



Minutes

Council Meeting held at 12.30 PM on Monday 4 December 2023 in the Perry Room, St Arnaud Town Hall.

Present

Cr Rob Haswell (Mayor)
Cr Lauren Dempsey
Cr Murray Emerson
Cr Kevin Erwin
Cr Trevor Gready
Cr Eddy Ostarcevic PhD

Mr Brent McAllister, Chief Executive Officer
Mr Vaughan Williams, Director Corporate and Community Services
Mr Trenton Fithall, Director Infrastructure and Amenity
Ms Justine Kingan, Director Strategy, Prosperity and Engagement

Affirmation

We recognise the traditional owners of the land.
We are inspired by the early pioneers and by those who gave their lives for our country.
We now ask God's blessing on our deliberations
and on our commitment to build a better lifestyle and environment.

Confirmed at the meeting of Council on Monday 5 February 2024.

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1. Apologies

An apology was received from Cr Karen Hyslop.

RESOLUTION

That the apology be received and leave of absence granted.

Moved: Cr Lauren Dempsey

Seconded: Cr Murray Emerson

Carried

2. Confirmation of Minutes

Council Meeting held on Monday, 6 November 2023

Statutory Council Meeting held on Monday, 6 November 2023

Unscheduled Council Meeting held on Monday, 13 November 2023

RESOLUTION

That the minutes as listed, copies of which have been circulated, be confirmed and adopted.

Moved: Cr Murray Emerson

Seconded: Cr Kevin Erwin

Carried

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

Nil

4. Presentations/Awards

Nil

5. Presentation of Petitions and Joint Letters

Nil

6. Disclosure of a Conflict of Interest at a Council Meeting

A Councillor who has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered at a Council meeting at which he or she-

- (i) is present must disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those present at the Council meeting immediately before the matter is considered; or**
- (ii) intends to be present must disclose that conflict of interest by providing to the Chief Executive Officer before the Council meeting commences a written notice-**
 - advising of the conflict of interest;**
 - explaining the nature of the conflict of interest; and**
 - detailing, if the nature of the conflict of interest involves a Councillor's relationship with or a gift from another person, the-**
 - name of the other person**
 - nature of the relationship with that other person or the date on receipt, value and type of gift received from the other person; and**
 - nature of that other person's interest in the matter;**

and then immediately before the matter is considered at the meeting announcing to those present that he or she has a conflict of interest and that a written notice has been given to the Chief Executive Officer.

The Councillor must, in either event, exclude themselves from the decision-making process, including any discussion or vote on the matter and any action in relation to the matter and leave the Council meeting immediately after giving the explanation or making the announcement (as the case may be) and not return to the meeting until after the matter has been disposed of.

Members of Staff

A member of Council staff must disclose any conflict of interest in a matter in respect of which they are preparing or contributing to the preparation of a report for a Council meeting. They must immediately upon becoming aware of the conflict of interest, provide a written notice to the Chief Executive Officer disclosing the conflict of interest and explaining its nature.

Nil

7. Informal Meetings of Councillors

[Brent McAlister, Chief Executive Officer]

Council's Governance Rules require that if there is a meeting of Councillors that-

- is scheduled or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of Council or briefing Councillors;
- is attended by at least one member of Council staff; and
- is not a Council meeting, delegated committee meeting or community asset committee meeting

the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that a summary of the matters discussed at the meeting are:

- tabled at the next convenient Council meeting; and
- recorded in the minutes of that Council meeting.

The records for the period since the last Council Meeting are listed below.

