor Pool design, have been rescheduled due to resourcing constraints.

Resilient and Sustainable Community

- Emergency preparedness outcomes are strong, with completion of the First 72 Hours Program, progress on flood studies, and ongoing climate action delivery.
- Council continues to work with regional partners on heat stress, emergency communications and preparedness events.
- Sustainability and local food initiatives are progressing through partnerships with health and community organisations.

Healthy, Connected and Safe Communities

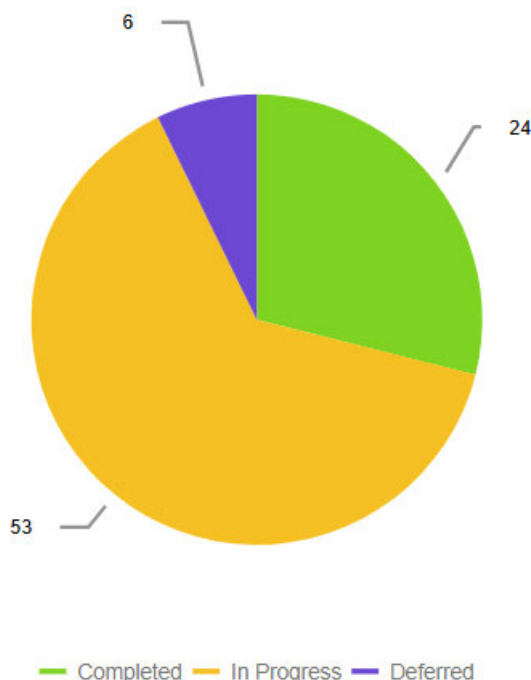
- Council is advocating for early years and family services, including exploring alternative delivery models for The Nest.
- Partnerships with Aboriginal organisations and health providers continue to strengthen access and inclusion.

Governance, Financial and Organisational Health

- Reviews of key governance documents—**Governance Rules, Procurement Policy and Confidentiality Policy**—are underway.
- Asset management, fleet transition planning and IT security upgrades are progressing to support long-term sustainability.
- The **2026/27 Annual Budget** is well advanced, with adoption anticipated ahead of the statutory deadline.

Progress to 31 March 2026 is as follows:

- **83** total action items
- **24** completed
- **53** in progress
- **6** deferred



Please note that the above chart will change as action items are updated each quarter. As tasks are completed, the orange “in progress” section will reduce and the green “completed” section will increase.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

Actions are aligned with Council Plan priorities informed by extensive stakeholder consultation.

FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The current year’s Budget was prepared in line with the initiatives identified in the Annual Plan subject to grants from State and Federal Government being received in some cases. Pulse, the system used to report on the Annual Action Plan is provided for in existing budgets.

RISK MANAGEMENT

This report addresses Council's strategic risk:

Governance - Failure to transparently govern and embrace good governance practices by providing Council with structured, evidence-based oversight of progress against the council Plan.

Community engagement- Inadequate stakeholder management or engagement impacting brand reputation and community satisfaction in Council decision making by demonstrating how Council actively plans, delivers and reports on engagement-focused initiatives in a transparent and accountable manner.

CONCLUSION

The Q1 and Q2 2025/26 reporting period shows solid progress against the Council Plan, with most actions on track and many key initiatives delivered.

Council has continued to maintain core services, deliver priority infrastructure, strengthen community outcomes and advance governance reforms within a challenging financial environment.

Where actions have been deferred, decisions reflect a responsible approach to affordability, resourcing and strategic alignment rather than reduced commitment.

Deferred initiatives remain under review and will progress as conditions and funding allow.




Overall, Council remains focused on sound governance, financial sustainability and transparent reporting, ensuring services and investments continue to support the long-term wellbeing and prosperity of the community.




ATTACHMENTS

1. Quarterly Progress Report Q 1 Q 2 [7.2.1]

Quarterly Progress Report 2025/2026, Q1, Q2



Economic Growth and Prosperity

Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
1.1	Grow Local Jobs, skills, and career opportunities.	1	Advocate for State Government support to create a Learning Hub in Maryborough.	Manager Customer Experience, Communications and Advocacy	In Progress	50%	Q1 - The Economic Development Officer has been in regular contact with State Government agencies and universities. Q2 - Discussions are continuing with potential stakeholders and it is proposed to evaluate the success of a similar project elsewhere in regional Victoria.		
1.1	Grow Local Jobs, skills, and career opportunities.	2	Deliver the Local Skills Partnership Program objective to develop a practical delivery model by end of January 2026 to address online options for vocational education training to enable reskilling, upskilling and/or new certificate qualifications.	Manager Community Partnerships	In Progress	60%	Q1 - A practical delivery model for the Local Skills Partnership Program has been developed through completion of the relevant Study Hub/online VET options report. Further consultation with local stakeholders is required to refine and implement the recommendations. Progression of the delivery model will occur following induction of the new Coordinator Tourism and Economy, who will lead engagement with training providers and key partners to advance implementation. Q2 - A practical delivery model for the Local Skills Partnership Program has been developed through completion of the Study Hub/online VET options report. Further consultation with stakeholders is required to refine and progress implementation of the recommended approach. Work is underway to transition responsibility to the newly appointed Coordinator Tourism and Economy to ensure ongoing ownership and progression of the delivery model, including engagement with training providers and key partners.		
1.1	Grow Local Jobs, skills, and career opportunities.	3	Participate in regional partnerships, including the Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance, to advance zero emissions economic opportunities and workforce development.	Sustainability Officer	In Progress	50%	Q1 - Sustainability Officer participating in Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA) quarterly working group meetings. Council participating in regional projects through the CVGA, including Charging the Regions 4, Home Energy Empowerment Program, Transitioning to a Clean Economy - Loddon Mallee Opportunities and Workforce Development Strategy development and Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO). Q2 - Sustainability Officer participating in CVGA quarterly working group meetings. Draft Strategy for Transitioning to a Clean Economy- Opportunities and Workforce Development Strategy has been released for comment.		





Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
1.1	Grow Local Jobs, skills, and career opportunities.	4	Lodge final reporting documentation that included model(s), course options, TAFE connections, and summary outcomes from the 2025 micro pilot course.	Manager Community Partnerships	In Progress	50%	Q1 - A practical delivery model for the Local Skills Partnership Program has been developed through completion of the relevant Study Hub/online VET options report. Further consultation with local stakeholders is required to refine and implement the recommendations. Progression of the delivery model will occur following induction of the new Coordinator Tourism and Economy, who will lead engagement with training providers and key partners to advance implementation. Q2 - Work has progressed toward final reporting for the 2025 micro pilot, supported by development of the Study Hub/online VET delivery model, including course options, TAFE connections and summary outcomes. Final reporting documentation is currently being prepared, with stakeholder feedback being collected to inform submission. This includes coordination of partner input to meet reporting requirements for the Victorian Skills Authority, with submission to occur following receipt and consolidation of responses.		
1.1	Grow Local Jobs, skills, and career opportunities.	5	Recruit three new Early Childhood Education trainees to Goldfields Children's Centre.	Manager Children and Families	In Progress	20%	Q1 - Goldfields Children's Centre recently appointed three trainees who had completed their traineeships at the Centre, as permanent ongoing staff. A review of EFT is currently underway in preparation of opening new trainee positions in the near future. Q2 - An EFT analysis is currently underway to ensure best practice staffing levels are in place at the Goldfields Children's Centre in preparation of opening new trainee positions in 2026.		
1.2	Boost tourism and celebrate regional identity	6	Partner with Destination Central Victoria to support, develop and promote local tourism businesses and initiatives across the region.	Manager Tourism, Economy, and Culture	In Progress	40%	Q1 - Council has partnered with Destination Central Victoria (DCV), through a formal, executed agreement. The DCV brand was launched on the 19th of February 2026 featuring a new website and the launch of a new Visitor App, designed to enhance the experience for our visitors and locals alike. Council continues to work with DCV to maximise opportunities to support, develop and promote local tourism businesses and initiatives. Q2 - Council continues to work in partnership with Destination Central Victoria (DCV). Recent discussions have focused on maximising		

Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
							opportunities through DCV's digital platforms and aligning regional promotion. The recent appointment of Coordinator Tourism & Economy will further strengthen this partnership, providing dedicated capacity to support industry development, marketing, and engagement with DCV.		
1.2	Boost tourism and celebrate regional identity	7	Establish a dedicated events funding stream with multi-year support options, ensuring this is reflected in Council's Community Support Policy.	Manager Tourism, Economy, and Culture	In Progress	10%	Q1 - A report is currently being prepared for the Executive Leadership Team to support discussion as part of the broader review of the Community Support Policy. This work includes consideration of current budget constraints and long-term financial sustainability, including the feasibility of multi-year funding arrangements within existing budget pressures. Q2 - Progress on establishing a dedicated events funding stream is currently on hold due to broader financial pressures. The draft 2026/27 budget, currently on public exhibition, includes the proposed removal of the Community Grants program. Further work will be undertaken to review events currently supported by Council funding to inform future options once financial settings are confirmed.		●
1.2	Boost tourism and celebrate regional identity	8	Contribute to community led festivals, art, and cultural events through a range of supports and advice including promotion, programming, community grants, and participation.	Manager Tourism, Economy, and Culture	In Progress	15%	Q1 - Council has continued to support a range of community-led events, including the Highland Gathering, New Year's Eve, Christmas Carols and Australia Day activities. Support has included event planning advice, assistance with traffic management coordination, promotion through Council channels and facilitation of in-kind resources. Q2 - Council continued support includes strengthening organiser capability through the sharing of grant and training opportunities, maintaining a regularly updated list of funding sources on Council's website, and providing letters of support for funding applications. The Event Permit process has been updated, with an accompanying application guide currently being developed to improve clarity and streamline the process for event organisers.		●
1.2	Boost tourism and celebrate regional identity	9	Develop the Creative Space and Courtyard at Maryborough Station to broaden the Shire's offer and growing reputation as an exciting	Manager Tourism, Economy, and Culture	In Progress	30%	Q1 - Pilot program has commenced but is now on hold due to structural issues with the main space-the lamp room and insufficient power supply to run the air conditioning units. These building		●

Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
			arts and cultural destination for visitors and community while also supporting the emerging local creative economy.				related issues have been referred to Vic Track for action. Funding body RDV are away of the delays and working with the project team to ensure funding compliance. Q2 - The Creative Space and Courtyard project at Maryborough Station remains on hold due to structural issues within the Lamp Room and insufficient power supply. VicTrack has scheduled a site inspection for 24 March 2026 to assess required structural works and next steps. Installation of the sound system remains on hold pending resolution of the structural work. Council continues to work with VicTrack and Regional Development Victoria (RDV) to ensure the project can progress while maintaining funding compliance.		
1.2	Boost tourism and celebrate regional identity	10	Provide a range of engaging promotions through the Maryborough and Surrounds Official Visitors Guide, the visitor experiences at the Maryborough Station and Central Goldfields Art Gallery to celebrate and share our heritage, stories, and cultures.	Manager Tourism, Economy, and Culture	In Progress	35%	Q1 - A coordinated suite of promotions celebrating our region's heritage, stories and culture were delivered - strengthening our regional identity and improving the way visitors engaged with our cultural assets. This included a refreshed Maryborough & Surrounds Official Visitors Guide, enhanced visitor experiences at the Maryborough Station, and new storytelling and exhibition features at the Central Goldfields Art Gallery. Major exhibitions including the Golden Textures Contemporary Art Quilt Award and Nick Dridan's Allegories were particular highlights, boosting visibility of our region's creative and cultural identity. Q2 - The Visitor Centre continues to deliver guided tours of the Maryborough Railway Station, enhancing the visitor experience and sharing local heritage stories. The Art Gallery has also extended the Art of Gold exhibition until the end of August 2026, continuing to attract and engage visitors.		●
1.3	Facilitate Inclusive, affordable, and sustainable population growth	11	Deliver a Planning Forum to provide education to the community on how to access and navigate the Council's planning System.	Manager Statutory Services	In Progress	10%	Q1 - Planning for the delivery of a community Planning Forum has commenced. The forum will focus on improving community understanding of how to access and navigate Council's planning system. Delivery will occur later in the reporting period to align with broader service design improvements currently underway Q2 - Planning for the delivery of a community		●

Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
							Planning Forum has commenced. The forum will focus on improving community understanding of how to access and navigate Council's planning system. Delivery will occur later in the reporting period to align with broader service design improvements currently underway.		
1.3	Facilitate Inclusive, affordable, and sustainable population growth	12	Submit an Expression of Interest to the Department of Transport and Planning unlocking strategic Development Sites Program to fast-track processes to enable housing, jobs, and investment.	Manager Statutory Services	Completed	100%	Q1 - Officers developed and presented options to the Executive, however, it was agreed that further work through the Planning Scheme Review is required before Council is ready to apply. As a result, the Expression of Interest has been deferred and will be reconsidered when future program opportunities arise Q2 - Officers developed and presented options to the Executive in Q1, however, it was agreed that further work through the Planning Scheme Review is required before Council is ready to apply. As a result, the Expression of Interest has been deferred and will be reconsidered when future program opportunities arise.		
1.3	Facilitate Inclusive, affordable, and sustainable population growth	14	Commence development of pre-planning application service to help educate applicants and streamline the planning process.	Manager Statutory Services	In Progress	20%	Q1 - The Pre-Planning Application Service (PPAS) will become a core initiative within the statutory planning transformation, led by the newly advertised Service Design Lead - Statutory Planning. This role is tasked with delivering a full service-design program, redesigning how planning services function. Q2 - The Pre-Planning Application Service (PPAS) will become a core initiative within the statutory planning transformation, led by the newly advertised Service Design Lead - Statutory Planning. This role is tasked with delivering a full service-design program, redesigning how planning services function.		

Informed and Engaged Communities

Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
2.1	Ensure the community is well-informed, actively engaged, and empowered to participate in local decision-making.	16	Introduce an electronic newsletter to provide a new communications channel in response to the Community Satisfaction Survey feedback.	Manager Customer Experience, Communications and Advocacy	Completed	100%	Q1 - A template has been developed, and a database for launch is being obtained. Q2 - Three fortnightly editions have been published,		
2.1	Ensure the community is well-informed, actively engaged, and empowered to participate in local decision-making.	17	Review engage website to ensure it is reaching its full potential to encourage participation.	Manager Customer Experience, Communications and Advocacy	Completed	100%	Q1 - Commenced preliminary scoping Q2 - A desktop review has been completed, and the findings will be discussed with ELT to consider potential cost savings and alternatives.		
2.1	Ensure the community is well-informed, actively engaged, and empowered to participate in local decision-making.	18	Council-wide collaboration to develop and implement a consistent approach for capturing community voices and perspectives in matters that affect them, including ensuring that children's voices are heard and considered.	Manager Children and Families	In Progress	40%	Q1 - The Children and Families Department has engaged with the Communications and Engagement team to develop resources and adopt practices for capturing children's voices in Council activities that impact them. Q2 - The Children and Families Department continue to engage with the Communications and Engagement team to develop resources and adopt practices for capturing children's voices in Council activities that impact them.		
2.1	Ensure the community is well-informed, actively engaged, and empowered to participate in local decision-making.	19	Continue to partner with and support the work of the Maryborough Volunteer Resource Group in collaboration with the IRCF Project Officer to advocate for and support capacity building opportunities for all community groups.	Manager Community Partnerships	In Progress	80%	Q1 - Council continues to partner with and support the Maryborough Volunteer Resource Group (MVRG), with the Coordinator Community Development meeting weekly to progress actions aligned with the MVRG Strategic Plan and contribute to IRCF-related initiatives. MVRG has secured \$26,000 in IRCF funding to undertake a six-month Community Hub feasibility study, with a consultant engaged to deliver this work. In collaboration with the IRCF Project Facilitator, Council has supported identification and delivery of capacity-building opportunities, including grant writing and Asset Based Community Development workshops. The 2026 Thriving Maryborough Workshop Series will deliver a structured year-long program to strengthen governance, volunteer engagement, and sustainability of local community groups. Further training needs, including Diversity and Inclusion, are being explored. Q2 - Council continues to partner with and support the Maryborough Volunteer Resource		






Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
							Group (MVRG), with the Coordinator Community Development meeting regularly to progress actions aligned with the MVRG Strategic Plan and contribute to IRCF-related initiatives. MVRG has secured \$26,000 in IRCF funding to undertake a six-month Community Hub feasibility study, with a consultant engaged to deliver this work. In collaboration with the IRCF Project Facilitator, Council has supported identification and delivery of capacity-building opportunities, including grant writing and Asset Based Community Development workshops, and development of the 2026 Thriving Maryborough Workshop Series to strengthen governance, volunteer engagement and sustainability of local community groups.		
2.2	Strengthen community engagement and belonging through shire-wide participation.	20	Promote volunteerism to support community events such as Energy Breakthrough.	Manager Tourism, Economy, and Culture	In Progress	20%	Q1 - Partnership discussions underway with Community Bank and education stakeholders to expand volunteer participation in Energy Breakthrough. Recruitment will also be supported through MVRG channels, including the Casual Volunteer Register (55-60 contacts) and Energy Breakthrough promotional videos and collateral hosted on the MVRG website. Q2 - Planning is underway to recruit a Volunteer Coordinator to strengthen recruitment, coordination and support of volunteers leading into the event.		●
2.2	Strengthen community engagement and belonging through shire-wide participation.	21	Work with young people to explore options for re-establishing the Central Goldfields Youth Council, including consultation on structure, purpose, and membership.	Manager Community Partnerships	In Progress	70%	Q1 - Recruitment for a Youth Voice advisory group is underway to ensure development of the 12-25 program is genuinely youth-led and aligned with Amplify and Engage! co-design principles. Two young people have already been successfully recruited, with further applications open via a public campaign. The Youth Officer is progressing formation of the group, which will collaboratively shape priorities, structure, and the associated work plan before broader program activation. Q2 - Work to re-establish youth representation within Council is progressing through development of a Youth Advisory Group, providing a contemporary foundation for a future Youth Council model. Recruitment and engagement activities are underway, with initial members appointed and further engagement ongoing to broaden representation.		●

Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
							In line with co-design principles, young people are being supported to shape the group's structure, purpose, and operating model. An update on the establishment and progress of the Youth Advisory Group is scheduled to be presented to Council in May, which will inform next steps toward formal re-establishment.		
2.2	Strengthen community engagement and belonging through shire-wide participation.	22	Implement a Volunteer Policy that establishes a clear framework for recognising, promoting, and celebrating the contribution of Council-engaged volunteers.	Manager Tourism, Economy, and Culture	Completed	100%	Q1 - The Volunteer Policy has been developed following stakeholder consultation and benchmarking against comparable councils and the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement. Supporting documentation, including procedures and a volunteer handbook, was prepared to ensure the framework is practical and aligned with the Policy and national standards. The Policy will be reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team in February 2026. Q2 - The Volunteer Policy was approved at ELT and adopted by the CEO on 18/02/2026.		●
2.2	Strengthen community engagement and belonging through shire-wide participation.	23	Continue to present a Shire-wide Volunteer Thank You event for community and Council volunteers and highlight their contribution during National Volunteers Week.	Manager Tourism, Economy, and Culture	In Progress	30%	Q1 - Delivery of the 2026 Shire-wide Volunteer Thank You event is underway, with the event scheduled for 18 May at the Highland Society in recognition of National Volunteers Week. Invitations will be issued in the coming weeks. Q2 - Planning for the 2026 Shire-wide Volunteer Thank You event is well underway, with invitations designed and nearing distribution. Work is progressing with MVRG to develop the event agenda, aimed at recognising and celebrating the contribution of volunteers across the Shire during National Volunteers Week.		●
2.3	Provide our community with clear, transparent, and targeted communication and engagement opportunities that are bottom up, planned, and accessible.	24	Review communications channels to ensure value for money and maximum reach.	Manager Customer Experience, Communications and Advocacy	In Progress	60%	Q1 - Commenced preliminary scoping. E-newsletter under active development. Q2 - Ongoing, using digital analytics. Facebook reach and engagement is double compared with the same time last year.		●
2.3	Provide our community with clear, transparent, and targeted communication and engagement opportunities that are bottom up, planned, and accessible.	25	Develop online mapping for community viewing which provides up to date information on Council assets and capital projects.	Manager Project Services and Asset Management	In Progress	40%	Q1 - Council has completed its new internal data framework, supporting improved public access to information through Data.VIC. Work is now underway on an online mapping interface that will provide up-to-date information on Council assets and capital projects. The mapping tool is scheduled for release in April to coincide with consultation on the draft 2026/27 Budget. Q2 - Council has completed its new internal data		●



Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
							framework, supporting improved public access to information through Data.VIC. Work is now underway on an online mapping interface that will provide up-to-date information on Council assets and capital projects. The mapping tool is scheduled for release in April to coincide with consultation on the draft 2026/27 Budget.		
2.3	Provide our community with clear, transparent, and targeted communication and engagement opportunities that are bottom up, planned, and accessible.	26	Publish newsletters and other documents that are accessible, informative and encourage interaction with the Council.	Manager Customer Experience, Communications and Advocacy	Completed	100%	Q1 - The Spring Update was published in September 2025 and distributed to all households in the Shire by Australia Post. Q2 - The Summer magazine was printed and distributed. A fortnightly e-newsletter has commenced.		●

Infrastructure that Supports Growth and Liveability

Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
3.1	Provide and maintain exclusive, accessible, and sustainable community Infrastructure that supports wellbeing at every life stage.	27	Adopt updated Walking and Cycling Strategy.	Manager Project Services and Asset Management	Deferred	90%	Q1 - Work on the updated Walking and Cycling Strategy is well underway, with community consultation planned for May 2026. Q2 - Adoption of updated Walking and Cycling Strategy is now deferred to October 2026, due to resourcing constraints.		
3.1	Provide and maintain exclusive, accessible, and sustainable community Infrastructure that supports wellbeing at every life stage.	28	Commence construction of the Deledio Recreation Reserve Pavilion.	Manager Project Services and Asset Management	In Progress	80%	Q1 - Evaluation of tenders for the Deledio Recreation Reserve Pavilion is currently underway, with the preferred contractor to be recommended following completion of the assessment process. The tender is scheduled for award in April, after which construction will commence. Q2 - Evaluation of tenders for the Deledio Recreation Reserve Pavilion is currently underway, with the preferred contractor to be recommended following completion of the assessment process. The tender is scheduled for award in April, after which construction will commence.		
3.1	Provide and maintain exclusive, accessible, and sustainable community Infrastructure that supports wellbeing at every life stage.	29	Complete Princes Park Cricket Wicket upgrade.	Manager Project Services and Asset Management	Completed	100%	Q1 - The Princes Park Cricket Wicket upgrade was completed in January, with all works delivered in accordance with the project scope. The facility is now fully operational and available for community and sporting use. Q2 - The Princes Park Cricket Wicket upgrade works are now completed.		
3.1	Provide and maintain exclusive, accessible, and sustainable community Infrastructure that supports wellbeing at every life stage.	30	Complete Maryborough Tennis Court and Lighting upgrade.	Manager Project Services and Asset Management	Completed	100%	Q1 - Maryborough Tennis Court and Lighting upgrade is nearing completion. Earthworks are completed and currently the synthetic surface is getting installed with lighting works expected to be complete by end of March 2026. Q2 - Maryborough Tennis Court and Lighting upgrade construction is complete.		
3.1	Provide and maintain exclusive, accessible, and sustainable community Infrastructure that supports wellbeing at every life stage.	31	Complete Stage 1 Design of Maryborough Outdoor Pool Complex.	Manager Project Services and Asset Management	Deferred	30%	Q1 - Tender documentation is currently being prepared to go to market for suitably qualified consultants to deliver the Design of the Maryborough Outdoor Pool Complex. Once the tender is released and a consultant appointed, design work will formally commence. Q2 - Completion Design for the Maryborough		



Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
							Outdoor Pool Complex has been deferred to October 2026 as a result of current resource constraints and procurement challenges.		
3.1	Provide and maintain exclusive, accessible, and sustainable community Infrastructure that supports wellbeing at every life stage.	34	Seek a partnership agreement with Department of Education to assist in financing upgraded/new kindergarten infrastructure.	Manager Children and Families	In Progress	30%	Q1 - As referred to in action 33, Central Goldfields Shire Council finalised and submitted the Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan (KISP) for the LGA to the Department of Education in November 2025. A collaboration of the Children and Families Department and the Project Services and Asset Management Department has developed a preferred implementation approach to early years infrastructure improvements based on the Early Years Infrastructure Master Plan, KISP, and available grants. A meeting with Department of Education to discuss is currently being sought. Q2 - A collaboration of the Children and Families Department and the Project Services and Asset Management Department has developed a preferred implementation approach to early years infrastructure improvements based on the Early Years Infrastructure Master Plan, KISP, and available grants. A meeting with Department of Education/Victorian School Building Authority to discuss this plan is scheduled for 20th April 2026.		●
3.2	Strengthen liveability and transport across townships through sustainable Infrastructure and improved connectivity.	35	Complete TAC Safe Local Roads and Streets Program Projects, including intersection upgrades, installation of roundabouts and other safety treatments at various sites in Maryborough.	Manager Project Services and Asset Management	In Progress	80%	Q1 - The TAC Safe Local Roads and Streets Program is progressing well, with the majority of project components now completed. Remaining works include construction of the roundabout at Burns Street and Nolan Street and associated street lighting improvements. These final elements are underway, and the overall program remains on track for completion by the end of the current financial year. Q2 - The TAC Safe Local Roads and Streets Program is progressing well, with the majority of project components now completed. Remaining works include construction of the roundabout at Burns Street and Nolan Street and associated street lighting improvements. These final elements are underway, and the overall program remains on track for completion by the end of the current financial year.		●





Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
3.2	Strengthen liveability and transport across townships through sustainable Infrastructure and improved connectivity.	36	Complete final Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) Flood Recovery Works from the October 2022 flood event, restoring roads, bridges, culverts, and other affected infrastructure.	Manager Project Services and Asset Management	Completed	100%	Q1 - Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) Flood Recovery Works are now completed. Q2 - Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) Flood Recovery Works are now completed.		
3.2	Strengthen liveability and transport across townships through sustainable Infrastructure and improved connectivity.	37	Adopt a Street Lighting Policy which guides the provision, upgrade, and improvement of street lighting in urban areas of the municipality.	Manager Project Services and Asset Management	Deferred	70%	Q1 - Street Lighting Policy is progressing well. The draft policy is currently being refined and is expected to be released for community consultation in May 2026. Q2 - Adoption of final Policy is now deferred to July 2026.		
3.2	Strengthen liveability and transport across townships through sustainable Infrastructure and improved connectivity.	39	Partner with Healthy Loddon Campaspe to promote active travel to and from school and early years settings (such as kindergartens and childcare centres).	Manager Community Partnerships	In Progress	80%	Q1 - Walk This Way initiative progressing to encourage active travel and use of outdoor recreation spaces. Decal installation scheduled for early March with Term 2 launch planned. Expansion to early years settings subject to future funding. Q2 - The Walk This Way initiative is progressing to promote active travel and increased use of outdoor recreation spaces among school and early years settings. Decal installation has been completed, with a launch event scheduled for 28 April 2026 involving local schools and kindergarten partners. The initiative will support increased physical activity and awareness of active travel options, with potential expansion to additional early years settings subject to future funding.		
3.3	Preserve and promote heritage and identity.	40	Continue to trial "additional hours lighting" at select recreation/sporting reserves to improve safety and encourage physical activity in partnership with Healthy Loddon Campaspe.	Manager Community Partnerships	In Progress	85%	Q1 - Additional hours lighting trial delivered and well received by community. Healthy Loddon Campaspe funded timer installation to enable automation; installation pending confirmation of operational status. Further activation proposed subject to timers being functional. Progress: Trial phase complete (automation pending) Q2 - The additional hours lighting trial has been delivered and was well received by the community. Healthy Loddon Campaspe has funded timer installation to enable automated operation, with functionality currently pending		



Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
							confirmation. Subject to successful operation of the timers, the program is scheduled to recommence from late April to support increased physical activity and improved community safety.		
3.3	Preserve and promote heritage and identity.	41	Commence Stage Two of the Talbot Heritage Review, ensuring inclusion and identification of significant Indigenous and early European values.	Manager Statutory Services	Deferred	0%	Q1 - Stage Two of the Talbot Heritage Review has been deferred due to budget constraints and timing, with Executive determining it is prudent to pause the planning component until investment is secured for sewer infrastructure in Talbot. As a result, the identification of significant Indigenous and early European heritage values will be progressed at a later stage when the broader Talbot Futures project is ready to proceed. Q2 - Stage Two of the Talbot Heritage Review has been deferred due to budget constraints and timing, with Executive determining it is prudent to pause the planning component until investment is secured for sewer infrastructure in Talbot. As a result, the identification of significant Indigenous and early European heritage values will be progressed at a later stage when the broader Talbot Futures project is ready to proceed.		

