



Council Meeting Agenda

Wednesday 26 November 2025 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 22 October 2025 be confirmed.

5 Minutes of Delegated and Advisory Committees

5.1 Community Asset Committees AGM Minutes

Author: Manager Governance, Property & Risk

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 present for noting to Council the confirmed Annual General Meeting (AGM) minutes of Council's Community Asset Committees established under section 65 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

That Council receives and notes the confirmed minutes of the:

1. Adelaide Lead Hall Committee Annual General Meeting Minutes 8 July 2025.
2. Daisy Hill Community Centre Committee Annual General Meeting Minutes 21 August 2025.
3. Dunolly Historic Precinct Management Committee Annual General Meeting Minutes 1 September 2025.
4. Talbot Community Homes Committee Annual General Meeting Minutes 13 August 2025 and
5. Talbot Town Hall Committee Annual General Meeting Minutes 11 September 2025.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

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

The Community's vision:

Our Community's Wellbeing

1. Socially connected, creative, inclusive, healthy, and safe 'all ages' friendly communities.
1. Everyone is valued and belongs and has every chance to grow, prosper and thrive.

Leading Change

4. Activated, engaged, and informed citizens who have a say, volunteer, get involved in community matters.
4. Good planning, governance, and service delivery.
4. Transparent decision making.

Initiative:

N/A

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In accordance with section 65 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council has established Community Asset Committees.

The Instrument of Sub-Delegation by CEO to Community Asset Committees require the minutes to be presented to Council for noting.

The minutes of Community Asset Committees are confirmed/approved at the next scheduled meeting of the Community Asset Committee.

REPORT

The following special and advisory committees of Council have provided confirmed minutes from their Annual General Meeting as follows:

- Adelaide Lead Hall Committee Annual General Meeting Minutes 2024-25
- Daisy Hill Community Centre Committee Annual General Meeting Minutes 2024-25
- Dunolly Historic Precinct Management Committee Annual General Meeting Minutes 2024-25
- Talbot Community Homes Committee Annual General Meeting Minutes 2024-25
- Talbot Town Hall Committee Annual General Meeting Minutes 2024-25

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

Annual General Minutes have been submitted by the Committees to Council.

FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There is no resource implications involved in the preparation of this report

RISK MANAGEMENT

Governance - Failure to transparently govern and embrace good governance practices by presenting the Annual General Meeting Minutes to Council as per the Instrument of Sub-Delegation by CEO to Community Asset Committees.

CONCLUSION

The Annual General Meeting minutes of Council's Community Asset Committees are presented to Council for noting.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Adelaide Lead 2025 Hall AGM [5.1.1]
2. Daisy Hill 2025 AGM Minutes [5.1.2]
3. Dunolly Historic Precinct AGM Minutes [5.1.3]
4. Camp St AGM 2024-25 [5.1.4]
5. AGM 11 th September 2025 minutes [5.1.5]

ADELAIDE LEAD HALL COMMUNITY ASSETS COMMITTEE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
TUESDAY, 8TH JULY 2025

Start: 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Drew Garraway, Colin Bartlett, Trish Walsh, Noreen Martin, Richard East, Runer Sandvik, Bev Wells, Gavin Hoffmann, Kevin Martin, Judy Webb

APOLOGIES: John Hummel, Keith Bartlett, Gary Perry, Shayne Hendrickson, Jacques Jacobs, Sharon Sandvik, Councillor Ben Green

President Drew welcomed all to the meeting.

Minutes of last AGM, 9th July 2024 were read (M) Gavin Hoffmann (S) Richard East

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

- Everything is running smoothly at present.
- Trivia Night on the 26th of July 2025 – Peter (Colin's son-in-law) has offered to do the lighting and sound for us. Tables have been booked from the Council, Drew and Kevin will pick them up. Payments and bookings are to be done online; we have three tables booked already. Auction will be on again, wood raffle. Liquor licence has been approved and Health Department approval received. Snacks for tables and BBQ.
- Still waiting on Council for water.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Balance as at 30th June 2025 - \$3,584.39 – Report attached.

Tiny House is at Drew's at present – negotiations ongoing.

(M) Gavin Hoffmann (S) Kevin Martin

All positions were declared vacant, and Noreen Martin took the chair for nominations as follows:

PRESIDENT: Drew Garraway - Nominated by Judy Webb Seconded by Bev Wells – Confirmed & accepted

SECRETARY: Judy Webb – Nominated by Bev Well Seconded by Kevin Martin – Confirmed & accepted

TREASURER: Gavin Hoffmann – Nominated by Trish Walsh Seconded by Richard East – Confirmed & accepted

Committee Members: Noreen Martin, Colin Bartlett, Keith Bartlett, Kevin Martin, Gary Perry, John Hummel, Trish Walsh, Shayne Hendrickson, Richard East, Sharon Sandvik, Runer Sandvik, Bev Wells, Jacques Jacobs.

There are three other people interested in being on the Committee – to be confirmed when they attend.

Hire of Hall to remain at \$100 per day. (M) Noreen Martin (S) Kevin Martin

Meeting closed: 8.10 pm.

DAISY HILL COMMUNITY CENTRE COMMITTEE MEETING:

Annual General Meeting 21st August, 2025

PRESENT: Bill Robinson (Chair), Chris Egan (Sec), Bernadine Mead (Treas) Julie Beggs, Laurie Nicholls, Janet Page, Sedigh Khademi, Nils Brock-Eriksen, Brian Riley, Ben Green.

Guests: Melinda (Milly) Cain, Scott Miller, Ebony Miller, Michael Keane, Barbara Keane, Chris Palmer.

APOLOGIES: Nil

Start Time: 8:20pm.

President welcomed all and opened AGM

The agenda for the AGM was distributed by Bill.

Presidents Report:

- Bill thanked the Committee for their contribution over the last 12 months.
- He provided a summary of key activities. This included the addition of a Projector and Screen. Christmas in July Profit of \$922.00. Donations of \$2,000.00 and purchase of a new BBQ. Free BBQ lunch for past Committee Members. Australia Day celebrations. The approval of a Grant for Kitchen upgrade. Various working bees.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Presented By: Bernadine Mead. (Copy attached)

Period: To 30th, June, 2025

Balance carried forward: Working Account: \$2,150.35

Closing Balance: Working Account: \$2,155.94

Total Balance: High Interest Account: \$3,603.08

ELECTION OF NEW COMMITTEE AND OFFICE BEARERS:

Bill handed the meeting over to Ben Green.

Bill Robinson, Janet Page and Chris Egan, declared they were stepping down from the Committee altogether.

Ben thanked the past Committee for their work and declared all positions vacant.

He then called for nominations for the new Committee.

Bernadine Mead, Julie Beggs, Laurie Nicholls, Sedigh Khademi, Nils Brock-Eriksen and

Brian Riley as past members were elected un-opposed.

Melinda (Milly) Cain, Scott Miller, Ebony Miller, Michael Keane, Barbara Keane and Chris Palmer were all nominated and elected to the Committee for the first time.

Ben congratulated the new Committee and called for nominations for Office Bearers.

The following members were nominated and elected un-opposed as Office Bearers:

Laurie Nicholls – President.

Julie Beggs – Vice President.

Melinda (Milly) Cain - Secretary

Bernadine Mead – Treasurer.

Ben then handed the meeting to Laurie who welcomed the new Committee and gave a few words of encouragement, emphasising the need for teamwork.

OTHER BUSSINESS:

It was decided to leave Hall fees as they are.

MEETING CLOSED: 9.00 pm

Dunolly Historic Precinct: AGM

September 1st 2025 at Dunolly Town Hall, at 5pm

Our guest chair, Ian Arnold, opened the AGM and declared all positions open.

Present: Karyn Bromley, Lynda Vater (Minutes Secretary), Jeanette Richards, Brian Phillips (Interim President), Drew Garraway, Judy Webb, Gavin Hoffmann.

On Phone: Jenny Scott, Kristina Valenta (Secretary and Treasurer).

Apologies: None

AGM 2024 Minutes

Minutes of 2024 AGM accepted. Moved: Brian Phillips; 2nd Lynda Vater.

Matters arising from Minutes: None

President's Report: Brian Phillips

Welcome all. Firstly, I thank you for attending our Dunolly Historic Precinct Annual General Meeting. I also mention the great work and dedication of our real president Brad Saul, his work and commitment to the management of our great historic buildings has been second to none, and I would like to take this time to thank Brad and wish him all the best for the future.

As Brad said in his President's report last year at our 2024 AGM, "The top priority is our upcoming review of our governance or Instrument of Delegation (my nemesis). We have one more year to review and refresh this document before we seriously start thinking about shutting our doors."

The councils' review of the Instrument of Delegation has been messy at best and the absence of any two-way consultation is in my mind quite shameful. Part of a letter I sent to both Peter Harriott and Grace LaVella said "Rather than nurturing and empowering those who give their time and energy to serve their communities, goodwill is being eroded, when it should be protected and strengthened. You are sucking the joy out of the people trying to help our various communities." I also said "I would like to thank our Mayor Grace La Vella and our councillors for voting against this overreach and costly exercise. Well done." I also mentioned the lack of meaningful two-way consultation between the council and the Central Goldfields CAC's. Our mayor didn't respond to my letter but the CEO did. In that letter he indicated the current level of consultation would continue.

With this in mind, I will resign from all voluntary positions that are part of the Central Goldfields Shire as soon as possible.

I would also like to thank the 2024/5 committee, Brad, Kris, Lynda, Karyn, Jeanette, Jennifer and the ongoing support from our local councillor Liesbeth.

I wish the new committee all the best for the future and if I can help, please don't hesitate to call me.

Treasurer's Report: Kris Valenta

Dunolly Historic Precinct Committee



Treasurer's Report: 2024-2025 Financial Year

BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD July 1, 2024 (as per Bendigo Bank Statement) \$4,656.69

INCOME

Town Hall Hire: Dunolly Market 29/7/2024	\$40.00
Town Hall Hire: Dunolly Primary School (9/8/2024)	\$100.00
Town Hall Hire: Dunolly Football Netball Club (4/10/2024)	\$200.00
Town Hall Hire: PMAV (23/10/2024)	\$200.00
Town Hall Hire: Gilbert and Sullivan: Trivia Night (16/12/2024)	\$300.00
Town Hall Hire: A. Marechal Wedding (27/12/2024)	\$300.00
Town Hall Hire: Bradley Saul 22/1/2025	\$230.00
Town Hall Hire: Bradley Saul 20/2/2025	\$100.00
Town Hall Hire: Andrew Bales: (3/4/2025)	\$100.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$1,570.00

EXPENDITURE

Town Hall and Courthouse Cleaning (Carole Gray): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4/7/2024 \$200 3/8/2024 \$210 3/9/2024 \$200 5/10/2024 \$240 31/10/2024 \$250 3/12/2024 \$270 6/1/2025 \$250 6/2/2025 \$250 3/3/2025 \$250 3/4/2025 \$187.50 6/5/2025 \$150 10/6/2025 \$125 	\$2,582.50
Reimburse Kris Valenta for Medshop: AED (Town Hall Defib) battery and pads	\$373.52
Reimburse Kris Valenta for Harvey Norman: Karcher Vacuum Cleaner	\$176.00
Elgas Annual Service Fee (28/10/2024)	\$44.00
Tango Energy (Electricity): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15/7 /2024 \$137.39 12/8/2024 \$122.79 9/9/2024 \$97.97 	\$1,287.87

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 6/12/2024 \$101.57• 10/1/2025 \$126.49• 10/2/2025 \$142.74• 12/3/2025 \$132.74• 8/4/2025 \$143.84• 12/5/2025 \$143.96• 4/6/2025 \$138.38	
Website by Preloaded Design: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SSL Certificate \$71.50 (6/2/2025)• Domain name renewal \$253.00 (13/5/2025)	\$324.50
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	\$4,788.39

LOSS OF \$3,218.39

BALANCE AT JUNE 30, 2025 (AS PER BENDIGO BANK STATEMENT) \$1,438.30

Prepared by Kris Valenta, Treasurer

Acting President: Brian Phillips.....

Treasurer: Kris Valenta

Notes

- Our income in 2024/25 was significantly affected by the loss of our long term tenant, *The Welcome Record* in December 2023. In the 2023/2024 financial year, our income was \$5,947.25 compared to \$1,570.00 in the 2024/20205 financial year.
- It was good to receive support from some of our regular hirers including: PMAV, Andrew Bales, Dunolly Markets and the Dunolly Football Netball Club.
- Our expenditure was also less than the previous financial year: 2023/2024 Expenditure was \$6,265.61 compared to \$4,788.39 in 2024/2025.

Election of Office Bearers

President: Lynda Vater nominated Drew Garraway; 2nd Brian Phillips.

Drew accepted the position of President.

Secretary: Lynda Vater nominated Judy Webb; 2nd Kristina Valenta.

Judy accepted the position of Secretary.

Treasurer: Lynda Vater nominated Gavin Hoffman; 2nd Kristina Valenta.

Gavin accepted the position of Treasurer.

Ian Arnold wished us well and left.

AGM Meeting closed at 5.20pm

Camp St Units Committee of Management

A.G.M 2024- 2025

13/8/25

Present Reinhard Gunther, Ben Green, Annie Seach, Gus Barda (via phone)

Apologies - Janice Darby

Minutes from Previous Meeting read and accepted.

Treasurers Report 2024-2025 During the year, \$85,000 was deposited into a separate Term Deposit acc, which will be reviewed at the end of 12 mth term.

Working account had balance of \$11,723.78 at end of July

Major Expenses through Year

Repairs to Septic system, totaling \$2524.

Replacement of fence adjoining R.Manns property, \$2,895. This sum is half the total cost which was shared.

Report moved accepted-Ben, Seconded Reiny.

Positions on committee declared vacant.

President- Reiny - nominated.moved Gus, 2nd Annie.

Sec/Treas. Annie - nominated.moved Gus, 2nd Reiny.

Other committee members also maintained positions on the committee, with Ben in attendance as Council Representative.

AGM closed 9.35 pm

General Meeting.

Treasurers Report

General Bank Acc. Balance \$14,640.21, with Term Deposit \$85,000

Discussion followed re the transfer of more funds to the Term Deposit to generate more interest, as progress on building more units on the Star st block is delayed until sewerage is installed through the town.

Tenants now pay for the usage of water, with the committee paying the service charge. They also have commented on the slight change to their power bills following the installation of the solar panels. The committee will approach the council for assistance in obtaining a grant to add batteries to the solar system.

The fence between the units and the museum is also in need of repair. This will take place further into the year, after meeting with Museum committee has occurred.

No further business arising. Next meeting will take place prior to years end, The phone connection with Gus did work well, but personal contact between members is obviously preferred and the meeting will be planned accordingly.

Meeting Closed 10 am

Talbot Town Hall Committee
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Held on: 11th September 2025
Meeting held at: Talbot ANA Hall
Meeting started at: 7.00pm

Present: Rob Sampson, Leanne Boyle, Kerry Holmes, Klaus Rosemeier, Jack Ryan, Bev Wells, Cr Ben Green Katrina Fowler

Apologies: Fred Davies

Guest: Cr Gerard Murphy

Minutes of Previous AGM (date):

Nil

Treasurer's Report:

Tabled and distributed to all present and read.

Moved: Leanne Boyle

Seconded: Rob Sampson

carried

President's Report:

Moved: Rob Sampson

Seconded: Katrina Fowler

Carried:

Rob Sampson hands the meeting over to Cr Ben Green who declared are positions vacant

Election of Office Bearer's:

President Rob Sampson

Nominated by Katrina Fowler

Seconded by Kerry Holmes

Vice President: Kerry Holmes

Nominated by Katrina Fowler

Seconded by Klaus Rosemeier

Secretary: Katrina Fowler

Nominated by Jack Ryan

Seconded by Klaus Rosemeier

Treasurer: Leanne Boyle

Nominated by Bev Wells

Seconded by Jack Ryan

Committee Members

Klaus Rosemeier, Jack Ryan, Bew Wells

Meeting Closed: 7.20pm

6 Petitions

Nil.

7 Council Reports

7.1 Carisbrook Railway Station Update

Author: General Manager Infrastructure Assets and 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 provide Council with an update on the February 2025 Notice of Motion regarding the Carisbrook Railway Station, including the outcomes of officer investigations, site visit discussions, and strategic alignment considerations. This report outlines the financial and operational implications of leasing and redeveloping the site, and assesses the proposal against Council's adopted plans, community feedback, and legislative obligations.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Notes the officer's update regarding the February 2025 Notice of Motion concerning the Carisbrook Railway Station; and
2. Recognises that while the proposal may offer potential community and heritage benefits, Council will not be prioritising this project at this time, given it does not align with recently adopted Financial Plan, Asset Plan and Council Plan objectives, and would require the redirection of resources away from priority areas identified through community consultation.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

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

The Community's vision:

Leading Change

4. Good planning, governance, and service delivery.
4. Transparent decision making.
4. Effective and sustainable financial management.

Initiative: Provide financial sustainability and good governance.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

At the February 2025 Council meeting, the following Notice of Motion was received in accordance with Central Goldfields Shire Council Governance Rules: S23 *Councillors May Propose Notices of Motion* and S24 *Notice of Motion*:

The Carisbrook Railway Station is a historically significant site with considerable potential for adaptive use. The goods shed and office building can serve as essential spaces for a community hub that promotes local history, cultural activities, and regional connectivity.

This initiative aligns council priorities to:

- *Preserve heritage assets*
- *Foster community engagement and well-being*
- *Support tourism and economic development.*

The proposed use of these facilities will benefit the community in multiple ways. A Notice of Motion has been submitted requesting Council action in relation to the Carisbrook Railway Station. This asset is not owned or managed by Central Goldfields Shire Council.

The motion was supported by the following recommendation:

That Council;

1. *Requests the CEO investigate the feasibility of a lease agreement with Vic Track, for the Carisbrook Railway Station and;*
2. *Present a report to Council regarding the intention of repurposing the spaces as a Community Hub, including all associated financial impacts and funding opportunities*

The Notice of Motion was subsequently carried. This report presents an update to Council on officer's progress regarding the Notice of Motion.

REPORT

Following the February 2025 Notice of Motion, officers investigated VicTrack's community lease program and confirmed that only councils are eligible to lease the Carisbrook Railway Station, requiring Council to act as head tenant for any future community use.

As part of a recent Council briefing, Councillors visited the site and discussed its condition and the significant investment required to make it usable. The station is currently vacant and deteriorated, with an estimated annual lease cost of \$8,000, regardless of its condition. Preliminary advice suggests that redevelopment would cost approximately \$6 million, including restoration, compliance upgrades, and fit-out.