Date	Meeting Description	Matters Considered At The Informal Meeting:	Conflict Of Interest Disclosures		
20/11/2023	Councillor Briefing	8.1 10am Planning Permit Application PA2023064 - Stawell Grampians Gate Caravan Park 8.2 10.10am Planning Permit Application PA2023064 - Stawell Grampians Gate Caravan Park - Applicant 8.3 10.20am Planning Permit Application PA2023064 - Stawell Grampians Gate Caravan Park - Objectors 8.4 School Crossing Supervisors 8.5 Director Report - Strategy, Prosperity and Engagement 8.6 Business Engagement - 10 minutes 8.7 Council Meeting Schedule 2024	Councillor/Officer	Item Number	Left Meeting?
			Nil	Nil	Nil
13/11/2023	Councillor Briefing	7.1 10am Presentation: Grampians Tourism and Parks Victoria 7.2 Pre-Prep Discussion 7.3 Business Engagement (Deferred) 7.4 Council Meeting Schedule 2024 (Deferred) 7.5 Appointment of Council Committee Delegates/Representatives 2024 7.6 School Crossing Supervisors	Councillor/Officer	Item Number	Left Meeting?
			Nil	Nil	Nil
06/11/2023	Councillor Briefing	7.1 Pre-Prep Discussion 7.2 Recognition and Settlement Agreements Update 7.3 Sport and Active Recreation Strategy and Open Space and Active Transport Strategy - Feedback Consolidation 7.4 Stawell Gift Event Management Board Sponsorship 8.1 Council Agenda Review	Councillor/Officer	Item Number	Left Meeting?
			Cr Murray	7.4	Yes
			Emerson	7.4	Yes
			Ms Justine Kingan	7.4	Yes
			Mr Trenton Fithall	9.2.1	No - Item was not discussed

RESOLUTION

That the report on Informal Meetings of Councillors be approved.

Moved: Cr Kevin Erwin
 Seconded: Cr Lauren Dempsey

Carried

8. Items Brought Forward

Nil

9. Consideration of Reports of Officers

9.1. Enhance Lifestyles and Community

9.1.1. Council Action Report

Author/Position: Brent McAlister, Chief Executive Officer

Purpose

To report on the progress of the Council Action Plan 2023-24 for the period 1 August to 31 October 2023.

Summary

The Council Plan 2021-25 provides the objectives that Council will undertake throughout the four year period. To achieve the goals set out in the Council Plan, the Council Action Plan 2023-24 was adopted by Council at the 4 September 2023 Council Meeting.

The action plan outlines the major initiatives that are to be carried out in the 2023-24 year of the Council Plan. The attached report provides an update on the progress towards achieving the objectives set out in the Council Action Plan 2023-24 from 1 August to 31 October 2023.

Recommendation

That Council notes the Council Action Plan Report for the 1 August to 31 October 2023 period and approves the forecast plan.

RESOLUTION

That Council notes the Council Action Plan Report for the 1 August to 31 October 2023 period and approves the forecast plan.

Moved: Cr Kevin Erwin

Seconded: Cr Eddy Ostarcevic

Carried

Background/Rationale

Council is required under the *Local Government Act 2020* to prepare a Council Plan containing the strategic objectives of Council, strategies for achieving those objectives and indicators to monitor the achievement of those objectives.

The Council Action Plan 2023-24 supports the Council Plan by providing key actions that Northern Grampians Shire Council is to deliver within the 2023-24 year to accomplish the strategic objectives outlined in the Council Plan. Three progress updates over a 12 month period are provided to Council and the community to give a clear indication as to whether Council's goals and objectives are on track to meet delivery targets.

Legislation, Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

Local Government Act 2020

Council Plan 2021-25

Options

Option 1

That Council notes the Council Action Plan Report from the 1 August to 31 October 2023 period and approves the forecast plan. **[recommended]**

Option 2

That Council notes the Quarterly Council Action Plan Report with amendments. **[not recommended]**

Implications

Any identified sustainability issues (economic, social, environmental or climate change) or heritage/cultural, amenity, human rights/gender equality, privacy, risk management, budgetary and asset management implications have been addressed in this report.

Procurement

The Council Action Plan includes the expenditure agreed in Council's adopted budget.

Community Engagement

This report is to provide Council and the community with an update of Council's current projects and initiatives and if they are on track for completion.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The Quarterly Council Action Plan Report aims to improve transparency and provide clear information to the community.

Collaboration

Any opportunities for collaboration with other councils or public bodies will be considered with each initiative.