Resilient and sustainable Community

Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
4.1	Build local resilience to climate change, health and economic disruptions, and emergency events.	43	Deliver 2025-2026 actions in Climate Action Plan - Implementation Plan.	Manager Statutory Services	In Progress	50%	Q1 - Delivery of the 2024-26 Climate Action Plan Implementation Plan remains broadly on track, with 16% of actions completed, 42% on track, another 20% to start and finish by the end of 2025/26. A review of the Implementation Plan will be undertaken by June 2026, as required, to inform future priorities and budget planning. Q2 - Delivery of the 2024-26 Climate Action Plan Implementation Plan remains broadly on track, with 16% of actions completed, 42% on track, another 20% to start and finish by the end of 2025/26. A review of the Implementation Plan will be undertaken by June 2026, as required, to inform future priorities and budget planning.		
4.1	Build local resilience to climate change, health and economic disruptions, and emergency events.	44	Deliver community workshops on the First 72 Hours Program to help individuals, families, businesses, and communities survive independently for the first 72 hours following a disaster or major emergency.	Manager Community Partnerships	Completed	100%	Q1 - Delivery of the First 72 Hours preparedness messaging has been progressed through community-facing initiatives including the Protecting People, Properties and Pets Community Information Day (May 2025), school-based emergency education sessions, and distribution of "What's Your Emergency Plan / First 72 Hours" resources. Children's emergency starter kits and printed materials (brochures, booklets, fridge magnets) have been distributed across Central Goldfields through schools, community groups, CFA open days and local events. Evaluation feedback from the Community Information Day demonstrated strong community engagement, with attendees reporting increased understanding of preparedness actions and intent to develop household emergency plans. Ongoing promotion and distribution of materials will continue through 2026 to reinforce the 72-hour preparedness message. Q2 - Delivery of the First 72 Hours preparedness program has been completed, with the project closure report submitted to the funding body. Community education was delivered through events, school sessions, and distribution of preparedness materials, supported by positive evaluation outcomes. Remaining educational materials will continue to support future emergency preparedness activities,		

Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
							including use at community events, distribution through rates notices and availability within Council facilities to reinforce the 72-hour preparedness message.		
4.1	Build local resilience to climate change, health and economic disruptions, and emergency events.	45	Complete year one actions in Carisbrook Flood Study.	Manager Project Services and Asset Management	In Progress	60%	Q1 - The Carisbrook Flood Study is progressing, with year-one actions well underway. The project team has completed and presented the results of key design events and climate change scenarios to the community. Work is now focused on modelling mitigation measures identified by experts and community members, with findings expected to be presented in April 2026. Q2 - The Carisbrook Flood Study is progressing, with year-one actions well underway. The project team has completed and presented the results of key design events and climate change scenarios to the community. Work is now focused on modelling mitigation measures identified by experts and community members, with findings expected to be presented in April 2026		●
4.1	Build local resilience to climate change, health and economic disruptions, and emergency events.	47	Maintain and review Council's Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) and associated sub-plans to meet statutory obligations and ensure readiness for a range of emergencies.	Manager Community Partnerships	In Progress	60%	Q1 - The Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) has been reviewed and updated in accordance with statutory requirements. The revised Plan will be distributed to relevant stakeholders in the coming weeks for consultation and feedback prior to submission to the Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee for endorsement. Q2 - The Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) has been reviewed and updated in accordance with statutory requirements. Following initial preparation, the updated Plan is scheduled to be presented at the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) in late May. Subject to MEMPC consideration, the Plan will then be submitted to the Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee (REMP) for endorsement to ensure compliance and readiness for a range of emergencies.		●
4.1	Build local resilience to climate change, health and economic disruptions, and emergency events.	48	Advocate for and work with communities and partner agencies to deliver preparedness initiatives — including exploring funding for a yearly Emergency Preparedness	Manager Community Partnerships	In Progress	85%	Q1 - Emergency preparedness initiatives are progressing through event delivery, communications development, and funding advocacy. An additional emergency preparedness event in Carisbrook has been approved under the		●



Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
			Expo and developing a Central Goldfields Heat Stress and Cool Spaces communications kit — that build resilience, support recovery, and help residents plan for emergencies.				<p>CRO project. Safer Together has announced a further funding opportunity and Council is reviewing eligibility to continue this work.</p> <p>A Central Goldfields Heat Stress and Cool Spaces Communications Kit has been developed, including the "Beat the Heat" booklet, venue signage, and promotional materials. Refinement is planned ahead of next summer, informed by operational learnings, including updated venue listings and strengthened volunteer and operating guidelines.</p> <p>Council is also working with the Northern Victorian Emergency Management Cluster to advocate for sustainable State and Federal funding to strengthen long-term preparedness capacity. Q2 - Emergency preparedness initiatives are progressing through coordinated communications, event delivery and funding advocacy. Work is underway to establish an annual emergency communications strategy to support consistent, timely and accurate information sharing across the year.</p> <p>The Central Goldfields Heat Stress and Cool Spaces Communications Kit remains in use and will be refined ahead of next summer. The Carisbrook Emergency Preparedness Event is on track for delivery on 3 May, with strong collaboration from community members and partner agencies.</p> <p>Council continues to pursue additional funding opportunities and work with regional partners to advocate for sustainable long-term investment in preparedness initiatives.</p>		
4.2	Enhance environmental sustainability and greening of townships.	49	Undertake a review of sustainability practices within the Goldfields Family Centre (Immunisations, Goldfields Children's Centre, and Maternal & Child Health)	Manager Children and Families	In Progress	20%	<p>Q1 - The Children and Families Department Leadership team have initiated discussions with the Council Sustainability Officer to progress this review. A schedule of actions for the review is under development.</p> <p>Q2 - The Children and Families Department Leadership team have initiated discussions with the Council Sustainability Officer to progress this</p>		●

Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
							review. A schedule of actions for the review is under development.		
4.2	Enhance environmental sustainability and greening of townships.	52	Adopt the updated Tree Management Plan which ensures the sustainable management of trees on public land and balances community safety, environmental health, urban character, and long-term asset sustainability.	Manager Operations	In Progress	10%	Q1 - Project management plan has been completed and development of draft plan underway. Q2 - Project management plan has been completed and development of draft plan underway.		●
4.2	Enhance environmental sustainability and greening of townships.	54	Develop and adopt the Tree Planting Program policy and guidelines.	Manager Operations	In Progress	10%	Q1 - Development of policy is underway, in consultation with stakeholders. Q2 - Development of policy is underway, in consultation with stakeholders.		●
4.3	Support sustainable food and resource systems.	55	Continue to explore opportunities to implement the recommendations of the Central Goldfields Food Systems Roadmap.	Manager Community Partnerships	In Progress	50%	Q1 - Healthy Eating and Flourish Projects contribute to implementation of priority actions within the Central Goldfields Food Systems Roadmap. Further opportunities for staged implementation will continue to be explored. Q2 - Healthy Eating and Flourish Projects are contributing to implementation of priority actions within the Central Goldfields Food Systems Roadmap. These initiatives continue to support improved access to healthy food and local food production, with work progressing on an ongoing basis. No significant changes have occurred since Q1, with further opportunities for staged implementation to be explored as projects continue to develop.		●
4.3	Support sustainable food and resource systems.	56	Partner with Healthy Loddon Campaspe to deliver a community food literacy and healthy cooking education program.	Manager Community Partnerships	In Progress	65%	Q1 - Cooking Together Facilitator Workshop confirmed for 24 April 2026 to expand local facilitator capacity. Working with Maryborough Neighbourhood House to commence delivery of community cooking classes. Cooking Together manual finalised and awaiting official launch. Q2 - Delivery of the community food literacy and healthy cooking education program is progressing, with the Cooking Together Facilitator Workshop confirmed for 24 April 2026 to build local delivery capacity. The Cooking Together manual has been finalised and planning for community cooking classes is underway. Delivery has expanded across multiple sites,		●



Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
							including Maryborough Neighbourhood House, Mill House, and Dunolly Neighbourhood Centre, with dates being finalised and a facilitator engaged to support program rollout.		
4.3	Support sustainable food and resource systems.	57	Support community-led initiatives that promote local food production and access to fresh and nutritious produce.	Manager Community Partnerships	In Progress	50%	<p>Q1 - Partnering with Maryborough Community Garden to deliver an additional Flourish Project supporting local food production and access. Project scope being finalised.</p> <p>Q2 - Council is supporting community-led food initiatives through the Flourish Project in partnership with Maryborough Community Garden, aimed at improving local food production and access to fresh and nutritious produce. Initial work focused on scoping the project, with delivery now progressing.</p> <p>As part of this initiative, a community workshop will be delivered to support residents to establish their own vegetable gardens, building local skills and encouraging greater food self-sufficiency.</p>		●

Healthy Connected and Safe Communities

Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
5.1	Support Children, families, and young people to thrive by investing in the early years, parenting support, and equitable access to health and wellbeing services.	59	Look at alternative delivery models for The Nest while continuing to advocate for funds to support Every Child, Every Chance activities.	Manager Children and Families	In Progress	50%	<p>Q1 - The Children and Families Department continues to investigate alternative delivery models to re-open The Nest and funds to support Every Child, Every Chance activities. A co-location/co-funding model is being tested for viability with other service providers in Maryborough.</p> <p>Q2 - The Manager Children and Families accompanied the CEO and Deputy Mayor to meet with the Minister for Children's Office in March 2026 to advocate for the critical work of Go Goldfields. At the meeting we sought funding for, local service coordination and collaboration (the glue), reopening 'The Nest' parent engagement and drop in space, and provision of locally driven/managed programs.</p>		
5.1	Support Children, families, and young people to thrive by investing in the early years, parenting support, and equitable access to health and wellbeing services.	60	Promote community access to existing breastfeeding spaces and advocate for new spaces as opportunities become available.	Manager Community Partnerships	In Progress	50%	<p>Q1 - Council previously considered a proposal to establish a new breastfeeding space at the Maryborough Railway Station; this proposal did not proceed following ELT review. Funding allocated through the VLGP project was subsequently redirected to purchase breast pumps to support Maternal and Child Health clients.</p> <p>Existing Council facilities registered as "Breastfeeding Welcome Here" venues remain available, however external promotion has not yet occurred. Internal discussions are required with Communications and the Manager Children and Families to progress promotion and awareness of available spaces.</p> <p>Separately, work is underway to introduce a Council Breastfeeding Policy to identify and formalise safe and accessible breastfeeding spaces within Council workplaces, with planned promotion to leadership teams.</p> <p>Q2 - Council maintains several facilities registered as "Breastfeeding Welcome Here" venues, with funding from the VLGP project redirected to purchase breast pumps to support Maternal and Child Health clients following a decision not to proceed with a proposed new space at the Maryborough Railway Station.</p>		



Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
							Promotion and awareness of existing breastfeeding spaces has not yet commenced, with further internal discussions required with Communications and the Manager Children and Families. Development of a Council Breastfeeding Policy to formalise and support access within Council facilities remains in progress, noting limited advancement since Q1 due to competing priorities and resourcing.		
5.2	Improve access to inclusive, safe, and preventable health services for all community members.	62	Develop and advance a proposal to increase connection with Bendigo and District Aboriginal Cooperation.	Manager Children and Families	In Progress	40%	<p>Q1 - The Children and Families Department is continuing to work with partners to increase access to BDAC services to local children and families. The Department supports the 'Our Future, Our Way' plan released by BDAC in December 2025 and looks forward to walking alongside BDAC to realise its goals.</p> <p>Q2 - The Children and Families Department have continued to increase connection with BDAC. Five BDAC family support practitioners attended the Central Goldfields Children and Families Practitioner Network hosted by Council on 10 March 2026 to meet other practitioners and service providers.</p>		●
5.2	Improve access to inclusive, safe, and preventable health services for all community members.	64	Using co-design principles, develop and implement an actionable program for young people aged 12-25.	Manager Community Partnerships	In Progress	60%	<p>Q1 - Active recruitment is underway to establish a new youth advisory group, providing a contemporary foundation for re-establishing youth representation within Council. The group will determine its identity, structure and operating model through a co-design process led by young people themselves. Two members have already been appointed, with further engagement ongoing to broaden representation and inform next steps toward formal re-establishment.</p> <p>Q2 - Council is progressing development of an actionable youth program through a co-design approach led by the Youth Officer, working with young people and key stakeholders across relevant funding streams. Recruitment and engagement activities for the Youth Advisory Group are underway, with initial members appointed and further engagement ongoing to broaden representation.</p> <p>The group will shape its identity, structure, and priorities through a youth-led process, forming the foundation for broader program delivery. An</p>		●



Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
							update on the establishment and progress of the Youth Advisory Group is scheduled to be presented to Council in May.		
5.2	Improve access to inclusive, safe, and preventable health services for all community members.	65	Design and deliver healthy eating and physical activity actions for approval through the 2025- 2026 Healthy Loddon Campaspe grant-funded partnership program.	Manager Community Partnerships	In Progress	80%	<p>Q1 - Two project proposals approved by the Regional Steering Group. Implementation underway across Walk This Way, Sports Equipment Libraries (Talbot and Carisbrook), skill sessions, informal sport activation, lighting activation, and healthy eating initiatives including facilitator training and cooking programs.</p> <p>Progress: Project approval 100% complete Implementation approximately 50% Q2 - Two Healthy Eating and Physical Activity project proposals were approved by the Regional Steering Group, with implementation progressing across multiple initiatives including Walk This Way, Sports Equipment Libraries (Talbot and Carisbrook), skill sessions, informal sport activation, lighting activation and cooking programs. Delivery has progressed from planning into implementation, with community engagement underway, activities being scheduled and early program rollout occurring across several components.</p>		●
5.3	Foster social connection, Inclusion, and pride in community identity	68	Establish a Cultural Partnership Working Group with DJAARA and core Council staff, meeting quarterly to strengthen relationships and provide advice on Council projects. In its first year, the group will deliver one co-designed initiative (such as an event, exhibition, or cultural feature in a capital project) and prepare a plan for a future cultural safety and communications review.	Manager Community Partnerships	In Progress	50%	<p>Q1 - Following initial discussions earlier in the year, DJAARA proposed forward planning meetings for March 2026, with additional 6-monthly engagement points through 2027 to strengthen partnership coordination under the RSA Local Government Engagement Strategy. Scheduling options were provided for March 2026, with further meetings to be established for late 2026 and 2027.</p> <p>Q2 - Establishment of a Cultural Partnership Working Group with DJAARA remains a priority, with initial engagement and proposed forward planning meetings under the RSA Local Government Engagement Strategy providing a foundation for this work.</p> <p>Progress has been limited to date, with further coordination required between DJAARA and</p>		●



Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
							internal stakeholders to confirm structure, representation and meeting cadence. This will support formal establishment of the working group and progression of co-designed initiatives.		

Sound Leadership and Financial Management



Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
6.1	Embed good governance in all aspects of the organisation to create the fundamentals of fair, open and equitable decision making.	69	Complete review of Council's Governance Rules.	Governance Officer	In Progress	40%	<p>Q1 - Local Government Victoria has commenced work to address the recommendations that Local Government Victoria develop and introduce Model Governance Rules to promote best practice council meeting procedures. A Local Government Steering Committee made up of representatives nominated from peak bodies and council representative groups has been convened to guide this work. These model Governance Rules are not projected to be released for several months, however a draft copy has been provided and will be used to update the current Governance Rules so they will be in line with the Model Rules once they have been adopted by the Victorian Government.</p> <p>The Governance Rules will be reviewed at the ELT Governance Strategic Meeting scheduled for 28 April 2026.</p> <p>Q2 - A review of the Governance rules will take place at the ELT Governance Strategic Session in April 2026 and a Draft copy of the Model Governance Rules will be referenced during the review.</p>		
6.1	Embed good governance in all aspects of the organisation to create the fundamentals of fair, open and equitable decision making.	70	Undertake a full review of the Community Support Policy and Community Grants Guidelines to ensure alignment with Council priorities, including health and wellbeing outcomes and ethical investment considerations.	Manager Community Partnerships	Deferred	75%	<p>Q1 - A full review of the Community Support Policy and Community Grants Guidelines is underway, with revised draft documents prepared to strengthen alignment with Council Plan priorities and the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. The updated framework incorporates clearer assessment criteria, strengthened governance and transparency measures, and improved alignment with health and wellbeing outcomes, including ethical funding considerations. The revised documents will be presented to ELT on 3 March for review prior to Councillor briefing and further refinement.</p> <p>Q2 - A full review of the Community Support Policy and Community Grants Guidelines was progressed, with revised draft documents prepared to strengthen alignment with Council Plan priorities, the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, and ethical funding</p>		

Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
							<p>considerations. The updated framework includes improved assessment criteria, governance, and transparency measures, and was scheduled for ELT review in March prior to Councillor briefing.</p> <p>Following budget development for 2026/27, which does not currently include a Community Grants program, this work has been temporarily deferred and will be reviewed in the next quarter to determine future direction.</p>		
6.1	Embed good governance in all aspects of the organisation to create the fundamentals of fair, open and equitable decision making.	71	Develop and implement a formal support framework for Community Asset Committees that clarifies the roles of Governance and Community Partnerships and strengthens consistent support across Council.	Manager Community Partnerships	In Progress	50%	<p>Q1 - Discussions are underway with the Acting Manager Governance, Property and Risk to establish a cross-directorate Community Asset Committee (CAC) Steering Committee. This group will bring together Governance, Community Partnerships, Infrastructure, Assets and Planning to clarify roles and responsibilities and ensure a consistent, coordinated approach to supporting CACs across the organisation.</p> <p>Q2 - Work to develop a formal support framework for Community Asset Committees (CACs) is progressing through cross-directorate discussions involving Governance, Community Partnerships and Infrastructure, Assets and Planning. Initial work has focused on establishing a coordinated approach, including consideration of a CAC Steering Committee to clarify roles and responsibilities and strengthen consistency of support across Council.</p> <p>Progress has been impacted by recent organisational changes, with responsibility transitioning across departments. Further work is required to consolidate the approach, confirm representation and progress establishment of the formal framework.</p>		
6.1	Embed good governance in all aspects of the organisation to create the fundamentals of fair, open and equitable decision making.	72	Develop a Healthy Sponsorship Policy for Council-run events to guide future partnerships and ensure they reflect Council's commitment to community health and wellbeing.	Manager Community Partnerships	Deferred	60%	<p>Q1 - Development of a Healthy Sponsorship Policy will be further progressed as part of the broader review of the Community Support Policy and Community Grants Program currently before ELT. Draft updates are being workshopped through ELT in March, with subsequent Councillor briefing and formal Council consideration scheduled for April. The review strengthens governance and probity controls, aligns with Council Plan commitments to avoid</p>		

Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
							investment in harmful industries, and incorporates Gender Impact Assessment considerations. The proposed Healthy Sponsorship Policy will provide a clear framework to guide Council-run event partnerships in a manner consistent with Council's commitment to community health and wellbeing. Q2 - Development of a Healthy Sponsorship Policy has been identified as a priority action and is being progressed in alignment with the broader Community Support Policy review to ensure future Council-run event partnerships reflect community health and wellbeing objectives and strengthened governance requirements. Progress has been temporarily paused pending outcomes of the Community Support Policy review and confirmation of the 2026/27 budget. Further work will recommence once these dependencies are resolved.		
6.1	Embed good governance in all aspects of the organisation to create the fundamentals of fair, open and equitable decision making.	73	Review of Confidentiality Policy for Councillors and Staff.	Governance Officer	In Progress	30%	Q1 - Development of the Confidentiality Policy will begin at the end of January 2026 and will be reviewed at the ELT Governance Strategy Meeting on 3 March. The policy will be presented at the March 2026 Council meeting for adoption. Q2 - A review of the new policy will be conducted during the ELT Governance Strategy meeting in April 2026.		●
6.1	Embed good governance in all aspects of the organisation to create the fundamentals of fair, open and equitable decision making.	74	Review of Council's Procurement Policy and a separate Procurement Procedure and Guidelines to support the policy.	Governance Officer	In Progress	40%	Q1 - A comprehensive review of the Procurement Policy has been undertaken. The review of the MAV Model Procurement Policy has been completed, together with benchmarking research of councils of a similar size to inform proposed Chief Executive Officer financial delegation thresholds. The Policy is currently in draft form and is scheduled to be presented to the Executive Leadership Team and staff for consultation in March 2026. Following consultation, the revised Policy will be submitted to Council for consideration in April or May 2026. Subject to Council endorsement, the updated Procurement Policy will be formally adopted.		●

Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
							Q2 - Review of the Procurement Policy continues and is anticipated to be submitted to Council in April or May 2026 for adoption.		
6.1	Embed good governance in all aspects of the organisation to create the fundamentals of fair, open and equitable decision making.	75	Commence development of Operational Plant and Fleet Transition Plan to support reduced Council emissions.	Manager Statutory Services	In Progress	50%	Q1 - Project scope and methodology have been confirmed, and data capture is underway. The fleet register is complete, fuel-usage data capture is 60% complete, and the depot electrical assessment is in progress. A technology scan has also commenced to inform transition options. Q2 - Planning for this project is complete and implementation is underway. Key baseline information is being collected, including fleet data, fuel use, and electrical capacity at Council depots, alongside a review of available technologies. This work will inform future options and support the development of a financial assessment and business case for Council's consideration.		●
6.1	Embed good governance in all aspects of the organisation to create the fundamentals of fair, open and equitable decision making.	76	Review and update fleet policy and procedures to support transition to low emissions fleet.	Manager Operations	In Progress	35%	Q1 - The Fleet Policy is in the early stages and will be a multi directorate project with Corporate Performance and Infrastructure Assets and Planning. Q2 - A draft Fleet Policy has been developed. Targeted consultation with relevant internal teams will commence next quarter to ensure the policy is accurate, consistent, and ready for finalisation.		●
6.2	Ensure organisations long-term financial viability.	77	Deliver all actions identified for 2025-26 in the Asset Plan 2025.	Manager Project Services and Asset Management	In Progress	30%	Q1 - Council is progressing well with the actions outlined in its Asset Plan. Work is underway to introduce a new Enterprise Asset Management System from April 2026, which will enhance the way Council manages, maintains, and plans for community assets. Council has also strengthened several supporting processes, including customer request handling, asset inspections, and work order management. In addition, a comprehensive gap analysis of Council's asset data has been completed, and data is now being cleaned and audited to align with industry best-practice standards. Together, these improvements will help ensure community assets remain safe, reliable and		●

Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
							<p>well-managed, and that all future capital investment decisions are made strategically and in line with the adopted Asset Plan.</p> <p>Q2 - Council is progressing well with the actions outlined in its Asset Plan. Work is underway to introduce a new Enterprise Asset Management System from April 2026, which will enhance the way Council manages, maintains, and plans for community assets.</p> <p>Council has also strengthened several supporting processes, including customer request handling, asset inspections, and work order management. In addition, a comprehensive gap analysis of Council's asset data has been completed, and data is now being cleaned and audited to align with industry best-practice standards.</p> <p>Together, these improvements will help ensure community assets remain safe, reliable and well-managed, and that all future capital investment decisions are made strategically and in line with the adopted Asset Plan.</p>		
6.2	Ensure organisations long-term financial viability.	78	Enhance Goldfields Children's Centre financial processes by transitioning to direct debit accounts.	Manager Children and Families	In Progress	90%	<p>Q1 - The Goldfields Children's Centre is transitioning to a new software system to enable soother, easier direct debit for childcare fees. The transition is expected to occur in March 2026. The Storypark Software also allows early childhood teachers to easily create children's e-portfolios & learning stories online and share privately with family, as sought by parents in a recent family survey.</p> <p>Q2 - Goldfields Children's Centre will transition to Story Park software and direct debit payments for care on 30 March 2026.</p>		●
6.2	Ensure organisations long-term financial viability.	79	Commence implementation of the Maintenance Management System, and Customer Relationship Management System, to create efficiencies in Council's Customer and Infrastructure service areas.	Manager Information Technology and Business Transformation	In Progress	40%	<p>Q1 - Implementation underway with anticipated completion mid to late 2026.</p> <p>Q2 - Implementation underway with anticipated completion mid to late 2026.</p>		●
6.3	Lead with integrity, accountability, and transparency within the organisation.	80	Undertake a Workplace Psychosocial Hazard Assessment	Manager People and Culture	In Progress	80%	Q1 - Review underway and rollout approach and uplift in training being planned.		●

Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
			survey, review the results and implement actions to ensure a safe and supportive working environment for all staff.				Q2 - Report has been analysed with results presented to ELT. Survey has been broken down to department level, and a high-level summary will be shared with staff at the All Staff meeting on 24th March 2026. Actions will be assessed in line with GEAP action plan and potential ELMO LMS expansion.		
6.3	Lead with integrity, accountability, and transparency within the organisation.	81	Continue to promote workplace diversity through training and awareness programs, such as Rainbow Ready.	Manager People and Culture	In Progress	90%	<p>Q1 - Council continues to promote workplace diversity through mandatory e-Learning modules and targeted awareness initiatives. As at 28 February 2026, compliance rates across key diversity-related modules are strong, including Equal Employment Opportunity (88%), Workplace Bullying and Harassment (87%), Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities (86%), and Child Safe Standards (85%). Monthly compliance reports are provided to Department Managers to support follow-up and continuous improvement.</p> <p>Further diversity initiatives are progressing, including collaboration with MAV on an updated Gender Equality Action Plan Diversity & Inclusion video (expected Q2 2026 rollout) and discussions with Women's Health Loddon Mallee regarding Active Bystander and Intersectionality training opportunities.</p> <p>Q2 - Rainbow Ready training was provided by Coordinator Community Development and the Manager Community Partnerships between late Sept and Early Oct 2026 with a total of 72 staff in attendance. Pronoun posters have now been created and placed in the Nolan Street building as an action outcome of the training. A new GEAP is currently being created with new alignment to the Psychosocial Incheq survey actions.</p>		
6.3	Lead with integrity, accountability, and transparency within the organisation.	82	Maintain best-practice IT security and upgrade Council's Wide Area Network using NBN to enhance performance, security, and cost efficiency.	Manager Information Technology and Business Transformation	In Progress	80%	<p>Q2 - Wide Area Network upgrade completed using NBN, cost efficiency includes savings of \$40k in operational annual costs.</p> <p>Work continues on the best practice security component ongoing.</p>		



Initiative Code	Initiative	Action Code	Action Name	Responsible Officer Position	Status	Progress	Comments	Due Date	Traffic Lights
6.3	Lead with integrity, accountability, and transparency within the organisation.	83	Ensure 2026-2027 Annual Budget is adopted by Council by 30 June 2026.	Manager Finance	In Progress	90%	Q1 - Budget process well advanced and currently anticipates early adoption in May 2026. Q2 - Budget process well advanced and currently anticipates early adoption in May 2026.	30/06/2026	

7.3 S11A Update to the Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation for Statutory Services

Author Governance Officer

Responsible Officer: 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 seek Council's adoption of an updated S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation to ensure nominated Council officers are appropriately appointed and authorised under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, enabling them to lawfully perform statutory, compliance, and enforcement functions on behalf of Council.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. adopt the updated S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation made under section 11A of the *Local Government Act 2020*; and
2. appoint and authorise the following officers as authorised officers under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*:
 - Manager Statutory Services
 - Coordinator Statutory Planning
 - Building Surveyor (Limited)
 - Coordinator Compliance; and
3. Revoke any previous Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation that are inconsistent with the updated S11A Instrument.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2025-2029:

The Community's vision:

Sound leadership and financial management

6. Embed good governance in all aspects of the organisation to create the fundamentals of fair, open and equitable decision making.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation made under *section 11A of the Local Government Act 2020* requires periodic review to ensure officers are properly authorised to exercise the powers and functions necessary to perform their roles.

The updated Instrument reflects current organisational structure, position titles, and legislative requirements, ensuring authorised officers have the appropriate authority to undertake compliance, enforcement, and statutory duties on behalf of Council.

A review of existing Instruments identified the need to update authorisations to maintain alignment with relevant legislation and operational practice.

REPORT

The previous Statutory Planner Appointment and Authorisation will be revoked. The Building Surveyor Limited Julian Peck and Coordinator Compliance Althea Jalbert will be added to the S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorization under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The current Manager of Statutory Services and Coordinator of Statutory Services will remain on the instrument.

S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation:

- Appoints the officers to be authorised officers for the purposes of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and the regulations made under that Act; and
- Authorises the officers generally to institute proceedings for offences against the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and the regulations made under that Act.

Authorisations need to be added to the Instrument for the new Coordinator of Statutory Planning to be an authorised officer under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

This authorisation gives officers the power to access property when required.

As with the delegations under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* these appointments and authorisations must be made by Council and are not delegated to the CEO.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

There is no requirement for community consultation in relation to the review of the Instruments. Affected staff will be provided with confirmation of the adoption of any Instruments.

FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Council subscribes to the Delegations and Authorisations service provided by Maddocks, the cost of which is provided for in Council's budget.

There are no other financial implications in reviewing the Instruments of Delegation.

RISK MANAGEMENT

This report addresses Council's strategic risk:

Governance - Failure to transparently govern and embrace good governance practices by the use of the Maddocks authorisations service alleviates the potential risk of staff not being appropriately authorised in the exercise of various powers and duties.

Legislative compliance - Failure to manage our compliance with relevant legislative requirements
The updates are done regularly and capture any legislative changes, and the service is available to all Victorian Councils which enables consistency.

CONCLUSION

Updating the S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation ensures that Council remains fully compliant with legislative requirements and maintains strong governance practices.

The revised Instrument reflects current organisational structure, position titles, and statutory needs, ensuring that authorised officers are properly empowered to undertake compliance, enforcement, and statutory duties on behalf of Council.

This ongoing review process supports transparent decision-making, mitigates governance and legislative compliance risks, and ensures officers can effectively perform their responsibilities in accordance with the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

ATTACHMENTS

The attachment has been provided under separate cover as they are confidential as defined under section 3 of the Local Government Act 2020:

- a. Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released***
- h. private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—***
 - (iii) relates to trade secrets; or***
 - (iv) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage***
- n. information prescribed by the regulations to be confidential information for the purposes of this definition***
- o. information that was confidential information for the purposes of section 77 of the Local Government Act 1989***

7.4 Castlemaine-Maryborough Rail Trail Project Update and Preferred Operating Model

Author: Coordinator Project Delivery

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 update Council on the status of the Castlemaine–Maryborough Rail Trail project and to seek in principle support for the proposed operating model.

Under the Castlemaine–Maryborough Rail Trail Committee’s (CMRT) funding agreement with the State Government, CMRT is required to nominate a preferred operating model for the future management of the trail.

As a project partner, Council is required to indicate its position on a preferred model through a formal resolution. This report supports CMRT to meet its funding obligations by outlining Council’s proposed in principle position on the recommended operating model.

This report seeks in principle support only and does not identify the Castlemaine–Maryborough Rail Trail as a current Council priority, nor does it commit Council to future funding, delivery or operational responsibility.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Provides in principle support for the proposed operating model for the Castlemaine–Maryborough Rail Trail, whereby Central Goldfields Shire Council and Mount Alexander Shire Council would act as the operators with support from an independent Advisory Committee;
2. notes that the project is not currently identified as a priority within Council’s 2026 Advocacy Strategy, adopted Integrated Transport Strategy 2020-2030, and is referenced only at a high level within the Walking and Cycling Strategy; and
3. Notes that any future decision for Council to assume responsibility for the operating model, including entering a lease with VicTrack, will be subject to:
 - a. confirmed availability of external funding to fully construct the trail;
 - b. detailed financial assessment in accordance with Council’s adopted Financial Plan and Asset Plan; and
 - c. a future resolution of Council.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Central Goldfields Shire Council’s Council Plan 2025-2029:

The Community’s vision:

Economic Growth and Prosperity

1. Grow local jobs, skills and career opportunities.
1. Boost tourism and celebrate regional Identity.

Healthy, connected and safe Communities

2. Promote and support positive health outcomes for residents in all stages of life.
 2. Foster social connections, inclusion and pride in community identity
-

Infrastructure that supports growth and liveability

4. Provide and maintain inclusive, accessible, culturally safe and sustainable community infrastructure that supports wellbeing at every life stage.

4. Strengthen liveability and transport across townships through sustainable infrastructure and improved connectivity.

Sound leadership and financial management

6. Embed good governance in all aspects of the organisation to create the fundamentals of fair, open and equitable decision making.

6. Ensure the organisation's long-term financial viability.

Initiative:

Boost tourism and celebrate regional identity

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Castlemaine–Maryborough Rail Trail is a proposed 61 km shared-use trail along the disused rail corridor between Castlemaine and Maryborough, linking communities such as Campbells Creek, Guildford, Newstead, Moolort, and Carisbrook, and connecting regional attractions.

The project can be recognised in three distinct stages:

Stage	Purpose	Council role	Status
Feasibility	Determine feasibility of CMRT	Partner	Complete
Preconstruction	Develop detailed designs, undertake technical assessments, and assess possible operating models	Partner	Underway
Construction	Seek investment and construct	TBC	Not yet started

Feasibility Study

Central Goldfields Shire Council (CGSC) and Mount Alexander Shire Council (MASC) supported a Feasibility Study proposed by the Castlemaine Maryborough Rail Trail (Inc) (CMRT) which was completed in July 2023.

The study received a contribution from each Council of \$6,000, in addition to \$18,000 raised by CMRT and a grant of \$120,000 from Regional Development Victoria (RDV).

In addition, Central Goldfields Shire Council auspiced the RDV grant and provided significant officer support in relation to the procurement, grant acquittal, and its role on the Project Control Group.

A presentation on the findings of the Feasibility Study was made to Councillors at a Briefing in August 2023.

The study confirmed the trail's potential to enhance regional connectivity, promote active transport, and stimulate economic development through increased visitation and local business engagement.

Enabling Tourism Fund

In March 2024, Council resolved to support CMRT in submitting a funding application to the Enabling Tourism Fund administered by the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR).

This decision reflected Council's commitment to advancing regional tourism infrastructure and improving active transport options.

As part of the resolution, Council committed \$40K in total over two financial years, plus project management resources and governance support.

The application sought funding for the Pre-Construction Phase of the Castlemaine–Maryborough Rail Trail, enabling detailed design, environmental and heritage assessments, and community engagement to pave the way for future investment for construction.

The funding application to the Enabling Tourism Fund was successful, securing \$400,000 in grant funding. Combined with co-contributions from CMRT, CGSC, and MASC of \$40,000 each, the total project budget for the Pre-Construction Phase is \$520,000.

Present Status

The Preconstruction Phase of the Project is now well underway and operating within an established governance structure. A Project Control Group (PCG) provides strategic oversight and includes representatives from CMRT, CGSC, MASC, and DJSIR.

The PCG continues to guide high-level decision-making, ensure cross-agency alignment, and monitor project progress.

Day-to-day project delivery is being managed by the Project Management Team, with Fitzgerald Frisby Landscape Architecture (FFLA) appointed as the lead consultant. FFLA is supported by a multidisciplinary group of specialists, including engineering, ecology, heritage, cost planning, and engagement experts, ensuring a comprehensive and integrated approach to the development of the Rail Trail.

Community consultation has been completed based on the Preliminary Reference Design, with feedback informing the refinement of trail alignment, design priorities, and operational considerations.

In parallel, a review of potential operating models has been undertaken, and several governance structures have been recommended for consideration.

The project is currently progressing procurement of specialist cost estimators to develop an updated construction cost estimate for the trail.

In addition to capital costs, discussions are underway to estimate the ongoing operational and maintenance costs required to run the Rail Trail, which will inform the recommended operating model and long-term resourcing needs.