The asset is not listed in Council's asset register, nor is it identified in any strategic or forward planning documents, including the Council Plan 2025–2029, Financial Plan 2025–2035, or Asset Plan 2025. Similar proposals for the Talbot and Dunolly railway stations were also excluded from these plans for the same reasons.

Officers also reviewed potential external funding opportunities. While Victoria's Heritage Restoration Fund and other heritage grant programs exist, they typically provide small-scale grants (generally between \$3,000–\$5,000) for conservation works. There are no current state or federal programs offering funding at the scale required for a \$6 million redevelopment, nor any programs that would

cover ongoing lease costs. As such, external funding would not materially change the financial feasibility of this project.

Council remains focused on addressing the asset renewal gap—the shortfall between available funding and the cost of maintaining existing Council-owned infrastructure. Diverting resources to non-Council assets would compromise this priority and conflict with Council's obligations under the Local Government Act 2020, which requires sustainable financial management and planning for assets under Council control.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

Extensive community consultation was undertaken during the development of the Council Plan 2025–2029, Financial Plan 2025–2035, and Asset Plan 2025. Feedback consistently supported focusing Council's investment on assets that are owned and managed by Council, reflecting community priorities around responsible financial and asset management.

As part of a recent Council briefing, Councillors visited the Carisbrook Railway Station site and discussed advice from VicTrack regarding the asset's condition and leasing requirements. VicTrack confirmed that its community lease program is only available to Councils. Officers also received indicative costings for lease and redevelopment, which further informed the assessment of the proposal's feasibility.

FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The recently adopted Financial Plan 2025–2035 identifies a critical need for Council to generate ongoing operational savings of approximately \$600,000 per year over the next five years. These savings are essential to improving Council's financial position and increasing the rate of asset renewal from the current 61% to a target range of 90–100% within five years.

Achieving this target requires disciplined prioritisation of investment and a clear focus on assets that Council owns and manages. The Carisbrook Railway Station is not a Council-owned asset, and there is no budget allocation or resource provision for its maintenance, renewal, or development.

Any investment or action relating to this asset would require the reprioritisation of existing commitments, potentially undermining Council's ability to meet its financial sustainability objectives and address the significant asset renewal gap. Such a decision would also be inconsistent with Council's obligations under the Local Government Act 2020, which requires prudent financial management and alignment with adopted strategic plans.

RISK MANAGEMENT

This report addresses Council's strategic risk:

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

The recommendation supports Council's adopted Financial Plan and Financial Sustainability Strategy by committing investment to Council owned and managed assets, ensuring resources are directed to priority areas.

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

Council is currently addressing a significant asset renewal gap. Diverting resources to non-Council assets would exacerbate this challenge and compromise service outcomes.

Governance - Failure to transparently govern and embrace good governance practices.

The recommendation aligns with Council's strategic documents and decision-making processes, ensuring transparency and consistency with community engagement outcomes.

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

Under the Local Government Act 2020, Council is responsible for managing assets under its control. Taking on financial responsibility for assets on Crown Land, such as the Carisbrook Railway Station, would be inconsistent with these obligations and may expose Council to unnecessary risk.

CONCLUSION

While the Carisbrook Railway Station holds historical and community interest, investigations have confirmed that the asset is not owned or managed by Council, is currently not fit for public access, and would require significant investment—estimated at \$6 million—for redevelopment. VicTrack's community lease program would require Council to act as head tenant at an annual cost of approximately \$8,000, even while the site remains unusable.

The project is not identified in any of Council's adopted strategic documents, and feedback from community consultation through the Council Plan, Asset Plan and Financial Plan process strongly supports prioritising investment in assets owned and managed by Council. A recent site visit and briefing reinforced the scale of investment required and the lack of alignment with Council's financial and asset management responsibilities.

Officers also reviewed potential state and federal funding programs and found no available grants at the scale required to make the project viable. Existing heritage programs offer only small contributions, which would not materially offset the estimated redevelopment cost.

Given Council's focus on closing the asset renewal gap and meeting its obligations under the Local Government Act 2020, proceeding with this proposal would divert resources from priority areas and compromise long-term financial sustainability. For these reasons, Council will not be progressing the Carisbrook Railway Station project at this time.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

7.2 Splash Park Feasibility Study

Author Coordinator Recreation Planning and Development
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 findings of the Splash Park Feasibility Study. This recommendation reflects that the project is not currently viable and does not align with the recently adopted Financial Plan, Asset Plan, and Council Plan objectives, and would require redirecting resources away from priority areas identified through community consultation.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Notes the findings of the Splash Park Feasibility Study and acknowledges that the project is not financially viable;
2. Publishes the Splash Park Feasibility Study on Council's website and promote the fact that no further work is anticipated on the concept plan, and
3. Confirms that the project will not be prioritised as it does not align with the objectives of the recently adopted Council Plan, Financial Plan, and Asset Plan, and would require redirecting resources away from priority renewal projects identified through community consultation.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

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

The Community's vision:

- Our Community's Wellbeing
 1. Socially connected, creative, inclusive, healthy, and safe 'all ages' friendly communities.
- Our Spaces and Places
 3. Engaging places and spaces for people to live, work, play and connect.
- Leading Change
 4. Effective and sustainable financial management.

Initiative: Provide financial sustainability and good governance.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Community interest in a splash park has been strong for many years and was highlighted during consultation for Council's Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2020–2029 (ROSS).

While the ROSS did not recommend delivery of a splash park, it identified potential sites and recommended further investigation.

Council allocated \$30,000 in the 2020/21 budget to undertake a feasibility study, which included community consultation in late 2023. The study assessed possible locations, design options, and associated construction and operational costs. A draft concept plan was also developed.

The study found that a splash park would cost approximately \$1.4 million to construct, with ongoing operating costs exceeding \$110,000 per year, making the project financially challenging.

REPORT

The Splash Park Feasibility Study was commissioned to assess the viability of a splash park/water play area in Maryborough, including capital and operational cost implications, potential locations, and community appetite. Council allocated \$30,000 in the 2020/21 budget for this study, which was completed in 2024 following seven key stages:

- Desktop review and contextual analysis
- Site assessments and locality review
- Community consultation
- Design development and cost analysis
- Operational and financial feasibility
- Concept plan preparation
- Final report

Site Assessment

The study involved consultants undertaking comprehensive site assessments and a locality review. A weighted assessment criteria was developed to evaluate each site for suitability, considering demographics, locality, nearby facilities, and play spaces. This assessment was applied to the two sites identified in the Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2020–2029:

- Adjacent to the Skate and Scooter Park and existing play space at Lake Road, Maryborough
- Within the heritage-listed Maryborough Outdoor Pool Complex

Additional sites identified for consideration included:

- Phillip Gardens
- Jack Pascoe Reserve (near Maryborough Sports and Leisure Centre)
- Adjacent to Station Domain
- Market Reserve, Carisbrook
- Bucknall Reserve, Carisbrook

The locality assessment considered operational and cost constraints, community priorities, and gaps identified in Council's draft Play Space Strategy, providing depth and credibility to recommendations.

Community Consultation

Consultation occurred concurrently with the Play Space Strategy in 2023, attracting over 350 survey responses. Feedback indicated strong community interest, with 97% of respondents stating they would use a water play facility. However, concerns were raised about seasonal use and ongoing costs.

A brief snapshot of the feedback is included below. It found that:

- Two thirds of respondents live in Maryborough
- The most common additional play item mentioned is water play
- 97% would use a water play facility and over 50% of these would travel more than 10km
- 86% prefer the paved area style rather than natural
- 92% think it is a higher priority than other park types

Further details can be found in Draft Splash Park Feasibility Study (Attachment 5.2.1).

Key Findings

- Estimated construction cost: \$1.4 million
- Annual operating cost: \$110,000+ (\$1.1M over 10 years)
- Preferred location: Jack Pascoe Reserve

While the study confirms strong community support, the financial implications are significant. Delivering a splash park would require substantial capital investment and ongoing operational funding, as well as diverting resources from existing priorities.

Strategic Alignment and Asset Renewal Priorities

The project does not align with Council's recently adopted Council Plan, Financial Plan, and Asset Plan, which prioritise maintaining and renewing existing assets over creating new facilities. Council faces a significant asset renewal gap, and funding a splash park would require redirecting resources away from priority renewal projects identified through community consultation.

Next Steps

Recognising that the project falls outside current strategic priorities and would require significant investment, it is recommended that Council notes the findings of the feasibility study and shares them with the community, however, does not proceed with consulting on the concept plan or prioritising the project at this time.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

The community was consulted during the development of this study; however, it is not proposed that the final report undergo further consultation. The purpose of the study was to inform Council's infrastructure planning.

To ensure transparency, it is appropriate for Council to publish the report in full via an Ordinary Meeting of Council and on Council's website, allowing the community to understand the basis of Council's decision-making.

As the study concludes that the project is not feasible now or in the foreseeable future, seeking community input on the concept plan is not recommended. Doing so would raise unrealistic expectations and require repeating the process if the project becomes viable in the future

FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The feasibility study provides detailed insight into both the capital cost of constructing a splash park and the ongoing operational and maintenance requirements. Indicative costs, based on benchmarking similar projects, are as follows:

Item	Capital cost	Operating cost (per annum)	Notes
Construction of splash park only	\$1,363,000		Construction cost is subject to detailed design. It is also worth noting that all the case studies of similar projects cost upwards of \$2 million dollars.
Annual splash park operations		\$84,000	
Annual plant and equipment maintenance		\$30,000	Averaged over a 10-year period
Total	\$1,363,000	\$114,000	

Additional Costs:

- Contingency allowance (20–30%): \$270,000–\$400,000
- Common infrastructure (toilets, shade, picnic facilities): \$200,000–\$400,000
- Adjoining play space (recommended): approx. \$600,000

These figures highlight that the true cost of delivering a splash park could exceed \$2.5 million when all elements are considered.

Alignment with Financial Plan 2025-2035

The recently adopted Financial Plan 2025–2035 identifies a critical need for Council to generate ongoing operational savings of approximately \$600,000 per year over the next five years. These savings are essential to improving Council's financial position and increasing the rate of asset renewal from the current 61% to a target range of 90–100% within five years.

Achieving this target requires disciplined prioritisation of investment and a clear focus on assets that Council owns and manages. Funding a new splash park would require significant capital and operational resources, diverting funds from priority renewal projects and undermining Council's ability to meet its financial sustainability objectives.

Such an approach would also be inconsistent with Council's obligations under the Local Government Act 2020, which requires prudent financial management and alignment with adopted strategic plans. Council's Council Plan, Financial Plan, and Asset Plan all prioritise renewal of existing assets over creation of new facilities, particularly given the significant asset renewal gap.

RISK MANAGEMENT

This report addresses Council's strategic risk:

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

The splash park project would require significant capital investment and ongoing operational funding, which is inconsistent with the Financial Plan 2025–2035 objectives to generate \$600,000 in annual savings and increase asset renewal rates from 61% to 90–100% within five years. Proceeding with this project would undermine Council's ability to meet these targets.

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

Council faces a substantial asset renewal gap. The Asset Plan prioritises renewal of existing infrastructure over new assets to ensure service delivery standards are maintained. Developing a splash park would create a new asset with high lifecycle costs, diverting resources from critical renewal projects and exacerbating the renewal gap.

Governance - Failure to transparently govern and embrace good governance practices.

Transparent governance requires decisions to be consistent with adopted strategic plans and based on sound financial management. Advancing a project that is not strategically aligned and unfunded would compromise Council's commitment to good governance practices and prudent decision-making.

Legislative compliance - Failure to manage our compliance with relevant legislative requirements by considering Council's capacity to progressing a project which created a new Council asset that is not budgeted.

The Local Government Act 2020 requires councils to manage resources responsibly and align decisions with strategic planning and financial sustainability principles. Progressing a project that creates a new Council asset without budget allocation or resource provision would be inconsistent with these legislative obligations.

CONCLUSION

The Splash Park Feasibility Study examined site options, design considerations, and the full lifecycle costs of constructing, operating, and maintaining a splash park. While community interest is strong, the study confirms that the project is not financially viable at this time due to significant capital and ongoing operational costs.

It is recommended that Council make the final study publicly available to ensure transparency but does not proceed with community consultation on the concept plan or further development of the project. Consulting on a concept plan would raise unrealistic expectations and require duplication if the project becomes viable in the future.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Splash Park Feasibility Study FINAL [7.2.1]



SPLASH PARK FEASIBILITY STUDY



ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This document is The Central Goldfields Splash Park Feasibility, prepared by @leisure Planners and Jeavons Landscape Architects.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Jeavons Landscape Architects and @leisure would like to acknowledge the support and assistance provided by:

- Carmel Pethick - Coordinator Recreation and Sport
- David Leatham - Manager Community Partnerships
- The project steering committee
- Residents who completed the survey

The Dja Dja Wurrung People lived in the area now known as Central Goldfields Shire Council. Council pays respect to leaders and Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and the hopes of all Dja Dja Wurrung People.

We express our gratitude in the sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual and cultural costs of that sharing and our hope that we may walk forward together in harmony and in the spirit of healing.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This project investigated the feasibility of providing a Splash Park/Water Play area in the Shire, with the goal of providing a water-based attraction for families.

1.1 BACKGROUND

The need to undertake this project was initiated by local advocacy to Shire Administrators during 2018- 2020.

Interest in a splash park goes back to 2015, when parent of young children started a Facebook page *Maryborough Water Playground* – and collected information about splash parks/water play spaces across the state.

A proposal by community members was presented to the then Administrators, and Council subsequently agreed to provide funds to investigate the feasibility of a splash park.

The feasibility sought strategic advice about siting, construction, operation and maintenance costs, together with management options and an indicative concept plan to inform Council's decision making regarding future development of a splash park.

Currently there is no splash park/water play area in Central Goldfields Shire.

Council has an indoor heated pool complex at the Maryborough Sports and Leisure Centre in Gillies Street, Maryborough. There is a heritage-listed outdoor pools complex in Princes Park, and there are small outdoor pools in the towns of Dunolly and Talbot.

The community consultation during the Council's Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2020-2029, identified two sites as the preferred locations. These were both in Princes Park:

- Adjacent to the skate and scooter park and play space at Lake Road; and
- Within the heritage-listed Maryborough Outdoor Pool Complex.

Two further sites; Jack Pascoe Reserve adjacent to the Maryborough Sports and Leisure Centre and a site in Carisbrook were subsequently been identified as warranting investigation.

Feasibility

The outcomes sought from this feasibility study include:

- Identification of the most appropriate site
- Community engagement and consultations (to be led by consultant with Council support)
- Preparation of site analysis and identification of proposed components
- Provision of cost estimates for construction, operation, maintenance plus whole of life costs
- Bench marking, and
- Site visits.

Design considerations

The brief identified design considerations for a future project should include the following:

- Respond to the location and reflect any heritage significance of the site, if relevant.
- Provide challenge and creativity, the opportunity to develop new skills.
- Consider a range of features that provide opportunity for interactive play.
- Incorporate universal design principles with a particular focus on meeting the needs of people with mobility devices.
- Incorporate crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED).
- Incorporate environmentally sustainable design (ESD) principles and water sensitive urban design (WSUD) considerations.
- Create a welcoming and family friendly site.
- Provide opportunity to enhance social connectedness, particularly for young people.
- Consider potential future users as well as current ones.
- Consider partnership opportunities.

1.2 OBJECTIVES AND ALIGNMENT WITH EXISTING PLANS

Central Goldfields Shire Council has existing Plans with stated objectives which support the development or investigation of a splash park.

This project aligns with these as follows.

Figure 1 The Council plans with objectives and commentary relating to splash parks

Plan	Relevant Objectives / Strategic Directions
<p>Council Plan 2021- 25</p> <p>Parks and playgrounds are part of daily life and contribute greatly to the health and well-being of residents.</p> <p>Strategic Objective 1. Our community's well-being</p> <p>Community's vision is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socially connected, creative, inclusive, healthy and safe for "all ages" friendly community. 	<p>What we will do</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen and build inclusion in community and intergenerational connections Supporting positive life journey development for all residents <p>How we will do It</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a diverse range of experiences that are welcoming accessible for people of all abilities, inclusive and affordable. Encourage and facilitate connections across all age groups through shared activities and social interaction Support children aged 0-8 and their families, so children can have the best start in life.
<p>Strategic Objective 3. Our spaces and places</p> <p>Strategic priorities</p> <p>Community's vision is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable living with green spaces A commitment to climate action and less waste production Preservation of heritage and Engaging places in spaces for people to leave work play and connect. 	<p>What we will do</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide engaging public spaces Provide infrastructure to meet community need <p>How we will do It</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively plan and seek funding opportunities to develop infrastructure, including recreation facilities.....to meet community needs.



Plan	Relevant Objectives / Strategic Directions
<p>Recreation and Open Space Plan 2020-29</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Provide a free access splash park/water play area in Maryborough.” <p>Maryborough Community Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Have a splash park in Maryborough so everyone can cool down in our dry hot summer.” “A splash/ water park in Maryborough that is fenced and is free to use”. <p>The Major Reserves Master Plan 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations in the master plans for Princes Park, J H Hedges Memorial Park and Jack Pascoe Reserve did not include a splash park. However a new play space at Jack Pascoe Reserve was recommended. 	<p>Objectives related to water play, from aligned strategic plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce heat stress Provide free access and fenced Improve shade in parks, playgrounds, pools Consider all ability access and female/family friendliness when planning recreation and community infrastructure Create more placed-based opportunities for young people to be physically active and socially connected Activate formal and informal green spaces across the Shire

2. ABOUT SPLASH PARKS

Water play can be provided in different forms. Typically water play facilities may include:

- a) **Small water play elements in a play space** for example a small hand pump or press-button tap, fillable trough, with gates that are interactive or include a stream bed in a natural setting, or
- b) **A splash park** which have a paved apron with sprays and cannons and the like, or other equipment, either as a stand-alone park or associated with aquatic centres.

A strong preference in the community survey was for a splash park, not water play elements in a natural setting.

This project investigates the feasibility of providing a splash park.

Splash parks- other names

Splash parks are also often known as splash pads, water parks, aquatic playgrounds, and legally as "interactive water features".

2.1 KEY TYPES OF SPLASH PARKS

There are two main types of splash parks distinguished primarily because risk and of regulations related to supervision. These are:

- a) **Zero-depth splash parks**, which may include a wide range of sprays cannons, buckets or equipment with water running over them, or
- b) **Splash parks with pools of water**. These may include the same types of sprays as zero depth splash parks, play-equipment style water features etc., but include a pool, so they carry additional risks and compliance issues. This type of splash park needs to be supervised and therefore they are commonly provided in conjunction with an aquatic centre, fenced lagoon pool or major destination park.