Officer's Declaration of Interest

All officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

Brent McAlister, Chief Executive Officer

In providing this advice as the author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Attachments

1. Council Action Plan 2023-24 - August to Oct 2023 **[9.1.1.1 - 9 pages]**

Council Action Plan 2023-24



	Off track
	Monitor
	On track
*	Projects carried forward

Enhance Lifestyles and Community				
Action	Adopted Due Date	Forecast Due Date	Current Status	Comments
Wellness and Welfare				
Deliver design for Navarre Recreation Reserve Facility Upgrades *	Jun-23	Dec-23		Planning and preparation underway. Project split into two with final designs for both stages expected to be completed by 30 June 2024.
SSAC Concept Design and Schematic	Jun-23	May-24		Tender awarded at September Council Meeting and investigations into the design and schematics has started.
Resurface the North Park Precinct Tennis Courts	Jun-24	Jun-24		Complete.
Enhance the Lord Nelson Park Sporting Club*	Jun-23	Oct-23		Quotes obtained July 2023. Equipment ordered, delays in obtaining stock with installation due by end of November.
Design the Great Western Football & Netball Clubrooms and Lighting*	Jun-23	Jun-24		On track.
Develop a new Stuart Mill Community Plan*	Jun-24	Jun-24		Due to resources deployed to community flood recovery efforts, Stuart Mill Community Plan is on hold.
Renew Heritage Trail signage*	Jun-23	Nov-23		Complete.

Review of the Early Learning Centre*	Jun-23	Nov-23		Delayed taking account of Pre Prep service and is currently underway and will completed in November 2023.
Undertake a Community Care Service Review*	Jun-23	Oct-23		A report on Community Care Review was presented to Council on 25 September.
Deliver a Sport and Active Recreation Strategy*	Jun-23	Apr-24		Community engagement on Draft Strategy expected to commence in February 2024.
Protect key heritage buildings and precincts*	Jun-23	Jun-24		Project delayed due to resourcing.
Conduct Heritage Study Review*	Jun-23	Apr-24		Stage 1 Environmental Thematic Review underway. Stage 2 Statement of Significance is unlikely to be delivered before December 2023.
Adopt the Navarre Recreation Reserve Precinct Master Plan*	Jun-22	Dec-23		Recommend removal due to: 1. Fund for the facilities upgrade have been secured and work underway 2. Netball court upgrades are in the 10 year capital list 3. Sport and Rec. Strategy will identify any outstanding needs.
Deliver the North Park Precinct Skate Park*	Mar-23	Sep-23		Complete.
Cultural Awareness training and develop a protocol*	Jun-23	Jun-24		Planning and preparation on hold with the delivery date to be reviewed.
Improving Connectivity				
Support Schools to create their own Transport Safety Management Plans	Jun-24	Jun-24		Not due to start until January 2024.
Undertake a Footpath Improvement Program	Jun-24	Jun-24		On track.
Undertake a Major Rural Roads Improvement Program	Jun-24	Jun-24		On track.
Undertake a Rural Residential Road Improvement Program	Jun-24	Jun-24		On track.
Undertake a Town Road Sealing Improvement Program	Jun-24	Jun-24		On track.

Undertake an Urban Residential Road Improvement Program	Jun-24	Jun-24		On track.
Undertake the Great Western Trail Stage 1 - Trail Delivery*	Dec-22	Dec-23		In progress. Full completion by end of December 2023.
Undertake a Stawell Flood Study*	Jun-24	Jun-24		Initial modelling undertaken. Further refinement underway including survey work.
Undertake a Marnoo Flood Study*	Jun-22	Feb-24		Final documentation and flood mapping complete. Seeking Council endorsement in February 2024.
Deliver Open Space and Active Transport Plan*	Jun-23	Apr-24		Community engagement on Draft Strategy expected to commence in February 2024.
Advocate for new and existing spaces for arts and culture activities*	Jun-23	Jun-24		On track.
Protecting the Natural Environment				
Implement the Walkers Lake Management Plan - Historical Plaque Project	Jun-24	Jun-24		Complete.
Implement the Walkers Lake Management Plan - Access, Tracks and Signage*	Jun-23	Jun-23		On track.
Container Deposit Scheme Implementation*	Jun-24	Jun-24		Complete. Container Deposit Scheme began in November 2023.
Establish a Transition Plan for a Glass Recycling Collection Service	Jun-24	Jun-24		Planning is ongoing. Council's new waste contract will consider glass collection options and implementation timeframes.
Transfer Station Upgrade - Deliver Glass Bins*	Dec-22	Dec-23		Complete.
Investigate and prepare for a separate Food Organic and Garden Organic (FOGO) waste collection*	Jun-23	Jun-24		Planning is ongoing. FOGO Trail to take place in St Arnaud to better understand the nature of material received through a FOGO kerb side collection and establish a means to manage and process locally.
Undertake Food & Green Organic Waste Composting Trial*	Jun-23	Jun-24		Trial began in August 2023 and FOGO collection service underway in St Arnaud. Trial to conclude in 2024.