As part of the Castlemaine Maryborough Rail Trail Committee's funding agreement with the State Government, CMRT is required to nominate a preferred operating model for the future management of the trail.

As a project partner, Council should indicate its preferred operating model via a formal Council resolution. This report provides the basis for Council's in-principal position to support CMRT in meeting this contractual obligation.

REPORT

Urban Enterprise (UE) was commissioned to identify the most suitable operating model for the future development, management, and operation of the Castlemaine–Maryborough Rail Trail (CMRT). The estimated construction cost is \$37M based on the report and a final cost of operations is yet to be prepared.

The PCG has requested a specialised review of the cost proposed in the UE report. The report evaluates a range of governance options and recommends a preferred model for Council consideration.

Five partnership models that were assessed:

1. Joint Council Management
2. Joint Council Management + Community Partnership (e.g., CMRT)
3. Joint Council Management + Advisory Committee
4. Community Asset Committee (CAC)
5. Joint Council Management + Private Partnership

Each option was evaluated against governance, skills, funding, community support, user impact, deliverability, sustainability, and risk.

Recommended option

UE recommends Option 3 (CGSC, MASC and Advisory Committee), where Councils retain full executive authority, ensuring clarity, accountability, and legal compliance.

An independent skills-based Advisory Committee would be established to provide expert advice, broad stakeholder input, and advocacy.

UE recommends this offers a unified approach across both municipalities and supports stronger user experience and consistent branding, and it reduces risks associated with outsourced decision-making (e.g., under a CAC model).

This option is considered sustainable long-term compared with community volunteer groups or commercial operators. Importantly, the recommended operating model would require:

- ongoing operational and maintenance investment from both Councils
- a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between CGSC and MASC
- a lease between the respective Councils and VicTrack, as VicTrack requires any lease to be held by a Council

These ongoing costs and obligations must be considered in the context of Council's recently adopted Financial Plan, Asset Plan and current budget constraints.

In--Principal Support Only

At this stage, the intention is to seek in--principal support only from Council for the recommended operating model.

This reflects the advice previously provided to the Castlemaine Maryborough Rail Trail Committee. The project will require significant external funding to progress the full construction of the trail, and the operating model is not implementable unless that investment is secured. Providing in-principal support does not commit either Council to:-

- adopting the operating model,
- entering into a lease with VicTrack, or
- assuming operational responsibility for the trail.

These decisions will be subject to:

- future resolutions of both Councils,
- confirmed availability of full construction funding, and
- detailed financial consideration in line with Council's adopted long-term financial planning and statutory asset management responsibilities.

Recommended Governance Structure

Rail Trail Working Group (CGSC + MASC)

- Formally established through an MoU between both Councils.

- Responsible for coordination and operational oversight.

Function	Description
Financial Management	Oversight of budgets, funding allocations, annual provisions, and long-term financial planning.
Maintenance & Infrastructure	Coordination of routine maintenance, asset renewals, and upgrade planning to ensure the trail remains safe, accessible, and compliant with service levels.
Safety & Regulatory Compliance	Ensuring the trail meets legislative standards, relevant regulations, and risk controls.
Risk Management	Ongoing monitoring and mitigation of operational, environmental, and user-related risks.
Promotion & Advocacy	Supporting marketing, community engagement, advocacy, and future funding opportunities.

Independent Rail Trail Advisory Committee

- Established under a Terms of Reference (ToR).
- Provides expert and community-informed advice to both Councils.
- No decision-making authority.

Function	Description
Strategic Advice	Provides specialist advice on matters relating to the trail's planning, development, and operation.
Community Input	Ensures that local perspectives, user needs, and stakeholder interests inform planning and operations.
Marketing & Activation Support	Contributes to ideas and opportunities related to activation, partnerships, funding, and future development.
Advisory Role Only	Operates strictly in an advisory capacity with no delegated authority.

Proposed Membership (Advisory Committee)

Proposed Membership may include representatives from Councils, CMRT, Traditional Owners, tourism organisations, industry specialists, and government agencies.

Implementation Stages include:

- Establishing the Working Group and MoU
- Establishing the Advisory Committee and ToR
- Recruiting members
- Preparing a detailed Trail Management Plan

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

A Working Group (WG) was established by the Project Control Group (PCG) to support the assessment of operating model options.

The Working Group included representatives from CMRT, Central Goldfields Shire Council (CGSC) and Mount Alexander Shire Council (MASC), and met with Urban Enterprise (UE) throughout the review process.

In addition to Working Group meetings, UE held individual briefings with Council staff to understand organisational expectations, governance preferences and the broader strategic context.

This ensured that the operating model assessment reflected the positions of both Councils and considered the implications for future decision-making, resourcing and financial planning.

FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Construction Costs

Urban Enterprise (UE) has provided a preliminary construction estimate of \$37 million for the Castlemaine–Maryborough Rail Trail.

This includes:

- \$25.7 million – main trail construction
- \$11.3 million – township link trails (Campbells Creek, Guildford, Newstead, Carisbrook and Maryborough)

The Project Control Group (PCG) has requested a revised specialist cost estimate to verify these figures. Regardless of the final amount, the project will require significant external capital funding, likely through state and federal grants, supplemented by financial contributions from both Councils. Before any construction can proceed, both Councils will need to consider and determine:

- their respective local financial contributions
- the timing and phasing of multi-year capital allocations
- cashflow requirements, including staged delivery of the project

These considerations will need to align with each Council's adopted Financial Plan, Asset Plan and long-term budget constraints.

Operational & Maintenance Costs (Post Construction)

Operational cost estimates in the UE report have been questioned by both Councils, and an independent operational cost assessment will be undertaken to determine a more accurate figure. Preliminary high-level internal analysis indicates:

- Without resealing:
 - Total 25-year cost: \$39.26 million
 - Approx. \$1.57 million per year across both Councils
 - ~\$785k per Council per year
- With reseal at Year 17/18:
 - Total 25-year cost: \$35.84 million
 - Approx. \$1.43 million per year across both Councils
 - ~\$717k per Council per year
 - Asset retains approximately \$20.73 million in residual value

Regardless of resealing timing, each Council will need to budget in excess of \$700k per year to manage and maintain the trail sustainably.

UE has also identified several key operating cost categories that have not yet been fully quantified and will increase overall annual expenditure:

- signage and wayfinding
- governance and administrative support
- trail activation and experience development
- marketing and promotion

- partnership development and advocacy
- full lifecycle asset renewal

Once these elements are included, annual operating costs will be materially higher than UE's initial baseline.

Financial Commitments Required Under the Proposed Operating Model

If the recommended model is formally adopted in the future, it would require:

- ongoing operational and maintenance investment from both CGSC and MASC
- a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two Councils
- Council entering a lease with VicTrack, should Councils assume operational responsibility (VicTrack requires leases to be held by Councils)

These obligations cannot be met without confirmed external construction funding and subsequent consolidated budget consideration by both Councils.

Future Requirements for Council Decision-making

Prior to assuming any responsibility for construction or operation, both Councils will need to separately endorse:

- the availability of full construction funding
- the budget capacity to sustain ongoing operational costs
- an appropriate funding model for asset renewal
- the operational expenditure split between CGSC and MASC
- administrative support requirements (including Advisory Committee resourcing)

These decisions will be made through future Council resolutions, once full financial implications are known.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Climate change -adaptation - Failure to appropriately respond to or prepare for the impacts of climate change.

The Rail Trail will be a long linear asset exposed to climate-related risks such as flooding, heat impacts, erosion, fire risk and vegetation decline.

Effective adaptation planning, hazard management and ongoing maintenance will be essential to ensure the trail remains safe, accessible and resilient.

Without sustained investment and coordinated cross-municipality management, the trail may be vulnerable to climate impacts that increase operational costs, disrupt service levels and pose safety risks.

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

Both the construction and ongoing operation of the Rail Trail present significant financial implications for Council.

The estimated \$37 million construction cost currently has no confirmed funding pathway, creating uncertainty regarding Council's financial exposure and reliance on external grants.

Post-construction, operational, maintenance and asset renewal costs—potentially exceeding \$700k per council per year—represent long-term recurring commitments.

If funding does not align with Council's adopted Financial Plan, Asset Plan and overall budget capacity, the project may place pressure on Council's financial sustainability over time.

Property and Assets - Failure to maintain, renew and expand our assets in a timely and robust way, that considers service and delivery needs

The Rail Trail would become a major shared asset requiring systematic maintenance, renewal and lifecycle planning. Failure to adequately resource these functions could result in asset deterioration, compromised safety, reduced accessibility and inability to meet community expectations. The scale and spread of the asset across 61 kilometres intensifies this risk, requiring consistent service levels and long-term asset management aligned with statutory obligations.

Governance - Failure to transparently govern and embrace good governance practices

Under the proposed model, Councils retain full executive authority and decision-making responsibility for the Rail Trail.

While the Advisory Committee provides expertise, it has no delegated powers, meaning governance failures, unclear roles or inadequate oversight could expose Councils to significant risk. As part of the Castlemaine Maryborough Rail Trail Committee's (CMRT) funding agreement with the State Government, CMRT is required to nominate a preferred operating model.

As a project partner, Council must indicate its preferred position by resolution. Failure to do so in a timely and transparent manner may impact CMRT's ability to meet its contractual obligations and weaken the governance framework supporting the project. If the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), Terms of Reference (ToR) and shared governance arrangements between CGSC and MASC are not robust, this could lead to confusion, duplication, inconsistent approaches, or delays in decision-making — all of which increase corporate, financial and reputational risk.

CONCLUSION

The recommended operating model presented by Urban Enterprise—Option 3: Joint Council Management supported by an independent Advisory Committee—provides the strongest balance of governance oversight, specialist expertise, community representation and long-term sustainability for the Castlemaine–Maryborough Rail Trail.

Under this model, Councils retain executive authority and statutory responsibility for the trail, supported by a skills-based Advisory Committee that contributes targeted advice, industry insight and broader stakeholder perspectives.

While Option 3 is identified as the highest-ranking model due to its ability to support a unified and high-quality trail experience across both municipalities, broaden funding opportunities and supplement internal capability, it is important to note that Council is being asked to provide in-principal support only at this stage.

The model signals a preferred approach but does not commit Council to assuming operational responsibility or entering a lease with VicTrack.

Any future decision will remain subject to the availability of full construction funding, detailed financial assessment in line with Council's adopted Financial Plan and Asset Plan, and a future resolution of Council.

ATTACHMENTS

1. CMRT Operating Model DRAFT V 1 [7.4.1]



Castlemaine to Maryborough Rail Trail: Operating Model

Draft Recommendations

Prepared by Urban Enterprise for Central Goldfields Shire Council, Mount Alexander Shire Council
and Castlemaine-Maryborough Rail Trail Inc.

November 2025

www.urbanenterprise.com.au

Castlemaine to Maryborough Rail Trail: Operating Model

Central Goldfields Shire Council
Mount Alexander Shire Council
Castlemaine-Maryborough Rail Trail Inc.

Report Author:

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Version Control:

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Acknowledgment of Country:

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which our work is based and pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We extend that respect to all First Nations people.

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Executive Summary

Overview

To support the development of the Castlemaine-Maryborough Rail Trail (Rail Trail), an optimal operating model is required to allow project partners to effectively manage project delivery and operation – ensuring the long-term success of the Rail Trail and positive outcomes for the Central Goldfields and Mount Alexander Shires.

This report examines a range of operating model options and recommends the preferred model for the Rail Trail (for Council consideration), having regard to the impact on project stakeholders, trail operation/utilisation and broader economic and community impact for the municipalities.

Partnership Model Options

The current ‘pre-construction’ phase of the Rail Trail is managed by a Project Governance Group, which consists of several partners, including:

- Castlemaine-Maryborough Rail Trail Inc. (CMRT) – a community organisation that has developed and championed the Rail Trail concept;
- Central Goldfields Shire Council (CGSC); and
- Mount Alexander Shire Council (MASC).

Given the existing partnership arrangements, a **partnership model** is the preferred operating model for Rail Trail development and operation, whereby management and governance is shared by multiple stakeholders.

From a review of comparable Rail Trail products, industry research and consultation with the current Project Governance Group, the following partnership model options were identified for further assessment:

Option 1: Joint Council Management:

Councils jointly manage the trail, with responsibility for trail sections within each Council’s jurisdiction.

Option 2: Council and Community Partnership

A partnership between the Councils and a designated community organisation (e.g. not-for profit, volunteer group) to assist in trail management.

Option 3: Council and Advisory Committee

Councils jointly manage the trail, with governance support from an independent Advisory Committee.

Option 4: Community Asset Committee

The trail is operated and managed by a designated Community Asset Committee (CAC).

Option 5: Council and Private Partnership

Councils jointly manage the trail in partnership with a commercial entity.

Options Analysis

A detailed assessment was undertaken for the above options to identify the preferred operating model for the Rail Trail. The assessment matrix is summarised in Table 1, which provides a score for each option against a set of weighted criteria, ranging from ‘0’ (does not meet the criteria); to ‘3’ (fully meets the criteria).

Options were ranked based on the total weighted score – with higher scores demonstrating a greater level of suitability (and preference) for Rail Trail governance. Based on the results of the matrix, the recommended model (with a weighted score of 2.5) is: **Option 3: Council and Advisory Committee**

Note: This assessment is qualitative and subjective, based on our understanding of the project, consultation outcomes, industry knowledge, and a general assessment of perceived benefits.

Table 1. Options Assessment Matrix

Criteria (and weighting)	Option 1: Joint Council Management	Option 2: Council and Community Partnership	Option 3: Council and Advisory Committee	Option 4: Community Asset Committee	Option 5: Council and Private Partnership
Governance and Accountability (20%)	3	2	2	1	0
Organisational Skills and Expertise (15%)	1	2	3	3	2
Finance and Funding Impact (15%)	0	1	2	2	3
Community Support (15%)	1	3	3	3	0
Market and User Impact (15%)	0	2	3	3	3
Deliverability and Sustainability (10%)	3	2	2	1	0
Risk Management (10%)	3	2	2	1	0
Total Score	11	14	17	14	8
Weighted Score	1.5	2.0	2.5	2.1	1.2
Ranking	4	3	1	2	5

Recommendations

Under the recommended Option 3, CGSC and MASC jointly manage the trail, with governance support from an independent Advisory Committee. The indicative structure and governance arrangement includes:

A partnership between the two Councils to manage the trail asset and support trail operation, with independent oversight/support from a ‘Rail Trail Advisory Committee’ – guiding Council with trail management and operational decision-making).

The recommended governance structure is summarised in the table below, with detailed information included in Section 4 of this report.

Table 2. Recommended Operating Model Governance Structure

	Rail Trail Advisory Committee	Rail Trail Working Group (CGSC and MASC)
Membership	Skills-based representatives from: - Council - Government (funding/development agencies) - Tourism - Community - Industry	Key representatives from Council involved in trail management and decision-making (e.g. Economic Development, Tourism, Assets, Infrastructure, Planning)
Roles and Responsibilities	- Advising Councils on trail priorities. - Forum for Community input - Project support for trail - Provide feedback to Council	- Trail finance and budget - Maintenance and trail infrastructure - Safety and security - Regulatory compliance: requirements. - Stakeholder oversight - Risk mitigation - Promotion and advocacy
Legal Framework	Terms of Reference (ToR)	Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

Implementation Guidelines

To support the successful establishment of the preferred operating model, the following **staged** implementation guidelines are recommended:

- **Stage 1: Establish the Rail Trail Working Group.** Prepare an MoU between MASC and CGSC to formalise the partnership agreement stipulating the roles, accountability and financial obligations of Councils.
- **Stage 2: Establish the Rail Trail Advisory Committee.** Establish the Advisory Committee, via the preparation of a ToR, to formalise the oversight of the Rail Trail and supporting role the committee will provide to Councils and the Working Group.
- **Stage 3: Recruit Advisory Committee Members.** Commence the recruitment process for the Advisory Committee, including Council, government, industry and community members, via a public (or selective) EOI process.
- **Stage 4: Prepare a Trail Management Plan.** The governing entity should develop a Trail Management Plan to outline the strategies and actions for the Rail Trail’s long-term sustainability, safety, and user experience.

1. Introduction

1.1. Project Engagement

Urban Enterprise, in partnership with Fitzgerald Frisby Landscape Architecture (FFLA), has been commissioned by Central Goldfields Shire Council (CGSC), Mount Alexander Shire Council (MASC) and Castlemaine-Maryborough Rail Trail Inc. (CMRT) to:

Recommend the preferred operating model for the Castlemaine-Maryborough Rail Trail (Rail Trail).

This includes the identification, examination and refinement of the nominated operating model for further consideration – to support the development and operation of the Rail Trail project.

Note: this report was developed to provide detailed recommendations for Rail Trail governance. It does not consider project funding requirements for development or ongoing operation.

1.2. Project Background

1.2.1. Project Description

The Castlemaine-Maryborough Rail Trail is a 61km shared-use trail that is proposed along the disused rail corridor between Castlemaine and Maryborough. The recreational trail would link these two towns via the communities of Campbells Creek, Guildford, Newstead, Moolort and Carisbrook as well as provide connections to the regions attractions and destinations.

1.2.2. Project Proponents

The Rail Trail project has been instigated and driven by CMRT (a community organisation) from inception, in partnership with the Central Goldfields and Mount Alexander Councils, with the trail covering areas across both Shires.

These three stakeholders are part of the project governance group, which has been formalised by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

1.2.3. Castlemaine-Maryborough Rail Trail Feasibility Study (2023)

A feasibility study for the Rail Trail was completed by Urban Enterprise in 2023, which helped defined the trail concept as well as identify the potential market, economic, financial and community implications. As part of this study, a preliminary operating model analysis was undertaken, which recognised a **partnership – or shared management – model** (between MASC, CGSC and CMRT) as the most appropriate governance model for trail development and operation.

This assessment is now undergoing further examination and consideration as part of the current 'pre-construction' phase, with detailed operating model recommendations to be agreed across the project governance group to support project development.

1.3. Report Structure

This report has been prepared through the following approach:

- **Project Context.** Identifying and examining relevant project background information to provide an evidence base that informs operating model requirements for the Rail Trail.
- **Operating Model Analysis.** Identifying and assessing suitable operating model options for the Rail Trail, for the purposes of determining the preferred governance arrangement.
- **Recommendations.** Refining the elements of the preferred operating model and advising on implementation approaches to help proponents successfully establish and deliver the chosen model.

2. Project Context

2.1. Overview

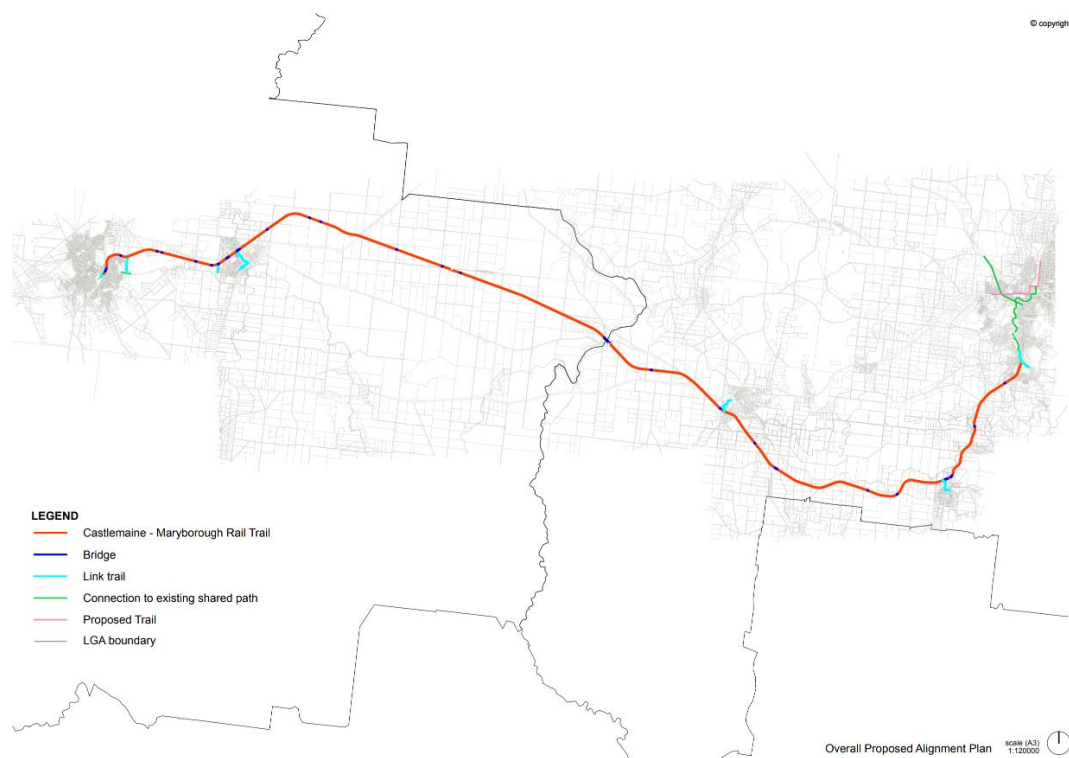
The following provides relevant background information and context to support future operation and governance of the Rail Trail.

2.2. Castlemaine-Maryborough Rail Trail

2.2.1. Locational Context

The project study area includes the Mount Alexander and Central Goldfields shires, which captures the full alignment of the Rail Trail, bookended by the key destinations of Castlemaine and Maryborough (refer to Figure 1 for trail alignment and study area). Current assumptions indicate that approx. 54% of the trail is located within Mount Alexander, with 46% located within Central Goldfields.

Figure 1. Castlemaine-Maryborough Rail Trail



Source: FFLA, 2025

The study area is located within the newly formed *Destination Central Victoria*, which is the peak governance structure for tourism in the Hepburn, Macedon Ranges, Mount Alexander and Central Goldfields region.

2.2.2. Project Vision

As outlined in the 2023 Feasibility Study, the project vision is articulated as follows:

The Castlemaine to Maryborough Rail Trail is a world-class recreational trail. Historic landscapes and rich storytelling will help the region come to life for tens of thousands of visitors and provide new, healthier and safer transport pathways for more than 20,000 people locally.

The trail will creatively transform disused land, and bring economic renewal, better land management and social dividends to several major communities, while adding a connecting link to Victoria's wider trail network.

This vision helps to frame the purpose and objectives to be supported by the entity responsible for Rail Trail development and operation.

2.2.3. Project Benefits

The 2023 Feasibility Study also identified the key benefits to be delivered by the Rail Trail (and achieved by the governing body), including:

- Support increases in visitation and visitor spend;
- Generate significant flow-on economic benefits to the region (including additional output and job creation);
- Strengthen the region's brand as a premier cycling and walking destination;
- Encourage a greater dispersal of visitation across the region;
- Stimulate private investment and activate visitor destinations;
- Provide new transport options and recreational amenity for residents; and
- Increase health and wellbeing for all users of the active transport experience.

It will be the responsibility of the governing body to pursue and achieve these benefits.

2.2.4. Project Costs

The project costs are a critical component of trail development and operation, influencing project governance (e.g. responsibilities for sourcing funds, expending funds, etc.). Estimates for project construction and operation are summarised below.

Note: These estimates are correct as of October 2024 and subject to change.

Project Construction

Total construction of the Rail Trail – using a sealed surface – is estimated at **\$37 million**. This comprises:

- \$25.7 million for main trail costs; and
- \$11.3 million for link trails that connect the main trail into the key townships of Campbells Creek, Guildford, Newstead, Carisbrook and Maryborough¹.

Project Operation

Ongoing (i.e. annual) operating costs for the Rail Trail are primarily determined by maintenance costs. Current maintenance estimates are set at \$1,200 per kilometre, equating to **\$73,200 per annum** (TBC).

While this is the primary ongoing cost, there are other operating costs – yet to be quantified – that will be the responsibility of the governing entity (either to obtain funds or fund directly). These include:

- Signage and wayfinding;

¹ Source: FFLA, 2025.

- Governance administration;
- Trail activations (e.g. trail experiences and amenity);
- Marketing and promotion; and
- Advocacy.

In addition to the above, it is expected that trail management will be responsible for asset renewal costs. However, this is likely to be funded through external stakeholders to reduce the financial burden for project proponents (details of asset renewal are out of scope for this report).

2.3. Rail Trail Governance

Understanding optimal approaches to trail governance, as well as typical roles and responsibilities, helps provide the context to inform the operating model for this project.

The following is based on a review of relevant literature as well as discussions with project proponents.

2.3.1. Key Characteristics

Effective governance is essential to successful trail operation, decision making and financial performance of the trail destination. While most governance models should be tailored to suit the specific needs of an individual project, there are common characteristics and traits for an effective governance model. These include:

- Governance and accountability is clear and simple, allowing for effective decision making and administration;
- The strengths, knowledge and expertise of partners are maximised;
- Flexible funding allocations that are used to invest in trail operation;
- Ability to access a range of funding sources;
- Risk is appropriately managed in a clear and accountable way.
- The model is legally appropriate for the jurisdiction and aligns with the project's vision/objectives.
- Benefits of the model must be clear to the community and trail users
- Promote environmental and cultural outcomes;
- Support the project's long-term sustainability; and
- The model must promote and support a quality user experience. ²

² TRC, Recreational Trail Planning, Design and Management Guidelines, 2020.

2.3.2. Management Functions

To successfully develop and operate the Rail Trail, the managing body should be responsible for the delivery of the following key activities/functions. The delivery of these activities could be the responsibility of one or more stakeholders responsible for trail operation.

The entity responsible for trail governance and operation will be subject to the following management functions.

Table 3. Rail Trail Core Management Functions

Function	Description
Trail construction and maintenance	Developing trail infrastructure and ensuring the preservation, protection, maintenance and safety of assets.
Strategic planning and governance	Setting the governance arrangements (e.g. partnership agreements, accountability), as well as decision-making roles, long-term planning, business objectives and KPIs.
Administrative support	Providing support functions including finance, HR, data collection, etc.
Marketing and Communications	Marketing of the trail and promotion (across various platforms) to attract utilisation.
Outreach and partnerships	Engaging with key stakeholders and user groups (e.g. volunteers, local businesses, schools, etc.) to promote awareness of the trail and obtain community buy-in.
Signage and wayfinding	Providing a consistent brand and linking interpretive elements to develop the trail as a single, cohesive product.
User experience and activation	Ensuring a high-quality user experience through activation of key areas and delivery of localised events.
Advocacy and funding support	Identifying and pursuing internal and external funding opportunities, including grants, private and public sponsorships, donations, etc.

Source: Various, compiled by Urban Enterprise 2025

Understanding the roles and responsibilities of the operating model will help to frame the development and assessment of options (below). It is understood that while some of these activities could be outsourced (or delivered by multiple stakeholders), the governing body will hold ultimate responsibility.

2.4. Consultation Findings

Consultation relating to the operating model was conducted over August/September 2025 with the following proponents: Project Working Group; MASC; CGSC; and CMRT.

Key findings from this consultation are summarised below (and detailed in 0, where individual responses have been collated and categorised as relevant for each topic):

- A **clear governance structure** and **robust agreement** is critical to provide clarity over roles and responsibilities;
- The operating model must support the project's **vision and objectives**, align with **cultural and community values**, promote **resource efficiencies**, as well as **provide expertise** to manage delivery of a successful trail;
- The optimal model must align with relevant criteria important to Council, such as **sustainability**, long-term **viability**, **risk management**, access to **funding and finance**, as well as **economic/community benefit**; and
- The preferred model must be **flexible**, capitalise on **organisational capabilities**, establish appropriate **risk controls** and access a **broad base of support** from community, government and industry.

Table 4. Consultation Summary

Topic	Key Findings
Operating model preferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a strong need for clear governance structures and well-defined responsibilities. - A legal agreement between Councils and/or partners is a necessity over informal arrangements, to ensure the model is robust and sustainable. - The operating model needs Council involvement, recognising ownership of the asset and obligations for operation (e.g. financial, legal). - Outsourcing expertise and skills to relevant stakeholders will benefit Council and alleviate internal resource requirements.
Desired outcomes and objectives	<p>The operating model must consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable and efficient management of the trail asset. - Clear vision and purpose. - Clarity around roles, responsibilities, and funding commitments. - Delivering economic and tourism benefits for the region. - Supporting the visitor/user experience. - Consolidate resources and use efficiencies where possible (e.g. and joint marketing). - Support active transport and strategic environmental goals/targets. - Inclusion of Traditional Owners and broader stakeholder representation. - Pursue private funding and commercial opportunities.
Relevant evaluation criteria for assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governance and accountability are top priorities for the governing body. - The model needs to be sustainable from a financial, environmental and operational perspective. - The model should demonstrate alignment with strategic goals and provide community benefit. - The model should have the ability to maximise the economic impact of the trail. - Managing risks to ensure effective governance and operation. - The ability to engage and support stakeholders, including community, industry and Traditional Owners. - The model should be able to access alternative funding and pursue commercial opportunities. - Organisational expertise and implementation efficiency is critical for trail management.
Operating model considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The preferred model must consider the financial costs and funding mechanisms for trail operation. - The type of partnership agreement needs to be robust and legally suitable for Councils. - Coordination with external tourism bodies and development/funding agencies is key to obtain finance and support promotion. - Flexibility in design and construction should be incorporated into the preferred model.

Source: Various, collated by Urban Enterprise, 2025.

The outcomes of the consultation helps provide an evidence base to support the directions and priorities for the Rail Trail's operating model.

3. Operating Model Analysis

3.1. Overview

This section examines the various operating model options, to inform the governance arrangement for the Rail Trail. This includes a detailed assessment of the various models, its suitability for this project, as well as identification of the preferred operating model for further analysis.

3.2. Benchmarking

The following benchmarking analysis includes a range of rail trail case studies across Australia, comparing the governance arrangements that are typically adopted for project delivery and operation. A total of eight case studies were included in the analysis, based on a combination of factors, including trail distance, market awareness and jurisdictions covered (see Table 5). Key findings and insights are summarised as follows:

- All case studies have adopted a **partnership model** (even those within a single jurisdiction), whereby multiple proponents/stakeholders work in partnership to manage the trails;
- Partnerships involve a combination of multiple Councils working together, as well as with **community/industry/government** representatives; and
- The types of partnership models **vary**, including a Committee of Management (CoM), community partnership and/or advisory committees, all of which are designed to support management of the trails.

Table 5. Rail Trail Operating Models Case Studies

Rail Trail	Distance	Municipalities	Governance Arrangement	Operating Model	Stakeholders/Partners
Port Fairy to Warrnambool Rail Trail	38km	2	Partnership	CoM*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Port Fairy to Warrnambool Rail Trail COM - Moyne Shire Council - Warrnambool City Council.
Bellarine Rail Trail	35km	2	Partnership	Council and Community Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - City of Greater Geelong - Borough of Queenscliff - The Friends of the Bellarine Peninsula Rail Trail
East Gippsland Rail Trail	96km	1	Partnership	CoM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - East Gippsland Rail Trail CoM - East Gippsland Shire Council
Munda Biddi Trail (WA)	1,070km	14	Partnership	Council and Community Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WA Parks and Wildlife Service - Munda Biddi Trail Foundation
Murray to Mountains Rail Trail	116km	3	Partnership	Council and Community Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alpine Shire Council - Indigo Shire Council - Rural City of Wangaratta - Tourism North East
Great Victorian Rail Trail	134km	3	Partnership	Council and Advisory Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mansfield Shire Council - Mitchell Shire Council - Murrindindi Shire Council - GVRT Working Group - GVRT Management Committee - GVRT Industry Group - Friends of the GVRT
High Country Rail Trail	80km	3	Partnership	CoM/Council/Advisory Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parklands Albury Wodonga CoM - City of Wodonga - Towong Shire Council - Bonegilla Rail Trail Advisory Group - Tallangatta Rail Trail Advisory Group - Koetong-Shelley Development Association
Mary to Bay Rail Trail (QLD)	32km	1	Partnership	Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fraser Coast Regional Council - Mary to Bay Rail Trail Advisory Committee

Source: Various, compiled by Urban Enterprise 2025; *Note: Committees of Management are currently known as Community Asset Committees, as stipulated in the *Local Government Act 2020*.

3.3. Partnership Model

3.3.1. Summary

As outlined in the Feasibility Study (and in the benchmarking analysis above), the partnership model is the preferred governance arrangement. In this model, management of the Rail Trail is shared by multiple partners – this can include a combination of government, community, private and/or industry stakeholders.