Zero depth / splash park elements

Zero depth splash parks do not require lifeguards. They typically include either:

- Sprays and various elements such as sprays, and cannons and buckets (for cooling off and fun) set into a spray apron.
- And/ or interactive play elements such as pumps and channels, often provided in conjunction with sand and other natural elements, or a dry playground equipment area.



Figure 2 Example of a) Zero depth splash park at Wallan Vic. This is a destination play space.

Splash parks with pools

Splash parks which include pools of water require lifeguards. They may include features such as sprays, cannons and equipment typically provided within an aquatic centre or destination or tourist park, either indoors or outdoors.



Figure 3 Example of b) Water play area with a pool of water and sculptures with sprays. The Entrance.

Images of a range of examples are shown in Appendix 3.

2.2 WHY PROVIDE SPLASH PARKS?

Splash parks are commonly provided for many reasons:

- **As a tourist destination**
E.g. Townsville and Cairns Foreshore; South Bank; Darling Harbour; Brisbane River; Bright.
- **As a major destination play space**
E.g. Wallan Community Park, Broad Water Parklands, The Heart Bannockburn
- **To extend opportunities at a swimming pool**
E.g. AquaMoves Shepparton; Kingston Waves; Eureka Aquatic Centre Ballarat, or indoors at Splash-Hume; GESAC Glen Eira; East Keilor Leisure Centre etc.,
- **To replace an outdoor swimming pool** deemed no longer viable E.g. Long Gully Bendigo, Seville.
- **To extend typical dry play opportunities with a natural interactive element, and water to cool off** that is attractive and educational
Ian Potter Children's Garden, Royal Park Nature Play space.

Splash parks are not a replacement for swimming pools

- Splash parks will not contribute to drowning prevention, swimming ability, or significant physical activity gains.
- Splash parks can however overcome fears of water in young children because they are non-threatening, safe and fun.
- Splash parks may be a welcome addition to the small traditional pools to expand the range of aquatic options for all ages and abilities.

Splash parks can add diversity to the range of play opportunities

Splash parks can:

- Provide open-ended play opportunities for the development of fine motor skills, coordination and problem-solving, and cause and effect.
- Provide opportunities to explore the senses, encouraging imagination and creativity.
- Expand on the attributes of an existing play space with traditional play equipment and create a focal point for activities not currently available.
- Embellish or "activate" a currently under-utilised space.

Splash parks-the other benefits

Splash parks also:

- Provide relief from heat stress, to cool off, and reduce heat stress.
- Provide opportunities to socialise and play with friends and family and engage in cooperative play.
- Offer different experiences with water. They may be exciting, and stimulating because of the sound, movement and sparkle, but water may also be calming, restorative and encourage contemplation.
- Typically require hard-stand surfaces (the spray apron) which can easily be designed to be very accessible to a wide range of people with mobility disabilities and devices.
- The spray apron surfaces can be multi-use, and in winter months used for other activities such as gentle exercise classes, and other community purposes. However these surfaces may increase the heat island affect within a park and be used by unintended uses such as for skating, and personal training.
- Zero depth splash parks can be open for longer hours than pools as staff supervision requirements and temperature policies are not applicable.

3. IDENTIFYING THE MOST APPROPRIATE SITE

The summary of site selection criteria is provided following the discussion the selection criteria. (See page 10.)

3.1 ISSUES AFFECTING SITE SELECTION

There are three major issues that affect site selection for a splash park, because they can significantly reduce the costs of the development. These are:

- 1. The availability of facilities that need to be provided to support users' visits.**
As support facilities may cost as much as the splash park sites where these are already provided are highly rated.
- 2. The feasibility and cost of monitoring and maintenance.**
Legislation requires regular inspections and monitoring of water quality. Where sites can be cost effectively serviced by staff close by – these are highly rated.
- 3. Compatibility and ability to add benefits to an existing public space.** A splash park is like to draw users from other towns including those outside the Shire.

Therefore the space should have a compatible catchment hierarchy and be suitable for regional users. The opportunity for this facility to fill a gap in local provision should also be considered.

1. Availability of support facilities

As users tend to travel some distance to use splash parks, they need a range of support facilities. These include toilets, change facilities, picnic shelters, furniture, and car parking etc.

The recent survey for this project indicated over 50% of respondents said they would regularly travel more than 10 km for a splash park and many currently travel an hour to use existing ones.

Sites that already have these support facilities are favoured for a new splash park development.

2. Monitoring and maintenance

State government regulations (Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019) require daily inspections, and frequent water quality monitoring and by their nature, there is a high level of maintenance required. Therefore if provided close to existing aquatic facilities, staff with necessary qualifications may be available to carry out monitoring.

3 Compatibility and ability to add benefits to an existing public space

Parks should have a regional or at least district catchment to be compatible with the potential use. The Play Spaces Strategy has proposed a park catchment hierarchy that sets out these characteristics for different levels of Parks across the Shire.

The Play Spaces Strategy and other Council Strategies have identified gaps in play and children's services. It would be beneficial to fill this gap with a splash park, which may also be colocated with a year round play space or other related service.

The specific site criteria are listed overleaf.



Figure 4 Long Gully Splash Park, City of Greater Bendigo

3.2 SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

For practical, social and economic reasons, splash parks need to be sited in district or regional parks in Central Goldfields Shire with the following attributes.

These selection criteria were weighted in terms of priority before evaluating each site against them. (See matrix with weightings on the following page and the steps in the process in 3.3).

- a. Space allows 500 sqm sized pad, plus shade, landscaping, picnic toilets/ change, lawn and associated dry play facilities, buffers and car parking)
- b. There is either existing support facilities such as car park, toilets, picnic and play facilities that can be added to, or the potential to provide them in conjunction with a play-space.
- c. The water play elements are consistent with and complements the park function and setting type and associated design/ existing opportunities
- d. There are no existing water play opportunities nearby, such as natural waterways that enable swimming or water play.
- e. Splash park can be cost effectively serviced, kept clean and managed i.e. close to an aquatic centre where qualified staff could inspect and monitor water quality and issues, and be able to organise /undertake repairs, unblock sprays/ drains etc.,
- f. Not heavily treed that may affect water quality, impact services, make surfaces slippery, increase cleaning etc., block drains and or obscure sight lines There needs to be an adequate buffer from existing trees.
- g. There is an adequate buffer from trees and residences for privacy, no conflict from light spill, noise etc., and there is space for vehicle/emergency maintenance
- h. Topography creates no substantial change in landform, a suitable balance in cut and fill, adequate grade for effective drainage
- i. The site is in Council ownership or long-term tenure/control.
- j. The water play elements, and especially new hard stand pavement, can be integrated into the park design without too much visual and environmental disturbance.
- k. Maximum population served, central to Shire and contributes to a better distribution of play / aquatic facilities
- l. Visually prominent open to two or more major road edges, not obscured by vegetation, large buildings or similar
- m. No major planning constraints that will require protracted approval processes e.g. flood, heritage, biodiversity, zoning, or services drainage, geotechnical, easement, trunk sewer
- n. Access to potable water supply close by as well as electricity, mobile phone internet service and other services connections
- o. Not a landfill site where subsidence, gas or poor soil conditions exist
- p. Accessible, safe pedestrian and cycle access to the site. Public transport access to the site or adjacent is desirable.

SITE SELECTION CRITERIA		Weighting	POTENTIAL SITES / OPTIONS															
			OPTION 1.						OPTION 2.		OPTION 3.		OPTION 4.		OPTION 5.			
			OPTION 1a. Princess Park, Maryborough Outdoor Pool		OPTION 1b. Princess Park, Maryborough Play		OPTION 1c. Coronation Park Maryborough		OPTION 2. Maryborough Leisure Centre		OPTION 3. Phillip Gardens		OPTION 4. Adjacent to Station Domain Play Space		OPTION 5a. Market Reserve, Carlsbrook		OPTION 5b. Burdinal Reserve, Carlsbrook	
			Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score
A	Space allows 500sqm sized pad, plus shade, landscaping, picnic toilets/ change, lawn and associated dry play facilities- buffers and car parking)	0.12	5	0.58	4	0.47	2	0.23	5	0.58	2	0.23	5	0.58	5	0.58	5	0.58
B	There is either existing support facilities such as toilet picnic and play facilities that can be added to, or where a new destination park is desirable	0.07	5	0.33	5	0.33	4	0.27	4	0.27	4	0.27	2	0.13	5	0.33	4	0.27
C	The water play elements are consistent with and complements the park function and setting type and associated design/ existing opportunities	0.02	5	0.08	5	0.08	4	0.07	4	0.07	3	0.05	3	0.05	5	0.08	4	0.07
D	Natural waterways that enable swimming or water play are not accessible close by	0.00	3	0.00	3	0.00	3	0.00	5	0.00	4	0.00	4	0.00	4	0.00	2	0.00
E	Splash pad is cost effective to service, keep clean and manage i.e close to a aquatic centre where qualified staff could inspect and monitor	0.11	5	0.54	4	0.43	4	0.43	5	0.54	3	0.33	3	0.33	2	0.22	2	0.22
F	Not heavily treed to affect services and cleaning etc.,	0.03	4	0.10	5	0.13	4	0.10	5	0.13	2	0.05	5	0.13	4	0.10	3	0.08
G	Adequate buffer from trees and residences for privacy, no conflict from light spill, noise etc., and space for vehicle/emergency maintenance	0.03	5	0.13	5	0.13	4	0.10	5	0.13	4	0.10	4	0.10	4	0.10	4	0.10
H	The site is in Council ownership or long-term tenure/control	0.13	5	0.63	5	0.63	5	0.63	5	0.63	5	0.63	5	0.63	5	0.63	5	0.63
I	Topography creates no substantial change in landform, a suitable balance in cut and fill, adequate grade for effective drainage	0.05	4	0.20	5	0.25	5	0.25	5	0.25	5	0.25	5	0.25	5	0.25	4	0.20
J	Maximum population served, central to Shire and contributes to a better distribution of play / aquatic facilities	0.10	5	0.50	5	0.50	5	0.50	5	0.50	5	0.50	5	0.50	2	0.20	2	0.20
K	Visually prominent open to two or more major road edges, not obscured by vegetation, large buildings or similar	0.08	3	0.23	3	0.23	3	0.23	5	0.38	4	0.30	3	0.23	4	0.30	2	0.15
L	No major planning constraints that will require protracted approval processes e.g flood, heritage, biodiversity, zoning, or services drainage, geotechnical, easement, trunk sewer	0.09	4	0.37	4	0.37	4	0.37	4	0.37	4	0.37	4	0.37	4	0.37	4	0.37
M	Access to potable water supply close by as well as electricity and other services connections	0.07	5	0.33	4	0.27	3	0.20	4	0.27	5	0.33	3	0.20	4	0.27	4	0.27
N	Not a landfill site where subsidence, gas or poor soil conditions	0.08	5	0.38	5	0.38	5	0.38	5	0.38	4	0.30	4	0.30	4	0.30	4	0.30
O	Accessible, safe pedestrian and cycle access to the site	0.04	4	0.17	5	0.21	5	0.21	5	0.21	5	0.21	5	0.21	4	0.17	3	0.13
P	Public transport access to the site desirable	0.02	3	0.05	3	0.05	3	0.05	4	0.07	5	0.08	5	0.08	2	0.03	2	0.03
	TOTAL SCORE	TOTAL SCORE	70	4.61	70	4.43	63	4.00	75	4.74	64	3.99	65	4.08	63	3.93	54	3.58
	RANK	RANK		2		3		5		1		6		4		7		8

3.3 METHODS OF DETERMINING THE PREFERRED SITE

The steps to determine the preferred site are outlined below.

Step 1.

A list of evaluation criteria was identified to ensure the site met the criteria of locating a fit-for-purpose splash park facility (see above).

Step 2.

A short list of sites was established, in collaboration with Council officers, to evaluate against the site selection criteria.

Step 3

Using the paired comparison technique, each criterion is compared against each other, to determine the relative importance of each.

Step 4.

The paired comparison technique was used to compare each criterion with each other. The priority for each comparison adds to the score for each criterion. This summed score divided by the total provides a weighting for each criterion.

Step 5.

Each site option was evaluated against the site selection criteria to provide a score for how well the option met the criteria.

This score was multiplied against the weighting to arrive at a weighted score for each site for each criterion.

Step 6.

The weighted scores for each site option are summed.

This determines a total for each option, and these are sorted to provide a ranking of the sites.

The site with the highest score indicates which option best meets all criteria.

Step 7.

The last step was to identify other advantages and disadvantages of each site, and this considers other added value and costs for example.

3.4 THE SITE OPTIONS

Option 1. Princes Park Maryborough (1a. Outdoor Seasonal Pool)

A splash park could be positioned outside the pool fence, or as a replacement for a small swim pool inside, if in keeping with the heritage works.

If a splash park is included with the pool, it would add diversity to the swimming offer and be serviced from the pool cost effectively. However it was not the preferred site as:

- A separate fenced area with an openable gate would be needed to provide for free access, and if open beyond pool hours, access to toilets, shade and support facilities would be required.
- The site is small
- It has heritage significance
- This option may be very expensive and would prevent colocation with new play space.
- This site would not address a gap in the distribution of play spaces.

Other options considered in Princes Park were in conjunction with an existing play space:

- 1b. Lake Rd East, and
- 1c. Coronation Park.

These sites were not found to be suitable because:

- The lack of space
- Context, and
- Potential conflict with existing facilities
- The lake water table is likely to create additional complications.

Option 2. In the vicinity of the Maryborough Leisure Centre Outdoors (Jack Pascoe Reserve)

A splash park in conjunction with a new play space here would assist in filling a gap in play spaces in this area of Maryborough.

A development at this site would activate this park with aging assets, and could use existing support facilities, including the car park, changing places facility for people a disability located in the Leisure Centre.

An option to an upgrade the existing indoor water play space was considered.

However this option was deemed unsuitable as it did not meet the two objectives:

- To reduce heat stress, and
- Provide a free facility.

Nonetheless it may be beneficial to upgrade the existing equipment inside the Leisure Centre in the longer term.

Option 3. Phillip Gardens

This site is not considered suitable due to:

- The garden's highly manicured natural green setting (botanic garden)
- Potential impact on trees
- The limited space available for the splash park or a play space
- This site would not address an identified gap in the distribution of play spaces.

It would only be suited to small natural water play element.

Option 4. Adjacent to Station Domain Play Space and Council offices in Maryborough

This site is not the most suitable as:

- It is obscured by trees from the road.
- It is green and has large shady trees which would be impacted by paving, drainage and water supply.
- The leaf litter would be problematic in maintaining a non-slippery surface, and meeting water quality guidelines.
- There is no public toilet in this parkland.
- It would not address a gap in the distribution of play spaces, and the site adjacent to the existing play space is too small.

Option 5. Sites in Carisbrook

A site in Carisbrook is not considered a priority as:

- It would not address a gap in play provision
- Carisbrook has a smaller population
- A site in Carisbrook is not as a central to service cost effectively
- It would not be as accessible to as many visitors as a site in Maryborough

Options to add water play elements were considered at the following sites in Carisbrook:

- a) Market Reserve.
Market Reserve could be enhanced by the addition of water and other design refinements.
- b) Bucknall Reserve.
This is not considered suitable in the creek corridor due to limited informal surveillance, the flood prone nature of reserve, and other factors.

3.5 THE PREFERRED SITE

The priority and most feasible site for a splash park in Central Goldfields Shire was found to be adjacent to the Maryborough Leisure Centre in Jack Pascoe Reserve.

The ranking of the site options is as follows:

No.	Site	Weighted Score
1.	Option 2. Adjacent to Maryborough Leisure Centre in Jack Pascoe Reserve	4.74
2.	Option 1a Princes Park – Outdoor Pool	4.61
3.	Option 1b Princes Park – Lake Rd East	4.43
4.	Option 2 Adjacent to Station Domain Play Space	4.08
5.	Option 1c Princes Park – Coronation Park	4.00
6.	Option 3 Phillip Gardens	3.99
7.	Option 4. Market Reserve, Carisbrook	3.93
8.	Option 5. Bucknell Reserve, Carisbrook	3.58

The ratings are shown detailed site selection matrix with weighted site selection criteria is shown in 3.2.



Figure 5 Site adjacent to the Maryborough Leisure Centre

3.6 OTHER OPTIONS

These options and the priority to provide a significant splash park for the Shire do not preclude small-scale water play elements being provided in conjunction with the existing outdoor swimming pools to enhance their offering.

The Council may best progress these in the longer term once a free-standing splash park is provided.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

4.1 METHODS

Community and stakeholder engagement included the following:

- A Your Say page for residents to contribute their ideas and information about play in Central Goldfields
- A poster was used to draw people to those online opportunities.
- A project reference group who was used to advise and provide feedback into the process telephone interviews of key stakeholders.
- A community survey was conducted, which received over 300 responses.
- A review of other social media outlets and commentary being made about play and splash parks in Central Goldfields.

4.2 RESULTS OF THE COMMUNITY SURVEY

Highlights

Almost all survey respondents (97%) said they would use a water play facility. Those respondents who supported Council delivering a splash park, provided a number of reasons why one is needed:

1. Its accessible / something that the whole family/ people of all ages and abilities can enjoy.
2. It is an activity needed by kids/ so many people would use it
3. It would bring people to the town, an attraction (18%)
4. Free activities are important, so you do not have to travel and the pool costs money. It would add variety to what is available (64%).
5. The outdoor pool is closed, and the kids need somewhere to cool off (22%).

Over 50% of respondents would travel more than 10 km to use a splash park.

A high proportion of residents (86%) prefer the paved apron with sprays as the style of park rather than a natural water play area with pumps and channels etc.

Some 92% of respondents (250) think a splash park is a higher priority than other park types, and other play space upgrades.

Other feedback

Eight survey respondents are not likely to use a splash park. The reasons given were as follows:

- It is for toddlers mostly. But if it was connected to a great play space, such as the Princes Park.... well maybe.
- I don't have children of a young age
- We would probably use it, but I disagree with it being free, I don't think as a ratepayer that our Shire can afford the construction and ongoing costs of this project
- It will end up being a dirty space as people will bring dogs and rubbish
- **It will be a waste of money. We need a swimming pool that all members of the community can use. A pool that is open on hot days. Would rather the money be put into the outdoor pool. We need an outdoor pool!!!!**
- A splash park will not be able to be used all year
- Because people think their dogs have the same rights as children
- Prefer places to sit, have a BBQ, sheltered. Allergic to chlorine...no no!

Views of supporters

It should be noted that community members supporting a splash park in Central Goldfields have actively promoted the survey, so survey results may not be representative of the whole population.