Deliver Public Place Recycling in high use areas *	Dec-22	Dec-23		Bins enclosures being fabricated. Expect delays due to fabrication timelines and supply issues.
Advancing Education				
Develop a Youth Strategy *	Jun-23	Jun-24		Strategy development underway.

Boost Economic Growth				
Action	Adopted Due Date	Forecast Due Date	Current Status	Comments
Boosting Tourism				
Deliver the Grampians Peaks Trail Halls Gap connection*	Jun-23	Jun-24		Parks Victoria led project. Council endorsed the design and consented to works at the September Council Meeting.
Implement St Arnaud and Stawell Tourism Strategy Action Plans*	Jun-23	Jun-23		On track.
Support Victoria's Goldfields to be given UNESCO World Heritage status*	Jun-23	Jun-25		On track.
Building more Housing				
Housing Stocktake	Jun-24	Jun-24		On track.
Deliver Sloane St Trunk Infrastructure, Stawell*	Jun-23	Dec-23		Onsite Works Complete. Power connected and commissioning of the site due early December 2023.
Investigate Urban Growth opportunities and constraints to accommodate long term housing supply in Stawell*	Jun-23	Jun-24		Technical work underway.
Develop a St Arnaud Structure Plan*	Jun-23	Sep-23		Complete.
Continue to work with Passive Place on the delivery of the Sloane Street Development*	Jun-23	Jun-24		Officers monitoring adherence to contractual milestones and supporting planning requirements where able.

Growing Local Businesses				
Advocate for funding the Halls Gap Heath Street Bridge*	Jun-23	Jun-23		Detailed designs in progress to support funding application.
Determine feasible value-add opportunities to the agriculture sector*	Jun-23	Jun-23		On hold following ELT advice to focus on feasibility of poultry expansion.
Advocate for an outer township gateway at the proposed London Road intersection, Stawell*	Jun-23	Jun-25		Western Highway Duplication Section 3 identified as a key advocacy project in preparation for renewed advocacy with the State and Federal Governments.
Upgrade B-Double routes	Jun-24	Jun-24		On track.
Deliver Stawell Airport Runway Lighting Upgrade*	Mar-23	Dec-23		On track.
Review the Northern Grampians Shire Council Stawell Aerodrome Master Plan*	Dec-22	Dec-23		Due for adoption in December 2023.
Develop a Priority Investment Prospectus*	Dec-22	Dec-23		Regional Tourism Investment Prospectus complete and adopted by Council.
Undertake Heath St Bridge detailed design*	Jun-23	Dec-23		Final draft design under review. Expect final approval in December 2023.
Advocate to State and Commonwealth Governments for the implementation of key recommendations in the Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Digital Plan*	Jun-22	Jun-24		Featured in Council's Forward Advocacy Plan, however no direct advocacy opportunities are currently available.
Explore options for improved wayfinding (incl. signage and local information) along key urban routes	Jun-24	Jun-24		On track.
Secure funding of the Halls Gap commercial centre Rear Laneway Commercial Expansion	Jun-24	Jun-24		Featured in Council's Forward Advocacy Plan, however no direct advocacy opportunities are currently available.
Establish land use precincts along the Western Highway, Stawell*	Jun-23	Jun-23		Off track. Project pending resource availability.