This model was identified for further examination for future management of the Castlemaine-Maryborough Rail Trail management due to the following:

- The Rail Trail involves a mix of land tenures, land managers and landholders (including across multiple municipalities) that requires input from multiple stakeholders;
- The funding environment (at a government, community and industry level) is constrained, with a need to leverage a broader resource/funding base for trail development and operation;
- This model provides a broader base for project support and advocacy;
- Having partners allows for sharing of resources, responsibilities and risks for stakeholders, alleviating the burden on any single proponent;
- Broadens access to appropriate expertise and capabilities across multiple organisations.
- A formal partnership requires stakeholders to enter management arrangements that clearly defines roles and responsibilities; and
- There is existing involvement and interest from the CMRT community organisation in both trail development and operation, which will assist in achieving trail success³.

3.3.2. Partnership Model Options

As detailed in Table 6 (overleaf), a range of partnership model options have been identified and examined, including key features, members, roles, advantages and disadvantages. This information is based on a combination of consultation findings, benchmarking and literature review.

These options are subject to further assessment to determine the optimal model for the Rail Trail (see Section 3.4).

³ Source: TRC, Guidelines for trail planning, design and management; adapted by Urban Enterprise, 2025

Table 6. Partnership Model Options

	Option 1: Joint Council Management	Option 2: Council and Community Partnership	Option 3: Council and Advisory Committee	Option 4: Community Asset Committee*	Option 5: Council and Private Partnership
Overview	Councils jointly manage the trail, with responsibility for trail sections within each Council's jurisdiction.	A partnership between the Councils and a designated community organisation (e.g. not-for profit, volunteer group) to assist in trail management.	Councils jointly manage the trail, with governance support from an independent Advisory Committee.	The trail is operated and managed by a designated Community Asset Committee (CAC)	Councils jointly manage the trail in partnership with a commercial entity.
Potential Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MASC - CGSC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MASC - CGSC - CMRT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MASC - CGSC - Skills-based Advisory Committee (inc. government, development/funding agencies, tourism bodies, industry, community, Traditional Owners) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Councillors and Council staff (MASC, CGSC) - Government (inc. development/funding agencies, tourism bodies), industry, community and Traditional Owner representatives (appointed by Council). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MASC - CGSC - Commercial operator/s
Roles and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Councils jointly responsible for trail development and operation. - Each Council focuses on the trail sections within its jurisdiction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Councils have executive authority on trail management, including trail funding, maintenance, approvals and compliance. - CMRT assists in trail operation, including promotion, advocacy, activations and partnerships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Councils have executive authority on trail management, including trail funding, maintenance, approvals and compliance. - The Advisory Committee provides advice on trail governance and operation (e.g. promotion, advocacy, activations and partnerships) – with no decision-making power. - Advisory Committees report to Councils on an ongoing basis to review and monitor performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CAC is responsible for ongoing operation and management of the trail - CAC has decision-making authority, with specific delegated powers and functions to manage Council-owned or controlled assets (while Council retains responsibility for specific duties). - The CAC is required to provide operating and financial reports to Council for monitoring and evaluation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Councils jointly responsible for trail development and operation. - Each Council focuses on the trail sections within its jurisdiction. - Commercial operator/s provide tourism services (e.g. amenity, accommodation, retail, dining) on private or public land (via a lease/licensing arrangement). - Commercial operator assists in revenue generation, promotion and advocacy.
Legal Framework/ Status	A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that defines roles, responsibilities and funding obligations.	MoU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MoU between Councils - Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Advisory Committee, outlining its purpose, scope, membership, authority, and operational procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CACs established and governed via the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>. - The Instrument of Delegation is a legal document that defines the responsibility of the committee (as well as Council). 	Lease/licensing agreement

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	Option 1: Joint Council Management	Option 2: Council and Community Partnership	Option 3: Council and Advisory Committee	Option 4: Community Asset Committee*	Option 5: Council and Private Partnership
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clearly defined management, funding obligations and decision-making authority. Councils will support the specific needs of its jurisdiction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CMRT already exists as a community organisation - Allows for community involvement - Sharing management functions alleviates capacity issues - Community group can broaden funding and industry support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advisory Committee can promote good governance. Leverages broader support from community, industry and government (as well as supporting commercial activations). - Provides independent expert advice and support (utilising a diverse skillset). Ensures development of a unified, consistent product across municipalities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leverages broader support and expertise from community, industry and government (as well as supporting commercial activations). - Community ownership and accountability reduces administrative burden for Council - Ensures development of a unified, consistent product across municipalities. - Singular focus on the trail asset. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leverage private expertise and investment. - Supports revenue generation. - Enhances user experience and market appeal. - Supports trail activation.
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Councils solely responsible for all management functions - Resource intensive - Councils may lack the capacity and expertise to support trail operation - Lack of holistic support for a single, unified product. - Potential for inconsistent experiences across municipalities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial and administrative burden remains on Council - Reliant on volunteer capacity - Issues with succession planning (and longer-term sustainability) of volunteer groups - Community group resources and expertise limited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial and administrative burden remains on Council (as committees do not have decision-making authority). - Multiple agreements required to establish this model. - Additional layer of bureaucracy may be inefficient and delay decision-making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subject to complex administrative arrangements. - CACs have limited authority over the asset (Council retains some responsibility). - CACs are reliant on Councils for funding and approvals, limiting independence and creating inefficiencies. - Councils are liable for poor CAC outcomes. - Additional administrative functions and reporting requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial and administrative burden remains on Council - Risk of commercial focus over community benefit. - Councils may lose some control over trail operation. - Administrative burden through procurement process and monitoring arrangements. - Unsustainable as private partners reliant on market forces.
Examples	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bellarine Rail Trail - Munda Biddi Trail (WA) - Murray to Mountains Rail Trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Great Victorian Rail Trail - High Country Rail Trail - Mary to Bay Rail Trail (QLD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Port Fairy to Warrnambool Rail Trail - East Gippsland Rail Trail - High Country Rail Trail 	<p>** Examples mostly apply to Mountain Bike Parks**</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mystic Mountain - Maydena MTB (Tas)

Source: Various, compiled by Urban Enterprise 2025; *Note: Community Asset Committees were formally known as 'Committees of Management'

3.4. Options Analysis

3.4.1. Assessment Criteria

The following provides a detailed assessment of each of the partnership options, for the purposes of identifying the preferred model for the Rail Trail. Each option was rated against relevant criteria – developed through industry research and consultation – and includes the following:

- **Governance and Accountability.** The governance structure and lines of accountability are clear (set by strong legal agreements), including well-defined roles and responsibilities, robust strategic planning frameworks and alignment to project objectives.
- **Organisational Skills and Expertise.** The organisational partners have the relevant skills and expertise to undertake the required management functions and successfully operate the Rail Trail (including efficient use of stakeholder skills).
- **Finance and Funding Impact.** Ability to finance the Rail Trail, access resources and attract funding from alternative sources (to effectively deliver and manage the trail).
- **Community Support.** The model engages and supports community stakeholders (e.g. residents and businesses), ensuring they contribute to decision-making, with outcomes aligned to local values (e.g. cultural and environmental values).
- **Market and User Impact.** Management supports a high-quality user experience that broadens the Rail Trail's appeals to a range of market segments and generates utilisation.
- **Deliverability and Sustainability.** The model can be established efficiently and is viable over the long-term.
- **Risks.** The model can effectively identify, manage and mitigate key risks (to the project and stakeholders).

Meeting these criteria allows the operating model to effectively perform the required management functions for the Rail Trail.

3.4.2. Scoring System

A scoring system between was applied to rate the alignment of each model to the above criteria – ranging from:

'0' (does not meet the criteria) to '3' (fully meets the criteria).

This system is used to determine which model scores the highest, demonstrating a greater level of suitability for the Rail Trail governance.

3.4.3. Options Assessment Matrix

The assessment matrix, detailed in Table 7, includes the weighting for each criterion (based on relative importance to proponents), as well as the score and response for each option. The options were subsequently ranked based on the weighted score, which is used to determine the preferred model.

Note: This assessment is qualitative and subjective, based on our understanding of the project, consultation outcomes, industry knowledge, and a general assessment of perceived benefits.

Table 7. Options Assessment Matrix

Criteria	Weighting	Option 1: Joint Council Management	Option 2: Council and Community Partnership	Option 3: Council and Advisory Committee	Option 4: Community Asset Committee	Option 5: Council and Private Partnership
Governance and Accountability	20%	Internal Council governance structure and accountability is already determined and clearly defined (although the MoU will need to clarify each Council's role)	The strength of the governance structure will be determined by the robustness of relevant agreements. However, as Council retains executive power the lines of accountability will be clearer.	The strength of the governance structure will be determined by the robustness of relevant agreements. However, as Councils retains executive authority, the lines of accountability will remain clear.	The strength of the governance structure will be determined by the robustness of relevant agreements. However, the mix of responsibilities for trail management (between CAC and Councils) creates ambiguity over decision-making power and roles.	Commercial operators are less likely to be bound by Council governance structures or partnership agreements
		3	2	2	1	0
Organisational Skills and Expertise	15%	Council has fewer staff resources and limited experience in undertaking identified management functions	CMRT (as a community partner) will provide specialised experience, but limited in range of abilities (e.g. activation, infrastructure)	A broad and skills-based Advisory Committee can draw on key stakeholders/ organisations with relevant knowledge and experience in trail operation (e.g. promotion, activation, infrastructure)	A CAC (with skill-based members) can draw on key stakeholders with relevant knowledge and experience in trail operation (e.g. promotion, activation, infrastructure)	A commercial operator can provide expertise in activating and commercialising the trail, but limited in range of abilities (e.g. promotion, infrastructure)
		1	2	3	3	2
Finance and Funding Impact	15%	Limited ability for Councils to solely finance the trail, source alternative funding for operation and/or realise commercial opportunities	CMRT will help identify and access funding support from the community, however the ability to access a range of funding sources may be limited.	An Advisory Committee can draw from a range of funding sources (e.g. government, community, industry) to help finance the trail. Committee members can also identify potential commercial opportunities	A CAC can raise funds, draw from alternate of funding sources and identify potential commercial opportunities. However, CACs typically require some Council funding to support operations.	A private partner will help commercialise the trail and attract revenue (although limited in reaching other funding sources)
		0	1	2	1	3

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Criteria	Weighting	Option 1: Joint Council Management	Option 2: Council and Community Partnership	Option 3: Council and Advisory Committee	Option 4: Community Asset Committee	Option 5: Council and Private Partnership
Community Support	15%	Community engagement processes may be limited, which could reduce the level of local support	Formal partnership with CMRT will help ensure alignment with local values and obtain community support	An Advisory Committee with local business, community and Traditional Owner members will help with local outreach and obtain local support	A CAC with local business, community and Traditional Owner members will help with local outreach and obtain local support	Lack of formal engagement process with community may reduce level of local support
		1	3	3	3	0
Market and User Impact	15%	Limited resources and capacity to provide activations and amenity to appeal to markets. In addition, Councils are more likely to focus on individual sections of the trail within its jurisdiction (creating a segmented product that is not a single user experience).	CMRT will support the user experience and treat the trail as a unified experience for users (across jurisdictions), however with limited reach and capacity to undertaken activation and broaden the trail's market appeal	The Advisory Committee will provide oversight to treat the trail as a unified experience for users (across jurisdictions). It will also include skills-based members that can support activations (from public and private operator/s) to enhance market appeal.	The CAC will provide oversight to treat the trail as a unified experience for users (across jurisdictions). It will also include skills-based members that can support activations (from public and private operator/s) to enhance market appeal.	A commercial operator will have the expertise and resources to invest in activations and amenity to appeal to trail users.
		0	1	3	3	3
Deliverability and Sustainability	10%	This is a more streamlined model that does not require additional partners, is viable in the long-term and will require minimal lead time	Establishing a partnership agreement with CMRT will involve some complexity, while long-term viability of CMRT is unclear (based on volunteer commitments) – although Councils will continue to retain executive authority for ongoing management	Setting up a dedicated Advisory Committee (and ToR), as well as a partnership agreement with Council, will require a longer lead time. While the long-term viability of the committee is based on the commitment of representatives, Councils will continue to retain executive authority for ongoing management.	Setting up a dedicated CAC will require a longer lead time. The long-term viability of the CAC is also uncertain (based on the commitment of CAC representatives), which could leave a vacuum with decision-making. Councils will also need to monitor decisions made by the CAC to ensure compliance (which is resource intensive)	Procuring a commercial partner is a complicated and elongated process, with safeguards required to ensure long-term commitment of partners.
		3	2	2	1	0

Criteria	Weighting	Option 1: Joint Council Management	Option 2: Council and Community Partnership	Option 3: Council and Advisory Committee	Option 4: Community Asset Committee	Option 5: Council and Private Partnership
Risk Management	10%	Councils will utilise existing structures and processes to mitigate operational or governance risks.	The ability to manage and mitigate project and governance risks will largely depend on the strength of the partnership agreement (as Council processes will be diluted with an external partner).	Risks in recruiting suitable committee members to oversee project, as well as establishing a robust ToR with effective controls to govern committee performance (somewhat offset through Council retaining executive authority).	Risks involved in recruiting suitable committee members to manage project, as well as establishing a robust Instrument of Delegation with effective controls to oversee performance. The outsourcing of decision-making authority to a CAC may also conflict with Council priorities and requires ongoing monitoring.	Risks involved in procuring a suitable commercial operator with conflicting risk management processes, as well as the robustness of the public-private agreement.
		3	2	2	1	0
Total Score		11	13	17	13	8
Weighted Score		1.50	1.85	2.45	1.90	1.20
Ranking		4	3	1	2	5

3.4.4. Assessment Matrix Results

The results of this assessment matrix shows that the preferred partnership model is:

Option 3: Council and Advisory Committee - Councils jointly manage the trail, with governance support from an independent Advisory Committee.

It is important to note that there is no 'perfect' choice without risks or other issues. As such, Option 3 is recognised as the best available option after considering the alternative choices and opportunity costs. Key factors for this decision are as follows:

- Having joint Council management (Option 1), while more streamlined from a governance perspective, is resource intensive for Councils. This also excludes the possibility of partnering with experts across the range of trail management functions.
- Council partnering with a community organisation (e.g. CRMT) – Option 2 – will help ensure strong community support. However, resources and skillset are limited in trail management and operation.
- A partnership with commercial operator/s (Option 5) is more exposed to market forces, less likely to align with community values and less sustainable in the long-term, making this option less desirable (and realistic).
- Outsourcing management to a Community Asset Committee (Option 4) does possess several attributes and benefits for Council and project proponents, including the recruitment of skill-based members, broadening the support base, accessing alternative funding options and appealing to markets (through activations and attracting commercial operator/s).
- However, the risk involved in Option 4 – through outsourcing decision-making authority to a third party – could create issues for Council such as ongoing monitoring to ensure compliance (which could burden Council resources). Additionally:
 - CACs are typically provided some Council funding to support operations, which will increase the burden on Council resources; and
 - There could be potential conflicts through a lack of clarity with final decision-making/approvals, given both proponents are afforded specific duties via the agreement (instrument of delegation).

More broadly, given the current constrained financial environment, the need for Councils to retain full control/executive authority over its assets, in addition to minimising funding obligations, is of critical importance. These requirements may be compromised, to a certain extent, through CAC management.

- Option 3 (Council and Advisory Committee) attributes are similar to Option 4 – including generating a broad support base, providing organisational expertise, alternative funding opportunities and enhancing user impact. However, the above risks for a CAC make Option 3 a more optimal model for the Rail Trail, as Councils will retain executive authority as a means to control risks, ensure compliance and all obligations are fulfilled. Furthermore, Option 3 is more likely to be more sustainable in the long-term, as decision-making by Councils will be able to continue uninterrupted in the event the CAC ceases to function.

Section 4 provides more guidance around the preferred model and implementation considerations.

3.5. Advisory Committee Examples

To inform the recommendations, several working examples of rail trail advisory committees (and advisory groups) have been analysed in more detail. This is included to indicate successful examples of this approach, as well as provide some operational details, which could apply for the Castlemaine-Maryborough Rail Trail.

3.5.1. Great Victorian Rail Trail

The Great Victorian Rail Trail (GVRT) is managed via a partnership of the three shires – Mansfield, Murrindindi and Mitchell (which form a working group) – overseen by a **GVRT Management Committee**, **GVRT Industry Group**, as well as a **Friends of the GVRT** group.

Table 8. GVRT Governance Arrangements

Committee/Partner	Representatives	Roles and Responsibilities
GVRT Working Group and Management Committee	Mansfield, Murrindindi and Mitchell Shires (inc. CEOs/ Directors, economic development or tourism representative, asset management representative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financially and operationally responsible for maintaining the trail and facilities within its boundaries (including maintenance, signage, safety and regulatory compliance). - Undertake major works or upgrades on sections within their jurisdictions.
GVRT Industry Group	Businesses, user groups and relevant trail friends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This group convenes twice a year to provide community and industry feedback to the Management Committee. - Operational insights for the GVRT Management Committee to consider.
Friends of the GVRT	Independent community group of like-minded volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established by an MoU between the Friends group and Councils - Provide input related to the ongoing management, development and promotion of the trail - Acting as advocate for the improvements to the asset and apply for funding - Undertaking volunteer activities towards upkeep and promotion of the rail trail

Source: Various, compiled by Urban Enterprise 2025

3.5.2. High Country Rail Trail

The High Country Rail Trail is managed and operated by the Parklands Albury Wodonga CoM, however, supported by several Advisory Committees. The governance arrangements are summarised below:

Table 9. High Country Rail Trail Governance Arrangements

Committee/Partner	Representatives	Roles and Responsibilities
Parklands Albury-Wodonga CoM	Community-based regional parklands organisation that manages various reserves and Crown Land – including staff and volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overarching responsibility for land management, including managing leases or licenses, securing project funding and trail management
Bonegilla Rail Trail Advisory Group	Community members and trail users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supports Parklands Albury Wodonga in the management, maintenance, marketing and development of the rail trail
Tallangatta Rail Trail Advisory Group	Community members and trail users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Works on the maintenance and management of the rail trail between the Sandy Creek Inlet and Old Tallangatta.
Koetong-Shelley Development Association	Community members and trail users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supports management of the rail trail section from Shelley Station through to Koetong

Source: Various, compiled by Urban Enterprise 2025

3.5.3. Mary to Bay Rail Trail (QLD)

The Mary to Bay Rail Trail, located in Fraser Coast Regional Council, is governed by an Advisory Committee that guides and supports Council on the development and operation of the trail.

Table 10. Mary to Bay Rail Trail Governance Arrangements

Committee/Partner	Representatives	Roles and Responsibilities
Fraser Coast Regional Council	-	- Responsible for trail management, development and planning, including trail funding for operations.
Mary to Bay Rail Trail Advisory Committee	It includes a broad mix of representatives: - Community members; - Trail user groups; - Councillors; - Council staff; - Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads; and - Fraser Coast Tourism & Events.	- The committee ensures local community, government agencies, and tourism interests are all involved in decision-making - The committee's role is to make recommendations to Council on all issues affecting the trail, including advising on trail development and planning, operations and maintenance standards, amenities, marketing and promotion, as well as facilitating community events. - The committee also identifies grant opportunities and supports Council in seeking funding.

Source: Various, compiled by Urban Enterprise 2025

3.5.4. Trail Network Advisory Committees

The case study analysis also identified the use of Advisory Committees to support Council's with the delivery and operation of entire trail networks. This approach could be applied to the management of single trails.

Nillumbik Shire Trail Network

Nillumbik Shire Council formally appointed a **Recreation Trails Advisory Committee** to provide specialist advice on the development and management of the entire trail network in the Shire – including new and existing recreation trails.

Table 11. Nillumbik Shire Trail Network Governance Arrangements

Committee/Partner	Representatives	Roles and Responsibilities
Nillumbik Shire Council	-	- Executive decision-making power on trail development, planning and maintenance.
Recreation Trails Advisory Committee	- Councillor (as chairperson); - Community representatives - Trail user groups; - Local Landcare groups; and - Tourism advocates.	- The Committee's role is advisory, focusing on trail development and designs, trail infrastructure and amenities, assisting Council with trail funding applications, providing input on signage and trail design, trail promotion and events to activate trails.

Source: Various, compiled by Urban Enterprise 2025

Collie Shire Trail Network (WA)

Collie Shire Council established an official committee to guide the strategic development of recreational trails in Collie and to promote Collie as a premier trails destination. The committee provides oversight and advice on trail planning and works, as well as ensuring community and stakeholder input is reflected in trail operations.

Table 12. Collie Shire Trail Network Governance Arrangements

Committee/Partner	Representatives	Roles and Responsibilities
Collie Shire Council	-	- Executive decision-making power on trail development, planning and maintenance.
Trails Planning Advisory Committee	- Councillors; - Council officers; - Collie Visitor Centre; and - Representatives from local stakeholder groups and trail user groups.	- The Committee's core aim is to support and guide the development of all trails within the Shire. - Operationally, it provides strategic direction on trail projects and enhancing Collie's profile as a "Trails Hub". - Other key roles includes advising on trail planning and design, helping to prioritise trail maintenance and infrastructure upgrades, as well as coordinating promotion and marketing. - Supports trail-related events and activities and seeks to ensure a consistent signage and branding across the trail network.

Source: Various, compiled by Urban Enterprise 2025

4. Recommendations

4.1. Overview

This section refines the recommended Option 3, including detail around potential management structures and partnership arrangements, for Council consideration.

Note: the information provided here is indicative only and subject to confirmation and clarification with relevant stakeholders and legal representatives.

4.2. Recommended Operating Model

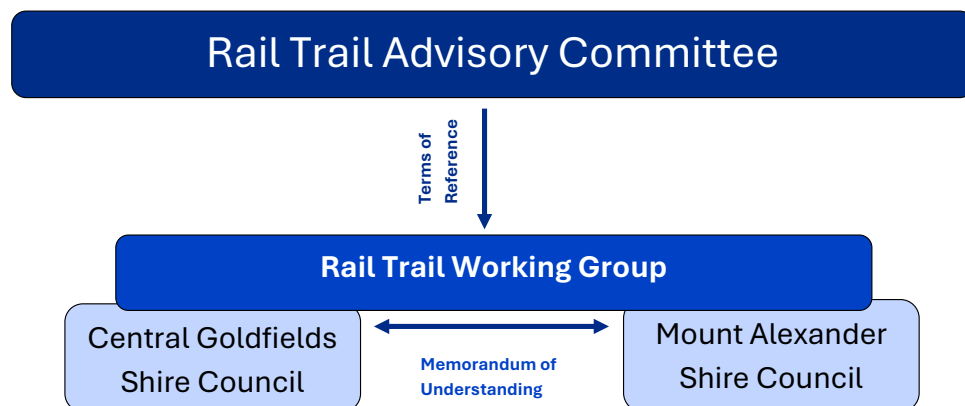
The following provides an overview of the preferred operating model and governance arrangements, using our understanding of the project, stakeholder insights, as well as case study examples. This information is intended to guide Council in its decision making and is subject to further investigation and business planning.

4.2.1. Indicative Structure

Under Option 3 (outlined in Section 3) Councils jointly manage the trail, with governance support from an independent Advisory Committee (e.g. the Rail Trail Advisory Committee). The indicative structure is illustrated in Figure 2, which includes:

- A Rail Trail **Working Group** partnership between the two Councils (formalised through an MoU) to manage the trail asset and support trail operation; and
- Oversight/support from an overarching, skills-based **Rail Trail Advisory Committee** (established via a Terms of Reference), that guides Council with trail management and provides advice for decisions relating to trail operation.

Figure 2. Operating Model and Structure



4.2.2. Roles and Responsibilities

Advisory Committee

The Rail Trail Advisory Committee will act as an independent body that provides specialist advice and feedback to Councils on specific project issues and needs. While it will guide decision-making, the Advisory Committee will not have any executive, financial or delegated powers.

Councils will not be obliged to endorse committee recommendations. However, Councils can use the committee to inform future decisions for the best interests of the project and all stakeholders.

Councils

Councils, as the asset owner of the trail, will have ultimate decision-making authority for trail construction and operation. As such, they will bear responsibility for project funding, as well as adherence to safety regulations and statutory compliance. The Committee, therefore, will provide relevant guidance and advice for specific areas in order to alleviate the operational burden for Council and provide specialist input.

A summary of the indicative roles and responsibilities of the proponents are summarised below.

Table 13. Roles and Responsibilities

Entity	Roles and Responsibilities
Rail Trail Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advising Councils: The primary role is to offer expert advice to the council on strategic priorities and policy development. - Community input: Act as a forum for discussion and ensure community needs and perspectives are considered in Council decisions. - Project support: Assist in the operation of the Rail Trail and contribute to its success, having regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Trail infrastructure (e.g. signage); o Strategic planning; o Administrative support; o Marketing and Communications; o Outreach and partnerships; o User experience and activation; and o Advocacy and funding support. <p>development and implementation of key projects, events, or initiatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feedback: They provide ongoing feedback on the work the council is doing and help guide the implementation of specific plans.
Rail Trail Working Group (CGSC and MASC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trail finance: Securing grants, contributing local funds, and managing the budget for the trail's ongoing management and development. - Maintenance (including asset renewal) and trail infrastructure: Ensuring the physical condition of the trail, including path surfaces, signage. - Safety and security: Identifying and implementing safety improvements to support utilisation. - Regulatory compliance: Ensuring the trail complies with relevant regulations and statutory requirements. - Stakeholder oversight: Monitoring proponents and the advisory committee, to ensure stakeholder needs are met and trail management is effective. - Risk mitigation: Identifying and mitigating governance risks, as well as project risks during trail construction and operation. - Promotion and advocacy: Marketing the trail to all user groups, including residents and visitors, promoting its use as a recreational and active transport asset.

4.2.3. Membership

The governing entity will include representatives from three organisations, including:

- CGSC;
- MASC; and
- The Rail Trail Advisory Committee.

More detail around indicative membership of the operating model is provided summarised in Table 14.

Table 14. Operating Model Membership

Entity	Representatives
Rail Trail Advisory Committee	<p>The makeup of Advisory Committees differ according to Council area and project type. However, based on Council feedback and project requirements, committee members could consist of the following representatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Councillors (from each municipality); - Council officers (from each municipality); - Community representatives (e.g. CMRT Inc., Traditional Owners); - Development/funding agencies (e.g. Regional Development Victoria); - Tourism bodies (e.g. Destination Central Victoria); and - Industry representatives (e.g. Business Mount Alexander).
Rail Trail Working Group (CGSC and MASC)	<p>Key representatives from Council involved in trail management and decision-making are likely to include officers from the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic Development - Tourism - Assets - Infrastructure - Planning

4.2.4. Legal Framework

As stipulated in Section 3, the legal framework of the operating model will be based on the following agreements:

- An **MoU** between the two Councils, formalising the Working Group arrangement to manage the trail asset; and
- A **Terms of Reference** between Councils and the overarching Advisory Committee, outlining its purpose, scope, membership, authority, and operational procedures.

Considerations relating to the legal framework and partnership agreements are outlined below.

Council Working Group – Memorandum of Understanding

Councils as the asset managers and responsible authority's for the Rail Trail need to formalise the partnership agreement via an MoU. Although not a legally binding document, it will outline the stipulations, clauses and duties that each party agrees to. The following high-level information should be considered for inclusion, to ensure a robust and viable partnership.

Table 15. Memorandum of Understanding Inclusions

Key Sections	Potential Inclusions
Relevant Parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CGSC - MASC
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide project context with background information about the Rail Trail - Highlight reason for parties engaging in a partnership (e.g. asset owners and managers) - Define the goal of the partnership (e.g. deliver a successful and high-quality Rail Trail)
Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List the effective dates/time period for the MoU and process for MoU renewals
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Articulate the project vision and goals the trail sets out to achieve. - List the specific, measurable objectives that the partnership aims to achieve.
Roles and Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Detail the specific duties, obligations, and contributions of each party for trail development and operation. - This should have regard to financial, regulatory, administration and other duties (e.g. maintenance, promotion, activation, etc.). - Identify areas of sole responsibility for each party (e.g. trail within respective jurisdiction), as well as joint responsibilities.
Financial and Resource Commitments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clearly state any financial contributions or other resource obligations of each party (e.g. for maintenance costs, asset renewals, etc.)
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partnership management, decision-making and dispute resolution processes - Processes for MoU modifications or termination - Frequency of meetings, progress reports, etc.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reference the Terms of Reference with the Advisory Committee (see below) - Ability to outsource/contract other organisations to perform specified functions

Source: Various, adapted by Urban Enterprise, 2025

Advisory Committee– Terms of Reference

For the Council partnership to be overseen by an Advisory Committee, a Terms of Reference should be established to set out the process, procedures and requirements of all parties. Potential inclusions for the ToR is outlined below.

Table 16. Terms of Reference Inclusions

Key Sections	Potential Inclusions
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outline purpose of Committee (e.g. provide guidance and expertise to the council; Act as a forum for discussion between councillors, officers, and community members).
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List the objectives of the Committee and areas of focus, aligning to the project vision (e.g. develop a world class recreational trail, etc.)
Membership	<p>Specify the members of the Advisory Committee, including the following (as an example):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council: Councillors and relevant Council staff (from CGSC and MASC) - Government: RDV - Tourism: Destination Central Victoria - Community: (CMRT, Traditional Owners) - Industry (TBC) – skills based members that can demonstrate capabilities, including business/commercial acumen, asset/financial management, community outreach, <p>Other considerations for committee membership includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chairperson - Selection process (e.g. EOI) - Term lengths of members - Roles of key members
Advisory Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advise on specific elements on trail management, not to make formal decisions - Articulate responsibility of members, including providing advice for marketing, outreach, funding advocacy, infrastructure, activations, etc. - Provide feedback on initiatives relating to the Rail Trail. - Facilitate community participation and provide expertise to assist the council in its decision-making and service delivery.
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How the Committee will be managed and how advice will be agreed and communicated - Processes for modifications or termination - Processes for dispute resolution - Frequency of meetings, progress reports, etc.
Terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective dates for Advisory Committee and any renewal processes

Source: Various, adapted by Urban Enterprise, 2025

4.3. Implementation Guidelines

Based on our understanding of the project, and in order to support the successful establishment of the preferred operating model, the following implementation guidelines and recommendation are provided (as a staged approach).

Stage 1: Establish the Rail Trail Working Group

Prepare an MoU between MASC and CGSC to formalise the partnership agreement stipulating the roles, accountability and financial obligations of Councils.

Stage 2: Establish the Rail Trail Advisory Committee

Establish the Advisory Committee, via the preparation of a ToR, to formalise the oversight of the Rail Trail and supporting role the committee will provide to Councils and the Working Group.

Stage 3: Recruit Advisory Committee Members

Commence the recruitment process for the Advisory Committee, including government, industry and community members, via a public (or selective) EOI process. As part of this process, confirm the Councillors and Council officers to be included on the Committee

Stage 4: Prepare a Trail Management Plan

The governing entity – including Councils and Advisory Committee – should develop a Trail Management Plan to **outline the strategies and actions for the Rail Trail's long-term sustainability, safety, and user experience**. This plan is crucial to the development and operation of the trail, detailing (for example) the maintenance program, safety procedures, budgets, infrastructure needs, interpretation, asset renewal requirements and marketing collateral.

As part of this plan, the governing entity could identify works/activities that could be **outsourced** (under Committee oversight), including (subject to funding and approvals):

- Trail construction led by an external Project Management Office (which could be funded through external sources);
- Branding and marketing (e.g. development of collateral) undertaken by a specialist company; and
- Engaging commercial operators to sponsor trail sections or invest in revenue-generating activities that provide user amenity (e.g. tours, equipment hire, dining, retail, etc.).