"Mainly doing this survey to assist those who have been really persistent and vocal for the build, though I must say there needs to be more swings at the Princes Park playground that aren't catered to toddlers".

"A minority of the community is very vocal in regard to a splash park, but many wouldn't understand the ongoing costs involved with the running of this, as well as the overall use each year. I wouldn't be taking my little kids there unless it's a hot day, which is only going to be over approximately 3 months of the year"

Respondents family members with a disability

There were 65 respondents who have a family member with a disability and want a water play park.

Two of the 8 respondents that don't want a water play space, have a family member with a disability.

Reasons for not prioritising a water play space

Reasons given for not prioritising a water play space above other options are that money should be spent elsewhere (e.g. outdoor pool, updating current play spaces), particularly

because a water play space would only be used for a portion of the year.

"Having a full size fully functional outdoor pool would be more beneficial than a splash park or anymore play spaces. Currently our kids are learning to swim in an indoor pool where they can touch the bottom which is not ideal or overly realistic if they fell in fully clothed etc. if a splash park was to be considered this area should all tie in together. Utilise the derelict tennis courts as well. It's a great central space".

"We have many play spaces in the area that would get a lot more use if they were upgraded there is no point adding more and letting the older places go to waste".

"The ongoing cost and water usage concerns me. For the cost it is only one season so 3-4 months at most. I think the money could be used to better. Adding public use basketball rings and more nature play in numerous areas around the region would be my choice".

"The other play spaces are in desperate need of upgrading. It would be amazing to have both a splash park and upgraded park but a park that can be used all year around would be amazing".

Respondents place of residence and sites

The respondents who said they would travel less than 5 km for a water play space are either in Maryborough or close to, and so would expect it to be within that distance.

Those willing to travel further are in the outer regions of the Shire, so expect that to be the case (it is likely to be "normal" for them).

Place of residence doesn't have an impact on type of water play space.

73% of Carisbrook residents want the water play space in Carisbrook, with the remainder in Maryborough. 34% want it in conjunction with the Maryborough Outdoor Pool, though it is worth noting that some comments suggest they don't want it in the pool complex because that requires an entry fee.

The most common "Other" suggestion for a site is near the skate park (Princes Park East). More gave this response than for Carisbrook.

Age of children

There was no notable difference in whether a water play space is a priority, by age of respondent's children.



145 people provided an additional comment at the end of the survey. 26% of those mentioned the water play.

Appendix 1. provides more details from the survey results, in particular the reasons why it would be good to have one in the Shire.

5. ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The following table outlines typical questions and issues that can arise in splash parks and suggested solutions to overcome them.

Figure 6: Typical questions and issues that can arise in splash parks and possible solutions

Issue: Year-Round or Seasonal?	Solution
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Splash parks are typically used when temperatures are 25 degrees and above. As a place to cool off and to be available for free, an outdoor splash park (with sprays etc.), will be by nature seasonal. Potential contamination requires higher turnover rates and higher chlorination levels than a typical swimming pool. Regulations require daily inspections and regular monitoring of water quality. Splash parks provide more flexibility in responding to unseasonal hot weather than a pool because they are not staffed. Benchmarking suggests low use increases the likelihood of equipment failures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Splash parks are feasible only to operate in warm weather. Minimal non-immersive water play elements such as hand pumps, or small channels can be provided with other dry play elements, allows a park to provide access to water play all year. An apron with sprays, buckets and wetting equipment can be available only when temperatures achieve 25 degrees, or for a designated time such as November – April. On hot nights – out of season or when pools may be closed, splash parks located outside a pool enclosure may provide access to water and cool off. Fencing alignments and access arrangements can however be challenging.
Issue: Water too cold?	Solution
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As temperatures can be cool in Victoria, some Victorian splash parks have water that is solar heated, introducing added comfort in the shoulder seasons, but also cost. (Long Gully, Bendigo, and some of the Big 4 Splash Parks, such as Mildura). Splash parks typically require a large volume of water to be heated quickly, and solar heating systems may not be able to provide the necessary heat output in a timely manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If this issue is likely to be a concern by users, consider being able to heat the water when days between November -April don't reach 25 degrees. Adjacent permanent shelters can reduce wind chill and include solar panels to minimise energy cost. Ensure facilities can be activated by users (push button) Turn off at a sensible time at night, so they don't run when no one is present.

Issue: Weather and usage



- Water play features may subject to high usage, wear and tear due to hot weather or low usage due to cool weather and shutdowns due to wind, weather and leaf litter etc.,
- Wind can blow water off the apron reducing flow back to filtration and dosing. Wind can also introduce debris that blocks filtration, and make the water feel cold.
- The windiest months are Jan and November.
- The average mean temperature is above 25 in the months of December, January, February, and March. The most common wind direction is S-SW.
- High usage and low water volume in an outdoor setting can lead to contamination, especially from toddlers in nappies, fully clothed adults, dog, sunscreen, birds, and loose materials blowing in.

Solution

- Ensure balance tanks are filled automatically (when water blown off the apron is not returned) and drain when they over fill due to rain. Ensure all valves and parts needing regular access are easy to access for maintenance, without permits for confined spaces etc.,
- Ensure there are not loose materials abutting the apron, or trees especially in the SSW direction that may cause debris to block sprays etc., and that the location of sprays minimise the amount of water ending up off the apron.
- Turn off the splash park in the wind. Warn the public that on windy days it will be closed. Maintain effective communication with users.

Issue: Burns from users moving from a cool wet surface onto hot dry equipment



- Positioning a splash pad adjacent to a dry unshaded surface such as synthetic softfall in an adjacent playground, or metal play equipment may put babies and young children in danger of they inadvertently crawl from the cool wet, to a hot surface and burning bare skin.

Solution

- Dry play spaces can be places adjacent to a splash park.
- Construct adjoining surfaces with material that does not retain heat, warn users and provide adequate permanent shade.

Issue: Fun for everyone



- Splash parks should have features that are attractive and useable to people of all ages, gender identities and abilities.
- A splash park should offer graded challenges and opportunities for all people to be included in the same way as a play space should.
- Some people may want to be involved, but not get wet.
- A spray apron should be accessible to a person using a mobility device, but they may not be able to get this wet.

Solution

- Ensure there is an accessible path of travel from the car park to the splash park and around and through the equipment for people whose wheelchairs or mobile frames can get access.
- When adjacent to a swimming pool, consider the option to hire water chairs. Consider interchangeable sprays to build in variety.
- Ensure there are items where the water is gentle for toddlers and interactive as well as areas that have more significant volumes of water, intense spraying and dumping features that are only accessible to older children.
- Provide adequate curtilage around the sprays and options where adults or people using mobility devices can be close to water and can get their feet wet for example, without being soaked.
- Ensure adequate space for the extended family in the picnic and seating areas. Provide accessible all-gender toilets where people can also change if required.

Issue: Desire for services, not just a splash park



- As users may travel some distance to use a splash park and wish to stay and socialise, a range of facilities are required.
- Some splash parks note a high demand for places to buy coffee, nappies, band-aids etc., nearby and a place to change.
- Some splash parks offer water wheelchairs for people with a disability to enjoy the water in.

Solution

- Covered seating areas, BBQ, picnic facilities and open lawn areas, and toilets including a "Changing Places" style of toilet are desirable to provide in associated with Splash Parks.
- Dry play opportunities can extend the use of a splash park, and small water features that don't involve getting wet, such as hand pumps, channels and features can add to a splash.
- If the splash park is adjacent to a service like an aquatic facility, some support services and equipment hire may be possible.

Issue: Recycled or potable water?



- Potable (drinking) water that is not recycled does not need to be treated as it is only used once. Recycling and treating water has a cost, but potable water may also be expensive and not available during restrictions.
- Saving water is considered an environmental priority and the cost of water is increasing. Western Sydney Parklands Water Play uses potable water, which is then used for irrigation.
- The cost to operate a non-recycling spray park may be \$5,000 to \$30,000 per year in water costs, depending on use, flow rate, size of the park, and cost of water.
- A [recirculating spray park](#) has a much lower yearly cost to operate as it reuses the water. Water costs may be in order of \$5000 to \$10,000.

Solution

- The capital cost of splash parks using recirculated water will be higher than those using potable water, due to the cost of installing a balance tank, chemical storage, and dosing pumps and equipment, however the recurrent cost of water and water usage will be substantially reduced.
- During water shortages facilities that do not use recycled water are less likely to operate.
- Objectives in Council Plan 2021-2025 regarding sustainable living, climate action and less waste are best met with a recirculated water system.

Issue: Management and design



- Splash parks can be high maintenance, and they need to be managed in accordance with current regulations. Sometimes high maintenance is due to poor design or inexperience, and poor choice of switches, pumps, valves and other fittings.
- As a minimum, splash parks must be inspected in the morning before opening to ensure they are safe and operational: Water testing is 4 hourly, filtration.
- Regular cleaning may be required depending on proximity to trees, shade, and loose materials etc.,
- Call outs of specialists may be required for issues with water quality, plumbing and electrical issues backwashing, vandalism repairs and equipment servicing.

Solution

- Ensure design includes systems to monitor use and water quality remotely and minimise maintenance. Where contractors are required, ensure they have significant splash design and construction experience.
- Minimise inspection and monitoring costs by co-locating a splash park with a swimming pool and extending the management arrangement /job description of existing aquatic personnel.
- Choose surfaces and products that are robust and easy to maintain. Porous impact absorbing surfaces are difficult to disinfect and should not be used in splash parks. Brushed concrete is the most practical surface for splash parks as it is easy to maintain.

Issue: Meeting health regulations



Regulations to be met include:

- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* and the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 (the regulations). (see excerpts in Appendix 4).
- Victorian Government, Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations, Dangerous Goods (Storage & Handling)
- Occupational Health and Safety (Manual Handling), Dangerous Goods Act.

For risk management, signs should include conditions of use, warnings and information.

Solution

- Install an off-site monitoring system that enables water quality and use monitoring remotely. This is particularly effective for sites without direct supervision, as an operator can be advised when chemical levels are outside recommended parameters.
- Operating parameters can be monitored remotely via Wi-Fi. Water chemistry can be remotely adjusted, or the facility shut down/turned on for example.
- Treat the static water before it returns to the apron, when the system is first turned on each day.
- The recirculation system should allow water to be returned to a balance tank, treated and returned to the park features.
- Ensure design maintains water levels in balance tanks to avoid manual filling etc., Ensure valves are accessible from outside confined spaces.
- Signage is required to show people how to use the park, and how to keep it safe for everyone.
- Site the splash park close to a staffed aquatic centre to enable more cost effective monitoring and access to trained staff.

6. DESIGN CONCEPT

6.1 THE PROJECT BRIEF

The project brief required the following components be considered.

- Shade structures and wind protection
- Access to toilets and shower facilities
- Bicycle parking
- Access to drinking water
- Access to BBQ facilities
- Signage re safety and usage
- Graffiti and vandalism resistance surfaces
- Good lines of sight for active and passive surveillance
- Access to complementary play/recreation equipment/areas
- Potential extension or development of complementary facilities
- Zones suitable for younger and older users
- Accessible pathways and ramps
- Landscaping and pathways that integrate with surrounding areas
- Seating for spectators with easy access and good viewing
- The durability of all materials used
- Easy access for maintenance and cleaning
- Risk mitigation
- Access to car parking
- Access to public transport.

6.2 PRELIMINARY LOCATION DIAGRAM

The following preliminary sketch assumes that the Jack Pascoe Reserve is the most feasible and preferred location for a splash park in Central Goldfields Shire.

This site would address a gap in the provision of play space in this area of Maryborough. Note: the master plan for this site shows a proposed play space in the vicinity of the tennis courts.

This is a high-level plan showing how the new facility could be positioned on the site of the soon to be decommissioned skate park, adjacent to the Leisure Centre.

This space is well serviced by access roads car parking and proximity to existing aquatic infrastructure. The driveway would be retained beside the Centre for maintenance access and chlorine deliveries.

Additional car parking may be required to address peaks in use of the Leisure Centre.

There is an existing shelter that could be retained, though it is not oriented ideally, and is not especially attractive.

New accessible toilets/change facilities would be positioned centrally so that they can serve a new district level play space, in the future. Access to a Changing Places toilet for people with a disability is available in the Leisure Centre.

Other shade and shelter structures would be provided, especially in the play space.

There would be a fully accessible path system linking both car park and bus stop to all the play opportunities and amenities, and there would be a strong connection between the play and splash parks.

A low fence could be provided along Majorca Rd.

Figure 7. Sketch showing an indicative layout of a splash park and play space in association with the Maryborough Leisure Centre



Water play elements

The proposed splash park would meet the design brief by providing fully accessible, interactive opportunities for children and adults of all ages and abilities.

The design can provide zoned activities that enable boisterous, more challenging activities to be separated from those that are more restful.

The design will include:

- Spray arches for through- movement
- Interactive elements such as spray guns, ground level bubble jets, water augers.
- Bubble jets in a variety of configurations that enable both group and individual play.
- Quieter zones with trickle stream (zero depth) and similar.
- Umbrella and mushroom shaped sprays.
- Possible bucket-style equipment, if appropriate.
- Smaller items with low velocity sprays for toddlers.

The play space could be constructed at a separate time from the splash park for funding purposes. However they should be designed together as an integrated space.

7. COST ESTIMATES

7.1 COST TO CONSTRUCT AND OPERATE AND MAINTAIN A SPLASH PARK

The following estimated probable costs are provided from actual projects benchmarked.

The costs assume an area of about 500 m² is available for the splash pad without accompanying support facilities, such as toilets, shelter, and an associated play space.

Figure 8 Estimated splash park construction costs

NO.	COMPONENT	ESTIMATED CAPITAL COST
FOOTPATHS AND PAVED AREAS		
1	Splash pad /apron	\$300,000
2	Footpath from the street	\$65,000
TOILET, SHELTER		
3	Two all gender/accessible toilets	Excluded
4	Shade over water play elements	Excluded
5	Picnic shelter	Excluded
EQUIPMENT/ FITTINGS/ FURNITURE		
6	Signage	\$7,000
7	BBQ	\$6,000
8	Bench seating, bins, drink fountains	\$15,000
9	Spray elements /cannons/buckets/ interactive equipment	\$120,000
10	Builders works (piling, excavations)	\$60,000
11	Plant room	\$250,000
12	Balance tank	\$300,000
13	Preliminaries on aquatic works	\$55,000
DRAINAGE /WATER/ PIPE WORK		
14	Water pipe work and drainage, storm water collection	\$55,000
SECURITY LIGHTING / PAD		
15	Security lighting	\$75,000
16	Power to the site	\$25,000
LANDSCAPING		
	Miscellaneous	\$30,000
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST		\$1,363,000.0

Indicative costs to operate a splash park

The following annual operational costs are based on the estimated capital costs and projects benchmarked. The costs assume the park is about 500 m² without accompanying support facilities, such as toilets, shelter, and associated play space.

Figure 9: Estimated operating costs and assumptions for a seasonal splash park

Component	Est. Cost per annum
Water	\$5,000
Electricity (Circulation pumps and features pumps)	\$22,000
Staffing (Backwashing, water testing, cleaning)	\$13,500
Staff training	\$1,500
Cleaning (Pressure washing surface, surrounds)	\$6,120
Rubbish removal	\$2,400
Grounds maintenance	\$1,080
Chemicals (Chlorine, Acid/CO ₂)	\$4,000
Repair and maintenance	\$7,000
Parts replacement - solenoids etc	\$5,000
Insurance	\$5,000
Technology monitoring	\$1,000
Security	\$6,000
Contingencies	\$5,000
Total	\$84,600

Assumptions

- The park is adjacent to an aquatic centre
- Design ensures minimal irregular maintenance.
- Equipment that needs servicing is easily accessible.
- The season is November to March.
- The park operates 10 hours per day.
- System uses recirculated water.
- Cleaning of nearby toilet, changeroom, BBQ facilities not included.
- Leisure Centre staff complete daily maintenance checks and 4 hourly water testing.
- Contractors do quarterly servicing and break downs.
- Pumps and sprays run daily not only on days over 23°C-25°C.
- No solar panels that would reduce electricity costs.

Asset life cycle costs

Indicative life cycle costs over the first 10 years are shown in the following table. These are related to the capital costs of wear and tear, typical repairs etc.

Figure 10 Indicative splash park life cycle costs over the first 10 years

NO.	COMPONENT	PROBABLE CAPITAL COST	YEAR										
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yrs. 1-10
	FOOTPATHS AND PAVED AREAS												
1	Splash Pad	\$300,000				\$8,038				\$9,224			\$17,261
2	Footpath from the street	\$65,000		\$1,634		\$1,742		\$1,866		\$1,998		\$2,141	\$9,380
	TOILET, SHELTER												
3	2 all gender/accessible toilet	Excluded											Excluded
4	Shade over water play elements	Excluded											Excluded
5	Picnic shelter	Excluded											Excluded
	EQUIPMENT/ FITTINGS/ FURNITURE												
6	Signage	\$7,000		\$440		\$469		\$502		\$538		\$576	\$2,525
7	BBQ	\$6,000			\$777			\$861			\$955		\$2,592
8	Bench seating, bins, drink fountains	\$15,000			\$2,912			\$3,229			\$3,580		\$9,721
9	Spray elements /cannons/buckets/ interactive equipment	\$120,000					\$83,191					\$98,805	\$181,997
10	Builders works (piling, excavations)	\$60,000								\$9,224			\$9,224
11	Plant room	\$250,000	\$3,050	\$3,142	\$3,236	\$3,349	\$3,466	\$3,588	\$3,713	\$3,843	\$3,978	\$4,117	\$35,481
12	Balance tank	\$300,000											Outside 10 year life



CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SPLASH PARK
FEASIBILITY 2023

NO.	COMPONENT	PROBABLE CAPITAL COST	YEAR										Yrs. 1-10
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
13	Preliminaries on aquatic works	\$55,000											Outside 10 year life
	DRAINAGE / WATER/ PIPE WORK												
14	Water pipe work and drainage, storm water collection	\$55,000	\$1,342	\$1,382	\$1,424	\$1,474	\$1,525	\$1,579	\$1,634	\$1,691	\$1,750	\$1,811	\$15,612
	SECURITY LIGHTING / PAD												
15	Security lighting	\$75,000		\$1,885		\$2,009		\$2,153		\$2,306		\$2,470	\$10,823
16	Power to the site	\$25,000											\$0
	LANDSCAPING												
	Miscellaneous	\$30,000	\$732	\$754	\$777	\$804	\$832	\$861	\$891	\$922	\$955	\$988	\$8,516
	TOTAL ESTIMATED	\$1,363,000.0	\$5,124	\$9,236	\$9,125	\$17,884	\$89,015	\$14,638	\$6,238	\$29,746	\$11,217	\$110,909	\$303,132
Average cost pa over 10 years													\$30,313

8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Support

A splash park can provide additional fun, affordable, attractive, and safe aquatic play opportunities for young families in the Shire, and would be supported by residents, based on the survey results.