Undertake a Bridges and Major Culvert renewal program	Jun-24	Jun-24		Works near complete on Landsborough Road Bridge. Design work complete to progress the remainder of the program.
Migration Support	Jun-24	Jun-24		On track.
Advocate for the realignment of the Lake Road level crossing	Jun-24	Jun-24		Not yet started.
Revitalise and reactivate retail opportunities in Stawell and St Arnaud *	Jun-22	Jun-25		On track.
Explore opportunities for long term industrial growth along Gilchrist Rd, Stawell and St Arnaud *	Jun-23	Jun-25		Progress pending amendment to introduce Stawell Framework Plan into the Planning Scheme.

Provide Sustainable Infrastructure				
Action	Adopted Due Date	Forecast Due Date	Current Status	Comments
Being a better Council				
Street lighting LED conversion	Jun-24	Jun-24		Project scope established and seeking funding opportunities
Undertake a Road Resealing Program	Jun-24	Jun-24		On track.
Undertake a Road Resheeting Program	Jun-24	Jun-24		On track.
Review the Footpath Asset Management Plan	Jun-24	Jun-24		On track.
Undertake a Stawell Cemetery Improvement Program*	Dec-22	Jun-24		Earthworks started, has since paused pending native vegetation removal planning permit.
Assess the condition of road & drainage assets*	Jun-23	Jun-24		Tender to be advertised in December 2023.
Undertake a Quarry Resource Material Review*	Jun-23	Jun-24		Work progressing with some minor delay.
Bridge and Major Culvert Condition Assessment*	Mar-23	Dec-23		Level 2 bridge assessment complete. Structures which qualify for further assessment will undergo a Level 3 assessment.
Undertake a Structural Assessment of the St Arnaud Pool*	Sep-22	Oct-23		Structural assessment complete. Further investigation planned to identify the cause of a water leak in the pool.

Improve Organisational Effectiveness				
Action	Adopted Due Date	Forecast Due Date	Current Status	Comments
Being a better Council				
Undertake 'Reduce Red Tape Projects' - Building, Planning, Environment review *	Jun-23	Jun-24		Review complete. New system in early implementation.
Undertake 'Reduce Red Tape, Referral Advice Review' *	Jun-23	Jun-24		Review complete. Working with external referrals.
Undertake 'Reduce Red Tape, Website/Communication Review' *	Dec-22	Jun-24		Review complete. Obtained a grant to undertake work to overhaul the website. Work underway.
Undertake 'Reduce Red Tape, Pre-Application Review' *	Dec-22	Jun-24		Review complete. Working with Economic Development to concierge the pre application process and encourage early pre-application sessions with potential developers.
Improve water quality and capacity at Mooney Dams, Stawell *	Jun-23	Jun-24		Parks Victoria carrying out remediation plan, delays expected. Any further work is Grant dependant.
Implement the Library review items	Jun-23	Jun-24		50% of recommended changes from the review have been considered and implemented.
Develop a Victorian Protective Data Security Framework Plan *	Jun-23	Jun-24		Year 3 implementation plan is on track.
Implement a new records management system *	Jun-23	Apr-24		Records implementation will be delayed until later in this financial year.
Plant & Equipment Review *	Dec-22	Jun-24		Planning and preparation underway for later in the year.
Review Naturestrip Management Plan *	Sep-22	Apr-24		Finalising last components before draft is complete. Delays expected to allow for public display and commentary.

9.2. Boost Economic Growth

9.2.1. Planning Permit Application PA2023064 - 2 Burgh Street Stawell - Stawell Grampians Gate Caravan Park

Author/Position: Patrick Kennedy, Statutory Planning Officer

Purpose

To make a decision on Planning Permit Application PA2023064 for the development of a replacement fence and associated works at 2 Burgh Street, Stawell.

Summary

The subject site is located at 2 Burgh Street, Stawell and is currently used for a camping and caravan park (C & C Park Stawell – Grampians Gate).

This application seeks to propose a 2.5 metre high fence along 205 metres of the northern boundary of 2 Burgh Street, Stawell. The fence will consist of chain mesh panels supported by concrete planter boxes and camouflage print netting attached to the north side of the panels.