Appendices

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Table 17. Acronyms

Acronym	Expanded
CAC	Community Asset Committee
CGSC	Central Goldfields Shire Council
CMRT	Castlemaine-Maryborough Rail Trail Inc.
CoM	Committee of Management
MASC	Mount Alexander Shire Council
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
ToR	Terms of Reference

Table 18. Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Memorandum of Understanding	A formal, non-binding agreement between multiple parties that defines the working relationship, expectations and responsibilities, usually to achieve common goals or objectives.
Terms of Reference	A foundational document that defines the scope, objectives, and functions for a project, committee, or taskforce. It is typically associated with the establishment of an entity to perform specific duties.
Community Asset Committee	The Local Government Act 2020 provides the capacity for Councils to adopt Community Asset Committees to assist with the management of council-owned facilities and assets. These committees – which consist of individual members – are established by local governments to handle day-to-day operations, maintenance, and promotion of the asset to ensure it is well-used and looked after for the benefit of the community and all users.
Local Government Advisory Committee	Local Government Advisory Committees are formed to promote good governance, acting as independent bodies that provide advice on decision making for specific issues/initiatives, as well as facilitate community participation. These committees do not make formal decisions but offer informed perspectives to help the council make better decisions. They often include a mix of councillors, council officers, and community representatives.

Disclaimer

Neither Urban Enterprise Pty. Ltd. nor any member or employee of Urban Enterprise Pty. Ltd. takes responsibility in any way whatsoever to any person or organisation (other than that for which this report has been prepared) in respect of the information set out in this report, including any errors or omissions therein. In the course of our preparation of this report, projections have been prepared on the basis of assumptions and methodology which have been described in the report. It is possible that some of the assumptions underlying the projections may change. Nevertheless, the professional judgement of the members and employees of Urban Enterprise Pty. Ltd. have been applied in making these assumptions, such that they constitute an understandable basis for estimates and projections. Beyond this, to the extent that the assumptions do not materialise, the estimates and projections of achievable results may vary.



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Castlemaine-Maryborough Rail Trail Operating Model



7.5 Appointment of Members to the Aerodrome Advisory Group 2026–2029

Author: Coordinator Asset Management and Development Engineering
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 present to Councillors, the officers' recommendation for the appointment of members to the Aerodrome Advisory Group, following the public Expression of Interest (EOI) process conducted from 4 February to 27 February 2026.

Officers have assessed all applications in accordance with the EOI process.

While the adopted Terms of Reference provide for five community members, officers are recommending the appointment of eight members to ensure adequate representation and continuity.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note and consider Confidential Attachment 1 – Applicant Information (Personal Information), which has been treated as confidential in accordance with sections 3(1) and 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020.
2. That Council approve the appointment of the following eight applicants, as recommended by officers, to the Aerodrome Advisory Group for the 2026–2029 term:
 - a. Ian Carfrae
 - b. Rod Brown
 - c. John Kidon
 - d. Gregory Thomas Corcoran
 - e. Anthony Ohlsen
 - f. Melanie Waddell
 - g. Cameron Bird
 - h. Benjamin Morgan
3. Note that this represents a departure from the adopted Terms of Reference, which provide for five community members, and that this broader membership is recommended to strengthen representation and advisory capacity.
4. Acknowledge that the Aerodrome Advisory Group operates in an advisory capacity only and does not hold decision-making or operational authority.
5. Note that future aerodrome investment, development and compliance activities will be subject to Council's financial constraints and determined through the annual budget process and aligned with the adopted Financial Plan and Asset Plan.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2025-2029:

The Community's vision: **Infrastructure that supports growth and liveability**
4. Strengthen liveability and transport across townships through sustainable infrastructure and improved connectivity.

Initiative: **Strategic Management of Aerodrome**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Aerodrome Advisory Group was established in mid-2023 to provide advice to Council on best practice and to support the implementation of actions identified in the Aerodrome Business Case. Council acknowledges and recognises the valuable contribution made by the Group throughout its inaugural two-year term.

Towards the end of the inaugural term, Council undertook a review of the Terms of Reference to ensure the Group's purpose, structure, and membership composition remained aligned with Council's operational requirements and strategic objectives.

In December 2025, Council endorsed the revised Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Aerodrome Advisory Committee.

Amendments included adjustments to membership numbers, clarification of the Committee's role, responsibilities and expectations, confirmation that the Group structure will continue beyond its inaugural term, and an extension of the standard term of appointment from 24 months to 36 months.

Following adoption of the revised ToR, a public Expression of Interest (EOI) process was conducted over a three-week period. A total of eight applications were received, exceeding the prescribed membership of five outlined in the ToR.

A resolution regarding the appointment of members is now required to enable commencement of the new term and to facilitate ongoing consultation and advisory functions.

REPORT

The Expression of Interest process attracted eight candidates with demonstrated experience across aviation training, aerodrome-related businesses, emergency management, aerodrome safety, and other relevant fields.

Collectively, these applicants bring a diverse range of skills that will enhance the Aerodrome Advisory Group's capacity to provide informed advice to Council and support the strategic intent outlined in the Aerodrome Business Case.

While the adopted Terms of Reference specify a community membership of five, the EOI process resulted in eight high-quality applications.

Appointing all eight would represent a departure from the membership structure endorsed in the ToR. However, officers consider this departure justified, as a broader membership increases the depth and breadth of expertise contributing to the Group's advisory function and supports balanced representation across users, tenants, and industry stakeholders.

Recommended Community and Industry Appointments

The table below outlines the recommended appointments for all non-tenant roles.

Table 1: Community and Industry Applicants

Name	Role	Reason for Recommendation
Anthony Ohlsen	Local resident representative	Only non-aviator in the applicant pool; able to represent broader community interests. Previously served in the role and contributed a pragmatic perspective to aerodrome-related matters.
Melanie Waddell	Flight training provider representative	Only applicant with flight-instructor qualifications; provides expertise relevant to aviation training activity.
Cameron Bird	Emergency Services representative	Only applicant with aerial firefighting experience; strengthens emergency management representation.

Benjamin Morgan	<i>Industry expert advisor</i>	Although not a listed ToR position, his extensive aviation industry experience—including as former CEO of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association of Australia—adds significant strategic insight.
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Recommended Tenant Appointments

Four tenant applications were received, each demonstrating the capacity to contribute meaningfully to the Advisory Group. Officers recommend the appointment of all four applicants.

Table 2: Tenant Applicants

Name	Role	Reason for Recommendation
Ian Carfrae	Tenant	Previously served on the Group; provides continuity and informed user insight.
Rod Brown	Tenant	Previously served on the Group; offers practical understanding of tenant interests.
John Kidon	Tenant	Long-standing Maryborough Aero Club member (since 2009); contributed to the previous Aerodrome Master Plan.
Gregory Thomas Corcoran	Tenant	Current President of the Maryborough Aero Club; brings leadership and operational familiarity.

The Aerodrome Advisory Group operates in an advisory capacity only and does not hold decision-making or operational authority. All operational, maintenance, renewal and development decisions relating to the aerodrome remain the responsibility of Council.

In addition, while the revised Terms of Reference establish a 36-month membership term, Council is currently operating within a constrained financial environment.

At present, funding is available only to deliver the remaining items under the Regional Airports Funding Program Round 4.

Future investment in the aerodrome, including capital upgrades, maintenance programs, and strategic development priorities will be guided by Council's annual budget process, and aligned to the adopted Financial Plan and Asset Plan.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

Councillors approved the Terms of Reference and the commencement of an Expression of Interest process for membership of the Aerodrome Advisory Group at the Council Meeting on 17 December 2025.

Following this endorsement, an Expression of Interest was advertised for a three-week period across social media, the local newspaper and Council's website, inviting interested community members to apply and respond to the required selection questions.

Applicants were contacted by Council officers and advised that their names may be included in this public report.

All applicants confirmed that they were comfortable with their names being disclosed.

FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The establishment of the Aerodrome Advisory Group for a new term will require ongoing Council officer time to coordinate, facilitate, and administer Advisory Group meetings, prepare agendas and minutes, support information requests, and action relevant follow-ups arising from meetings. Council is currently operating within a constrained financial environment.

As part of broader organisational planning work, Council is undertaking a review of all advisory committees, strategies, masterplans, and business cases to ensure they remain achievable and reflect the organisation's current resourcing capacity and financial position.

This review will help prioritise deliverables and ensure that commitments made through adopted documents can realistically be implemented.

At present, funding for aerodrome-related projects is limited to the remaining obligations under the Regional Airports Funding Program Round 4.

Any future investment in aerodrome maintenance, renewal, or development, beyond committed grant-funded works will require consideration through Council's annual budget process, in alignment with the adopted Financial Plan and Asset Plan.

As such, while the Advisory Group will provide valuable advice to Council, the scope and timing of any future projects will be contingent on available funding and prioritisation across Council's broader asset and service portfolio.

RISK MANAGEMENT

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

The Aerodrome Advisory Group brings specialist knowledge that assists Council by providing informed advice on cost-effective approaches, operational efficiencies, and prioritisation of aerodrome-related matters.

This can support reduced reliance on external consultants and help Council consider financially prudent options when assessing the future needs of the aerodrome.

Their advice contributes to Council's ability to make financially sustainable choices in a constrained fiscal environment.

Property and Assets - Failure to maintain, renew and expand our assets in a timely and robust way, that considers service and delivery needs

The aerodrome is a highly specialised asset class requiring technical knowledge not typically held within general local government portfolios.

The Advisory Group's experience assists Council by improving understanding of asset condition, operational risks, and emerging issues. This enables Council to make more informed decisions regarding asset prioritisation, staging, and long-term planning, contributing to more effective risk management across the aerodrome's infrastructure.

Governance - Failure to transparently govern and embrace good governance practices

As part of the Aerodrome Advisory Group's membership, all members including any industry expert advisor may have current or future personal or professional involvement in relation to Maryborough Aerodrome or specialised aviation markets where Council may, from time to time, procure goods or services, including situations involving limited or single-source suppliers.

Any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest will be disclosed as it arises and managed in accordance with Council's governance arrangements.

Where a conflict is identified, the affected member's input will be limited to general, high-level technical advice only.

Consistent with the Terms of Reference, members will not participate in procurement-related discussions. Relevant disclosures and management actions will be noted in meeting records.

This approach allows Council to access specialist industry knowledge while ensuring transparency and maintaining confidence that advisory input does not influence Council procurement decisions.

Legislative compliance - Failure to manage our compliance with relevant legislative requirements.

Aerodromes are governed by strict regulatory requirements.

The Advisory Group's specialist aviation experience assists Council by helping identify potential compliance issues earlier, highlighting operational risks and providing insight into regulatory expectations. This supports Council in proactively planning for compliance and managing aviation-related obligations in a timely and informed manner.

CONCLUSION

This report presents the proposed membership of the 2026–2029 Aerodrome Advisory Group for Council's consideration.

While the endorsed Terms of Reference provide for the appointment of five community members, officers recommend the appointment of all eight applicants received through the Expression of Interest process.

Retaining the industry expert applicant is considered strategically beneficial, as this expertise would strengthen the Group's capacity to provide informed advice on long-term aviation trends, regulatory expectations, and future opportunities for the aerodrome.

Expanding the number of tenant representatives would further broaden operational insight and ensure balanced representation across key aerodrome user groups.

Appointing all eight applicants will enhance the Advisory Group's overall capability and provide Council with access to a broader range of perspectives to inform the ongoing management, planning, and strategic consideration of the aerodrome's future.

Appointment of the Group does not confer operational or decision-making authority, and all future investment or development decisions will continue to be guided by Council's financial capacity, annual budget process, Financial Plan and Asset Plan.

ATTACHMENTS

The attachments have been provided under separate cover as they are confidential as defined under section 3 of the Local Government Act 2020:

- f. personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information***
- k. information prescribed by the regulations to be confidential information for the purposes of this definition***
- l. information that was confidential information for the purposes of section 77 of the Local Government Act 1989***

7.6 D022-23 – 3280 Pyrenees Highway, 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 no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present to Councillors the assessment of Planning Permit Application 022-23 for the use and development of land for a Class B broiler farm accommodating up to 400,000 birds, and a caretaker's house with associated buildings and works at 3280 Pyrenees Highway, Moolort.

Notice of the application was given as the proposal is classified as a Class B broiler farm under the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 (as amended in 2018).

As a result, fifty-six (56) objections and two (2) neutral submissions have been received.

The application has been assessed against all relevant matters that the Responsible Authority must consider under section 60 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

Council previously considered this application at its December 2025 meeting; however, as no motion was moved, the item lapsed.

The report was subsequently considered at the February 2026 Council meeting for determination.

At that meeting, Council did not support a motion to issue a Notice of Decision to Grant the Permit.

As no alternative motion was resolved, Council has not made a statutory decision on the application. The application therefore remains undetermined and is presented to Council for decision.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council, as the Responsible Authority and pursuant to section 61 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, decides to grant a permit subject to conditions and issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit in respect of planning permit application no. 022-23 for the use and development of the land for a Class B broiler farm for up to 400,000 birds and a caretakers house with associated buildings and works at 3280 Pyrenees Highway, Moolort.

The following conditions will apply to this permit:

Amended plans required.

1. Before the development starts, amended plans to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority.
2. When approved, the plans will be endorsed and then form a part of this permit. The plans must be generally in accordance with the submitted plans, but modified to include each of the following:
 - a. Amendments necessary for consistency with the Landscaping Plan endorsed under condition 8.
 - b. A materials schedule that includes suitably muted and non-reflective materials and colour finishes for all buildings (excluding roofs of the broiler sheds) and silos.
 - c. Details of the internal access track including width and construction methods.
 - d. Locations of biosecurity fencing and gates and signs.
 - e. Location and orientation of floodlighting and/or security lighting and lighting baffles.
 - f. Details of the retention dam layout and spillway.

- g. The area(s) set aside for vehicle parking including dimensions of parking spaces.
- h. Design details and cross sections of the storage dam and vegetated swales.
- i. Removal of the dead bird composting pad and location of dead bird freezers.
- j. Application material be consolidated and revised to consistently present the proposed farm class and capacity in bird numbers for the purpose of clarity.
- k. 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.
- l. Show the finished floor level for each shed.
- m. Show dimensions for the energy centre building.
- n. External cladding materials and colour finishes for the caretaker's house.

Layout not altered

- 3. The layout of the site and size of the buildings and works, as shown on the approved endorsed plans must not be altered or modified without the consent in writing of the Responsible Authority.
Any substantive changes, in the opinion of the Responsible Authority, will require a new application and permit.

Compliance with endorsed plans

- 4. The use and development hereby permitted must at all times be carried out in accordance with the documents endorsed under condition 1 to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Broiler farm use must cease.

- 5. If the broiler farm use ceases, the caretaker's house must be demolished or rendered uninhabitable to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority within 3 months of the date the use ceases.
- 6. The use and development must at all times comply with *the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 (as amended 2018)* to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Maximum number of birds

- 7. The total number of birds in the sheds at any time must not exceed 400,000.

Environmental Management Plan

- 8. Before the broiler farm use starts, an amended Environmental Management Plan (EMP) for the operation of the broiler farm must be submitted to and be to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority and Goulburn Murray Water.
When approved by the Responsible Authority and Goulburn Murray Water, the EMP will be endorsed and then form part of this permit. The EMP must be amended to:
 - (a) Deletion of 'Environmental Protection (Vehicle Emission) Regulations 1992' in item 2.3.5 which have been repealed and replacement with relevant current regulations under the *Environment Protection Act 2017* (Vic).
 - (b) In item 4.1, increase the period after which audit documents may be destroyed to ten (10) years.
 - (c) Delete the composting of dead birds on site provided in item 2.9.8 and item 2.9.9 and instead make provision for the freezing of birds and removal from the site to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

- (d) Bird pick-up trucks which are attending the land between 9.00pm and midday must have broadband reverse beepers.
- (e) No deliveries of feed are to occur between midnight and 7.00am, unless a feed delivery is required outside these hours for the welfare of the birds and is delivered at a time to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
- (f) Any faulty fans are to be immediately decommissioned and are to be repaired within three (3) business days (unless otherwise agreed by the Responsible Authority).
- (g) Measures to ensure compliance with the Traffic Management Plan endorsed under condition 46 including information to be provided to drivers to ensure they follow the route required by the Traffic Management Plan.
- (h) Shed clean out must be carried out after 8.00am and before 4.00pm.
- (i) Litter stockpiling or spreading or disposal is not to occur on the land i.e. the whole of 3280 Pyrenees Highway, Moolort.
- (j) Litter, dead birds, compost and other waste from other broiler farms is not to be accepted, disposed of, stockpiled on, or spread on or over the land.

Any revision to the endorsed Environmental Management Plan must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority and Goulburn Murray Water. When approved, such revised Environmental Management Plan will be endorsed and will then form part of this permit.

Landscaping

9. Before any buildings and works start, a Landscape Plan must be submitted to and be to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

The Landscape Plan must be prepared by a person suitably qualified or experienced in landscape design to ensure substantial visual screening to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

When approved by the Responsible Authority, the revised Landscape Plan will be endorsed and then form part of this permit.

The revised landscape plan must be amended to include:

- (a) A reduction in the height of the buffer mounds to no more than one metre.
 - (b) The base of the mounds to be wider to facilitate plant growth.
 - (c) Locally indigenous plant and tree species.
 - (d) Increased buffer widths from 10m up to 40m for sensitive interfaces such as the rail reservation and Bald Hill Road.
 - (e) Landscape screening to the site boundaries and internal access track.
10. Before the use starts the landscaping shown on the approved landscape plan must be carried out and completed to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. Once completed the landscaped areas as shown on the endorsed plan(s) must not be used for any other purpose except with the prior written consent of the Responsible Authority.
11. At all times, the landscaping shown on the approved landscape plan must be maintained (including the replacement of any dead, diseased or damaged plants) to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
12. Before the development starts, a landscape performance bond to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority must be established in accordance with approved measure E4 M1.8 of the Broiler Code.

Land capability

13. Before either use starts an amended Land Capability Assessment generally in accordance with the Land Capability Assessment prepared by Provincial Geotechnical Pty Ltd (v1) and dated 4 April 2024 must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. It must address:

- (a) The broiler farm operation and impact on land capability to ensure the General Environmental Duty provisions (Section 25) of the *Environment Protection Act 2017* can be satisfactorily met.
- (b) Planning Practice Note PPN55: Planning in open drinking water catchments, to ensure the proposed development will not have a detrimental impact on the open water drinking catchment.

The recommendations of the endorsed Land Capability Assessment must be implemented to the satisfaction of the responsibility authority.

Amenity

The amenity of the area must not be detrimentally affected by the use or development through any of the following:

- (a) Transport of materials, goods, or commodities to or from the site.
 - (b) Appearance of any building works or materials. The land shall be kept orderly and tidy to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
 - (c) Emission of noise, artificial light, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, vapour, steam, soot, ash, dust, wastewater, waste products.
 - (d) The presence of vermin.
 - (e) Dust and particulate matter resulting from deliveries and pick-ups at and from the sheds. Each of paragraphs (a) to (e) must be to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
14. All security alarms or similar devices installed on the land must be of a silent type in accordance with any current standard published by Standards Australia International Limited and be connected to a security service to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
15. A biosecurity gate incorporating a truck wheel wash must be installed and used to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
16. Litter trucks entering and leaving the land must be secured and covered to avoid dust emissions to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority and trucks leaving the land must remain secured and covered until entering the land on which the litter is to be delivered or deposited.
17. External lighting must be designed, baffled, and located so as to prevent any adverse effect on adjoining land to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
18. Noise emitted from the premises must not exceed the levels determined in accordance with the EPA Noise Limit and Assessment Protocol (EPA Publication 1826.4) or as amended. If any noise emissions exceed the levels determined in accordance with the EPA Noise Limit and Assessment Protocol, external plant and equipment must be acoustically treated, as necessary, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
19. Before either use starts, a Noise Management Plan prepared by a suitably qualified acoustic consultant must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority.

The use must be carried out at all times in accordance with the approved Noise Management Plan.

20. Management of farm waste must be in accordance with EPA Publication IWRG641 Farm Waste Management June 2009 or as amended.
21. Stormwater contaminated with effluent must not be discharged beyond the boundary of the land.
22. Nuisance dust must not be discharged beyond the boundary of the land.
23. If the Responsible Authority receives a written complaint from a person about the operation of the broiler farm that contains the following details:
 - (a) name of the person.
 - (b) the person's email address or telephone number.
 - (c) where the person was located when the person experienced the broiler farm operation that warranted the complaint.
 - (d) the date and time on which the person experienced the broiler farm operation that resulted in the complaint; and
 - (e) the nature and details of the complaint, including whether there is or has been a failure to comply with a condition of this permit or the Broiler Code, the Responsible Authority must give the broiler farm operator ('operator') a copy of the complaint.

The operator must, without delay, investigate the complaint in accordance with the Environmental Management Plan endorsed under condition 6 and take remedial action as may be required to comply with this permit and/or the Broiler Code. The operator must also give the Responsible Authority a written report on when the complaint was investigated and the results of the investigation.

24. If the Responsible Authority considers that the operator's response to a complaint considered by the grower under condition 22 does not or has not satisfactorily addressed or resolved the complaint, the Responsible Authority may direct the operator to conduct a special audit in accordance with section 8 of the Broiler Code.
25. The broiler farm sheds and all feed stores must be vermin and bird proof to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
26. All external lighting must be baffled to prevent the direct emission of light to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
27. The use of chemicals in association with the use and development of the site must be in accordance with the endorsed EMP to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
28. The permit holder must implement the approved Odour Environmental Risk Assessment (ERA) and maintain compliance with its recommendations.

Wastewater

29. Before construction of the caretaker's house, sheds, amenities building or any other structures starts, an Application for a Permit to Install Onsite Wastewater Management System must be submitted to and approved by Central Goldfields Shire Council.
30. All domestic wastewater from the caretaker's house and amenities building must be treated to a standard of at least 20mg/L BOD and 30mg/L suspended solids using a package treatment plant or equivalent.

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 Guideline for Onsite Wastewater Management.

31. All wastewater from the caretaker's house must be applied to land via pressure-compensating sub-surface irrigation.
32. All wastewater from the amenities buildings must be treated and disposed of using an onsite wastewater management 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 Standards and Permit to Install Onsite Wastewater System conditions issued by the Council Environmental Health Officer.
33. The wastewater management system must be appropriately designed to manage the potential volume of wastewater generated under full occupancy (based on a minimum 4 bedrooms for the caretaker's house and minimum 5 personnel for the amenities building), including an appropriately sized disposal area based on a full water balance specific to the proposal and subject land in accordance with the requirements of the current EPA Guideline for Onsite Wastewater Management.
34. Stormwater must be diverted away from effluent disposal fields to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Monitoring and Reporting

35. Records of bird numbers, litter management and environmental monitoring must be kept and made available to the Responsible Authority upon request.
36. The broiler farm must be audited against the Broiler Code in accordance with the auditing requirements of the Broiler Code and must:
 - (a) Assess compliance with the conditions on the planning permit and related endorsed plans.
 - (b) Review the Environmental Management Plan (EMP) and associated contingency plans, operational and management practices relating to environmental performance and the management of environmental risk (including emergency response), and other measures to prevent or minimise environmental impacts.
 - (c) Evaluate any improvements to the system since the EMP has been in place and confirm that the EMP adequately describes and documents improved management systems.
 - (d) Evaluate the grower's response to any verified complaints.

Infrastructure

37. Before development starts, the following conditions must be undertaken by the permit holder to the requirements and satisfaction of the Responsible Authority (alternative requirements may be approved, in writing, by Council's Infrastructure Department). The engineering plans must be in accordance with the Infrastructure Design Manual and will need to be approved by the Responsible Authority.

They must include:

Road

- (a) An internal road designed to all-weather condition and to withstand anticipated traffic.
- (b) Drainage
 - i. A Stormwater Management Strategy detailing all proposed stormwater quality works within the subject land during construction and operation of the broiler farm development must be submitted to and approved by the

Responsible Authority prior to the commencement of any drainage works on site.

- ii. All stormwater and surface water drainage from the proposed buildings, hard standing areas, driveways, and yards must be designed to be contained within the site and designed for storm water quality and quantity in accordance with the infrastructure design manual and to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
- iii. No effluent or contaminated stormwater may enter the Council drainage system. All stormwater and surface water drainage from the proposed buildings, hard standing areas, driveways, and yards is to be collected and discharged to the proposed retention dam on the development.

(c) LUAA

- iv. Prior to any works on crown land, the Responsible Authority will need to conduct a Land User Activity Agreement assessment. If the outcome of the assessment deems that it is a 'Negotiation Activity,' the applicant/property owner will need to negotiate with DJAARA and will need to pay for all costs associated with it prior to the commencement of works on crown land.

38. All works constructed or carried out must be in accordance with approved plans and completed to a standard satisfactory to the Responsible Authority prior to the commencement of use. The segment of internal road that passes through the crown land road reserve will need to be constructed to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. Once constructed, the applicant/property owner will be responsible for the upkeep of this portion of the road passing through the crown land.

Loading and Unloading

39. At all times, the loading and unloading of vehicles and the delivery of goods to and from the site must always be undertaken entirely within the boundaries of the site and be so conducted as to cause minimum interference with other traffic to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

41. The surface of parking and loading areas and access roads and lanes must be constructed to the 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 and roads to be constructed to ensure all-weather use and access.

Waste Disposal

42. The treatment of waste and litter from the operation of the site is to be undertaken in accordance with the endorsed Environmental Management Plan.

43. No stockpiling of waste or litter is to occur on the site; all waste is to be disposed of off-site to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

44. All waste pick-up vehicles/trucks are to be covered with secure covers, which are used to prevent dust or spillage of waste on departure from the site.

Access

45. All access is to be from Pyrenees Highway.

46. A Traffic Management Plan, prepared by a suitably qualified engineer, must be submitted and endorsed detailing access to and from the broiler farm site. These documents must detail heavy vehicle access (including but not limited to construction vehicles, livestock transport, and litter transport) to and from the broiler farm site. Such access must be

restricted to access directly to and from Pyrenees Highway and then only along pre-approved heavy vehicle routes. This condition does not apply to the delivery of spent litter to land in the locality.

- a. Methods to mitigate the emission of dust particles from trucks such as the covering of loads.
- b. Before any roadworks start, detailed construction plans must be submitted to and an application made to the Central Goldfields Shire Council and Consent for Works permit granted.

Department of Transport and Planning

47. There must only be a single access point from the subject land to the Pyrenees Highway as shown on the plans appended to the application.
48. The proposed farm (Farm 10) must utilise the existing access.
49. No new access will be permitted.

Goulburn Murray Water

50. All construction and ongoing activities must be in accordance with EPA Publication 1834.1 Civil Construction, Building and Demolition Guide (September 2023).
51. 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.
52. 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.
53. The development must be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms, 2009 (including 2018 amendments).
54. The broiler sheds must be located at least 50m from all waterways/drainage lines.
55. 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.
56. Contaminated litter removed from the sheds must be transported off site by an approved contractor to an approved site.
57. 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.
58. No land application of contaminated litter is to occur.
59. 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.

60. 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.
61. All dead birds must be disposed of off-site or managed on-site to the satisfaction of the Environment Protection Authority.
62. Any chemicals stored on-site must be kept in accordance with the EPA Publication 1698 Liquid Storage and Handling Guidelines (June 2018)

VicTrack Land

63. 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.
64. No drainage, effluent, waste, soil, or other materials must enter, be stored or be directed to the railway land.

Interpretation

65. In this permit:
 - a) 'Broiler Code' means the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 (Plus 2018 Amendments).
 - b) 'litter' and 'spent litter' have the same meaning as in the glossary of the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms, 2009 (including 2018 amendments).
 - c) 'composting' or 'compost' has the same meaning as 'composting' in the glossary of the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms, 2009 (including 2018 amendments).
 - d) 'Contaminated litter' means litter contaminated with bird carcasses not managed with the mortality compost pad or with chemicals.
 - e) 'complaint' includes the meaning of 'confirmed complaint' and 'likely complaint' in the glossary of the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms, 2009 (including 2018 amendments).
 - f) 'stockpile' or 'stockpiled' has the same meaning as 'stockpile' in the glossary of the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms, 2009 (including 2018 amendments).
 - g) 'Waterway' has the same meaning as in the glossary of the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms, 2009 (including 2018 amendments).

Expiry

66. This permit will expire if any of the following applies: -
 - a) The use does not start within six (6) years of the date of this permit.
 - b) The development of the first shed does not start within four (4) years of the date of this permit.
 - c) The development of the final shed is not completed within six (6) years of the date of this permit.

In accordance with section 69 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, an application may be submitted to the Responsible Authority for an extension of the periods referred to in this condition.

****** END OF CONDITIONS ******

Permit Notes:

- *Although the LCA has provided that a standard tank and trench system can be used, the LCA also mentions that the second layer of soil starting at approximately 200mm is category 5b and Emerson class rating of this soil layer is 2 (for limiting layer. If the soil when dug represents a poor water retention profile a higher treatment system with sub-surface irrigation is required.*
- *For wastewater management for the amenities building, given potentially low wastewater loading rates, a Standard Tank and Trench System shall be sufficient when constructed as per the recommendations of the LCA (should the applicant choose not to combine the wastewater management from two buildings into a single system.*
- *The Environment Protection Act 2017 imposes duties on individuals and/or businesses undertaking the activity permitted by the permit. If your business engages in activities that may give rise to a risk to human health or the environment for pollution or waste, you must understand those risks and take action to minimise them as far as reasonably practicable.*

LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2025-2029:

The Community's vision:

Sound leadership and financial management

6. Embed good governance in all aspects of the organisation to create the fundamentals of fair, open and equitable decision making.

Initiative:

Provide infrastructure to meet community needs

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).

REPORT

Proposal

The application proposes 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 3280 Pyrenees Highway, Moolort. Refer to Attachment 1: Proposed plans, Revision J.

The applicant is Ian Hurse, and the contact is Michael Vukadinovic of Pavilion Farms. The proposal is also known as Farm 10 and was accompanied by the following documents that formed the basis of the officer's assessment:

- Planning Report dated November 2024.
- Environmental Management Plan dated November 2024.
- Traffic Engineering Report, prepared by Traffix Group, dated June 2024.
- Odour Environmental Risk Assessment, prepared by GHD, dated 4 December 2024.
- Flora & Fauna Assessment, prepared by Mark Trengrove, dated October 2023.
- Land Capability Assessment, prepared by Provincial Geotechnology, dated 4 April 2024.
- Engineering Plans Revision J
- Landscape Plans dated 5 February 2023.
- Mortality Management Requirements prepared by Scolexia (undated or referenced).

Broiler sheds

Primarily, the proposal is for the construction of six broiler sheds that would house a maximum of 400,000 birds.

The sheds are proposed to be 174m long by 25.5m wide with a total area each of 4,437m².

The height of each shed will be 2.7m at the eaves with a maximum height of 4.8m at the ridge line.

Each shed will have a useable floor area of 4,222m².

The total floor area will be 26,622m², with a total useable floor area of 25,332m².

The permitted placement of 400,000 birds' results in a density of 15.8 birds per square metre of floor space.

The floor of each shed will be constructed of 100mm thick reinforced concrete laid on a compacted clay pad of 50m².

The floor level of each building will be constructed above the surrounding ground surface level as shown on the plans provided in Attachment 1.

It is noted that although the shed elevation shows the existing surface, the plan is not dimensioned to show how far above natural ground level the floor shed is.

It is considered this can be dealt with via an amended plan condition, should a permit issue.

The sheds will have a 150mm concrete dwarf wall with an above ground height of 150mm. Building walls above the concrete dwarf walls will be constructed of white 50mm fire retardant XFLAM panel.

The roofs will be clad with zincalume.

There will be exhaust fans on the southern end of the sheds and air inlets on the roof of sheds, but the sheds will be otherwise enclosed.

A ventilation and tunnel cooling system will control ventilation and temperature within the sheds.

The ventilation process uses a bank of extractor fans located at one end of each shed which draw fresh air into the sheds.

The air is drawn through the length of the shed via roof mounted air inlets and expended by the end wall exhaust fans.

The number of fans in operation at any one time depends on the rate of air exchange required for the birds based on their age.

Fresh air can also be drawn in with the 28 adjustable vents located along the roof of each shed in 2 lines, with equal separation between each of the roof inlets.

Heating of the sheds is controlled by hot water heaters maintained by a wood chip boiler, with LPG as a standby.

Ventilation, temperature, and environment control will be automated with the use of a computerised control facility located in control rooms built adjoining each shed.