It is important that it is well-used and it is recommended that therefore it should be located in Maryborough.

The Site

The preferred site for a splash park is at Jack Pascoe Reserve, adjacent to the Maryborough Leisure Centre.

- This is an area of Maryborough with an identified gap in access to play opportunities.
- The site provides an unimpeded space for a design that could provide a district level or destination space for residents and people from outside the Shire and well as within.
- This site would provide cost efficiencies in inspecting and managing the water play.
- It already has the required infrastructure, such as car parking and nearby services, which provide savings.
- It would activate a space that is underutilised, and currently has a large expanse of concrete.
- It does not have excessive tree cover.
- It is a prominent location on Majorca Road and has an existing bus stop.

Advantages of this site

The advantages of co-locating a splash park with an existing Council facility include:

- Lower build cost due to co-location, e.g. Council owns the land and accessible change rooms/toilets, utility services and chemical storage, kiosk, etc., are already provided on site.
- Lower operating costs where there is access to trained staff for management, maintenance and water quality monitoring, and security is provided with the existing pool.
- Opportunity to extend the offer at the Leisure Centre and enhance its use.
- Residents are familiar with the site.
- Income generated by additional visits to the Leisure Centre could offset additional staff costs.

No disadvantages of this site were identified.

Management

- The facility could be included in Council's contract for the management of the Leisure Centre and swimming pools.

Other options

- A splash park in conjunction with a play space is the preferred priority and meets all the objectives set. However, in the longer term, the Council could add small interactive water play elements to one or more of the swimming pools across the Shire and the existing one at the Leisure Centre. These would meet a slightly different objective of increasing the appeal of the swimming pools.

- Some interactive water play elements could replace the small pool in the Maryborough Outdoor Pool. This pool doesn't not have a heritage listing.
- These water play elements would add to the attraction of the pools and aquatic offerings and provide more experiences for additional people.

Capital and Operating Costs

The estimated cost to construct just the splash park is at least \$1.4 million. This figure excludes supporting infrastructure and the recommended district play space to be provided in association with the splash park.

Any further detailed costs will need a detailed design to inform them.

Based on benchmarking facilities proximate to Central Gold Fields, operational costs are likely to be in order of \$85,000 per year.

Additional capital costs over 10 years could be an order of about \$30,000 per year to address preventative works and repairs to assets.

Resourcing this proposal

It is recommended that Council:

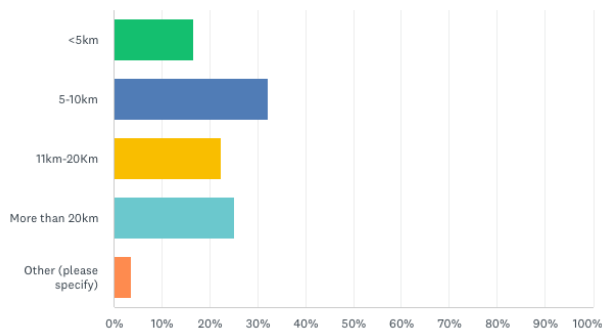
- Consider providing a splash park, only if Council can provide adequate funds to manage and maintain the facility to a high standard.
- If Council can resource this type of facility; plan to provide a zero depth splash park that caters to a district catchment, in conjunction with a new play space, and associated picnic and support facilities. The splash park and play space could be constructed separately but should be designed as one integrated facility.
- Consider this resourcing decision in term of play space upgrades and annual maintenance, and the findings of the Play Space Strategy
- Manage and operate the splash park as part of the Leisure Centre operations.
- Refer an amount of up \$2 million to Council's budget and Strategic Financial Plan for the construction of a splash park in Maryborough.

9. APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. THE COMMUNITY SURVEY: WHAT RESPONDENTS SAID

Question 15: How far would you travel to use a small water play area?

The majority of respondents would travel 5 to 10 kilometres however a number were also prepared to travel more than 20 kilometres to use a splash park.



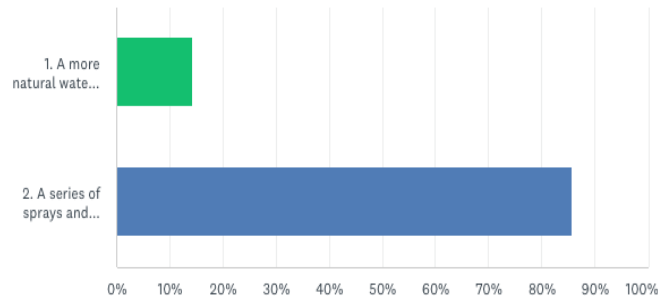
The following table shows the distance likely to travel to a splash park, and the town where the respondents is from.

Location	<5km	5-10km	11-20km	>20km	Other	Total
Maryborough	42	73	32	37	7	191
Carisbrook		14	10	4	2	30
North			1	7		8
Central	4	3	5	4		16
South		4	12	8		24
Outside CG		1	1	12	2	16
Grand Total	46	95	61	72	11	285

Question 16: What type of water play area would be best provided by Council?

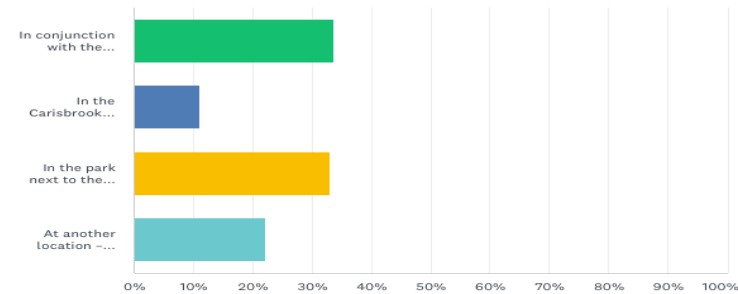
Respondents were asked about the nature of water play that they would prefer a) A more natural water play area with hand pump, zero depth channels, sand play with vegetation etc., or b) A series of sprays and water play equipment on a paved apron.

Over 85% of respondents preferred the spray apron style of water park over a more natural water play elements.



Question 17: Which location for a water play facility do you think would suit the most people in the Shire?

A very similar number of respondents thought the best location for a water park was in association with the Maryborough outdoor pool it's those who chose next to the Maryborough Leisure Centre (64) respondents suggested another location other than those options provided.



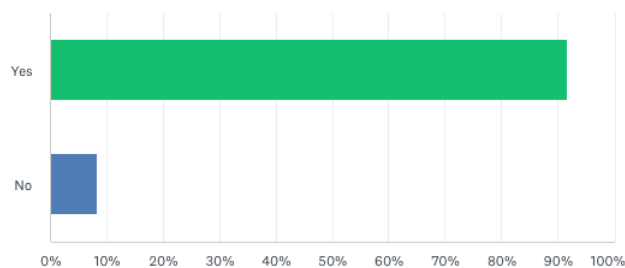
*The most common "Other" suggestion is near the Skatepark (Princes Park East). More gave this response (40) than for Carisbrook (32). See following table.

Figure 11. Which location for a water play facility do you think would suit the most people in the Shire?

Location	North	Central	Maryborough	Carisbrook	South	Other	Total
Maryborough Outdoor Pool	5	3	71	3	11	3	96
Beside Maryborough Leisure Centre	2	7	64	5	7	8	93
At another location*	1	5	48		5	5	64
Carisbrook Park/Market Reserve		1	8	22	1		32
Grand Total	8	16	191	30	24	16	285

Question 18: Splash parks may cost more to build and maintain than a typical play space. Do you think a water play area is a higher priority to build than other play space upgrades?

More than 90% of respondents thought that a water play area was higher priority than other play space upgrades.



Question 19: Reasons why a water play area is a higher priority to build than other play space upgrades

The main reasons given as to why a water play area is a higher priority are summarized in the following table.

The main reasons were a splash park would add variety to the opportunities available, there is no outdoor pool, providing an additional attraction to the town, there is a need for more free activities, children need these types of activities, it and it would be an accessible to people of all ages and abilities.

Figure 12. Reasons why a splash park is a high priority

Summarised Reason	Qty	%
Adds variety to opportunities available	160	64%
No outdoor pool	54	22%
Attraction	45	18%
Free	28	11%
Activity	23	9%
Accessible	21	8%
Prefer to pool	9	4%
Safer than a pool	9	4%
Other	6	2%
Cost	2	1%
Water familiarisation	1	0%

Question 20: If no, please provide your reasons why a water play area is not high priority

Figure 13 Reasons why a water play area is not high priority

Reasons why a water play area is not high priority	Count
Costs	3
Short season/ only suitable for the summer Playgrounds can be used all year around	5
Need an outdoor pool more	2
All other playgrounds would get more use	1
Outdoor pools don't have much variety for toddlers	1
No one community deserves it over another	1
All parks are basic / not up to date, need more going on e.g. basketball rings, more nature play and fences, e.g. Whirrakee Rise	2
Not everyone will use them	1
Can do water play at home	1
Incorporate water into other playground spaces; don't need a dedicated space	1
We need more indoor play space i.e., for birthday parties	1

Full comments
Reasons why a water play area is not higher priority to build than other play space upgrades?

- A minority of the community is very vocal in regard to a splash park, but many would not understand the ongoing costs involved with the running of this, as well as the overall use each year-I wouldn't be taking my little kids there unless it's a hot day, which is only going to be over approx. 3 months of the year.
- Other okay areas need updating first.
- Having a full size fully functional outdoor pool would be more beneficial than a splash park or anymore play spaces. Currently our kids are learning to swim in an indoor pool where they can touch the bottom which is not ideal or overly realistic if they fell in fully clothed etc. if a splash park was to be considered this area should all tie in together. Utilise the derelict tennis courts as well. It's a great central space.
- We have many play spaces in the area that would get a lot more use if they were upgraded there is no point adding more and letting the older places go to waste.
- I think all growth to our community is beneficial in the long run. Our local outdoor pools offer baby/toddler pools but not much variety when it is keeping the kids interested in long enough periods times especially when a parent pays an entry fee.
- At the same time no area of community deserves more than the other. But it's not just our local community that benefits from growth to the wider community

- It's a hard question, I don't think any of the parks are up to date or have enough going for them especially having twin boys who like to run off. I think all parks should have fences. So I can't answer that one
 - **We don't have a swimming pool in the town!**
 - There would be more things to do at a splash park and more water and fun for kids to play with
 - The ongoing cost and water usage concerns me. For the cost it is only one season so 3-4 months at most. I think the money could be used to better. Adding public use basketball rings and more nature play in numerous areas around the region would be my choice.
 - Not everyone will use a splash park. More families would use playgrounds any time of the year
 - The other playgrounds are in desperate need of upgrading. It would be amazing to have both a splash park and upgraded park but a park that can be used all year around would be amazing.
 - There are other options for water play at home
 - Our play spaces are very basic. I think spending the money and improving the beautiful area near the lake would be more useful. The splash park would only be used for a couple of months a year
 - You have an indoor pool with a play area and an outdoor pool where children can play in water, they will play on other maintained playgrounds.... Splash parks are really only suitable for the summer....
 - Have a pool and safer play in backyard compared to this, splash park so limited to time of year. Playgrounds all year around.
 - Water play can be more economically incorporated into other playground spaces; we don't need a dedicated splash park per se, as it's use would be limited to the handful of very hot days. Water play in a playground setting can be used year round.
 - It would be great. Not a necessity over improving other spaces.
 - I think Whirrakee rise has a very large proportion of young children and families, making a series of upgrades to make the area user friendly would be my preference first.
 - I suppose you can only use a splash park for a few months of the year and playgrounds can be used all year!
 - Water parks are only for summer and warmer months. Parks we can use all year round. We take a towel and dry the slide and swing, so we get more use out of them
 - We need more indoor players, especially when kids want to have birthday parties and don't want to have it at home. There's not much places to have a kids party.
- Summary: Why is splash play appealing to residents**
- Those respondents who supported Council providing a splash park provided a number of reasons:
1. Its accessible / something that the whole family/ people of all ages and abilities can enjoy
 2. It is an activity needed by kids/ so many people would use it
 3. It would bring people to the town, an attraction
 4. Free activities are important, so you do not have to travel and the pool costs money
 5. **The outdoor pool is closed, and the kids need somewhere to cool off.**

Details of what respondent said under each heading are provided below.

1. Its accessible / something that the whole family/ people of all ages and abilities can enjoy

- It is family friendly, and the younger children love water
- There is plenty of fun play spaces all ages can enjoy the splash pad easier for grandma to walk in water than go down a slide
- There are a lot of new families in the area, meaning little toddlers, and a majority of them love to play in water, and we as parents like them to be able to interact with others while they do so, therefore I feel that a splash park would be a great asset to the town for this reason.
- Better access for some families.
- It's somewhere all young children can play
- They are more inclusive of all ages, where the artificial creeks are mostly for small children.
- The splash park will be built to cater for all children and abilities.
- The nearing towns all have parks. A water space is a safe space for all children to be able to play and enjoy the heat. Whilst engaging with other families in the near communities.
- Unique, accessible option for summer. There are lots of playgrounds in the area. Might attract families to the town
- I think a splash park would be inclusive for different ages, disabilities/abilities and social backgrounds
- Provides safe and inclusive summer activity for children of all ages and abilities- great for familiarising children with water, also calming/sensory for neurodivergent children. Plenty of other playgrounds and natural spaces for kids already.

- I have been waiting years for a splash park to be in town. Several times a year I'll drive to Bendigo to take the kids to one. My little boy is autistic and a sensory seeker, so he loves splash parks. He hates being in water like a pool, but the spray water is extremely appealing to him. I have taken him to the indoor pool that has the spray but because it's indoors it echoes really bad, and he gets that excited with screaming of joy that the sound echoes really badly being indoors. An outdoor one would be amazing
- Play n catch up with family.
- it would bring young family together
- The water parks the kids have been to have been awesome adults having a BBQ and the kids play for hours
- A splash park would appeal to all age groups.

There are smaller generations in this town that would love something that fits their needs and growing criteria. This town is full of families, this will bring the community together.

2. It is an activity needed by kids/ so many people would use it

- Need something like this for the kids
- It is hot in Maryborough. The kids get bored, there's nothing to do in summer.
- There is nothing for kids to do in Maryborough when it's summer and they want to cool off
- Kids of all ages love them. And other Smaller towns have them. It's about time we had One
- Because a lot more children would use this space

- Give kids a fun time, and people from out of town here to spend money at our shops
- This is a facility that so many people would use. In the warmer months children love to use splash parks
- Already travel to Creswick to use for smaller children. Better for families to just pop in
- To get outdoors more often
- It is a space that will be well utilised by the community and promote and strengthen relationships between community members.
- There is hardly anything for younger kids to do
- Yes, keeps kids outside and off of their electronics
- It will also provide those out of town something to do in town instead of going to other towns.
- Children love water play so it will get kids out socialising & off screens.
- There is nothing to do with young kids.
- So many people would take their kids
- Kids of all ages love them.
- Because it would be well utilised.

3. It would bring people to the town, an attraction

- It will be great for the growth of Maryborough
- Having a splash park will bring in more tourists and other homeowners to travel to Maryborough to use the splash park,
- Splash park at the market reserve Carisbrook would significantly improve this play space.
- Splash parks bring so much summer joy. And many families including mine travel to Ballarat or Creswick to use their splash parks. This would attract people to our town
- The existing parks are well established, and some are new such as the skate park. The water park would be great in the summer for local children, would attract more visitors to town and if placed near the outdoor pool, attract more people to use the pool facility, it's a great resource with views of the park and lake.
- Get people travelling to Maryborough. Which results in business making money. Or having free entry to all swimming pools again
- It will bring people into the town. We and a lot of other people travel to Creswick to use theirs.
- People would love to have a splash park close by with having to travel 45 mins, would also mean a lot more use for families
- Carisbrook could benefit from a splash park and be great for the local people to have something to look forward too and it takes some pressure of Maryborough parks in peak times.
- We need something for our town
- As families travel out of town to water/splash park if there is 1 in town people will tend to spend money in town

- Would attract tourists to the town, could be accessed by caravan park visitors Summer in Maryborough is hot and would be a great summer activity outdoors. The slides and things get too hot
 - Most play areas are appropriate. But I think water park will also get people travelling to Maryborough. Which in turn \$\$\$
 - A splash park in Carisbrook would bring people to the town and kids of all ages would love it
 - Because I think it would get so much more use! Plus will bring more people to town!
 - Everything cost money but this would keep community in town there for brings money
 - This town needs more revenue and having a splash park will be a great way to add to our already growing tourism attractions.
 - if Ballarat and other areas can have them why can't Maryborough. Mildura has one right on the Murray and it's always busy it's a great one. Visitors can use it, and it's safer than a big pool for drownings and more fun.
- 4. Free activities are important, so you don't have to travel and the pool costs money**
- Access must be free though.
- We travel a lot, and a free splash park will often dictate where we stop for lunch or dinner and occasionally even our o Enright stop. Therefore being tourist \$ into the town.
 - Anything free Everything is so expensive for families
 - Don't put it in the pools and charge us to go. Every other splash park is free and accessible
 - the pool is hardly open
 - A lot of family's can't afford to travail to other towns in our shire to go to the pool and also may not have the money to get into the indoor pool in summer.
 - So that everyone can enjoy and not have to travel in the heat
 - Some people cannot afford the pool- a free splash park would be amazing
 - A lot of families that can afford it go out of town. And the ones that can't miss out and a lot of these families don't even have air conditioning or cars This space also needs to be inclusive for those with a disability so anyone can use it including the clients I work with of all ages
 - I believe a lot of the community if asked would donate or contribute to fundraising for this to happen
 - Not a lot to do with your family that's free
 - Because it will help those who can't afford to attend the pool in summer keep cool while children can still play.
 - We need a free space for kids & families to use during summer. Parents don't want to go to playgrounds on 40 degree days & have kids going down hot slides & getting too hot so often stay home locked indoors under an air con.
 - It is a free activity for families in the shire that differs from a regular playground. It can be enjoyed by people of all ages.
 - There also needs to be a free outdoor water option for families, especially during times of hardship, no child should miss out.
 - Some families can't afford to go to pool so at least this would be somewhere for them to enjoy.
 - Offering a free service, would allow families to enjoy it on a regular basis.