The application was referred to internal and external agencies, all of whom have consented to the application. The application was also advertised to surrounding properties along the northern side of Burgh Street, and eleven objections were received.

Statutory planning recommends the application be approved subject to a reduction in the height of the fence from 2.5 metres to 2.0 metres.

Recommendation

That Council supports the officer's recommendation and determines to issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit for the replacement fence subject to permit conditions as outlined in the attached planning report.

RESOLUTION

That Council supports the officer's recommendation and determines to issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit for the replacement fence subject to permit conditions as outlined in the attached planning report except for an amended Condition 1 which is to state instead:

- 1. Before the development starts, amended plans to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. When approved, the plans will be endorsed and will form part of the permit. The plans must be drawn to scale with dimensions noted. The plans must be generally in accordance with submitted but modified to show:**
 - a. maximum height of fence no higher than 2 metres**
 - b. amended design of the fence to remove the camouflage material and replace it with alternative materials and/or fencing design which better suits the neighbourhood character, with materials, colour and design to be to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.**

Moved: Cr Kevin Erwin

Seconded: Cr Eddy Ostarcevic

Carried

Background/Rationale

A detailed planning assessment report is provided as attachment 1, assessing the application against all relevant requirements of the Northern Grampians Planning Scheme.

The subject site is located in a Public Park and Recreation Zone within the established southern periphery of Stawell. The site is also partially affected by a Bushfire Management Overlay. The site has been used as a camping and caravan park for at least 40 years and is an important tourist accommodation within the region.

This application seeks to propose a replacement fence which will be:

- 2.5 metres high
- 205 metres long
- consisting of camouflage netting and planter boxes
- intended to provide screening and privacy to existing campsite areas at C & C Park Stawell – Grampians Gate.

As part of the assessment of the application, the application has been referred externally to the GWMWater, Wimmera CMA, Department of Environment Energy and Climate Action (DEECA) and Powercor, all of whom have consented to the application. It was highlighted that DEECA provided landowner consent to the application being made as well as for the proposed fence. The application has also been referred internally to Council's Building Team, which also consented to the application.

The application was advertised to fourteen adjacent landowners along Burgh Street, and eleven objections were received from these residents. The concerns raised in the objections relate to the following:

- Amenity impact from height and design of fence
 - Views and vistas to parkland blocked
 - Out of character design
 - Accumulation of waste in fence's netting
 - Potential noise pollution from wind whistle effects through the netting
- Decrease in property values
- Environmental impact

As outlined in the attached planning report, there is strong support for enhancing tourism and associated accommodation, including the needs for existing accommodation businesses. The subject business where the replacement fence is proposed, C & C Park Stawell – Grampians Gate, is a key tourist accommodation in the region that supports both Stawell and the Grampians area.

Nevertheless, development design should strive to respect the neighbourhood character and should not impact the amenity or valued vistas of an area. The height of the proposed fence is excessive in terms of both blocking views to the parkland within the subject property, as well as the sheer bulk of the fence design comprising of camouflage netting. While there are no specific neighbourhood character objectives through a Neighbourhood Character Overlay (NCO), the residential area is void of fences this height and design. The height also appears to be at odds with general streetscape expectations within a residential built environment, particularly that the residential side of the street enjoys vistas of parkland and its canopy line of trees.

If the proposed fence was shorter in height, the current design of camouflage netting could be considered more acceptable. Though there are little or no examples of this design in the area, the setback of the dwellings to the proposed fence is a considerable distance owing to the 30 metre wide road reserve. Whilst some impact to views would still occur, it is anticipated that some of parkland's tree canopy would still be seen from Burgh Street. The vegetation along the southern side of Burgh Street would also provide some buffering to the proposed netting design.

With regards to concerns relating to noise pollution, accumulation of waste and environmental impacts, there is no evidence that the fence will produce these affects; however the fence is of a temporary nature and so the structure can be removed at any time.

In balance of the above considerations, planning officers recommend that Council issues a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit subject to condition, including the reduction of the fence height from 2.5 metres to 2 metres.