Water Pipeline

The proposed development requires the extension of a waterline from an existing waterline that currently serves the Pavilion Farms Farm 10 which is located to the south/east.

The waterline extension will comprise a 150mm PVC pipe.

The pipeline will include constructed on Lot 3 TP98420 as well at the subject site at Lot 6 LP98420, with both lots forming part of 3280 Pyrenees Highway.

Associated buildings and works.

Associated buildings and works include:

- Nine (9) feed silos of approximately 9m high and 3.4m in diameter.
 - An amenities building. Dimensions are not shown on the submitted plans, but should a planning permit issued this can form part of an amended plan condition.
 - An energy centre building. Dimensions are not shown on the submitted plans, but should a planning permit issued this can form part of an amended plan condition.
 - Three (3) water storage tanks and a water settling pond.
 - An extension of an existing 150mm PVC water pipeline.
-

- Extension of an all-weather access road from Pyrenees Highway, currently serving Farm 8.
- A 10m landscape buffer to the north, south, east, and west of the buildings and works.
- No native vegetation is proposed to be removed.

Caretakers' houses

Further, it is proposed to a caretaker's house.

This is proposed to house the farm manager and assistant manager, as staff are always required to be available.

The caretaker's house is proposed to be located north/east of the sheds and will comprise four (4) bedrooms, two (2) bathrooms, a study, and the usual living areas.

A merbau deck is also proposed across the meals, kitchen, and study rooms.

It has the appearance of an agricultural shed and is constructed of corrugated colourbond walls and roof and colourbond guttering.

Colours are not provided on the elevations, but this can be suitably addressed with an amended plan condition requiring external cladding of muted tones, should a planning permit be issued.

Operational arrangements

The broiler farm will operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

It is expected that most work and traffic generation will be between 7am and 7pm on weekdays and 7am and 1pm on Saturdays.

Key operational activities of note include:

- Collection of birds for slaughter will generally occur at dark when they are asleep and largely inactive.
- The farm will be operated by 3 FTE staff with a further 2 EFT staff required between batches to clean out manure, wash sheds and prepare bedding and shed equipment for new birds.
- The farm manager is responsible for operations and will be primary contact with regards to management issues of if there are third party complaints.
- The production cycle is a growing period of approximately 7 weeks for each batch of birds.
- A period of approximately 14 days is required between batches to clean, sanitise and prepare the sheds for the next batch.
- There will be approximately 5.7 batches per year.
- Each shed will accommodate up to 66,666 birds.
- Feed for the birds will be kept in silos and delivered to the farm by enclosed delivery trucks. Feed is then distributed to the sheds by an enclosed auger system.
- The occasional spilt feed will be returned to feeding system to avoid access from rodents.
- Rodent control is maintained by the placement of rodent control boxes and baits as outlined in the Environmental Management Plan (EMP).
- Drinking water to the sheds is provided from a dam fed by water from Tullaroop Creek and piped to three (3) storage tanks with a capacity for approximately 1,000,000 litres.
- The above water tanks provide at least seven (7) days backup if there is a failure of water supply from the dam.
- Water is filtered and chlorinated into an automatic drinking system in the sheds, fitted with dripless drinking nipples and cups to provide added protection against moisture affecting the litter. Cut-of devices are provided to the drinking nipples to ensure birds only get one drop of water every time they peck the nipples.

- Meters are used to gauge consumption and will alert farm management if consumption is outside predetermined levels.
- Chemicals comprising detergents and sanitisers will be stored in the generator/storeroom and are not considered hazardous.
- 3phase power will be connected.
- Shed floors are constructed of concrete and before the introduction of a new batch of birds the whole floor area will be covered in a layer of chopped straw.
- At the end of each batch the litter is removed and replaced with a new layer.
- Litter will not be stockpiled on site.
- The current farming operation involves the spreading of broiler manure and other fertilisers on the land, and this will continue.
- Used litter will also be transported to customer sites where the litter is stockpiled and spread to the land as a fertiliser.

Dead Bird Composting

- Dead birds to be removed from the sheds daily in a front-end loader and transferred to a dead bird composting site which the application states will be 100m from the nearest shed.
- The dead bird composting site is on an impermeable clay pad, included within a bund and elevated to prevent extraneous stormwater run-off from entering the compost site.
- Dead bird compost is to be retained on site and spread to the farm once mature. The compost is not proposed to be spread to land subject to flooding, sloping land, rocky or highly erodible land or highly permeable soils.
- The application states there will be no risk of nutrient run-off to waterways, surrounding land, or groundwater.

Access

Access is proposed to be via a 6-metre-wide all-weather access track to be extended from an existing Pavilion Farms Broiler Farm (Farm 8) located at CA 145C, PP3155, 3280 Pyrenees Highway Moolort. The access road would pass on the east side of Farm 8 and head north and then west towards Farm 10.

Farm 8 has an existing approved entrance to the Pyrenees Highway that provides as right turn lane into the property.

The access track will be approximately 1.75km long.

All the land between Farm 8 and 10 is owned by the applicant and comprises the following:

- CA 14A2 PP3155
- CA 14A1 PP3144
- Lot 4 TP98420
- Lot 3 TP98420

Landscaping

A Landscape Plan dated 13 September 2023 submitted with the application shows a landscaped 10m buffer around all sides of the sheds, except where it allows for vehicular access.

The screened area also includes the ancillary structures such as the water tanks, generator room, and energy centre.

The caretaker's house is located outside of this but is provided with a separate landscape screen.

The 16m separation areas between sheds will be grassed and the landscape plan notes this will reduce soil erosion and heat load on the ground.

The landscape buffer is more than 20m from the sheds and the planting density is to be 90 plants per 75 metres.

Elevations produced on the landscape plan do not show the height of the mounds, but they are depicted at above half the height of the sheds, which would be approximately 2.4m, with trees planted on top, exceeding the height of the sheds by several metres.

The landscape plan does not show any landscaping around the property boundary or along the internal accessway.

Flora and Fauna

A Flora and Fauna Assessment prepared by Mark Trengrove Ecological Services and dated October 2023 was submitted with the application and is described later in this report.

The application does not propose to remove any native vegetation.

A field survey was conducted on 20 September 2023; records were taken of all indigenous vascular plant and dominant exotic plant species.

Observations were made of the existing habitat value; a casual survey was undertaken of vertebrate fauna and vegetation was mapped.

Stormwater

The application states that stormwater is prevented from entering the sheds as the finished floor levels will be at least 0.5m above adjacent open earth drains between the sheds.

Further protection is provided with concrete floors and the concrete dwarf walls.

It is not anticipated that stormwater will come into contact with any waste materials.

All surface water flows will be directed via table drains to the proposed dam.

The topography in the immediate vicinity of the proposed sheds is relatively flat, with low risk of soil erosion.

All disturbed areas will be revegetated as soon as practical upon completion.

If a planning permit is to issue it is reasonable to require a Stormwater Management Plan be submitted for Council's approval prior to the commencement of development.

The Broiler Code

Clause 53.09 of the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme applies to Council's consideration of a poultry farm and requires that an application to use or develop land for a broiler farm must comply with the *Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 (plus 2018 amendments)*.

The Broiler Code classifies broiler farms according to different levels of environmental and amenity risk and applies different approval requirements and notification and review rights to planning permit applications.

The classification is dependent on the number of birds kept on the farm, the ability to contain the 'separation distance' within the broiler farm boundary, and the proximity to other existing and proposed broiler farms.

The Broiler Code sets out that the 'separation distance' is the distance from the nearest external edge of the new or existing broiler shed to the nearest external edge of the sensitive use (such as a dwelling) on land beyond the broiler farm property.

It excludes sensitive uses directly associated with the broiler farm operations, such as dwellings on the broiler farm property.

The separation distance is therefore the distance from the new or existing broiler sheds within which no sensitive use is located.

The Broiler Code sets out how the separation distance is calculated, which is essentially a function of the capacity of a broiler farm.

The Broiler Code states that the separation distance is required to minimise the risk of routine and abnormal odour and dust emissions from the broiler sheds adversely impacting on nearby sensitive uses.

The currently proposed broiler farm is classified as a Class B under the Broiler Code. The Class B classification applies to broiler farm where all of the following apply:

- The farm capacity is between 10,000 and 400,000 birds.
- The development can meet the minimum separation distance requirements (as defined by Formula 1), but this distance is not fully contained within the broiler farm boundary.

Both above requirements have been satisfied and the minimum separation distance for a farm with a capacity of 400,000 birds is 686m.

It is noted that the Broiler Code does not require an Odour Environmental Risk Assessment for a Class B Broiler Farm, although one has been provided by the applicant.

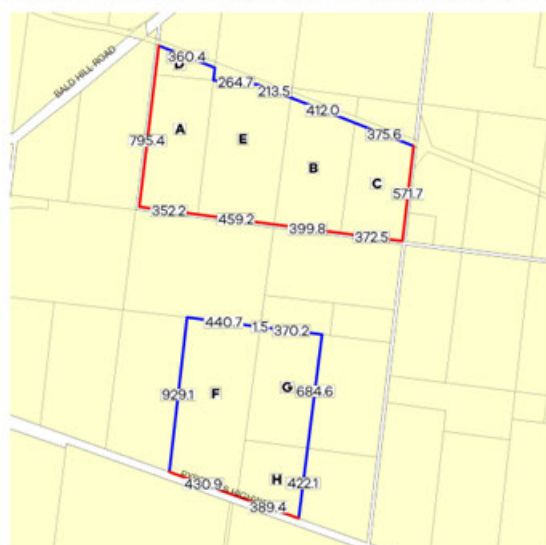
Site and surrounds

The site is located on the north side of the Pyrenees Highway, immediately south of a rail line and comprises eight (8) parcels with the land proposed for the use and development of a broiler farm being Lot 6 TP98420 shown in the extract further below from the Department of Transport Planning (DTP) website as Parcel E. The aerial image below shows the nature of the land use, noting that the land is vacant. All parcels total an area of 202.91ha.



SITE DIMENSIONS

All dimensions and areas are approximate. They may not agree with those shown on a title or plan.



Area: 2029065 sq. m (202.91 ha)

Perimeter: 8494 m

For this property:

— Site boundaries

— Road frontages

Dimensions for individual parcels require a separate search, but dimensions for individual units are generally not available.

2 overlapping dimension labels are not being displayed

Calculating the area from the dimensions shown may give a different value to the area shown above

For more accurate dimensions get copy of plan at

[Title and Property Certificates](#)

PARCEL DETAILS

The letter in the first column identifies the parcel in the diagram above

Lot/Plan or Crown Description	SPI	Lot/Plan or Crown Description	SPI
A Lot 1 TP98420	1\TP98420	PARISH OF MOOLORT	
B Lot 3 TP98420	3\TP98420	F Allot 13C Sec. 4	13C-4\PP3155
C Lot 4 TP98420	4\TP98420	G Allot 14B Sec. 4	14B-4\PP3155
D Lot 5 TP98420	5\TP98420	H Allot 14B1 Sec. 4	14B1-4\PP3155
E Lot 6 TP98420	6\TP98420		

The site is currently used primarily for agricultural purposes for cropping. Under the Planning Scheme, the site is entirely within the Farming Zone (FZ). There are no overlays on the land.

The surrounds

The surrounding area is characterised by agricultural uses, mainly broad acre cropping and grazing, along with scattered dwellings that are mostly associated with farming. The closest township is Carisbrook approximately 5.5km to the southwest and Maryborough is approximately 11km west of the subject site.

A broiler farm (not associated with Pavilion Farms) is located approximately 7km southeast of Farm 8 and a quarry is located approximately 3km to the southwest of Farm 8.

Pavilion Farms also operate or have approved broiler farms at the following sites and shown in the aerial image below:

- Farm 7 at 394 Bald Hill Road Carisbrook (existing)
- Farm 8 at 3280 Pyrenees Highway Moolort (existing)
- Farm 9 at 683 Baringhup Road Carisbrook (existing)
- Farm 11 at 705 Baringhup Road Carisbrook (recently approved)

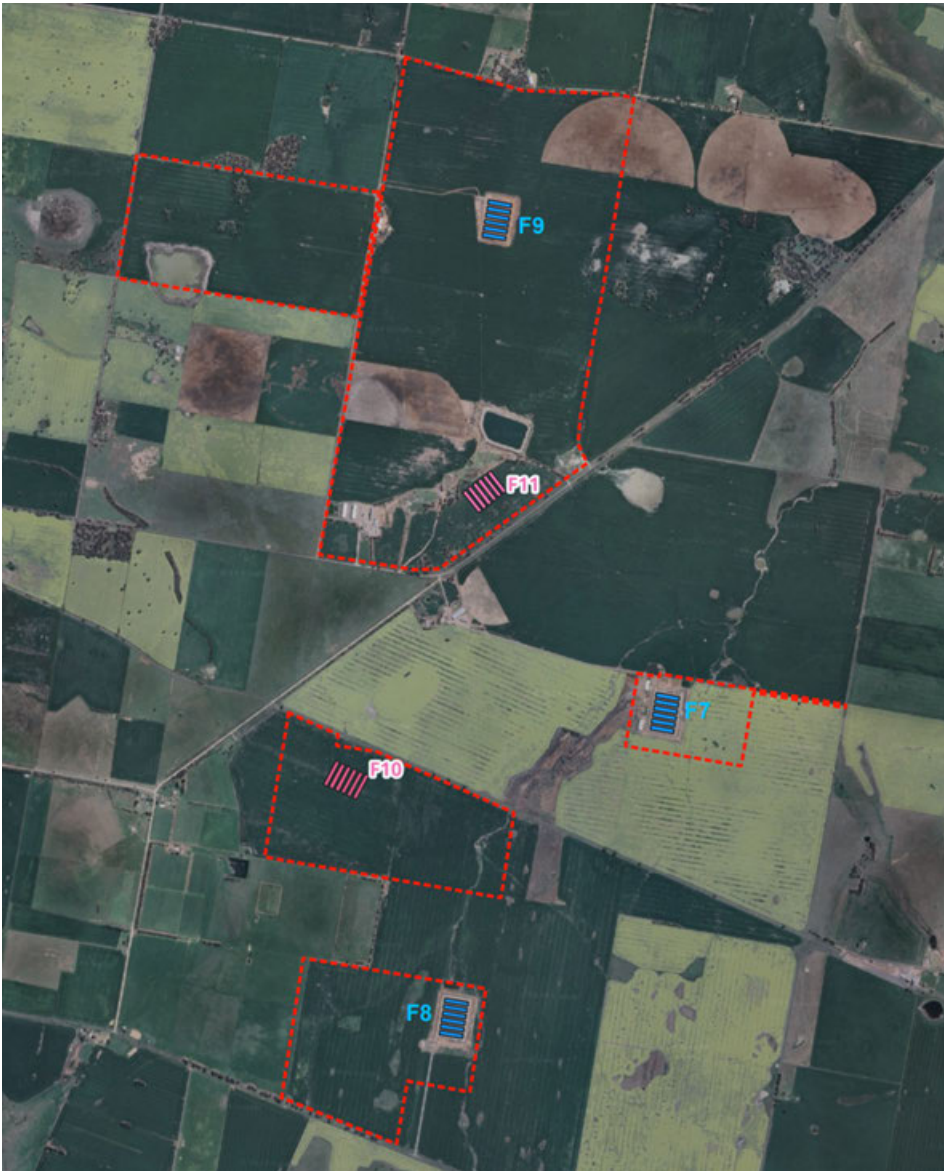


Figure 1 - Location of Pavilion Farms (Source: OERA 4 December 2024)

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

- R1 310 Allans Road Carisbrook
- R2 148 Allans Road Carisbrook
- R3 252 Boundary Road Moolort
- R4 1069 Bald Hill Road Carisbrook
- R5 320 Donovans Road Carisbrook
- R6 128 Bald Hill Road Carisbrook
- R7 160 Bald Hill Road Carisbrook

The sensitive receptors all within 2km of Farm 10 and are identified on the image below. It is evident there are a number of sensitive receptors in close proximity to each other near Mount Moolort (R4, R5, R6 and R7).



Figure 2 - Location of sensitive receptors (Source: OERA 4 December 2024)

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. There are no restrictive covenants on title.

Permit triggers

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

- Clause 35.07-1, 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, a permit is required for the caretakers' 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, a permit is required to construct a building or carry out works associated with a use in Section 2 of Clause 35.07-1.

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 nested within the land use term of 'animal production,' which in turn is nested within the land use term of 'animal husbandry,' which in turn is 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 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 Milkwort, 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.

- o Ensuring land capability supports land use and development, particularly in areas of environmental risk.

02.03-4 Natural resource management

- **Agricultural land**
 - o 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.
 - o 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.
 - o 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.
 - o 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.
 - o 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.
 - o 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**
 - o The Central Goldfields Shire is situated in the Loddon dry land catchment and is part of the wider Avoca Loddon-Campaspe catchment.
 - o 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.
 - o 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.
 - o 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:
 - 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
 - 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
- Active transport is an important transport mode within the towns and as a tourism drawcard, with rail trails an emerging interest.

02.03-9 Infrastructure

- Integrated water management
 - 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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:
 - o Protect the environmental, cultural, landscape values of all waterway systems as significant economic, environmental, and cultural assets.
 - o 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 floodways.
 - 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.
 - Limit development where it cannot be adequately serviced with septic systems without impacting the water catchment and encourage farm consolidation.
 - 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:
 - Ensure agricultural and productive rural land use activities are managed to maintain the long-term sustainable use and management of existing natural resources.
 - Support the development of innovative and sustainable approaches to agricultural and associated rural land use practices.
 - Support adaptation of the agricultural sector to respond to the potential risks arising from climate change.
 - Encourage diversification and value-adding of agriculture through effective agricultural production and processing, rural industry, and farm-related retailing.
 - Assist genuine farming enterprises to embrace opportunities and adjust flexibly to market changes.
 - 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.
 - 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:
 - 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:
 - Ensure the continued availability of clean, high-quality drinking water by protecting water catchments and water supply facilities.
 - Consider the impacts of catchment management on downstream water quality and freshwater, coastal and marine environments.
 - 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 developments

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.

- o The capability of the land to accommodate the proposed use or development, including the disposal of effluent.
- o How the use or development relates to sustainable land management.
- o Whether the site is suitable for the use or development and whether the proposal is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.
- o How the use and development makes use of existing infrastructure and services.
- o Agricultural issues and the impacts from non-agricultural uses
- o Whether the use or development will support and enhance agricultural production.
- o Whether the use or development will adversely affect soil quality or permanently remove land from agricultural production.
- o The potential for the use or development to limit the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.
- o The capacity of the site to sustain the agricultural use.
- o The agricultural qualities of the land, such as soil quality, access to water and access to rural infrastructure.

Accommodation issues

- o Whether the dwelling will result in the loss or fragmentation of productive agricultural land.
- o 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.
- o Whether the dwelling will adversely affect the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.
- o 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

- o The impact of the proposal on the natural physical features and resources of the area, in particular on soil and water quality.
- o The impact of the use or development on the flora and fauna on the site and its surrounds.
- o 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.
- o The location of on-site effluent disposal areas to minimise the impact of nutrient loads on waterways and native vegetation.

Design and siting issues.

- o 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.
- o 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.
- o 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.

- o The location and design of existing and proposed infrastructure including roads, gas, water, drainage, telecommunications, and sewerage facilities.
- o Whether the use and development will require traffic management measures.

50 Particular provisions

52.06 Car parking

Purpose

- o To ensure that car parking is provided in accordance with the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- o 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.
- o To support sustainable transport alternatives to the motor car.
- o To promote the efficient use of car parking spaces through the consolidation of car parking facilities.
- o To ensure that car parking does not adversely affect the amenity of the locality.
- o 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

- o 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

- o 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

- o The purpose of the relevant zone.
- o The design, height, setback, and appearance of the proposed buildings and works.
- o The proposed landscaping.
- o The need to protect amenity of existing uses on adjoining land.
- o 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.
- o The impact of the proposal on any wetlands, waterways, or water bodies.
- o 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.
- o 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.

Referral

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 4)
Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) Section 55 Determining referral authority	Does not object if the permit is subject to specified conditions. (Refer to Attachment 3)

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

Department	Response
Engineering	Recommended conditions
Environmental Health	Recommended conditions

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, fifty-six (56) objections were received alongside neutral submissions from the EPA Victoria (Refer to Attachment 2) and Agriculture Victoria (Refer to Attachment 1).

A summary of the matters raised in the objections are provided immediately below, followed by a summary of the matters raised in the submissions from the EPA Victoria and Agriculture Victoria. The matters raised in both the objections and submissions are addressed in the assessment that follows.

Summary of matters raised in objections.

- Impacts from odour.
- Impacts from noise, including from heavy vehicles.
- Impacts from lighting disturbance.

- General proximity to dwellings including visual amenity impacts.
- Cumulative impacts of several broiler farms in an area.
- Impacts on landscape character.
- Ability of roads to safely and efficiently accommodate increased heavy vehicles.
- Dust impacts from heavy vehicles on unsealed local roads.
- Impacts of heavy vehicles on road condition and cost of road maintenance.
- Impacts on waterways, including flood events.
- Impacts on water quality, including drinking water.
- Impacts on groundwater, including the wider catchment.
- Impacts on wetlands.
- Impacts on flora and fauna / biodiversity.
- Impacts on air quality.
- High quality agricultural land not suitable for broiler farms.
- Location not suitable for industrial scale agriculture.
- The broiler farm will limit the operation of nearby agricultural uses.
- Biosecurity concerns, including from disease and pests.
- Compliance issues with existing broiler farms.
- Concerns with environmental management measures of broiler farms.
- Proposal not in accordance with the Broiler Code.
- Impacts on proposed Castlemaine-Maryborough Rail Trail
- Castlemaine-Maryborough Rail Trail could not occur within buffer zone.
- Loss of economic, social, and environmental benefits of rail trail.
- Concerns about how public notice was given.
- Compliance with existing broiler farms.
- Incompatibility of broiler farms with purpose of the FZ.
- Proposal should be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment.
- Cultural heritage concerns.
- Impacts on property values.
- Inhumane conditions of broiler farms.
- The necessity for two caretakers' houses.

Summary of EPA Victoria submission

In accordance with Section 52 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* notice was given to EPA Victoria. In their response they note they are not a statutory referral authority as the proposal:

- “Does not require an operating licence or development licence or amendment to a licence.

- *Is not proposed to be used for an industry, utility installation or warehouse for a purpose listed in the table to Clause 53.10 shown with a threshold distance not specified or for which the threshold distance cannot be met; and*
- *Is not a proposed extractive industry intended to be used at a later date for a landfill.”*

They did review the Odour Environmental Risk Assessment (Odour ERA) but did not undertake a technical assessment and beyond that they have no further involvement in the assessment of broiler farms as that is the jurisdiction of Agriculture Victoria.

EPA advised the odour assessment is satisfactory for Council to support the application and that Council could use the conclusions as a guide to potential risks.

They recommended a permit note should a planning permit be issued as follows:

- *The Environment Protection Act 2017 imposes duties on individuals and/or businesses undertaking the activity permitted by this permit. If your business engages in activities that may give rise to a risk to human health or the environment from pollution or waste, you must understand those risks and take action to minimise them as far as reasonably practicable.*

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 provided a detailed response of the proposal against the requirements of the Code.

This assessment largely identified that conditions of the Code were met. They did identify some standards and measures that required more detail or a revision and some that had not been addressed.

In the Agriculture Victoria assessment Standards or Approved Measures **not met** include:

Element 1: Location, siting, and size - Standard E1 S4 Biosecurity

AM E1 M4.2 Stockpile greater than 100m from a shed.

The mortality composting appears to be within 100m of sheds.

Element 5: Waste management

Mortality composting detail and design not provided.

Standard E5 S2 Dead birds

AM E5 M2.2

Dead bird bins and collection vehicles to come in close proximity to sheds.

Detail not addressed.

Disposal by composting of farm. Approved measures E5 M1.1 – 1.4 all apply to meet the standard for this system of dead bird management.

Other Standards or Approved Measures **where more detail/revision is required** include:

Element 1: Location, siting, and size.

Resolution of mortalities composting design and construction required.

Standard E1 S5 Future use and development of neighbouring land.

The proposal needs to clarify surrounding land ownership.

Element 2: Farm design, layout, and construction

Standard E2 S5 Stormwater Drainage

Agriculture Victoria advised they were not in a position to judge these criteria.

Element 3: Traffic, site access, on-farm roads, and parking

Standard E3 S1 Site access

Construction of access points and location of access point at least 30m inside the boundary not shown on the plans.

Lighting design spill not provided.

Element 4: Landscaping

Standard E4 S1 Landscaping

Vegetation plantings only shown directly around the works area. No screening is proposed along roads.

No detail of a landscape bond to be provided.

It is considered the above matters can be addressed by permit conditions requiring some additional detail on the plans for endorsement including the landscape plan and amendments to the Environmental Management Plan.

Overall Agriculture Victoria considers that:

- *The Application addresses the requirements of the Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 (plus 2018 amendments), subject to amendments as per the following:*
 - *022-23 Planning Report – Farm 10, November 2024, is amended to remove reference to Greater Geelong Planning Scheme in contents page 2.*
 - *Construction and site plans are amended to include detail and design for dead bird composting and re-use to the satisfaction of Council (noting references to that activity in 022-23 Planning Report – Farm 10, November 2024, and 022-23 Environmental Management Plan (EMP) – Farm 10, November 2024)*
 - *Agriculture Victoria have previously noted the application material provides no detail as to the design and construction of the mortality composting pad or the spreading of compost on the land and this is yet to be addressed.*
 - *Matters raised in Appendix 5: Checklist for planners: Compliance with Code elements as per previous pages.*
- *The proposed shed location would appear to meet the minimum separation distance requirement of 686m for a Class B broiler farm with 400,000 birds to neighbouring sensitive uses (dwellings).*
- *The Environment Protection Authority Victoria will be able to provide comment on the suitability of the Odour Environmental Risk Assessment (OERA) and comments that: sensitive receptors were identified within 2 km of radius from the site as this is generally considered the distance at which sensitive receptors are likely to experience odour nuisance from an odour source. A total of seven receptors have been identified within 2 km of the site boundary to be included in this assessment. (3.3 Sensitive receptors)*

Agriculture Victoria made the following recommendations:

Agriculture Victoria conditionally supports the application 022-23 on LOT 6 TP98420, 3280 Pyrenees Highway, Carisbrook for the use and development of the land for class B broiler farm with a maximum farm capacity of 400,000 birds and recommends that if a permit is granted that:

- *The permit 022-23 for LOT 6 TP98420, 3280 Pyrenees Highway, Carisbrook allows: The use and development of the land for class B broiler farm with a maximum farm capacity of 400,000 birds.*
- *The Odour ERA, Environmental Management Plan and Site Plans are endorsed and form part of any permit issued to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.*

Vic Track Submission

VicTrack leases the adjoining rail serve to V/Line. They were made aware of the application by a member of the public but had no objection and recommended that should a permit be issued the following conditions be included in a planning permit.

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

Assessment

Farming zone

As previously discussed in this report both the broiler farm and caretakers house require a planning permit for use under Section 2 of the land use provisions in the FZ. Clause 35.07-4 of the FZ requires a planning permit for the associated buildings and works.

Decision guideline	Response
General issues	
The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.	<p>Neither the MPS nor PPF discourage use of the subject site for a broiler farm.</p> <p>The strategic framework requires regard to environmental and landscape values, protection of agricultural land, promoting economic development, land use compatibility, sustainable agricultural uses, water quality and built form design in rural areas.</p> <p>Many of the objections are directed towards these strategic objectives.</p> <p>The sheds, whilst large, are low profile and views to the sheds can be ameliorated with appropriate screening. Lighting can also be baffled and directed to minimise light glare. Large sheds are not unexpected in a rural landscape, and these are setback 688m from the nearest road.</p> <p>As discussed elsewhere in this report the broiler farm is a legitimate agricultural land use and has the potential to increase agricultural</p>

	<p>productivity from the site. The balance can still be used for cropping.</p> <p>The broiler farm also creates both direct and indirect jobs to support and enhance the local and wider economy.</p> <p>Land use compatibility is a legitimate concern and robust planning permit conditions will be required to minimise any detriment to adjoining or nearby agricultural properties.</p> <p>Neither a stormwater management plan nor hydrology report were submitted with the application, although the application did outline how surface water would be dealt with. This can be further enhanced with the requirement for a stormwater management plan as a condition of planning permit.</p>
The capability of the land to accommodate the proposed use or development, including the disposal of effluent.	A Land Capability Assessment was provided for the caretakers' house based upon a four (4) bedroom dwelling. A disposal area of 150m ² is required and can readily be provided.
How the use or development relates to sustainable land management.	The Environmental Management Plan submitted with the application can be further strengthened to ensure the proposed use results in 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.	<p>Clause 71.02-3 of the planning scheme requires integrated decision making. Sometimes conflicting objectives need to be balanced to achieve a net community benefit and sustainable development.</p> <p>On balance the concerns raised by objectors can be addressed by appropriate conditions of a planning permit to protect their concerns, whilst allowing a legitimate agricultural use in the Farming Zone.</p>
How the use and development makes use of existing infrastructure and services.	The broiler farm will need to make use of existing approved heavy vehicle routes. A Traffic Management Plan can require these to be identified and the TMP can become an approved document under a planning permit.
Agricultural issues and the impacts from non-agricultural uses	The proposed use is a legitimate agricultural use and is nested under the definition of 'agriculture' in the planning scheme.
Whether the use or development will support and enhance agricultural production.	As above and it will improve agricultural production from the subject site by increasing the number of birds.

Whether the use or development will adversely affect soil quality or permanently remove land from agricultural production.	<p>The concrete pad for the sheds and dwarf walls will protect soil quality and the proposed use is considered an agricultural use so is not removing land from agricultural production.</p> <p>The dam will also require a clay lining to protect soil quality and groundwater.</p>
The potential for the use or development to limit the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.	<p>Adjoining and nearby uses are generally dryland cropping and grazing.</p> <p>Some of the objectors are nearby farmers and are concerned with biosecurity risks and an increase in weed management as a result of truck movements. Concerns with avian flu have also been raised by objectors.</p> <p>Ways of dealing with some of these concerns are via an Environmental Management Plan and Traffic Management Plan which can form part of a planning approval.</p> <p>Matters such as avian flu are not a consideration for the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i>.</p>
The capacity of the site to sustain the agricultural use.	Compliance with the Broiler Code and an Environmental Management Plan will help ensure the capacity of the site to sustain the use of the site for a broiler farm.
The agricultural qualities of the land, such as soil quality, access to water and access to rural infrastructure.	<p>A private water pipeline fed from Tullaroop Creek is being extended from Farm 8 to Farm 10. It is then piped to three (3) storage tanks to provide at least seven (7) days backup with a storage of 1,000,000 litres.</p> <p>Ensuring the use of roads approved for heavy vehicles can be addressed in a Traffic Management Plan approved under a planning permit.</p>
Accommodation issues	
Whether the dwelling will result in the loss or fragmentation of productive agricultural land.	The caretakers house will reduce the area of productive agricultural land; however, it is supporting an agricultural use that is increasing agricultural production.
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 caretakers' house is likely to be more affected by emissions on the subject site, rather than agricultural activities on adjoining or nearby land.