5. The outdoor pool is closed, and the kids need somewhere to cool off

Because we have no outdoor pool, give the local kids and the kids that come down for energy breakthrough somewhere to cool down

- There is very little for young children to do during the hotter times of the year, especially with the pool not being open.
 - Kids need options when it comes to play, and this is an excellent option for summer especially when there is no outdoor pool operating in town
 - We don't have a proper water area as the outdoor pool is not opened and is not of a good standard.
 - Because of pool closure plus they are SO MUCH FUN
 - We don't have enough for children to do in our town and without an outdoor pool being operational atm
 - Children have no outdoor water space with our outdoor pool out of action.
 - At least there is somewhere for kids to go while the pool is closed.
 - And a free water space play area to go when it's hot would be fantastic. Everything costs so much these days. There are no pools open into the day to use in this town
 - Families in this town will benefit from this as we no longer have a big outdoor pool.
 - The benefit will out way the cost and coverage of building and maintaining
 - The pool is now closed. Imagine all the fun a splash park would bring to the town for children over holidays, after school and weekends.
- We live in an area that is generally hot for a lengthy period of time. The outdoor pool is not open, and I feel that a beautiful natural water park would not only be a great learning and fun place for our local children but also for the tourist families that stay here. Perhaps even encourage more visiting families. Lake Victoria area is a wonderful spot for this as the caravan parks are also nearby
 - With the Maryborough outdoor pool being closed indefinitely, the splash park would still allow families to gather and socialise.
 - We have lots of other play spaces and no outdoor pool
 - With Maryborough having no outdoor pool and being rather hot up here during the summer months I believe that this will bring more families outside and more families relocating to the area
 - No outdoor pool
 - I think with the outdoor pool closed kids need another source of water fun in the summer, I'd vote that be built first and then upgrade the play equipment. Personally the outdoor gym equipment was a waste of money! Should have been put into these other ideas
 - As the outdoor pool is closed
 - There are already enough play space options in town, we need to add a splash park for families who can't afford a pool. Especially with the outdoor pool closing
 - With so many families struggling with the cost of living and not having the outdoor pool currently operating, a free slash park would be amazing
 - Due to the closure of Maryborough outdoor pool.

- We don't even have a public pool and our water ways are polluted with blue green algae
- Given that our outdoor pool is now closed until further notice, an outdoor water plays place is important for children. It provides a place to meet, play and have lots of fun.
- Need a splash park as there is no outdoor pool in Maryborough
- Summer fun is limited to pools only when it's super-hot and the outdoor pool isn't even useable
- With the pool being shut there is nothing to do in summer. I feel like the splash park would well utilised.
- More user friendly than pool, also the fact the outdoor is not in use. All ages and people living with disabilities would have ease of access. It would be a draw card to the town with local businesses profiting from the extra tourism. We wouldn't have to travel to Creswick like we usually do to attend a splash park. It would be financially cheaper to run than the outdoor pools and have longer seasonal usage.
- Because there is no outdoor pool at the moment and since nothing has been started on its renovations. I'm guessing there won't be an outdoor pool for some time
- No outdoor pool currently and indoor pool to hot in summer
- Because you have shut the outdoor pool, and we also travel to Ballarat a bit for the water parks
- Not all pools are open and have to be a certain temperature when a splash park will be up to parents' choice.
- There is currently no outdoor pool, so an outdoor splash park is essential!
- Currently, there doesn't seem to be any indication that the outdoor pool will be opening any time in the next few years. There's no other option for water play in summer other than the indoor pool which is humid and not the best location to be on a warm day. Also, there isn't a huge variety of things to do in town and as we are a low socio-economic area, it's nice to have a variety of no cost options for families.
- They are fantastic to use, and it is something the shore is really missing. Especially since the outdoor pool is gone
- Without an outdoor pool in Maryborough, and the increasing hot weather and lack of free experiences for families and children in the shire I feel it is vital to provide more experiences for families to engage in to maintain healthy lifestyles. Also many families cannot financially afford to drive to the outlying suburbs that have water parks.
- The parks we have in town her great a water park will add something new and exciting for the family especially because we don't have an outdoor pool
- We haven't got an outdoor pool; we have warm enough weather. It would be such an asset to the town.
- At this time there is only the Maryborough Leisure Centre for the indoor pool due to outdoor pool requiring a major repair or replacement. They are usually closed after midday on Saturdays meaning citizens/residents have to travel out of town to use other pool facilities.
- No outdoor pool within 20 km of us. Bring young children out to enjoy the outdoors and encourage physical activity for both children and parents.
- Our swimming pool is closed so a good alternative.

- Something for the kids to do in the summer as no outdoor pool
- We currently have no outdoor pool for an unknown amount of time. It would also be an asset to energy breakthrough
- Because there is currently no outdoor pool or appropriate space for children to spend summer safely in Maryborough
- Splash parks can be made fun for a large age range and not having an outdoor pool for the next 4+ years in such a hot, dry area means we need somewhere for kids to find relief.
- No outdoor pool in use currently. Improve kids confidence around water.
- We have no pool God knows when we will..... This will be used a lot
- You've closed the outdoor pool! Spend the money in the meantime!!
- **With no pool for school age children it is necessary to drive for more than 20 minutes to find anything more than a puddle in the summer. If the municipal pool doesn't get fixed for 2,3 or 4 years, what are we to do!?**
- Due to no outdoor pool in town a splash park would be perfect for the kids
- When the heat hits the kids need more options of outdoor play to keep cool. Plus god only knows how long the outdoor pool will be closed for.
- Outdoor pool is now shut and who knows when or if it'll reopen. A splash park is great for children all ages to enjoy.
- There is over a dozen other play spaces. While a splash park would cost more to build and maintain, it would be filling a gap. Not all families have the funds to access the pool.
- Also, a hybrid natural/artificial play space would be nice. Vegetation and also concrete.
- With our outdoor pool closed for however long, the kids need some other form of fun over the school breaks
- I have a 1 and two year old. A splash park would be great in summer, we don't have access to Maryborough pool because it's closed.

APPENDIX 2. BENCHMARKING OF SPLASH PARKS

The following table provides a list of largely regional splash parks and the facilities that are included at each.

Figure 14 Splash parks and their facilities

Splash Park Name	Toilets	BBQs	Picnic Area	Shaded Seating	Change rooms	Wi Fi	Bike Racks	Rubbish Bins	Kiosk	Solar heating
Long Gully, Bendigo	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓
Riverwalk Estate, Werribee	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		
Crocodile Park, Point Cook	✓	✓	✓							X
Eureka Outdoor Pool, Ballarat	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Victory Park, Sebastopol	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		
Midlands Park, North Ballarat	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		
Lara Outdoor Pool	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	
Adventure Park, Wallington	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Creswick Splash Park	✓			✓				✓		
Woodlea Estate Adventure Park, Rockbank	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		X
The Heart Bannockburn	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		

Splash park management, entry fees, season and operating hours

Figure 15. Example of splash parks, management entry fees, season length and opening hours.

Splash Park Name	Management	Entry Fees	Season Length	Operating Hours
Long Gully, Bendigo	Belgravia Leisure	Free	Oct - March	Sept - Nov 10 am – 6 pm; Dec- Mar 9 am - 8 pm
Riverwalk Estate, Werribee	Wyndham Council; Melbourne Water; Places Victoria	Free	Oct – March. Apr - Sept	9 am – 8 pm 10 am – 5 pm
Crocodile Park, Point Cook	Not known	Free	Year round	Open 24 hours
Eureka Outdoor Pool	City of Ballarat: In-house aquatic services co-ordinator	Adult \$5, Child/Concession \$4.20, Family \$15, Under 4 Free	Dec - April	6.30 am - 7.30 pm weekdays. closes 5.30 pm weekends
Victory Park, Sebastopol	City of Ballarat	Free	Nov - 30 April	9 am - 9 pm
Midlands Park, North Ballarat	City of Ballarat	Free	Nov - 30 April	9 am - 9 pm
Lara Outdoor Pool	City of Geelong	Adult \$8.00, Adult with child under 5 \$6, Adult with child 5-18 years \$12, Concession \$6	Nov - March	6 am – 6 pm
Adventure Park, Wallington	Private	Adult \$43, Child (based on height) \$33.50 Seniors \$26, Child under 90 cms Free	Oct - April	Oct - Dec 10 am - 5 pm; Dec - Apr 10 am – 6 pm
Creswick Splash Park	Shire of Hepburn	Free	2 Dec- 31 March	9 am - 9 pm
Woodlea Estate Adventure Park	Developer	Free	Year round	Open 24 hours
The Heart Bannockburn	Council; via contract to electrician and plumber	Free	December to April	9 am – 9 pm
Mill Park All Abilities Play	Not known	Free	Late October to April)	8am-8pm during summer while the water plays tables operate all year round.

APPENDIX 3. TYPES OF SPLASH PARKS

There are many styles and scales of splash parks and water play areas. These range from those which include just a small hand pump and troughs and perhaps a stream bed in a natural setting to large-scale facilities in social settings with sprays and hard surfaces, associated with aquatic centres, or major parks.

Images of a range of examples are shown below.

Figure 16. The following table describes different styles of splash park found in Australia and overseas.

Type of splash park	Description	Photo example
Zero depth, free-non supervised, interactive water play elements with play spaces	Local splash park/water play area in conjunction with small playground and oval, change facility etc., Long Gully City of Greater Bendigo	
Zero depth, free-non supervised, interactive water play elements with play spaces	Splash park added to a large destination play space, e.g., Wallan Community Playground	

<p>Zero depth, free-non supervised, interactive water play elements with large destination play space.</p> <p>Urban plaza style water play area</p>	<p>Booran Reserve City of Glen Eira</p>	
<p>Zero depth, free-non supervised, interactive water play elements with play spaces</p>	<p>Modest water play park with dry play equipment in an open space.</p> <p>City of Ballarat</p>	
<p>Nonzero depth</p> <p>Outdoor water play requiring supervision, provided in conjunction with an aquatic centre - paid access</p>	<p>Water play equipment at an outdoor pool: Noble Park</p>	

**Nonzero depth
Free access,
outdoor water play
(theoretically
requiring
supervision)**

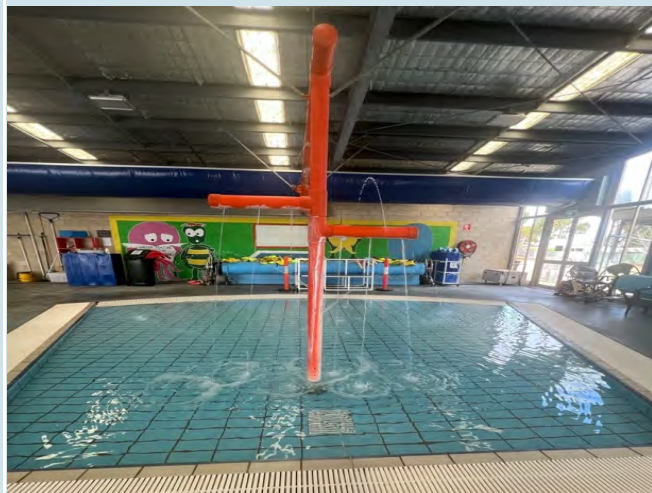
The Entrance Water Play, Central Coast Council on a beach edge plaza adjacent to a shopping centre.



**Nonzero depth
water play
requiring
supervision;
indoor, paid
access**

These facilities require specialised management by trained personnel, (lifeguards) regular maintenance and routine water quality monitoring.




The Maryborough Leisure Centre has a small water feature.



**Nonzero depth
water play
requiring
supervision;
indoor, paid
access**

Keilor East Aquatic Leisure Centre.



Nature based zero depth unsupervised water play in wider play space	Royal Park Nature Play Space City of Melbourne	
Water element in overall park design – no equipment	Seasonal creek bed water play – US	
Water elements in overall park design – no equipment	Princess Diana Foundation Play Space Hyde Park London	

**Free water play in
natural water
bodies
(Lakes, Rivers
and Creeks and
the Bay)**

Bright Victoria



**Zero depth, free-
non supervised,
interactive water
play elements on
the edge of the
River.**

Bright Victoria



**Zero depth, free-
non supervised,
interactive water
play elements on
the edge of the
River.**

Nagambi Splash
Park
Buckley Park



Recently developed water play spaces

Bannockburn “The Heart” Golden Plains LGA. Constructed 2019

Nature of facilities

- Adjacent play equipment for toddlers and children
- A ninja-style play area for teens
- A flying fox designed for people of all abilities
- Seating, lighting, shade
- Public toilets
- Water play includes design features a splashpad with 40 interactive elements, including a tipping bucket and canopy trio
- 400m² of concrete make up the waterplay slab
- Stage 2 to include: a village green, a performance stage that looks out to an open amphitheatre, change rooms to compliment the water play area
- Additional shade and BBQ structures.

Capital costs

The \$3 million Stage One. Funded by \$1.2 million from the Australian Government through the National Stronger Regions Fund, \$1,233,500 from Council; \$566,500 in grants from the State Government with \$500,000 from Regional Development Victoria’s Rural Infrastructure Fund and \$66,500 from Sport and Recreation Victoria’s Community Sports Infrastructure Fund - Minor Facilities Program.

In addition, Barwon Water supplied the precinct with drinking water fountains, and the Bannockburn and District Lions Club helped fund the BBQ.

Recurrent costs

- \$60-80 per year, (water park only).
- 1500 litres per minute flow through the hydraulic systems

Figure 17 Images of Bannockburn “The Heart” splash park



Image: [Puddles and Play - play spaces of Geelong](#)



Image Melbourne Playgrounds.

Eco Park Romsey Macedon Ranges Shire LGA 2022

Nature of facilities

- Climbing forest, ropes course, flying fox, water features, a sensory garden, a 'woodland ramble'
- An events space with picnic and BBQ facilities
- Sculptural installations and 'Story Telling Chair'.
- 4000 native and exotic plants.
- Solar path lighting.

Capital costs

The cost of construction was \$2,737,000.

- Regional Development Victoria (\$1,333,000)
- Macedon Ranges Shire Council (\$996,000)
- The Australian Government (\$215,000)
- Romsey Ecotherapy Park Inc. (113,000 + Art in the Park), and
- Lancefield Romsey Community Bank (Bendigo Bank) (\$80,000).

Recurrent costs - Not known.

Figure 18 Images Eco Park Romsey



Photo Melbourne Playgrounds. Photo Macedon Ranges Shire

Mill Park All Abilities Play Space 2019

Nature of facilities

An extensive play with multiple zones of activities:

- Play Tower Zone
- Nature Zone
- Junior Play Zone,
- Water Zone
- Swing and Sand Pit Zones, and
- Seniors Agility Zone.
- The water play area includes accessible water play tables, shooting water jets, misting rings and manual water pumps.

Capital costs

\$1 mill first stage from the Growing Suburbs Fund and \$2.03 millions of Council funds for the final stage.

Recurrent costs

- Running costs – power and water; \$60 K to 70K per year.
- Other maintenance \$60-80 K a year for all year round items and water play.
- Upkeep / replacement parts.
- Warranty for first 12 months on all parts.
- \$5K – 10K per year after that for replacement parts.

Figure 19 Images Mill Park All Abilities Play Space



APPENDIX 4. SUMMARY OF KEY COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS: VIC HEALTH AND WELLBEING ACT REGULATIONS 2019

Key points

The regulations require the following for public interactive water features.

1. Ensure adequate training and competency of aquatic facility operators. Recommendations for training are provided in Chapter 10 of the Water Quality Guidelines.
2. Have a water quality risk management plan that includes:
 - Staff roles and responsibilities, competencies and training requirements
 - A description of the facility, its source water, and its treatment systems
 - Water quality targets and treatment objectives
 - Hazard identification, risk assessment and control measures
 - Operational and verification monitoring
 - Incident management and response procedures, and
 - Data recording and reporting.

Resources to assist in the development of this document are available on the Department of Health and Human Services' [website](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/water/aquatic-facilities/developing-water-quality-risk-mgmt-plan) <<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/water/aquatic-facilities/developing-water-quality-risk-mgmt-plan>>.

3. Undertake at a minimum:
 - one daily check of key pool water quality parameters before the pool opens for the day; and
 - operational monitoring every four hours while the pool is open.
 - At least one of these checks should be done by hand and analysed manually each day. It is strongly recommended that this occurs immediately before the aquatic facility opens for the day.

For further information see Appendix 2 of the Water Quality Guidelines.

4. Keep pool water quality parameters within the range specified in the Water Quality Guidelines
5. Undertake periodic verification monitoring of microbiological parameters (refer to Appendix 2 of the Water Quality Guidelines)
6. In the event of non-compliance with microbiological parameters, follow the [prescribed procedure for responding](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/water/aquatic-facilities/incident-response) <<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/water/aquatic-facilities/incident-response>>

7. Keep written records for 12 months from the date the record was made, including details of all results of tests and monitoring, and all corrective activities undertaken in relation to the water in the aquatic facility.

WATER QUALITY GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC AQUATIC FACILITIES

Version 2.0 December 2020

Appendix 1: Interactive Water Features; splash pads, spray parks and water play areas (IWF)

Interactive water features (IWF) such as splash pads, spray parks and water play areas have been associated with a number of disease outbreaks in Australia. The information provided below will help operators of IWFs to minimise the risk to public health.

Risk management

All IWFs should have site-specific risk management plans.

Location

IWFs are often located within public open spaces such as parks, so it is important to consider surrounding land uses and how other activities in the neighbouring area may affect the water quality of an IWF.

For example, sand pits, garden beds and trees will increase the volume of physical contaminants (such as sand, dirt and leaf litter) entering the IWF.

This will compromise the effectiveness of filtration and disinfection systems.

General site sanitation, including the availability of public infrastructure (such as toilet and shower facilities) will reduce physical and microbiological contamination of the IWF water system. Access to showers, toilets and baby change facilities encourage good hygiene practices among IWF users.

Ideally, fencing should be provided to keep out dogs and other animals during and outside operating hours. If this cannot be achieved, where IWFs are located in areas where animals may be present (for example, near dog parks), providing bag dispensers can prompt owners to collect and dispose of animal faeces.

System design

Full system design plans (as installed) and operating manuals should be maintained so they can be reviewed by an environmental health officer as required.

The following factors should be considered when designing an IWF:

- The quality and availability of the source water (only potable water should be used)
- Containment structures and drainage including upstream interceptor drains to prevent stormwater runoff entering the IWF
- Water circulation – recirculating water (subject to treatment and re-use) versus non-recirculating water (passes through the IWF only once)

- Infrastructure – appropriately sized to achieve effective water circulation, turnover, filtration and disinfection targets
- Materials and system components – fit for purpose (slip resistant, anti-entrapment) and able to withstand ongoing exposure to the surrounding environment including varying disinfection concentration levels (such as during periodic shock dosing)
- Water flow – engineered to prevent both water stagnation and water pooling
- Spray plume height and velocity – high spray plumes may expose more people due to the drift of water particles (aerosols), including people who may not be directly using the facility; low spray plumes may be more appealing to young children, resulting in accidental or intentional water consumption
- backflow prevention – this ensures water supply lines are protected from contamination. Any backflow device should be installed and commissioned to comply with the relevant plumbing and drainage legislation.