Legislation, Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

Planning and Environment Act 1987

Planning and Environment Regulations 2015

Northern Grampians Planning Scheme

Options

Option 1

That Council supports the officer's recommendation and determines to issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit for the replacement fence subject to permit conditions as outlined in the attached planning report.

[recommended]

Option 2

That Council determines to issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit without the condition requiring a reduced height.

[not recommended]

Option 3

That Council determines to issue a Notice of Refusal to Grant a Planning Permit on the following grounds:

1. The application fails to comply with state and local planning policies aimed at protecting the neighbourhood character of the shire's towns, ensuring development is designed to protect and enhance valued views and vistas, encouraging new buildings to address the street and visually contribute to the streetscape character, and supporting development that respects the existing neighbourhood character or contributes to a preferred neighbourhood character.
2. The application fails to positively respond to the decision guidelines of the zone in that the proposed fence is not appropriately designed with regards to height and design.

[not recommended]

Option 4

That Council supports the officer's recommendation and determines to issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit for the replacement fence subject to permit conditions as outlined in the attached planning report except for an amended Condition 1 which is to state instead:

1. Before the development starts, amended plans to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. When approved, the plans will be endorsed and will form part of the permit. The plans must be drawn to scale with dimensions noted. The plans must be generally in accordance with submitted but modified to show:
 - a) maximum height of fence no higher than 2 metres
 - b) amended design of the fence to remove the camouflage material and replace it with alternative materials and/or fencing design which better suits the neighbourhood character, with materials, colour and design to be to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

[not recommended]

Implications

Any identified sustainability issues (economic, social, environmental or climate change) or heritage/cultural, amenity, human rights/gender equality, privacy, risk management, budgetary and asset management implications have been addressed in this report.

Procurement

No procurement requirements apply to this report.

Community Engagement

Public notice of the application was undertaken as part of the application as outlined in the attached planning report.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The subject matter of this report does not raise any implications regarding innovation or improvements.

Collaboration

Internal and external referrals were sent as part of the application, as outlined in the attached planning report.

Officer's Declaration of Interest

All officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

Patrick Kennedy, Statutory Planning Officer

In providing this advice as the author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Attachments

1. Planning Officers Report Burgh Street [9.2.1.1 - 10 pages]

PLANNING ASSESSMENT REPORT

DELEGATE REPORT



Property Number: 1047599
Permit Number: PA2023064

ASSESSMENT REPORT

No of stat days at time of report:	61 days at time of Council Meeting
Planning Officer:	Patrick Kennedy
Officer Direct or Indirect Conflict of Interest	No Council officers involved in the preparation or review of this report have any direct or indirect interest in the matter to which this report relates, in accordance with Section 80 (C) of the Local Government Act.

APPLICATION DETAILS

Permit No:	PA2023064
Permit Preamble:	Development of a Replacement Fence and associated works
Applicant:	R & R Planning and Development Consultants Pty Ltd
Property Address:	2 Burgh Street STAWELL 3380
Legal Description:	Crown Allotment 18 Section 6A Township of Stawell Parish of Stawell
Application Received:	15 August 2023
Existing Use:	Caravan park
Site Area:	26.77 ha
Zones:	PPRZ - PUBLIC PARK AND RECREATION ZONE
Overlays:	BMO - BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT OVERLAY FO1 - FLOODWAY OVERLAY - SCHEDULE 1 LSIO1 - LAND SUBJECT TO INUNDATION OVERLAY - SCHEDULE 1
Adjoining Zones	GRZ1 – GENERAL RESIDENTIAL ZONE – SCHEDULE 1 LDRZ - LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL ZONE RLZ1 – RURAL LIVING ZONE – SCHEDULE 1 TRZ2 – TRANSPORT ZONE 2
Easements:	No easements on title
Covenants or Restrictions:	No covenants or Section 173 Agreement registered on title.
CHMP required:	No. The proposal, whilst located in an area of cultural heritage sensitivity is not a high impact activity as the activity is for a purpose for which the land was being lawfully used prior to 28 May 2007.