Whether the dwelling will adversely affect the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.	The caretakers' house is not considered likely to 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.	The caretakers' house is the only dwelling proposed and will result in a concentration or proliferation of dwellings in the area.
Environmental issues	
The impact of the proposal on the natural physical features and resources of the area, in particular on soil and water quality.	<p>The application states that stormwater is prevented from entering the sheds as the finished floor levels will be at least 0.5m above adjacent open earth drains between the sheds. Further protection is provided with concrete floors and the concrete dwarf walls. It is not anticipated that stormwater will come into contact with any waste materials.</p> <p>All surface water flows will be directed via table drains to the proposed dam. The topography in the immediate vicinity of the proposed sheds is relatively flat, with low risk of soil erosion. All disturbed areas will be revegetated as soon as practical upon completion.</p> <p>If a planning permit is to issue it is reasonable to require a Stormwater Management Plan be submitted for Council's approval prior to the commencement of development.</p>
The impact of the use or development on the flora and fauna on the site and its surrounds.	The site is devoid of native vegetation and only one native bird species was identified as a result of the survey that formed the basis of the Flora and Fauna Assessment prepared by Mark Trengrove.
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.	Refer above.
The location of on-site effluent disposal areas to minimise the impact of nutrient loads on waterways and native vegetation.	There are no nearby water and no native vegetation on site that could be impacted by on-site effluent disposal.
Design and siting issues	
The need to locate buildings in one area to avoid any adverse impacts on surrounding	The buildings are co-located with the sheds and caretakers house, and the balance of the

<p>agricultural uses and to minimise the loss of productive agricultural land.</p>	<p>land will continue to be used for cropping purposes.</p> <p>Furthermore, under the planning scheme a 'broiler farm' is ultimately nested in the definition of 'agriculture,' so the broiler farm arguably does not remove land for agriculture.</p> <p>The caretaker's house does but only takes up a small area and is required to support the broiler farm use of the land.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>The sheds are located 688m from the nearest road (Bald Hill Road), although only located 129m from the railway reserve. The caretaker's house is located approximately midway between the sheds and railway reserve. The mortality composting pad is also located approximately midway between the sheds and the railway reserve.</p> <p>It is reasonable to request external materials and colours to be of muted tones. It is noted the applicant prefers the roof to be zincalume to reflect heat for the bird's welfare. This approach has been accepted in the VCAT decision relating to 705 Baringhup Road.</p> <p>Although the EPA and Agriculture Victoria will accept dead bird composting, Agriculture Victoria required more information and details to ensure the Broiler Code is being met.</p> <p>Alternatively, it is considered more appropriate to use dead bird freezing and removal of dead birds from the site.</p> <p>The setback of the mortality composting pad presents an unacceptable risk to the future use of the railway reserve as a rail trail.</p> <p>The mortality composting pad is not screened from the railway reserve and future users could be subject to odour and witnessing any disposal of the dead birds.</p> <p>It is noted that the VCAT decision for 705 Baringhup Road did not consider this a relevant consideration as users would be going by for only a short period of time and any impact from odour would likely be short lived.</p> <p>In this case though we are considering a mortality pad in very close proximity to the railway reserve. For that reason, it is considered appropriate to require its deletion and an alternative method of dead bird</p>

	disposal such as freezing birds and removing them from site.
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.	<p>The landscape response is considered inadequate and as discussed elsewhere in this report a revised landscape plan should be required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the height of the mound and widen the base to assist plant growth. • Widen the landscape buffers. • Choose locally indigenous plant species.
The location and design of existing and proposed infrastructure including roads, gas, water, drainage, telecommunications, and sewerage facilities.	<p>The Castlemaine Maryborough Rail Trail has been supported via various funding sources including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community (\$20,000) • CGSC (\$6,000) • MACS (\$6,000) • State Gov't (\$120,000)
Whether the use and development will require traffic management measures.	<p>A Traffic Impact Assessment Report prepared by Traffix Group accompanied the application material. It noted that the existing ingress and egress to/from the Pyrenees Highway is satisfactory.</p> <p>DTP provided no objection subject to specific planning permit conditions.</p> <p>A Traffic Management Plan should also be a condition of permit, and this should clearly identify haulage routes for all heavy vehicles visiting the site.</p> <p>Council's engineer did not object subject to conditions being placed on a permit relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal road design and construction. • Drainage • Land User Activity Agreement over Crown Land • Loading and Unloading • Waste disposal • Access to be from Pyrenees Highway.
The need to locate and design buildings used for accommodation to avoid or reduce noise and shadow flicker impacts from the operation of a wind energy facility if it is located within	Not applicable

<p>one kilometre from the nearest title boundary of land subject to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A permit for a wind energy facility; or – An application for a permit for a wind energy facility; or – An incorporated document approving a wind energy facility; or – A proposed wind energy facility for which an action has been taken under section 8(1), 8(2), 8(3) or 8(4) of the Environment Effects Act 1978. 	
<p>The need to locate and design buildings used for accommodation to avoid or reduce the impact from vehicular traffic, noise, blasting, dust and vibration from an existing or proposed extractive industry operation if it is located within 500 metres from the nearest title boundary of land on which a work authority has been applied for or granted under the Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990 .</p>	<p>Not applicable as the nearest quarry is approximately 2.8km to the south/west</p>

Overlays

There are no planning overlays applicable to the subject site.

Particular Provisions

Clause 53.09 applies to poultry farms and seeks 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.

Clause 53.09-3 requires a broiler farm to comply with the *Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 (plus 2018 amendments)*.

The Department of Agriculture is responsible for the Broiler Code and in their response provided conditional approval and recommendations for some additional details to be provided particularly relating to landscape and the mortality composting pad.

To address both comments from the Department of Agriculture and objections it is considered appropriate to require the removal of the mortality composting pad and to require a more robust landscape outcome.

The relevance of previous VCAT decisions

Planning permit 061-23/VCAT reference no. P270/2025

- A recent VCAT Order dated 16 October 2025 set aside Council's decision to refuse to grant a planning permit and directed that a planning permit be issued for use of the land for a broiler farm, caretakers house, associated buildings and works and to remove, destroy or lop vegetation.
- This was for the Pavilion Farms Farm 11 at 705 Baringhup Road Carisbrook.
- This decision is considered particularly relevant as it was also for a Class B Broiler Farm and has the same operational procedures as proposed for Farm 10.

Key reasons behind the VCAT decision included:

- The farm is classified as a Class B Broiler Farm, not a Cluster Broiler Farm, as the setbacks required under the Broiler Code of Practice are met.
- The relevant considerations are those of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, not other State provisions such as the Environment Protection Act 2017.
- No part of the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) or Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) of the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme discourages additional broiler farms in the area surrounding Farm 11.
- The broiler farm is an agricultural use that is appropriate in a Farming Zone.
- The settlement plan in the MPS confirms the subject land and its surrounds as a farming area but not as 'high quality cropping land,' which applies to land in the Moolort Plans further to the south/east.
- An Odour Environmental Risk Assessment (OERA) is not required by the Broiler Code of Practice for a Class B Broiler Farm, so the Tribunal gave little weight to the OERA.
- Shortfalls in the application such as an inadequate landscape response could be dealt with via planning permit conditions.
- The Tribunal had little to no regard to the cumulative impact of an additional broiler farm as it was a Class B farm and not a Cluster farm.
- Viewlines into the site from the top of Mt Moolort which rises 100m above ground were not considered relevant as these were wholly from privately owned land.
- Compliance issues with other sites are not a relevant consideration.

In this decision the Tribunal also made reference to Farm 10 and gave clear direction that if Council is required to make a decision about Farm 10, that the VCAT decision for Farm 11 is a relevant consideration.

Odour impacts

An Odour ERA was prepared by GHD, dated 4 December 2024. This report address both 3280 Pyrenees Highway Moolort (Farm 10) and the recently approved Farm 11 at 705 Baringhup Road Carisbrook. It took into consideration the impact of existing and proposed farms including:

Farm 7	Existing	394 Bald Hill Road Carisbrook
Farm 8	Existing	3280 Pyrenees Highway Carisbrook
Farm 9	Existing	683 Baringhup Road Carisbrook
Farm 10	Proposed	3280 Pyrenees Highway Carisbrook
Farm 11	Approved	705 Baringhup Road Carisbrook

The Odour ERA was undertaken in accordance with the requirements of EPA *Publication 1883 – Guidance for assessing odour and Agrifutures – Planning and environment guideline for establishing meat chicken farms: Guide 1 – Assessment Guide*.

- The EPA publication 1883 provides three levels of assessment including:
- Level 1 – Gateway assessment of emissions duration, wind direction, and cumulative odour sources.
- Level 2 – Source-Pathway-Receptor assessment.
- Level 3 – Detailed risk assessment that could include:
 - Comparisons with similar operations or case studies.

- o Risk assessment using field odour surveillance data.
- o Complaint assessment.
- o Community odour surveys/questionnaires and odour diaries.
- o The use of dispersion modelling.

The GHD report adopted a Level 3 assessment and included:

- Complaint assessment.
- Odour surveys.
- Odour dispersion modelling.

The GHD report identified sensitive receptors, all dwellings, within a 2km radius of the site. The dispersion modelling was based on the five-odour unit (OU) 99.9th percentile 3-minute average of odour modelling.

As stated in the GHD report this *“is generally used to assess the predicted downwind odour concentrations during short time worst-case, poor dispersive meteorological conditions.*

This 99.9th percentile is generally taken as the level that if the odour is obvious and has an offensive character, it may lead to nuisance and resultant complaint”.

Of the identified seven (7) sensitive receptors, all were identified as being subject to 99.9th percentile offsite concentrations predicted at above the 5 OU from the current farms and this increased as a result of the proposed farms (Farms 10 and 11).

Table 12 in the GHD report identifies the overall risk of odour impacts from current farms and Table 13 identifies the overall risk of odour impacts from current and proposed farms.

Table 12 identifies that R1 is at risk of moderate offensive odour and Table 13 identifies that R1, R5, R6 and R7 are each at risk of moderate offensive odour.

R1 experiences the greatest risk of offensive odour at 24.9 odour units from existing farms and 32.5 odour units from existing and proposed farms.

R5 and R7 experience the greatest increase going from 7.8 odour units to 19.8 odour units and 8.8 odour units to 24.9 odour units, respectively.

Moderate risk means a receptor is likely to experience offensive (obvious) odour. Although there may be some residual risk, the GHD report states it is possible it can be practically and effectively managed.

The GHD report goes on to state that odour level needs to almost treble before an increase in perceived intensity is registered.

GHD also recalibrated the dispersion model and compared the modelled results with odour survey observations.

They identified the likely modelled odour concentrations that could describe the ‘obvious’ odour experienced by surveyors to be 10 OU.

The ‘obvious’ odour was used as the level which may lead to nuisance and complaint. The updated risk assessment indicated that the risk of offensive odour is low at all identified sensitive receptors.

The complaint analysis was based on complaints received at Central Goldfields Shire Council and EPA from 2018 – 2024.

The GHD analysis states that during that time Council received 92 complaints in 2019.

Of these thirty-two (32) related to other farms and sixty (60) did not specifically allege a source.

One (1) complaint in 2020 related to Rodborough Road and two (2) complaints in 2022 related to Baringhup Road Carisbrook.

It was made clear in the recent VCAT decision relating to 705 Baringhup Road that non-compliance or operational issues with other broiler farms was not a relevant consideration. EPA Victoria were satisfied with the way the GHD report was conducted and its outcomes.

It is considered appropriate to endorse the GHD report under a planning permit so the recommendations can be implemented.

Visual/landscape impacts and landscaping

The proposed 10m landscape buffer around the sheds is considered inadequate. In coming to this conclusion regard was had to the VCAT decision for 705 Baringhup Road Carisbrook (VCAT Ref: P270/2025).

Farm 10 is sited 688m from Bald Hill Road to the west and 129m from the rail reserve to the rear. It is noted that the recently approved Farm 11 at 705 Baringhup Road is setback 176m from Baringhup Road.

The Tribunal recognised that Farm 11 is located within the Moolort Plains which is a relatively flat setting, with large rural landholdings used for grazing or cropping on sites that have been largely cleared for that purpose.

The Moolort Plains are identified in the PPF and MPS, however they are not included in a Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO) in the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme.

Mount Moolort is a significant topographical feature rising 100m above ground and although it was likely that Farm 11 could be seen from there, the Tribunal was of the view this was not a relevant consideration as this is wholly privately owned land.

The Tribunal felt the impact of Farm 11 on the landscape was acceptable.

The applicant did provide expert landscape evidence from Mr John Patrick. Mr Patrick provided some key advice considered relevant to Farm 10:

- Trees identified on the landscape plan submitted with the application were largely non-indigenous.
- Locally indigenous species are preferred and Mr Patrick identified mainly Buloke, with secondary plantings of Yellow Gum, Yellow Box and Grey Box. The screen could also be thickened with shrub planting of wattle varieties.
- Due to compaction and profile, the 3m high bund leads to slow tree growth, tree instability, and water shedding.
- Mr Patrick recommended a lower bund of no more than 1m with a broader base to limit water shedding and provide a 'gentle modification' to the Moolort Plains context.
- Buffer widths should vary depending upon the priority. In the instance of Farm 10 the priority interfaces are the rail reserve and Bald Hill Road, so these could be much wider.
- For Baringhup Road Mr Patrick had buffer widths varying between 10m and 40m.

The Tribunal accepted Mr Patrick's evidence and stated that unless the landscape plan was improved, from that submitted with the permit application, they would not be prepared to grant a planning permit.

Noise and other amenity impacts

An Acoustic report has not been submitted with the application; however, the Environmental Management Plan submitted with the application and dated November 2024 does address noise at Section 2.5. This includes measures such as:

- Repair of equipment failures resulting in increased off-site noise within one week.
- Drivers to minimise vehicle reversing.
- Use of low noise alarms, house alarms, and paging systems.
- Operational measures such as instructing bird pick drives and crews to conduct their business as quietly as possible.
- Compliance with relevant legislation such as the national Environmental management System for the Meat Chicken Industry – Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation Publication No. 03/038.

Should a planning permit be issued conditions can be included relating to:

- Amenity
- Compliance with EPA Regulations
- Submission of an Acoustic Assessment and inclusion of any recommendations in a Noise Management Plan.

The management of runoff and stormwater

A hydrological report was not submitted with the application but if a planning permit is to issue this should be required as a condition of planning permit and should address Planning Practice Note PPN 55: Planning in open drinking water catchments to ensure the proposed development will not have a detrimental impact on the open drinking water catchment

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.

The Impact report identified Baringhup Road and Pyrenees Highway as pre-approved for haulage and typically a permit is not required to use these roads. Moolort-Baringhup Road is not a pre-approved haulage route, and approval is required for haulage access of 26m B-doubles were to utilise this route for delivery.

The haulage route to the subject site was identified as Bendigo-Maldon Road, Allans Road, Lowther Street, Bridgwater-Maldon Road, Baringhup Road, Moolort Road, Moolort-Baringhup Road.

The peak cumulative traffic volumes were estimated to be 842 movements per batch, assuming a 7-week growing cycle and 2 weeks for preparation for the next batch. This was further broken down to be 20 vehicle movements per day.

Sight distances were assessed at various intersections with Baringhup Road and Bald Hill Road intersection having inadequate sight distances i.e. less than 300m in both directions.

The Impact report recommended reducing speeds on the northeast bound approach from 100km/hr to 90 km/hr and for the westbound approach to 70 km/hr.

Additionally installing warning signs such as 'trucks entering, along with rumble strips or solid centrelines near the intersection is recommended to enhance driver awareness and safety.

The applicant also prepared their own Traffic Management Plan and following a request for further information from the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP), they had a Traffic Engineering Assessment prepared by Traffix Group, dated June 2024. The Traffix Group report has been used for the purpose of this report to Council.

The Traffix Group report recognised that the subject site also caters for an existing broiler farm, Farm 8, also operated by Pavilion Farms. Farm 8 also provides six (6) sheds for 400,000 birds. Vehicle access to Farm 8 and for the proposed Farm 10 is via a single connection with Pyrenees Highway which provides a basic left turn (BAL) treatment and basic right turn (BAR) treatment as shown in the Figure below.

These access treatments were required by the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) for the previous Farm 8 proposal.



Figure 3 - Aerial photograph of existing access (Source: Traffic Engineering Assessment, Traffix Group, June 2024)

Based on existing and proposed traffic movements the anticipated daily traffic movements are shown in the table below, with the Traffix Group report stating that these figures are conservative.

Week	Total Daily Vehicle Movements	Entry Movements	Exit Movements
1	22	11	11
2	18	9	9
3	18	9	9
4	30	15	15
5	30	15	15
6	30	15	15
7	30	15	15
8	18	9	9
9	30	15	15

The Traffix Group report concludes that the existing basic left turn treatment (BAL) and basic right turn treatment (BAR) are adequate when taking into consideration the additional traffic movements of the proposed Farm 10.

To address objector concerns about heavy vehicles and the impact on roads and the amenity of residents it is reasonable that if a planning permit is to issue to require a Traffic Management Plan that addresses matters such as:

- Haulage routes to and from the broiler farm utilising pre-approved heavy vehicle routes.
- Securing of litter loads to prevent dust and particle emissions.

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 application plans do not show the provision of carparking. Considering the proposed number of staff, the nature of the operations, and the proximity of the caretakers' house that provides further car parking, it is considered that this can adequately be addressed by a condition of permit requiring six (6) car parking spaces.

Further, there are areas around the site that may provide informal car parking opportunities, if required, and ample space for trucks to park for deliveries/collections.

Car parking should be constructed to the satisfaction of Council with compacted crushed road and drained.

Land Capability Assessment

A Land Capability Assessment prepared by Provincial Geotechnical P/L and dated 15 January 2024 was submitted with the application to address the needs of the proposed caretaker's house. This report refers to the subject site as 290 Bald Hill Road Carisbrook, although it does refer to Farm 10. If a planning permit is issued an amended plan condition should require the report to be amended to include the correct address.

It is noted that attachments to the report including the property report and aerial image refer to the correct property.

The LCA is based upon a four (4) bedroom dwelling however has no regard to the operation of the broiler farm.

The General Environmental Duty, Section 25, of the Environment Protection Act 2017 applies to households and businesses and any person doing any activity that creates a risk to human health and the environment from waste or pollution.

If a planning permit is to issue the LCA should be updated to address the broiler farm operation and impact on land capability and to ensure that the General Environmental Duty provisions (Section 25) of the *Environment Protection Act 2017* can be satisfactorily met

It should also address Planning Practice Note PPN55: Planning in open drinking water catchments to ensure the proposed development will not have a detrimental impact on the open drinking water catchment

Biodiversity impacts

A Flora and Fauna Assessment prepared by Mark Trengrove Ecological Services and dated October 2023 was submitted with the application.

A field survey was conducted on 20 September 2023; records were taken of all indigenous vascular plant and dominant exotic plant species.

Observations were made of the existing habitat value; a casual survey was undertaken of vertebrate fauna and vegetation was mapped.

The site was assessed on the same day to determine the value of the site for terrestrial vertebrate fauna.

Pre 1750 EVC mapping of the study area undertaken by DEECA indicates that the study area comprised of EVC 803 Plains Woodland, however the current study records no native vegetation that accords with EVC 803 Plains Woodland.

No native vascular plant species were recorded in the study area.

The whole site consists of relatively consistent cropping paddocks, sown to wheat that carry no native vegetation.

Only one vertebrate faunal species was sighted, and this was the locally significant Australian Raven.

The Flora and Fauna assessment concluded that no native vegetation was recorded for the study area, only one locally significant bird species, Australian Raven, was sighted and there are no implications under the Commonwealth EPCB Act, Clause 52.17 of the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme or the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act.

The Broiler Code

The Department of Agriculture have provided their consent and provided a detailed assessment of the proposal against the Broiler Code.

There are some deficiencies in the proposal, however nothing that could not be addressed by providing further details.

A review of the Department of Agriculture response is provided earlier in this report, and their response is attached to this report.

Environmental Management Plan

Element 6 (E6): Farm operation and management of the Broiler Code require an Environmental Management Plan (EMP).

It is to include strategies and measures to avoid or minimise environmental risks and contingency actions to manage environmental problems that may arise.

An EMP was submitted with the application material and subsequently provided to Agriculture Victoria for their review.

Agriculture Victoria were satisfied with the submitted EMP and recommended the Odour ERA, EMP and plans form part of any permit to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Other matters raised in objections and submissions.

Some of the issues raised by objectors such as decreasing property values, compliance with other planning permits and the cumulative impact of broiler farms are not considered a relevant planning consideration.

Decreasing property values has long been held by VCAT not to be a relevant planning consideration.

We can only consider the application before Council and any compliance issues with other planning permits is a potential separate enforcement action for Council to consider.

Cumulative impacts cannot be considered as the proposed broiler farm is classified as a Class B Farm, not a Cluster Farm.

This has been confirmed by both the EPA and Department of Agriculture in their respective responses.

Conclusion

Overall and on balance, the proposal is assessed as being an orderly planning outcome that represents net community benefit and sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations.

It is appropriate to ensure planning permit conditions adequately deal with operational requirements to ensure the above is achieved.

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, fifty-six (56) objections were received alongside two (2) neutral submissions from the EPA Victoria and Agriculture Victoria.

The matters raised in both the objections and submissions have been addressed in the preceding assessment.

Council's decision 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 and setting out their appeal (or review) rights to VCAT under the Act.

FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The assessment of planning permit applications is within the normal operational budget of Council. To assist in the assessment and consideration of both the subject planning permit application and two other applications for proposed broiler farms in the municipality, Council's Planning department commissioned a Traffic and Transport Assessment by Impact Traffic Engineering Pty Ltd. This was prepared and provided for a total cost of \$9,460.00 incl. GST.

Should any party appeal Council's decision to VCAT and a review process occurs, additional costs will be incurred. These situations may arise if:

- Pursuant to section 77 of the Act, the permit applicant applies to VCAT for review of Council's decision to refuse to grant the permit.
- Pursuant to section 79 of the Act, the permit applicant applies to VCAT for review of Council's failure to grant the permit within the prescribed time.
- Pursuant to section 80 of the Act, the permit applicant applies to VCAT for review of any condition in a permit which Council has issued or decided to grant.
- Pursuant to section 82 of the Act, an objector applies to VCAT for review of Council's decision to grant a permit.

RISK MANAGEMENT

This report responds to Council's strategic risks:

Community Well-being - Failure to recognise and manage the impact of changing social and economic conditions on the community by assessing the application under section 60 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 including giving consideration to amenity impacts, environmental sustainability, and compatibility with surrounding land uses.

Governance - Failure to transparently govern and embrace good governance practices by providing a clear, transparent assessment based on statutory requirements and community input. The report outlines the application details, relevant planning controls, and the rationale for the recommendation, ensuring accountability and informed decision-making.

Legislative compliance - Failure to manage our compliance with relevant legislative requirements by outlining in the report the statutory assessment process, including consideration of all matters required under section 60 of the Act, and documenting public notice and submissions in accordance with legislative requirements.

CONCLUSION

Planning permit application 022-23 seeks approval 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 3280 Pyrenees Highway Moolort.

A Council resolution/determination is sought on the application as fifty-six (56) objections and two (2) neutral submissions have been received.

The recommendation of this report is that Council, as the Responsible Authority and pursuant to section 61 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, decides to grant a permit subject to conditions and issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit in respect of planning permit application no. 022-23 for the use and development of the land for a Class B broiler farm for up to

400,000 birds and a caretakers house with associated buildings and works at 3280 Pyrenees Highway, Moolort.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 20241220 022-23 Ag Vic submission [7.6.1]
2. 20240509 022-23 EPA submission [7.6.2]
3. 20240701 022-23 DTP referral response conditional consent - 3280 Pyrenees Highway Carisbrook [7.6.3]
4. 20240516 022-23 GMW referral response conditional consent [7.6.4]
5. 20240621 022-23 Plans [7.6.5]



Agriculture Victoria

20 December 2024

██████████
██
Central Goldfields Shire Council
22 Nolan Street,
MARYBOROUGH, VIC, 3465

Email: mail@cgoldshire.vic.gov.au

Dear █████,

**RE: Planning Permit Application 022-23 Use and development of the land for
a class B broiler farm and caretakers house with associated buildings and
works and alteration of access to a Transport Zone 2.**

**Land at: 3280 Pyrenees Highway CARISBROOK 3464
LOT 6 TP98420**

Reference: 022-23

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

This advice must be read in conjunction with the Agriculture Victoria initial referral response dated 12 November 2024

The advice provided in this letter relates to:

1. Review of updated documents

1. Review of updated documents

OFFICIAL

Agriculture Victoria has reviewed the following provided supporting documentation:

- 022-23 Planning Report – Farm 10, November 2024
- 022-23 Planning Report (markup) – Farm 10, November 2024
- 022-23 Broiler Farm Proposal Summary
- 022-23 Environmental Management Plan (EMP) – Farm 10, November 2024
- Odour Environmental Risk Assessment – 4 December 2024,
- GHD022-23 Land Capability Assessment

Agriculture Victoria has based our assessment on the requirements of the [Victorian Code For Broiler Farms 2009 Plus 2018 Amendments](#) (Broiler Code) with some reference to the following additional sources:

- [Planning and environment guideline for establishing meat chicken farms, Guide 1 Assessment guide, November 2021](#)
- [National Farm Biosecurity Manual poultry production](#)

Agriculture Victoria provides the following summary based on the Broiler Code Appendix 5: Proposal Summary and Application Checklist

Colour key	
Condition/requirement met, adequate detail provided	
More detail/revision required	
Not addressed	
Condition/requirement not met	

Appendix 5: Checklist for planners: Compliance with Code elements

	Yes / No	Comment	
Element 1: Location, siting and size Through the provision of appropriate setback and separation distances, do the location and size of the broiler farm and the siting of the broiler sheds, temporary litter stockpiles, compost piles and litter spreading areas: • minimise the risk of adverse amenity impacts on nearby existing, planned and potential future sensitive uses as a result of odour, dust and noise?	Gaps	Resolution of mortalities composting design and construction required.	

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• not adversely affect the use and development of nearby land? • avoid pollution of ground and surface waters? • avoid adverse impacts on the visual quality of the landscape? • minimise biosecurity risks?			
Standard E1 S1 Amenity protection	Yes		
AM E1 M1.1 Residential Zone >1000m	Yes		
AM E1 M1.2 RLZ >750 m	Yes		
AM E1 M1.3 Meteorological conditions considered	Yes		
AM E1 M1.4 Farm Boundary >100m	Yes		
AM E1 M1.5 Litter stockpile >300m sensitive use	N/A	No litter stockpile proposed	
AM E1 M1.6 litter spreading >20m farm boundary	N/A	Litter to be removed from site	
AM E1 M1.7 litter spreading >100m sensitive use	N/A	Litter to be removed from site	
Standard E1 S2 Waterway protection			
AM E1 M2.1 Vegetative buffer 30m along waterway	N/A	No Waterway identified	
AM E1 M2.2 20m buffer from shed to vegetative buffer	N/A		
AM E1 M2.3 litter stockpile/spreading distance to waterways	N/A	No stockpile or litter spreading proposed	
Standard E1 S3 Protecting the visual quality of the landscape	Yes		
AM E1 M3.1 B&W not on steep slopes	Yes	Site is not steep	
AM E1 M3.2 B&W orientated to follow contours	Yes	Limited site contours	
AM E1 M3.3 existing ridgeline vegetation maintained	Yes	No vegetation removal proposed	
Standard E1 S4 Biosecurity	Yes		
AM E1 M4.1 Separation from other poultry farms	Yes	686m buffer maintained	
AM E1 M4.2 Stockpile >100m from shed	No	Mortalities composting appears to be within 100m of sheds	
AM E1 M4.3 Litter spreading >20 m from shed	N/A	No litter spreading proposed	
Standard E1 S5 Future use and development of neighbouring land			
AM E1 M5.1 Class B separation <50% of neighbouring property	No	Proposal needs to clarify surrounding land ownership	
AM E1 M5.2 Class B neighbouring property retains building parcel	No	Proposal needs to clarify surrounding land ownership	
Element 2: Farm design, layout and construction Is the broiler farm development designed and constructed to minimise the risk of adverse off-site impacts and support the cost-effective operational efficiency of the farm?			
Standard E2 S1 Protecting the visual quality of the landscape	Yes		
AM E2 M1.1 Buildings are constructed in response to the topography of the land	Yes	Screening proposed	
AM E2 M1.2 Sheds clad in non-reflective and natural-coloured materials	Yes		
Standard E2 S2 Efficient farm operation			

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AM E2 M2.1 Shed orientation and tunnel fan location	Yes		
AM E2 M2.2 Site designed for efficient operation	Yes		
AM E2 M2.3 Site designed to prevent access by wild bird and vermin	Yes		
AM E2 M2.4 Water availability	Yes		
AM E2 M2.5 Water supply backup	Yes		
AM E2 M2.6 Detail of water treatment system	Yes		
AM E2 M2.7 Feed and water system adjusted as birds grow	Yes	The modern systems proposed have this functionality	
AM E2 M2.8 Nipple drinkers used	Yes		
AM E2 M2.9 Systems designed to minimise feed spills	Yes		
Standard E2 S3 Avoiding environmental impacts from broiler sheds	Yes		
AM E2 M3.1 Concrete hard stand at entrance to sheds	Yes		
AM E2 M3.2 Low permeability shed base	Yes		
AM E2 M3.3 Floor level above natural surface level	Yes		
Standard E2 S4 Noise management			
AM E2 M4.1 design and siting to minimise noise	Yes		
Standard E2 S5 Stormwater drainage			
AM E2 M5.1 Clean stormwater areas separated from areas that broiler farm waste may affect	Yes		
AM E2 M5.2 Stormwater from sheds and hard standing apron areas is collected and managed on site in a dam(s) or tanks within the broiler farm boundary	Yes		
AM E2 M5.3 Stormwater table drains with an appropriate gradient are established	Yes		
AM E2 M5.4 Soil erosion mitigation	N/A	Flat site limits erosion potential	
AM E2 M5.5 Stormwater management consistent with stormwater management plan of the responsible authority	UK	Unknown. Agriculture Victoria is not in the best position to judge this criteria	
AM E2 M5.6 Retaining dams are constructed with the capacity to retain run-off from a one-in-ten-year storm.	Yes		
Element 3: Traffic, site access, on-farm roads and parking Do the location, design and construction of farm access points, internal roads and parking areas support the safe and efficient entry and exit to the site, movement of vehicles and operation of the farm? Do the location, design and construction of farm access points, internal roads and parking areas minimise noise and lighting impacts?	Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access point at least 30m inside farm boundary not addressed in materials 	
Standard E3 S1 Site access (Standard 1)	No		
AM E3 M1.1 Access points constructed to appropriate standard	No	Not shown on plans	
AM E3 M1.2 Access point at least 30 metres inside boundary	No	Not shown on plans	

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Standard E3 S2 Site access (Standard 2)	Yes		
AM E3 M2.1 Vehicle access points are located away from sensitive use	Yes		
AM E3 M2.2 Lighting designed to limit spill	No	No detail provided	
Standard E3 S3 Internal roads and car parking (Standard 1)			
AM E3 M3.1 Internal roads appropriately constructed	Yes	Subject to Council conditions	
AM E3 M3.2 Appropriate parking provided	Yes	Subject to Council conditions	
Standard E3 S4 Internal roads and car parking (Standard 2)			
AM E3 M4.1 Internal roads and parking areas are designed to ensure efficient traffic flow and to reduce the need for vehicles to reverse.	Yes		
AM E3 M4.2 Internal roads and parking areas located away from sensitive use	Yes		
AM E3 M4.3 Lighting baffled	Yes		
Element 4: Landscaping Is landscaping used to minimise the visual impact of broiler sheds and litter storage areas, reduce the risk of light and dust impacts on nearby sensitive uses, and protect, manage and enhance on-farm native vegetation and biodiversity?			
Standard E4 S1 Landscaping			
AM E4 M1.1 Dense vegetation and planting along frontages to public roads and other highly exposed site boundaries to provide screening	No	Vegetation plantings only proposed directly around works area. No screening proposed along roads	
AM E4 M1.2 The landscape plan incorporates a mix of trees and large shrubs	Yes		
AM E4 M1.3 Retains existing trees and native vegetation	Yes	None on the development site	
AM E4 M1.4 Mounds of approximately 2 m high are used if the natural topography and tree planting cannot effectively screen a broiler farm	Yes	Not required in the flat landscape	
AM E4 M1.5 Plantings and vegetation are located no closer than 20 m from the perimeter of the broiler sheds	Yes		
AM E4 M1.6 Unpaved areas around sheds are grassed to prevent soil erosion and minimise the heat load	Yes		
AM E4 M1.7 Ground surfaces that are exposed to erosion are stabilised with ground cover planting	Yes		
AM E4 M1.8 The permit approval requires the establishment of a landscape performance bond, to ensure effective implementation of a landscape plan approved by the responsible authority.	No	No detail provided	
Element 5: Waste management Are measures in place to manage spent litter from the farm operations to minimise odour and dust generation, prevent the pollution of surface water, groundwater and land, and minimise biosecurity risks?	Gaps	• Mortality composting detail and design not provided	

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Are measures in place to manage the disposal of dead birds from the farm operations to minimise odour and dust generation, prevent pollution of surface water, groundwater and land, and minimise biosecurity risks? Are measures in place to manage chemical waste from the farm operations to prevent the pollution of surface water, groundwater and land?			
Standard E5 S1 Spent litter	N/A	None proposed	
AM E5 M1.1 Temporary litter stockpiles/compost piles are not visible/screened	No	No detail provided	
AM E5 M1.2 Stockpiles are located to prevent run-off into sensitive areas	No	None proposed	
AM E5 M1.3 Nutrient-rich run-off stockpiles is collected in a sump or dam	No	None proposed	
AM E5 M1.4 Stockpiles are on an impermeable base	No	None proposed	
AM E5 M1.5 Litter application is not on land subject to conditions where there is any risk of nutrient run-off to waterways, surrounding land or groundwater.	N/A	None proposed	
Standard E5 S2 Dead birds			
AM E5 M2.1 Adequate freezers and space for the freezers are provided	N/A		
AM E5 M2.2 Dead bird bins are not left in public view, and the collection vehicle does not come in close proximity to the broiler sheds	No	Not addressed	
AM E5 M2.3 The collection point so the bins are protected from extreme weather conditions; and the site can be easily cleaned in the event of a spill	N/A		
AM E5 M2.4 Dead bird collection vehicles and all containment systems are leak proof and vermin proof	N/A		
Disposal by composting of farm – Approved measures E5 M1.1-1.4 all apply to meet the standard for this system of dead bird management			
AM E5 M2.5 Incineration of dead birds is only in incinerators built for purpose.	N/A	Not proposed	
AM E5 M2.6 On-site burial of dead birds is undertaken only in an emergency situation and with the approval of the relevant authorities	N/A	EMP proposes on-site and off-site removal from site rather than on-site burial	
Standard E5 S3 Chemical waste			
AM E5 M3.1 Secure sheds, with an impermeable concrete base and appropriate bunding	Yes		
Element 6: Farm operation and management (environmental management plan (EMP)) Are measures in place to ensure best practice management of the farm to avoid or minimise the risk of adverse impacts on the surrounding environment and neighbouring sensitive uses? Does the EMP adequately describe the day-to-day operation and management of the farm, including contingency plans? Does the EMP adequately describe the routine auditing program proposed for the farm?	Yes		

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Standard E6 S1			
AM E6 M1.1 An environmental management plan (EMP) is developed that is site specific and based on the approved generic EMP	Yes		
AM E6 M1.2 The farm grower / operator maintains and updates (as required) a manual containing the EMP		Not able to be assessed at application stage. A matter for continuing compliance with the Broiler code when farm operational	

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Conclusion

The Central Goldfields Shire Council as the responsible authority will have to make a determination as to whether the application for the proposal meets the strategic objectives of the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme.