Recirculating systems

Water storage and circulation

Water should be stored and circulated to allow adequate water turnover and distribution of disinfectant throughout all parts of the system. Water tanks should be accessible for cleaning and inspection and be capable of complete draining. Storage capacity, including both the size and number of tanks required, must be sufficient to ensure an adequate residual of disinfectant is maintained within the system.

Water temperature is an important consideration when sizing water storage tanks. Small volumes of water will heat rapidly when exposed to external surfaces during IWF operation, increasing the risk of microbiological growth. A water turnover rate of not more than 30 minutes is recommended due to the relatively small volumes of water and high contaminant load associated with IWFs. A flow gauge should be fitted to the system to demonstrate an adequate flow rate within the IWF.

Treatment

Filtration

Filtration systems should be fitted to remove particulate matter (soils, leaves, etc.) and potential disease-causing microorganisms. The filtration system should run constantly while the IWF is open to users.

For new aquatic facilities, the filtration system should be designed and operated to remove *Cryptosporidium* oocysts 4 microns in diameter

or smaller and continuously achieve filtrate turbidity of not more than 0.2 NTU. Refer to [Table A2.2 in Appendix 2](#).

Disinfection

Automatic dosing equipment and online monitoring equipment should be fitted to control the level of disinfectant in the water. Refer to [Table A2.1 in Appendix 2](#) for water quality parameters and targets. Using cyanuric acid is unlikely to be beneficial where the majority of the water is contained in a balance tank. In addition, using cyanuric acid in such instances may reduce the effectiveness of chlorine disinfection.

Secondary disinfection

Secondary disinfection is recommended, usually in the form of UV disinfection, for all IWFs. UV disinfection can inactivate *Cryptosporidium* oocysts and medium pressure UV lamps can control combined chlorine while improving the water quality (including the odour from combined chlorine). A UV disinfection system should be installed in a location prior to the chlorine dosing point and run constantly while the IWF is open to effectively control the combined chlorine levels. Prioritise using validated equipment that is capable of delivering a UV dose required to achieve a minimum of 3- \log_{10} , or 99.9 per cent, inactivation of *Cryptosporidium* (Centres for Disease Control and Prevention 2018).

On-site monitoring

Daily on-site monitoring is essential for all IWFs and should include physically inspecting the site. This is important because IWFs are typically located in open public spaces and may be accessed after hours. On-site operational monitoring should be undertaken at all IWFs. This is important to gain an understanding of water quality and to verify the accuracy and reliability of any remote monitoring.

The frequency of monitoring should be determined as part of the site-specific water quality risk management plan. Routine operational monitoring should include free chlorine, total chlorine, pH, alkalinity, cyanuric acid (if used) and water temperature. Refer to [Table A2.1 in Appendix 2](#) for water quality parameter targets.

Records of physical inspection and on-site operational monitoring should be maintained and made available for compliance inspection.

Remote monitoring

To enable real-time, remote monitoring of free chlorine levels, pH and water temperature, IWF operators should install probes for free chlorine, pH and temperature.

The probes should be configured to allow automatic shutoff of the IWF when the free chlorine levels, pH levels or water temperature are out of specification.

If remote monitoring is used, the results should be reliable and accessible during operating hours and made available during compliance inspections.

Signage

Safety signage should be provided in a conspicuous location(s) and include:

- Contact details for reporting issues/faults with the IWF
- Advice to not swallow the water
- Advice not to use the IWF if someone has diarrhoea, and for 14 days after symptoms have stopped
- Advice for babies and toddlers to wear tight-fitting swim nappies

- The location of the nearest public toilets/change rooms
- Advice that animals are prohibited from accessing the IWF.

Assistance animals

Assistance animals (such as guide dogs) can be permitted to enter an area with an IWF but should not be permitted to enter the IWF or drink the water.

Seasonal operation

For any IWF that are operated seasonally, to minimise water quality risks the IWF should be drained to remove any stagnant water prior to closing for the season. Prior to reopening, the system should be cleaned and disinfected.

Operator skills and knowledge

The owner or operator of an IWF should take reasonable care to ensure the person(s) responsible for managing the IWF has the appropriate skills, knowledge, and experience. Further information on operator training is provided in Chapter 10.

Non-recirculating systems

The following systems present a lower public health risk and therefore may not require treatment:

Use mains drinking water supply - do not recirculate water.

Water quality guidelines Appendix 2: Water quality criteria and monitoring frequencies (excerpts)

Table A2.1: Chemical criteria for facilities using chlorine-based disinfectants

Parameter	Situation	Criteria (1)
Free chlorine ⁽²⁾	Interactive water feature	Min. 1.0 mg/L
Combined chlorine (chloramines)	Any pool or interactive water feature	Max. 1.0 mg/L, ideally < 0.2 mg/L. Must be less than the free chlorine residual.
Total chlorine	Any pool or interactive water feature	Max. 10 mg/L
Turbidity (pool water) ⁽³⁾	Any pool or interactive water feature	Max. 1 NTU ⁽⁴⁾ , ideally < 0.5 NTU
pH	Any pool or interactive water feature	7.2–7.8
Total alkalinity	Any pool or interactive water feature	60–200 mg/L
Ozone ⁽⁵⁾	Any pool or interactive water feature	Not detectable

- (1) mg/L is equivalent to parts per million or ppm.
- (2) **Free chlorine** concentration should be increased when high bather numbers are anticipated to ensure concentrations are never less than the minimum.
- (3) If **turbidity** is measured immediately post filtration, it should not exceed 0.2 NTU (DIN 19643 (2012-11)).
- (4) **NTU** = Nephelometric Turbidity Unit. Ideally this would be measured with an appropriate device. If this option is not available, the following applies:
An aquatic facility operator must ensure that the water in the aquatic facility is maintained in a clear condition so that the floor of the aquatic facility or any lane marking, or object placed on the floor of the aquatic facility is clearly visible when viewed from any side of the aquatic facility' (r. 51, Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019).
- (5) Residual excess **ozone** is to be quenched before circulated water is returned to the pool.

Table A2.3: Microbiological criteria for all facilities

Microbiological parameters

Parameter	Guideline value
<i>Escherichia coli</i> (or thermotolerant coliforms)	0 CFU ⁽¹⁾ /100 mL or 0 MPN ⁽²⁾ /100 mL
<i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i>	0 CFU ⁽¹⁾ /100 mL or 0 MPN ⁽²⁾ /100 mL
Heterotrophic colony count (HCC)	Less than 100 CFU/mL

(1) **CFU** = Colony Forming Units(2) **MPN** = Most Probable Number

Table A2.4: Risk profiles to inform microbiological and chemical verification monitoring frequencies

Low-medium risk facilities	High-risk facilities
Residential apartment pools	Spas
Diving pools	Interactive water features
Lap pools (i.e. 25 m and 50 m pools)	Wading pools
Gym pools*	Learn-to-swim pools
Resort pools*	Program pools
Holiday park pools*	Hydrotherapy pools
Hotel/motel pools*	School pools
Theme park wave pools*	Water slides
	Shallow-depth interactive play pools
	Pools used by incontinent people
	Aged care facilities
	Retirement village pools
	Artificial lagoons with unrestricted access

Adapted from: NSW Department of Health 2013, Public swimming pool and spa pool advisory document (p. 34)

*Note: The following are medium-risk facilities that may require increased monitoring consistent with high-risk facilities during peak seasonal use: lap pools, gym pools, resort pools, holiday park pools, hotel/motel pools, theme park wave pools. In instances where a facility manager is operating a type of facility that is not included in Table A2.4, the manager should identify the type of facility that is most similar and monitor accordingly.

If a facility falls into multiple risk categories, the facility should be monitored as if it were the type of facility in the highest risk category. For example, if a gym pool is used for learn-to-swim classes, the facility should be categorised as high risk.

Table A2.5: Minimum operational monitoring frequency (1)

Parameter	Category 1 and category 2 aquatic facilities
Disinfectant: Free chlorine, combined chlorine and total chlorine; or bromine	For facilities with automated monitoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One check immediately before the pool opens for the day, and Four hourly monitoring while the pool is open. At least one of these daily checks should be done by hand and analysed manually. It is strongly recommended that this occurs immediately before the aquatic facility opens for the day.
Disinfectant: Free chlorine, combined chlorine and total chlorine; or bromine	For facilities without automated monitoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> one daily check by hand and analysed manually immediately before the pool opens for the day, and four hourly monitoring by hand and analysed manually while the pool is open.
pH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tested at the same time as for disinfectant parameters (all facilities)
Water balance (includes calcium hardness, total alkalinity TDS and temperature)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly (all facilities)
Turbidity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily (all facilities)
Cyanuric acid (if used)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum monthly, ideally weekly (all facilities)
Condition of aquatic facilities: Facility must be kept in a clean, sanitary and hygienic condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aquatic facility operator to determine the inspection frequency necessary to ensure this regulatory requirement is met.

¹ The information provided in Table A2.5 is the minimum requirement under the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019. However, increased monitoring frequencies may be required based on the risk profile of the aquatic facility, as per Table A2.4. It is the responsibility of facility operators to determine if this applies. The frequency of monitoring should also be increased if the bather numbers increase significantly – for example, during school holidays.

Table A2.6: Recommended microbiological verification monitoring frequency

Parameter	Low-medium risk facilities	High-risk facilities
<i>Escherichia coli</i> (or thermotolerant coliforms)	Quarterly	Monthly
<i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i>	Quarterly	Monthly
Heterotrophic colony count (HCC)	Quarterly	Monthly

Table A2.7: Recommended chemical verification monitoring frequency

Parameter	Low-medium risk facilities	High-risk facilities
Chloramines (combined chlorine)	Quarterly	Monthly
Ozone (if used)	Quarterly	Monthly

Note: The frequency of monitoring should be increased if the bather numbers increase significantly. For example, during school holidays when bather numbers at public facilities increase significantly, medium-risk aquatic facilities should be monitored as if they were high-risk facilities.

7.3 Statutory Planning Delegation Policy

Author: Manager Statutory Services

Responsible Officer: General Manager Infrastructure Assets and Planning
The Officer presenting this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present the proposed Statutory Planning Delegation Policy (the Policy).

The Policy aims to:

- Provide clarity and certainty for Councillors, Council staff, and the community regarding statutory planning decision processes;
- Define clear delegation arrangements for planning decisions, including which matters are determined by Council and which are delegated to officers;
- Promote transparency, accountability, and efficiency in decision-making; and
- Support effective communication and engagement throughout the planning process.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

Adopts the Statutory Planning Delegation Policy attached to this report.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

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

The Community's vision:

Leading Change

- 4. Good planning, governance, and service delivery.
- 4. Transparent decision making.

Initiative:

Provide financial sustainability and good governance.

Legislation:

Local Government Act 2020

Planning and Environment Act 1987

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The absence of a formal Statutory Planning Delegation Policy at Central Goldfields Shire Council presents a significant gap in our governance framework, particularly considering recent sector-wide scrutiny of planning decision-making processes.

Operation Sandon

The findings of Operation Sandon, handed down by the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC), exposed systemic vulnerabilities in Victoria's planning system. The report highlighted how planning decisions can be compromised by political donations, lobbying, and

personal relationships, undermining public confidence and the integrity of local government processes.

In response, IBAC made 34 recommendations aimed at strengthening transparency, accountability, and governance in planning. The recommendations reflect a broader push to reduce the risk of undue influence and improve decision-making integrity.

Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Bill 2025

The Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Bill 2025, which proposes reforms to the Victorian Planning and Environment Act 1987, has been introduced to Parliament but has not yet passed. The Bill seeks to establish three distinct planning approval pathways—Category 1, 2, and 3—designed to streamline decision-making and reduce delays in housing delivery.

While these reforms are still under consideration, Council currently faces a clear governance gap due to the absence of a Statutory Planning Delegation Policy. Developing this policy now is critical to ensure robust governance and clarity in decision-making. It will:

- Define roles and responsibilities.
- Empower officers to make timely determinations on lower-risk applications.
- Maintain Councillor involvement in strategic matters, consistent with obligations under the Local Government Act and Planning and Environment Act.

Any changes required as a result of the Bill can be incorporated into future policy updates, ensuring flexibility and compliance with legislative changes.

REPORT

As with all Local Government Authorities, at Central Goldfields Shire Council (CGSC), relevant powers are transferred to the CEO and officers by Council via Instruments of Delegation. At CGSC these are:

- S13 Instrument of Delegation of CEO powers, duties and functions;
- S14 Instrument of Delegation by CEO for VicSmart Applications and Future Homes Applications under the Planning and Environment Act 1987; and
- S16 Instrument of Delegation for Bushfire Reconstruction Applications under the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

The Statutory Planning team currently operates within a decision-making framework under an operational procedure. This procedure was developed in 2018 and has never been updated. This procedure is not guided by a clear Policy position adopted by the Council.

Purpose of Policy

The purpose of the Policy is to provide clear guidelines regarding the exercise of delegated planning powers, duties and functions. It aims to ensure that Councillors can concentrate on determining matters in relation to the strategic direction of the municipality and that decision-making regarding planning matters is transparent, consistent and compliant with all relevant legislation and policies.

The objectives of the Policy are to:

- increase certainty through applying a consistent approach in an established framework for the exercise of delegated authority in matters concerning statutory planning, whilst

recognising the key role of Councillors in determining the strategic direction of the municipality;

- clearly define when Council will be called on to determine a planning permit application and when an application can be determined by an officer acting under delegation;
- reduce delays in the planning process using delegation which facilitates efficient, consistent and transparent decision-making;
- enable Councillors and officers to fulfil their respective roles; and
- enable adequate involvement of all stakeholders in decision-making, including, Councillors, officers, applicants, referral authorities, objectors and the broader community.

The benefits of a Council Policy position

The Policy balances the need for efficient, expert decision-making with Councillor oversight on key issues, enhancing the overall responsiveness and governance of statutory planning processes.

The Policy provides Council with many benefits, such as:

Improved Efficiency and Timeliness

Delegations allow senior planning staff to assess and decide on most planning permit applications without requiring the full Council's involvement. This reduces delays by streamlining decision-making on routine or less significant applications and prevents Council meetings from being overloaded with matters that can be better handled administratively.

Councillors focus on applications of Significant Importance or Major Public Interest

The Policy ensures that Councillors can focus on planning applications of Significant Importance or Major Public Interest, while day-to-day decisions are handled by delegated officers. This maintains Councillor engagement on strategic issues while delegating operational decisions, promoting strengthened governance in line with the principles of the Local Government Act 2020 and Planning and Environment Act 1987.

Consistent and Professional Decision-Making

Delegations are typically given to suitably qualified and experienced staff, ensuring that technical expertise underpins decisions in line with the intent of the Planning Scheme. This is important for maintaining consistency, quality, and defensibility of planning decisions.

Use of Delegation Guidelines

The Policy includes clear delegation guidelines, which specify thresholds and protocols for consultation with Councillors. These structures support informed, multi-perspective consideration of complex or borderline applications without escalating all applications to full Council.

Transparency and Accountability

Call-ins (requests by Councillors to move decision-making from delegated officers back to Council) are governed by clear rules, with reasons clearly documented in Council records. This promotes transparency regarding decision authority and ensures that the delegation is exercised appropriately.

Formal Delegation Framework Underpinning Local Government Act

The Policy aligns with legal frameworks allowing Council to delegate powers to officers, ensuring decisions are lawful, and delegation limits are respected. It also facilitates regular review and updating of delegations to keep pace with organisational and legislative changes.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

The Statutory Planning Delegation Policy has been developed for officers, Councillors and applicants. The Policy has been developed based on Councils legislative obligations, best practice guidelines and giving consideration to similar policies in the local government sector. The Policy has been externally reviewed by Macquarie Local Government Lawyers.

FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The preparation of the Policy was undertaken using existing human resources in the Planning unit of Council and incurred legal costs for quality assurance and alignment with legislation. This has been funded through the approved operational budget. There are no immediate unbudgeted financial or resource implications. Decisions arising from the use of the Policy in relation to potential costs associated with VCAT will be made on an individual basis, as required.

RISK MANAGEMENT

This report addresses Council's strategic risks:

Business Continuity - Failure to plan adequately for the impacts of a disruption to Council's normal operating environment.

Without a clear Policy position, Council faces a governance gap that could disrupt business-as-usual operations. A Policy will ensure planning assessments and determinations can continue seamlessly, even as legislative changes progress.

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

Inconsistent decision-making increases the risk of unplanned and unbudgeted VCAT hearings. A robust Statutory Planning Delegation Policy will provide clarity and consistency, mitigate these financial risks and support long-term sustainability.

Governance - Failure to transparently govern and embrace good governance practices.

The absence of a formal policy undermines transparency and good governance practices. Developing a Statutory Planning Delegation Policy will strengthen Council's governance framework, aligning with the intent of the Local Government Act and Planning and Environment Act.

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

While the *Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Bill 2025* has not yet passed, Council must proactively manage compliance within current requirements. A clear Policy position will drive adherence to the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and can be updated to reflect any changes once the Bill becomes law.

CONCLUSION

In response to the governance vulnerabilities highlighted by IBAC Operation Sandon and the current absence of a Statutory Planning Delegation Policy, Council must act decisively to strengthen transparency, accountability, and efficiency in planning decision-making. While the Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Bill 2025 has not yet passed, its intent underscores the need for a clear delegation framework that supports timely, proportionate decisions and maintain Councillor oversight of significant matters.

The proposed Statutory Planning Delegation Policy delivers this by:

- Establishing a clear and consistent framework for the exercise of delegated planning powers;
- Introducing documented call-in procedures and mechanisms for community engagement; and
- Enabling Councillors to focus on strategic planning priorities while qualified officers manage routine applications.

Adopting this Policy now addresses a critical governance gap, reduces delays, and mitigates financial risks associated with unplanned VCAT hearings. It ensures decisions are made lawfully, fairly, and in the public interest, while positioning Council to adapt seamlessly to future legislative changes.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 20251311 Draft Statutory Planning Delegation Policy [7.3.1]

STATUTORY PLANNING DELEGATION POLICY



Directorate:	Infrastructure, Assets and Planning
Responsible Manager:	Manager Statutory Services
Review Due:	November 2029
Adoption:	Council
Date Adopted:

Acknowledgement

Central Goldfields Shire Council acknowledges and extends appreciation for the Dja Dja Wurrung People, the Traditional Owners of the land that we are on.

We pay our respects to leaders and Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture, and the hopes of all Dja Dja Wurrung People.

We express our gratitude in the sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual and cultural costs of that sharing and our hope that we may walk forward together in harmony and in the spirit of healing.

1. Background

The findings of Operation Sandon, handed down by the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC), exposed systemic vulnerabilities in Victoria's planning system. The report highlighted how planning decisions can be compromised by political donations, lobbying and personal relationships, undermining public confidence and the integrity of Local Government processes.

In response, IBAC made 34 recommendations aimed at strengthening transparency, accountability and governance in planning. The recommendations reflect a broader push to reduce the risk of undue influence and improve decision-making integrity.

Central Goldfields Shire Council recognises the importance of aligning with these principles, whilst also enabling Councillor involvement in strategic decision-making, in line with their responsibilities in the *Local Government Act 2020* and *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Act).

The absence of a formal Statutory Planning Delegation Policy (Policy) at Council presented a significant gap in Council's governance framework, particularly considering recent sector-wide scrutiny of planning decision-making processes, prompting the introduction of this Policy.

The development of this Policy is a proactive step towards:

STATUTORY PLANNING DELEGATION POLICY

- Strengthening governance by clearly defining roles and responsibilities in planning decisions;
- Enhancing transparency in how planning matters are assessed and determined by Council; and
- Promoting probity and reducing the risk of perceived or actual conflicts of interest.

This Policy provides a clear framework for delegating planning powers, ensuring that decisions are made consistently, fairly and in the public interest.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to provide clear guidelines regarding the exercise of delegated planning powers, duties and functions.

This Policy ensures that decision-making regarding planning matters is transparent, consistent and compliant with all relevant legislation and policies.

This Policy provides clarity and certainty to Councillors, Council staff and the community regarding Council's planning processes, promoting effective communication and engagement throughout the planning process.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to Councillors and Delegated Officers holding planning powers, duties and functions pursuant to an Instrument of Delegation. These powers include the consideration and determination of planning permit applications and other decisions required by Council as the Responsible Authority under the Act.

This Policy supports a commensurate approach to the delegation of planning decisions within Council by ensuring that Councillors are engaged in applications of significant importance or major public interest, whilst providing Delegated Officers with the ability to determine all other planning permit applications, in accordance with the Instruments of Delegation.

This structure enables Councillors to focus on strategic planning policy decisions and direction for the municipality.

This Policy details the criteria that will be used to decide who can determine a planning permit application within Council.

4. Policy Objectives

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- **Increase certainty through applying a consistent approach** within an established Policy framework for the exercise of delegated authority in matters concerning statutory planning, whilst recognising the key role of Councillors in determining the strategic direction of the municipality.
- **Clearly define when Council will be called on** to determine a planning permit application and when an application can be determined by an officer acting under delegation.
- **Reduce delays in the planning process** by using delegation which facilitates efficient, consistent and transparent decision-making.
- **Enable Councillors and officers** to fulfil their respective roles.
- **Enable adequate involvement of all stakeholders** in decision-making, including, Councillors, officers, applicants, referral authorities, objectors and the broader community.

5. Policy Authorities

The Policy establishes authorities and identifies who bears responsibility for determining planning permit applications. The criteria are based on an assessment of risk and consider the value of the project, public response and the potential sensitivity of the project.

Table 1: Planning authority decision table

Application	Criteria	Determination
Planning Permit or Amended Planning Permit	Value of development up to \$5 Million; or Between 1-4 eligible objections have been received.	Delegated Officers
Planning Permit, or Amended Planning Permit	Value of development above \$5 Million; or 5 or more eligible objections have been received; or Planning application is called in by a Councillor in line with Section 7.3 of this Policy.	Council

STATUTORY PLANNING DELEGATION POLICY

Application	Criteria	Determination
Planning Permit or Amended Planning Permit	<p>The CEO determines that the application is <u>Significant Importance</u> in line with this Policy; or has <u>Major Public Interest</u> or is likely to be of <u>Major Public Interest</u>.</p> <p>The CEO, General Manager Infrastructure Assets and Planning, and/or Manager Statutory Services is satisfied that the application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> raises an issue of policy or process not covered by existing Council policies, processes or practices. <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is affected by two or more Council policies that appear to be inconsistent, conflicting or ambiguous, or the parameters for decision are unclear. 	Council
VicSmart Applications	All applications	Delegated Officers

6. Policy Tests

For an application to be considered of **Significant Importance**, it must meet one or more of the following criteria:

(a) Strategic Policy Impact

The consideration of the proposal involves various policies which may conflict or be unclear on application which may set a precedent or influence future planning decisions. The proposal raises issues beyond the immediate site, affecting the municipality's strategic direction.

(b) Scale and Complexity

The proposal concerns a large-scale development (for example, multi-dwelling projects, major commercial or industrial proposals). High-value developments or those outside the Urban Growth Boundary often trigger significance tests.

(c) Long-Term Impacts

The proposal raises potential for long-term environmental, economic, or social effects on the municipal community.

STATUTORY PLANNING DELEGATION POLICY

For an application to be considered of **Major Public Interest**, it must meet the following criteria:

(d) Major Public Interest

Significant objections or submissions indicating strong community concern have or are reasonably expected to be received. Media attention or controversy beyond the immediate neighbourhood is or is reasonably expected to be generated.

7. Exercise of Planning Decisions

This part outlines how the Council will determine planning permit applications.

7.1 Delegated Officers determination of Planning Permits

Subject to Section 5, Table 1, Delegated Officers will determine planning permits in accordance with the provisions of section 60 of the Act.

Council's *S6 Instrument of Delegation – Members of Staff* sets out the titles of those Council officers to whom planning powers, duties and functions are delegated. Council's delegation applies to three senior positions:

- Coordinator Statutory Planning;
- Manager Statutory Services; and
- General Manager Infrastructure, Assets and Planning.

7.2 Councillor requests for Planning Permit information

Councillors may request information or a briefing on planning permit applications at any time. Requests can be made to the Chief Executive Officer or General Manager Infrastructure Assets and Planning. Information on individual planning permit applications should be made available to all Councillors, to ensure Councillors have access to the same information. Once a request for information has been made, officers will provide an update to all Councillors at the next available Councillor briefing session.

7.3 Councillor powers to call-in Planning Permits

Councillor call-in of a planning permit refers to a process where Councillors may request a planning permit application (which would normally be decided by Council officers under Delegated Authority), be brought before the full Council for determination.

Councillors can call in planning permits of a value less than \$5m and that have less than 5 objections (for example, permits delegated to officers for decision) provided they can justify the call-in based on the *Significant Importance and/or Major Public Interest* test outlined in section 6 of this Policy.

Once a valid call-in request is received, the application cannot be determined under officer delegation. The application will be brought to a Council meeting for determination once the assessment process for the permit application has been completed by officers.

At least two Councillors must request the call-in for a planning permit application. The request must be in writing to the Chief Executive Officer and include:

STATUTORY PLANNING DELEGATION POLICY

- details of the application;
- reasons for calling in the application (how the call-in request aligns with section 6 Policy Test requirements of *Strategic Importance* and *Major Public Interest*); and
- signatures of the supporting Councillors.

All call-ins requested by Councillors, including the reasons why it was called in and why the matter should not be decided under delegation, will be recorded in the Register of Councillor call-ins.

7.4 Decide to call in permit applications early

Councillors must ensure that it is clear to the Chief Executive Officer if there is an intention to call-in an application as soon as is practicable. It is the responsibility of Council's Delegated Officers to inform the permit applicant if an application has been called in.

7.5 Provide reasons for Council decisions

Where a Council decision differs from the Council officer recommendation, clear reasons for the decision must be included in the resolution of Council and documented in Council Meeting minutes.

8. Responsibilities

The following responsibilities form part of this Policy:

8.1 General Responsibilities

Councillors and Delegated Officers work in partnership as different arms in the same organisation.

The common goals are:

- informing the community;
- resolving differences between objectors/submitters and applicants, where appropriate;
- achieving quality outcomes in planning decisions;
- ensuring transparency in the planning process; and
- ensuring consistency in decision-making.

Where possible, Council will seek consensus between objectors, submitters and applicants with a view to obviating the need to apply to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) for review of planning decisions.

By building consensus and reaching a mutually acceptable outcome, stakeholders can avoid the delays, costs and frustration that can be associated with formal VCAT processes.

8.2 Role of Councillors

Council is the Responsible Authority for planning permits under the Act. Councillors play a key role in determining the strategic direction and planning policy position of the municipality. Councillors can participate in planning decision-making processes as outlined in this Policy, as representatives of the community and by participating in Council Meetings.

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Under section 28 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the role of a Councillor is strategic, not operational. Councillors must:

- ensure Councillor decisions on planning permits occur only at Council meetings, based on policy and evidence;
- avoid pre-determination, lobbying, or private discussions with developers;
- adhere to Council's Governance Rules; and
- consider the IBAC recommendations from Operation Sandon and related reports to maintain integrity and public trust.

8.3 Councillor interaction with planning applicants

Outside of Council Meetings, Councillors perform important representative functions by liaising with residents of the Shire. Community engagement is important to ensure that Councillors have a good understanding of the local issues and are best positioned to consider the needs and interests of the broader local community.

To ensure that transparency and integrity are applied to decision-making in relation to planning permit applications, Councillors should not liaise directly with applicants of a planning permit application. Should Councillors want information on a specific planning application, they may request information as outlined in section 7.2 of this Policy.

8.4 The Council

Subject to this policy, the Council's role in the planning process is to consider all factors relating to a planning permit application, including officer recommendations. The broad range of issues considered by Council as part of its decision-making process includes:

- the purpose and vision of the Planning Scheme;
- objectives of the Planning Policy Framework;
- the purpose of the applicable zone and/or overlay;
- decision guidelines set out in the Planning Scheme;
- objections lodged;
- outcomes (if any) reached at a mediation;
- the likely impacts on neighbouring land and the neighbourhood; and
- any relevant State and/or local policies included in the Planning Scheme.

8.5 Role of Delegated Officers

The role of Delegated Officers is divided into two distinct areas:

(a) Before a decision is made

Before a decision is made on an application, it is the role of Delegated Officers to engage with applicants, objectors, referral authorities and other residents clearly, impartially and professionally to ensure that Council's planning processes and requirements are understood.

Delegated Officers must ensure that applications and supporting documents are in the best form to ensure the full concept is easily understood and able to be properly considered.

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Council is obliged by law to consider all applications. This allows all applications to be the subject of an appeal, which is an underlying principle in the Victorian planning system. Delegated Officers must formally consider all applications that are received.

(b) Provide advice and determine applications

Delegated Officers provide professional and technical advice to applicants, residents and the Council on a range of issues.

Delegated Officers are empowered to determine planning permit applications under section 60 of the Act subject to the criteria in Section 5, Table 1 of this Policy.

9. VCAT

9.1 Delegation to Council Officers at VCAT

The CEO or their delegate has authority to:

- Represent Council at VCAT hearings, mediations, and compulsory conferences;
- Negotiate and settle matters with all parties during VCAT proceedings;
- Form a position on any amended plans or proposals filed with VCAT;
- Prepare, file, and serve amended grounds for review under sections 77, 79, or 82 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987;
- Negotiate and agree to minor changes to permit conditions or plans, provided:
 - Changes do not alter the fundamental intent of Council's decision; and
 - Changes do not introduce new uses or developments of greater impact.

The above powers will apply irrespective of whether the decision was made by the Council or by a Delegated Officer.

9.2 VCAT Powers and Council's Authority

A decision made by Council or a Delegated Officer may be reviewed in VCAT. These proceedings are subject to certain limitations.

VCAT cannot hear matters involving federal legislation or cases where parties are from different states. VCAT cannot award compensation for non-monetary loss beyond a small amount for personal injury, and it cannot make non-monetary orders. Status reports of Council VCAT cases must be provided to Councillors to keep them informed as to the progress of hearings.

When VCAT conducts a merits review, it takes a fresh look at the application and is not bound by the Council's or the Delegated Officer's decision.

VCAT can:

- affirm the Council decision;
- vary conditions;
- set aside the decision and substitute its own;
- issue a consent order; or

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- cancel or grant a permit.

Once an application is lodged at VCAT, Council becomes a party to the proceeding, not the decision-maker. It must:

- present its position (which may differ from its original decision if circumstances change); and
- comply with Model Litigant Guidelines and VCAT Practice Notes.

9.3 Matters Requiring Council Resolution

The following actions arising from a VCAT proceeding must be referred to Council for a decision:

- settlement or consent orders that materially alter Council's original decision (for example, changing a refusal to an approval or approving additional storeys or dwellings);
- withdrawal of Council's position or abandonment of grounds of refusal; or
- any agreement that significantly changes the scope or impact of the proposal beyond what was considered by Council.

VCAT expects Councils to provide a fair and balanced assessment, even those which are contrary to the Council decision. Independent advocates are skilled at framing these arguments without undermining Council's position. Council will appoint independent representation when:

- the decision is politically sensitive or high-profile;
- the decision opposes the Delegated Officers recommendation; or
- the matter involves complex planning policy or legal issues.

9.5 Councillor status reports

Councillors will be provided with a weekly report in the Councillor Bulletin which will provide the following information:

- list of all planning permit applications lodged in the past seven days, including indications about:
 - relevant previous applications on the property; and
 - applications that are, or are likely to be of Significant Importance or of Major Public Interest.
- list of planning decisions made under delegation in the past seven days.
- VCAT matters to be heard; and
- VCAT decisions made in the past seven days.

10. Planning Hearings

A Council Planning Hearing provides an independent, transparent forum for assessing planning matters. A Planning Hearing can help Councils meet community expectations for

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integrity and align with state reforms aimed at reducing corruption risks and streamlining planning processes.

A Planning hearing presents an opportunity for the applicant, referral authorities and objectors to make submissions before Councillors in attendance.

Planning hearings are not a mandatory requirement under the Act but are used to give Councillors an opportunity to gain further insight into objections and a better understanding of the application in addition to reports presented through regular Council briefings and Council Meetings.

As it is not a mandatory requirement, Planning Hearings will not form part of all planning permit application processes. The criteria used by Council to determine whether a Planning Hearing should be conducted is outlined in the Planning Hearing Eligibility table below (Table 2).

Table 2. Planning Hearing Eligibility

Application Type	Criteria	Determination
Planning Permit Amended Planning Permit	Value of development up to \$5 Million; OR Between 1-4 objections have been received	<u>No hearing provided</u>
Planning Permit or Amended Planning Permit	Value of work above \$5 Million; OR 5 or more objections have been received; OR Planning application is called-in by Council.	<u>Hearing offered</u> Upon request of Council; OR The applicant; OR Where the CEO, General Manager Infrastructure Assets and Planning and/or Manager Statutory Services are satisfied that the application is of Significant Importance or Major Public Interest.
VicSmart	All applications	No hearing

Councillors can request a planning hearing in line with the communications protocols outlined in the *Councillor and Staff Interaction Policy*.

11. Planning Definitions

Term	Definition
Act	Planning and Environment Act 1987

Warning – uncontrolled when printed – the current version of the document is kept in Council's Records Management System

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Amendment	<p>A permit or details in a permit can be changed using the following mechanisms under the Act:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 72 – a person who is entitled to use or develop land in accordance with a permit may apply to the Council for an amendment to the permit. • Secondary Consent – under a permit Council may consent to changes to, or amend matters regulated by a permit condition if this is authorised by the condition. • Section 87 – amendment under section 87 is a remedy available in limited circumstances to specified people exercisable by VCAT. • Section 87A – amendment under section 87A is a broad power of amendment only exercisable by VCAT at the request of the owner, occupier or developer of land in respect of a permit issued at the direction of the Tribunal. <p>The powers to amend a permit under sections 72, 87 and 87A are statutory powers conferred by the Act. An application under section 72 can be made to Council. An application under sections 87 and 87A must be made to VCAT. Secondary consent powers arise under the permit itself.</p> <p>An application or request for consent to change something under the permit must be made to Council or other specified body named in the condition. Changes under a secondary consent provision in a permit condition change the matter or detail regulated by the condition.</p> <p>The permit itself is not changed, unlike an amendment under sections 72, 87 or 87A which amends the permit.</p>
Councillor call in	Councillor call-in of a planning permit refers to a process where Councillors request that a planning application, which would normally be decided by Delegated Officers, be brought before the full Council for determination
Planning Hearing	A closed meeting arranged to allow applicants, objectors and referral authorities to put their case to Councillors and Delegated Officers. Information is presented to inform a later decision and are closed to the public.
Delegated Officer	A member of Council staff that has been delegated a power, duty or function under the relevant Instrument of Delegation (S6, S13, S14, S16)
Eligible objections	<p>An objection to an application that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is submitted as a proforma (content and format) • is the only objection received from an objector at that address (for example, more than one objection received from the same property will be counted as a single objection) • is not unrelated to the permit trigger/s of the particular application • relates to a relevant planning consideration (for example, it does not concern matters that Council cannot consider when determining an application, such as precedent, devaluation of property, construction noise, etc)

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		NOTE: All objections will still receive written notification of Council's decision in accordance with the Act. This definition only relates to the counting of objections for the purposes of assessing the thresholds for the exercise of delegated authority under this Policy.
Instrument of Delegation	of	Refers to the S6 Instrument of Delegation – To Members of Council Staff, as adopted by Council from time to time.

12. Review

This Policy must be reviewed a minimum of once every 4 years.

13. Human Rights Statement

It is considered that this policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of *Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

14. Gender Equality Act

Gender equity is applied to this Policy by ensuring that decision-making processes are fair, inclusive, and reflect the diverse needs and experiences of all genders, often through a gender impact assessment. Council will use data to understand how different genders are impacted, promoting diverse representation within delegated roles, implementing inclusive engagement strategies for community input, and ensuring that policies and resource allocation do not reinforce existing gender inequalities.

15. Relevant Legislation and Council Policies

- Auditor General No 62. Land Use and Development in Victoria, The State's Planning System December 1999.
- Municipal Association of Victoria, Planning Delegation Report, 2014
- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- *S6 Instrument of Delegation – Members of Staff*
- S13 Instrument of Delegation of CEO powers, duties and functions
- S14 Instrument of Delegation by CEO for VicSmart Applications and Future Homes Applications under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- S16 Instrument of Delegation for Bushfire Reconstruction Applications under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- Councillor and Staff Interactions Policy
- Governance Rules

8 General and other Urgent Business

9 Notices of Motion

Nil.

10 Confidential Business

Nil.

11 Meeting Closure