Agriculture Victoria considers that:

- The Application addresses the requirements of the *Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 (plus 2018 amendments)*, subject to amendments as per the following:
 - 022-23 Planning Report – Farm 10, November 2024, is amended to remove reference to Greater Geelong Planning Scheme in contents page 2
 - Construction and site plans are amended to include detail and design for dead bird composting and re-use to the satisfaction of Council (noting references to that activity in 022-23 Planning Report – Farm 10, November 2024, and 022-23 Environmental Management Plan (EMP) – Farm 10, November 2024)
 - Agriculture Victoria have previously noted the application material provides no detail as to the design and construction of the mortality composting pad or the spreading of compost on the land and this is yet to be addressed.
 - Matters raised in Appendix 5: Checklist for planners: Compliance with Code elements as per previous pages.
- The proposed shed location would appear to meet the minimum separation distance requirement of 686m for a Class B broiler farm with 400,000 birds to neighbouring sensitive uses (dwellings).
- The Environment Protection Authority Victoria will be able to provide comment on the suitability of the Odour Environmental Risk Assessment (OERA) and comments that: *sensitive receptors were identified within 2 km of radius from the site as this is generally considered the distance at which sensitive receptors are likely to experience odour nuisance from an odour source. A total of seven receptors have been identified within 2 km of the site boundary to be included in this assessment.* (3.3 Sensitive receptors)

Recommendations

Agriculture Victoria conditionally supports the application 022-23 on LOT 6 TP98420, 3280 Pyrenees Highway, Carisbrook for the use and development of the land for class B broiler farm with a maximum farm capacity of 400,000 birds and recommends that if a permit is granted that:

- The permit 022-23 for LOT 6 TP98420, 3280 Pyrenees Highway, Carisbrook allows: The use and development of the land for class B broiler farm with a maximum farm capacity of 400,000 birds.
- The Odour ERA, Environmental Management Plan and Site Plans are endorsed and form part of any permit issued to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

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.

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

Please contact me if you require any further clarification.

Regards



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Agriculture Victoria Planning and Advisory Service
Agriculture Victoria | Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
255 Ferguson Road, Tatura, Victoria 3616
M: 0436 934 574 | E: agvic.planning@agriculture.vic.gov.au

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From: Development Advisory <development.advisory@epa.vic.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 9 May 2024 2:59 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: EPA Response: planning permit application - 022-23 - 3280 Pyrenees Highway, Carisbrook

[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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Dear [REDACTED]

RE: Planning permit application: 022-23

Proposal: Use and development of the land for a class B broiler farm and caretakers house with associated buildings and works and alteration of access to a Transport Zone 2

Address: 3280 Pyrenees Highway, Carisbrook

Thank you for your correspondence in relation to the above planning permit application, received by Environment Protection Authority (EPA) on 29 April 2024.

EPA is not a statutory referral Authority under Section 55 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, since this proposal:

- a) does not require a licence or works approval or amendment to a licence or works approval;
- b) is not proposed to be used for an industry or warehouse for a purpose listed in the table to Clause 53.10 shown with a threshold distance not specified or for which the threshold distance cannot be met; and
- c) is not a proposed extractive industry intended to be used at a later date for landfill.

The Proposal

EPA understands this permit application is for the use and development of a broiler farm and associated caretaker's residences in a Farming Zone, on Lot 6, TP98420 at 3280 Pyrenees Highway, Carisbrook.

The proposal seeks to use the land for a Class B Broiler farm and associated caretakers residence. The farm will have a maximum capacity of 400,000 birds. Proposed development includes:

- Six (6) broiler sheds.
- A caretakers house.
- 9 feed siloes of approximately 9m in height and 3.4m in diameter.
- An amenities building.
- An energy centre building.
- 3 water storage tanks and a water settling pond.
- An extension of a 150mm PVC water line to the farm from an existing waterline.
- An all weather access road from Pyrenees Highway.

The farm will operate 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year for the primary purpose of growing broilers for chicken meat. The application states that majority of the work and traffic generation will occur between the hours of 7am and 7pm on weekdays, and 7am and 1pm on Saturdays. No information has been provided regarding operations on a Sunday. Bird collection for slaughter will occur during the night, when the birds are asleep and/or largely inactive. Five (5) full time employees will be required to operate the farm.

Based on the information provided, EPA does not object to the proposal. However, Class B broiler farms may pose risks in terms of odour, noise, and dust production. As such, EPA provides the following advice intended to assist Council as the responsible

authority, as well as the proponent, in ensuring the development does not cause harm to the environment, amenity or human health.

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.

Council Meeting Agenda - Wednesday 22 April 2026

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

Should a permit be issued, EPA recommends the inclusion of the following permit note to ensure that these new duties under the *Environment Protection Act 2017* are understood.

- A. The *Environment Protection Act 2017* came into effect on 1 July 2021 and imposes new duties on individuals and/ or businesses undertaking the activity permitted by this permit. If your business engages in activities that may give rise to a risk to human health or the environment from pollution or waste, you must understand those risks and take action to minimise them as far as reasonably practicable.

For further information on what the laws mean for Victorian businesses go to: <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/for-business/new-laws-and-your-business>

For further information on what the new laws will mean for individuals and the community go to: <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/about-epa/laws/new-laws/the-new-act-for-the-community>

General comments & further guidance

EPA is working with industry and the community to help them understand how to fulfil their obligations under the *Environment Protection Act 2017* and the GED, by providing guidance, advice, and other support.

The following guidance material will assist with the application of the environment protection framework:

- EPA Publication 1961: Guideline For Assessing and Minimising Air Pollution <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/about-epa/publications/1961>
- EPA Publication 1695.1: Assessing and controlling risk: A guide for business provides businesses with a risk management framework that can be applied to help prevent harm to human health and the environment. <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/about-epa/publications/1695-1>
- Civil construction, building and demolition guide, EPA Publication 1834 <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/about-epa/publications/1834>
- Guidance of assessing odour, EPA Publication 1883, <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/about-epa/publications/1883>
- Reasonably practicable, EPA Publication 1856, <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/about-epa/publications/1856>
- Industry guidance: supporting you to comply with the general environmental duty, EPA Publication 1741.1, <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/about-epa/publications/1741-1>
- Guide to the Environment Reference Standard, EPA Publication 1992, <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/about-epa/publications/1992>
- Victorian Code for Broiler Farms 2009 (Plus 2018 amendments), published by the Department of Primary Industries and dated September 2009 <https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/farm-management/planning-and-farm-development/information-for-applicants/broiler-farms>
- General Environment Duty, EPA website, <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/for-business/new-laws-and-your-business/general-environmental-duty>
- Understanding your environmental obligations, EPA website, <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/for-business/new-laws-and-your%20business/understanding-your-environmental-obligations>

If you require additional information or would like to discuss this matter, please contact me on 1300 EPA VIC (1300 372 842).

Kind regards,


Planning Advisor
Development Advisory



E 

P 1300 372 842
A 200 Victoria St, Carlton

epa.vic.gov.au



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 29, 2024 2:23 PM
To: Development Advisory <development.advisory@epa.vic.gov.au>
Subject: Non-statutory provision of planning permit application - 022-23 - 3280 Pyrenees Highway, Carisbrook

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear EPA,

We are writing to you regarding a recent planning permit application (ref. 022-23) at 3280 Pyrenees Highway, Carisbrook. The proposal is for a 'Class B' Broiler Farm with related development and up to 400,000 birds at any one time.

As a Class B Broiler Farm, the application is not subject to a strict notice requirement to the EPA under the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme, which would apply if the proposal were a Special Class Broiler Farm or Farm Cluster. Nonetheless, we are providing the application documentation to you and inviting your comment in a 'non-statutory' sense. If there are any assessment comments you are willing to offer or permit conditions that you suggest are warranted, we would welcome them.

APPLICATION No.	022-23
ADDRESS	3280 Pyrenees Highway, Carisbrook
PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION	Use and development of the land for a class B broiler farm and caretakers house with associated buildings and works and alteration of access to a Transport Zone 2

Should you wish to discuss the matter, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

www.centralgoldfields.vic.gov.au



Philip Adams,
To the Pyrenees,
2024, oil and
acrylic on canvas,
92 x 122cm.

*Experience the creativity
of Central Victoria*

**Philip Adams, Craig Barrett
and Jackie Gorrington**

18 APRIL TO 14 JULY 2024

CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS ART GALLERY



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Department of Transport
and Planning

GPO Box 2392
Melbourne, VIC 3001 Australia
www.transport.vic.gov.au

Ref: PPR 45956/24

██████████
Central Goldfields Shire Council
22 Nolan Street
Maryborough VIC 3465

Dear ██████████

PLANNING APPLICATION No.: 022-23
DEPARTMENT REFERENCE NO: PPR 45956/24
PROPERTY ADDRESS: 3280 PYRENEES HIGHWAY, CARISBROOK VIC 3464

Section 55 – No objection subject to conditions

Thank you for your referral dated 30/4/2024 of the above application to the Head, Transport for Victoria under Section 55 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

The Head, Transport for Victoria has considered this application and does not object if the permit is subject to the following conditions:

1. There must only be a single access point from the subject land to the Pyrenees Highway as shown on the plans appended to the application.
2. The proposed farm (Farm 10) must utilise the existing access.
3. No new access will be permitted.

Please forward a copy of any decision to this office as required under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Should you have any enquiries regarding this matter, please contact ██████████ ██████████
statutory.planning@roads.vic.gov.au

Yours sincerely

██

██████████
A/ Team Leader – Statutory Planning
Under delegation from the Head, Transport for Victoria
1/7/2024



Cc: Permit applicant



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GMW Ref: PP-24-00464
Doc ID: A4935626

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 Dwelling & Associated Buildings & Access

Application No. 022-23
Applicant: Pavilion Farms [REDACTED]
Location: 3280 Pyrenees Highway CARISBROOK
V 11812 F 000 Lot 1 Plan 098420
V 11812 F 000 Lot 3 Plan 098420
V 11812 F 000 Lot 5 Plan 098420
V 11812 F 000 Lot 6 Plan 098420
V 11812 F 000 Lot 4 Plan 98420N

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, hot water heating facility room and extension of an existing water pipeline. The property is zoned FZ 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).

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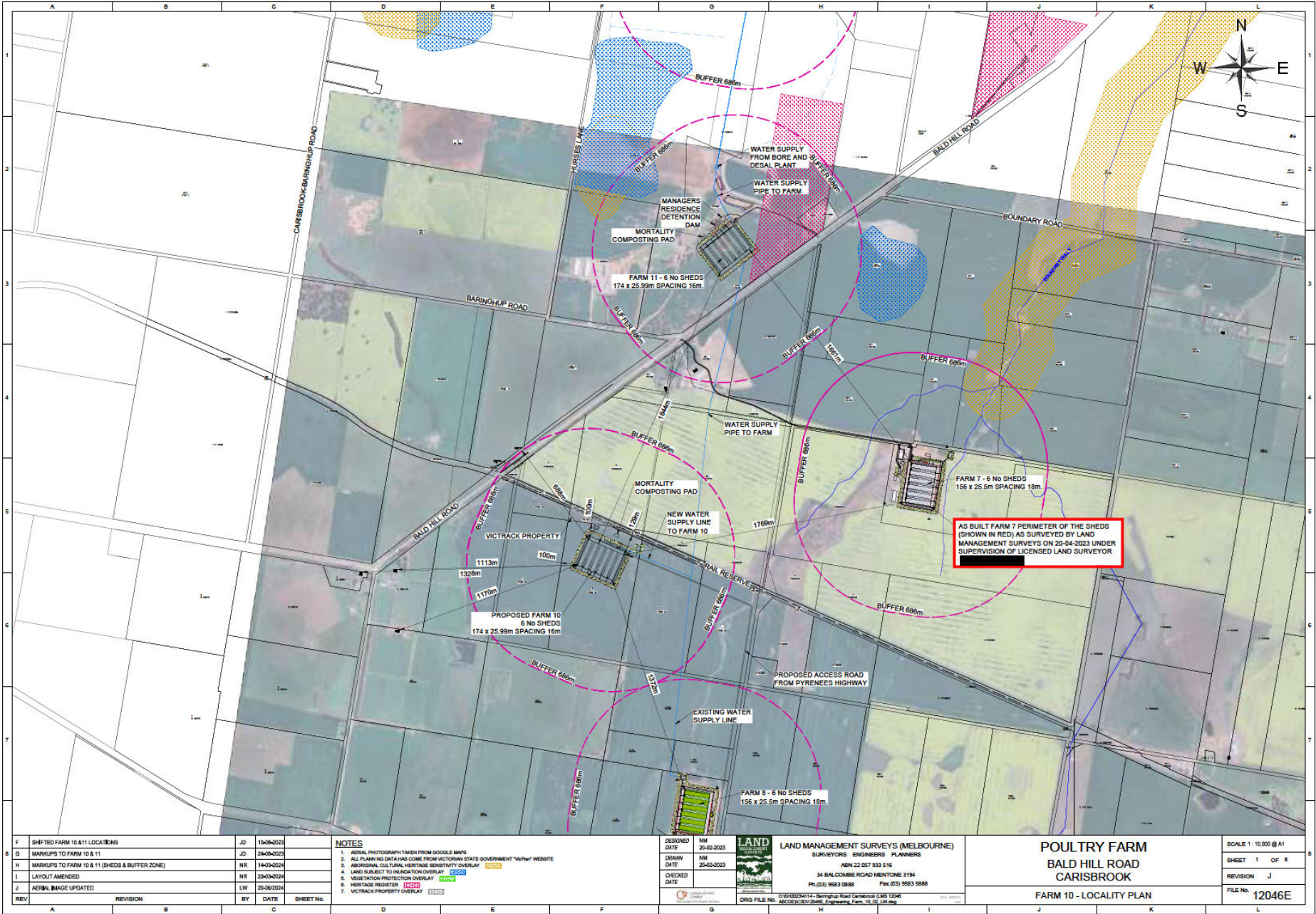
2. All domestic wastewater from the dwelling and amenities buildings must be treated and disposed of using an approved system. The system must have a certificate of conformity issued by the Conformity Assessment Body (or equivalent approval) and be installed, operated and maintained in accordance with the relevant Australian Standard and EPA Code of Practice.
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).

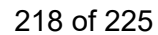
If you require further information please e-mail propertyservices@gmwater.com.au or contact 1800 013 357.

Yours sincerely

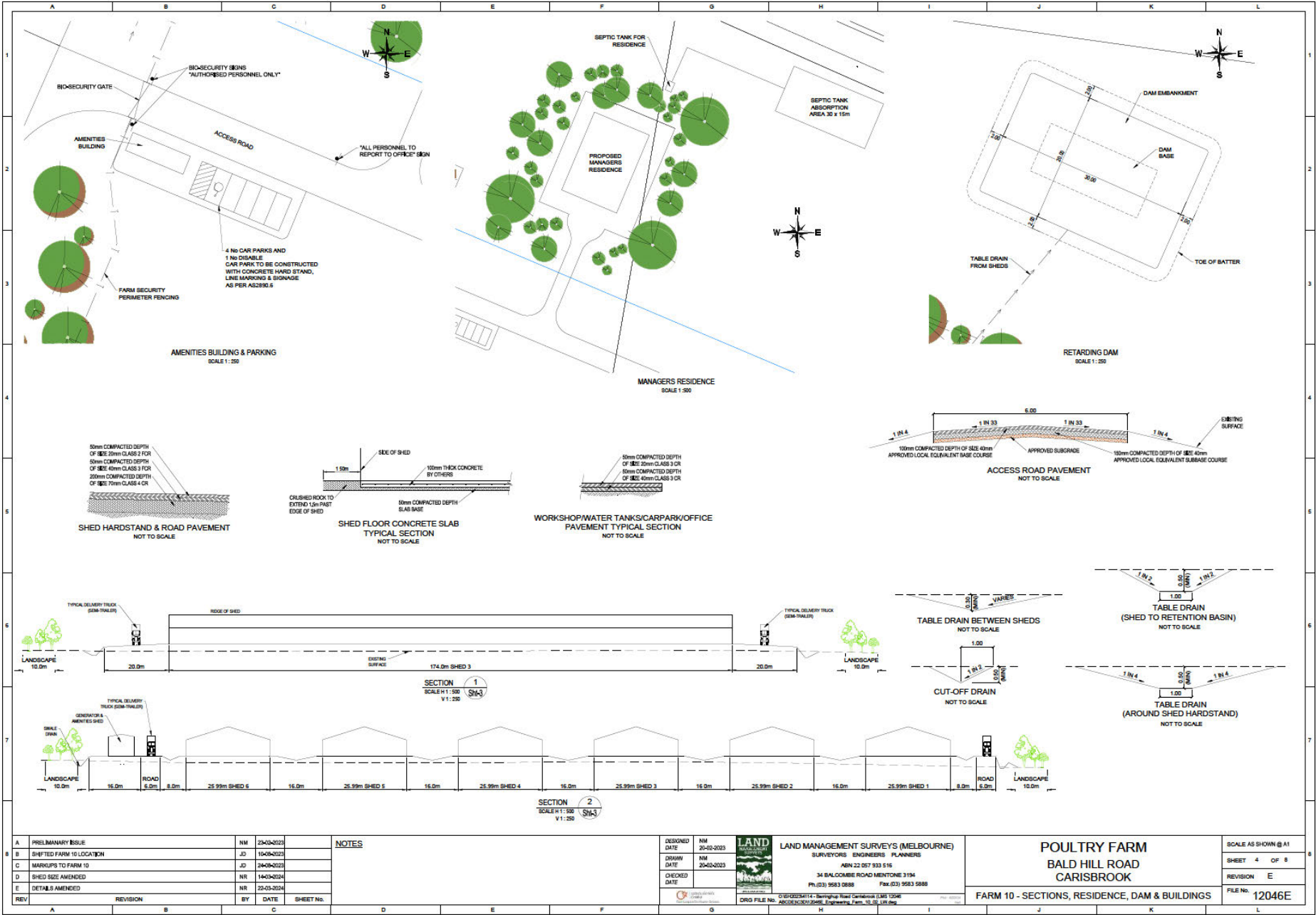
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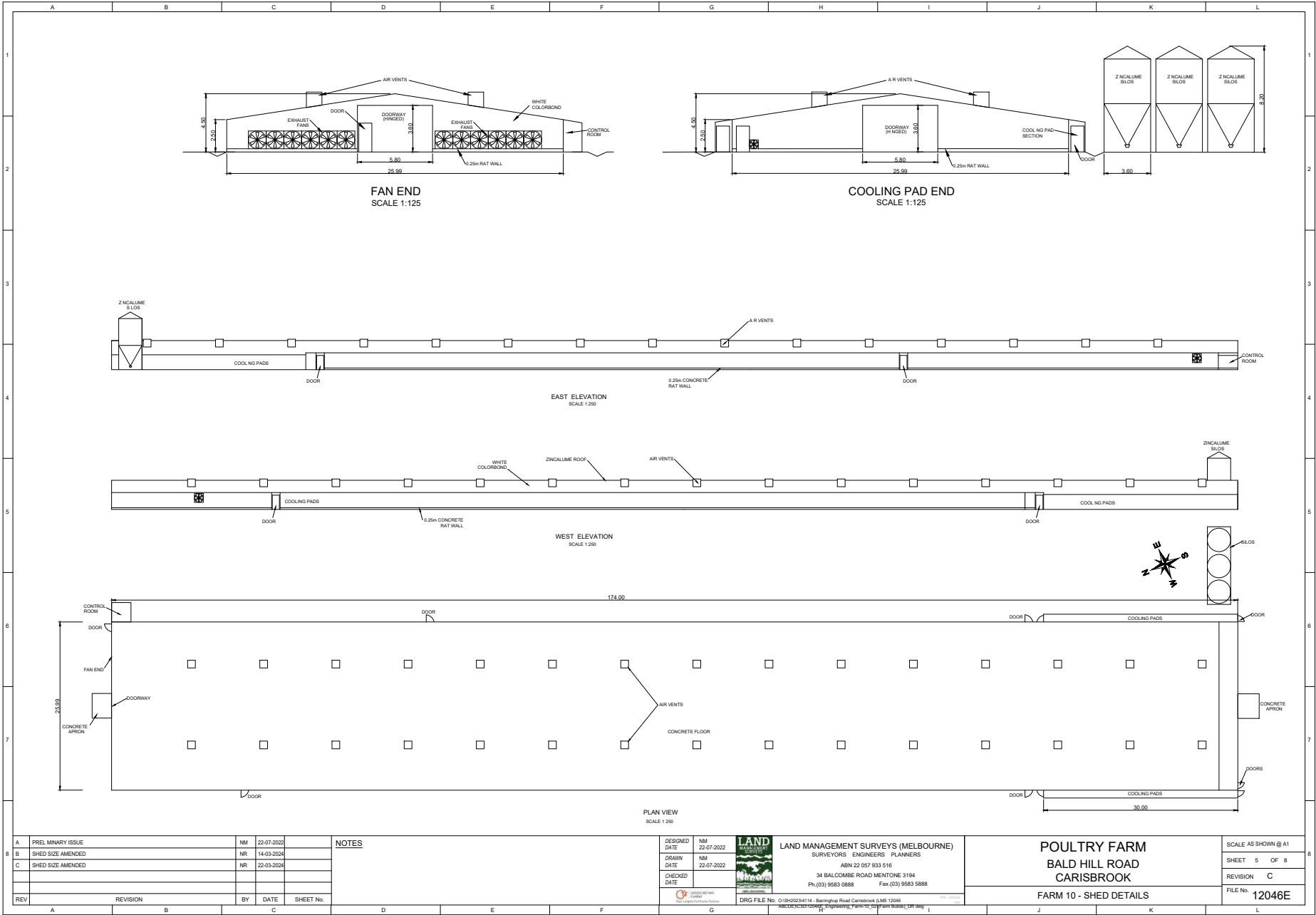
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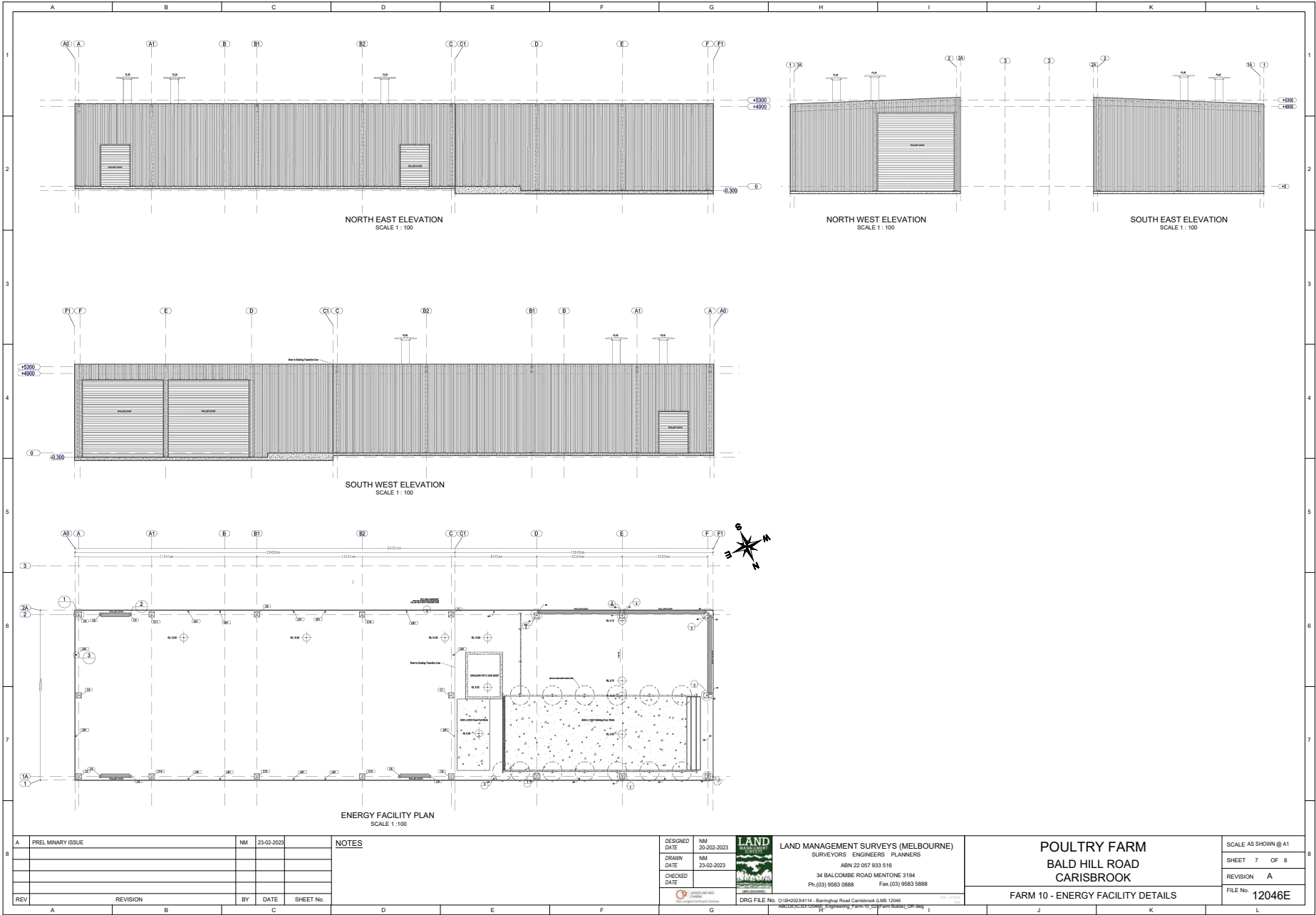


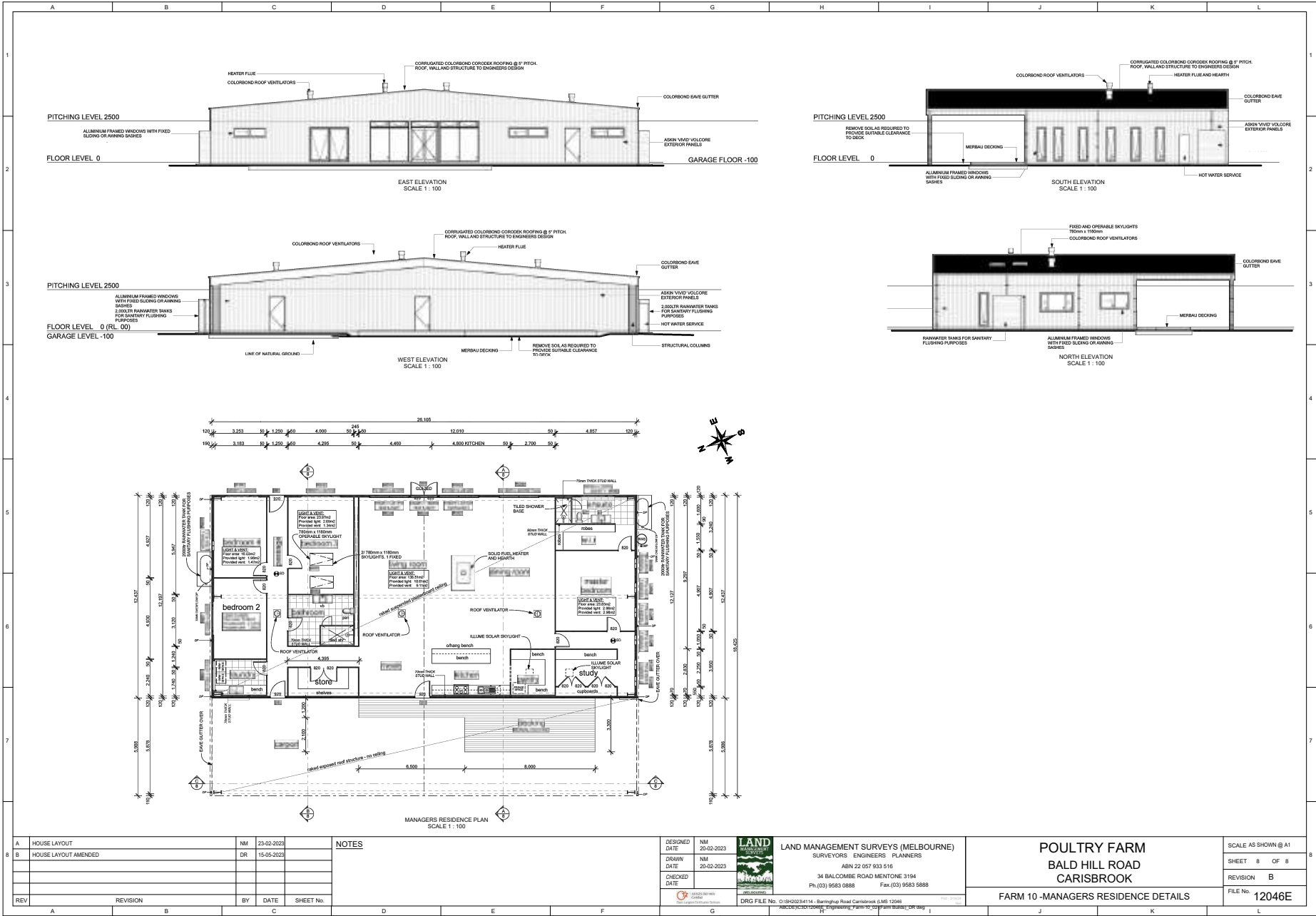












8 Urgent Business

9 Notices of Motion

Nil

10 Confidential Business

Nil

11 Meeting Closure