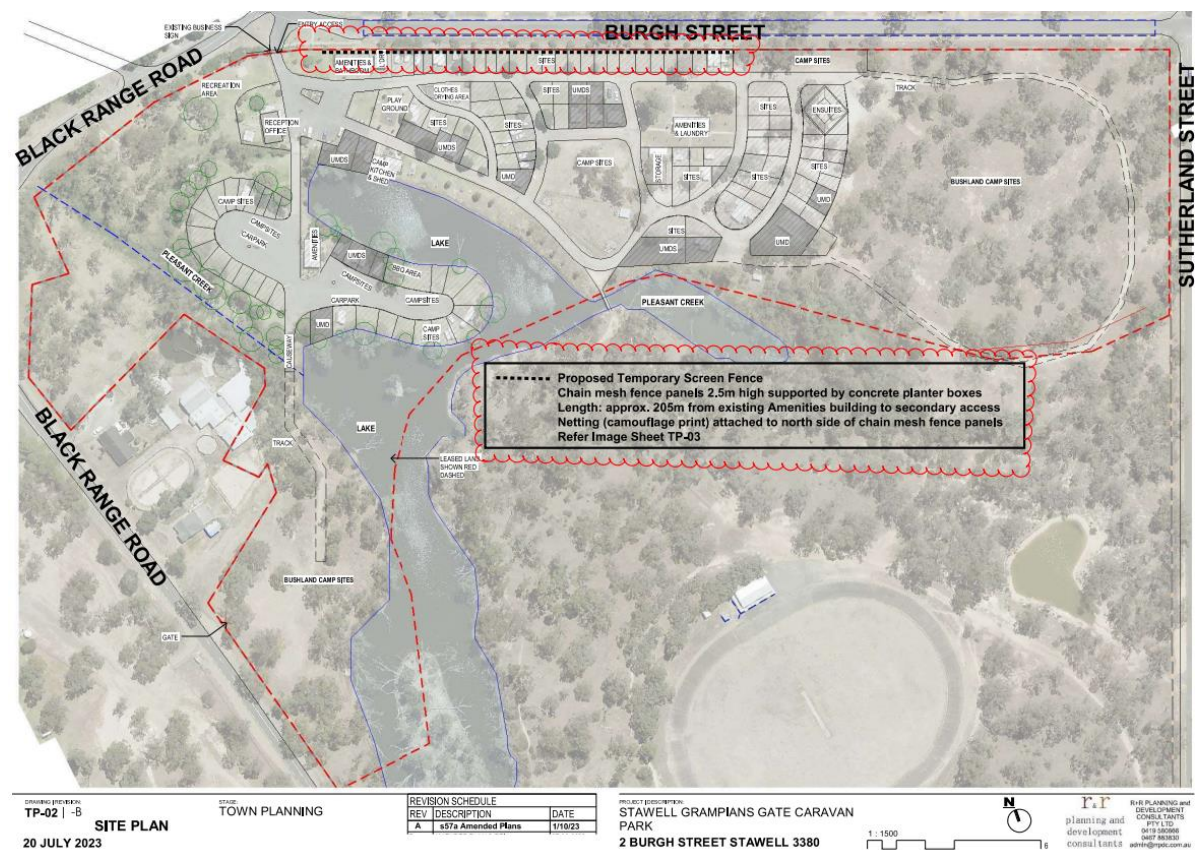
Is the site located in a Special Water Supply Catchment?	Yes (If yes, refer to GMMWater)
Permit Triggers:	Clause 36.02-2 - Buildings and works in PPRZ

PROPOSAL

The proposal comprises of a 205 metre long fence along a part of the northern boundary of 2 Burgh Street, Stawell. The fence will be a height of 2.5 metres and will consist of chain mesh panels supported by concrete planter boxes and camouflage print netting will be attached to the north side of the chain mesh fence panels.

The proposed fence is intended to provide screening and privacy to existing campsite areas at Stawell Grampians Gate Caravan Park. The fence will traverse from near the existing amenities building to the secondary access gate further east along the boundary.

For further detail, please see plans below:



Site Plan of proposed fence



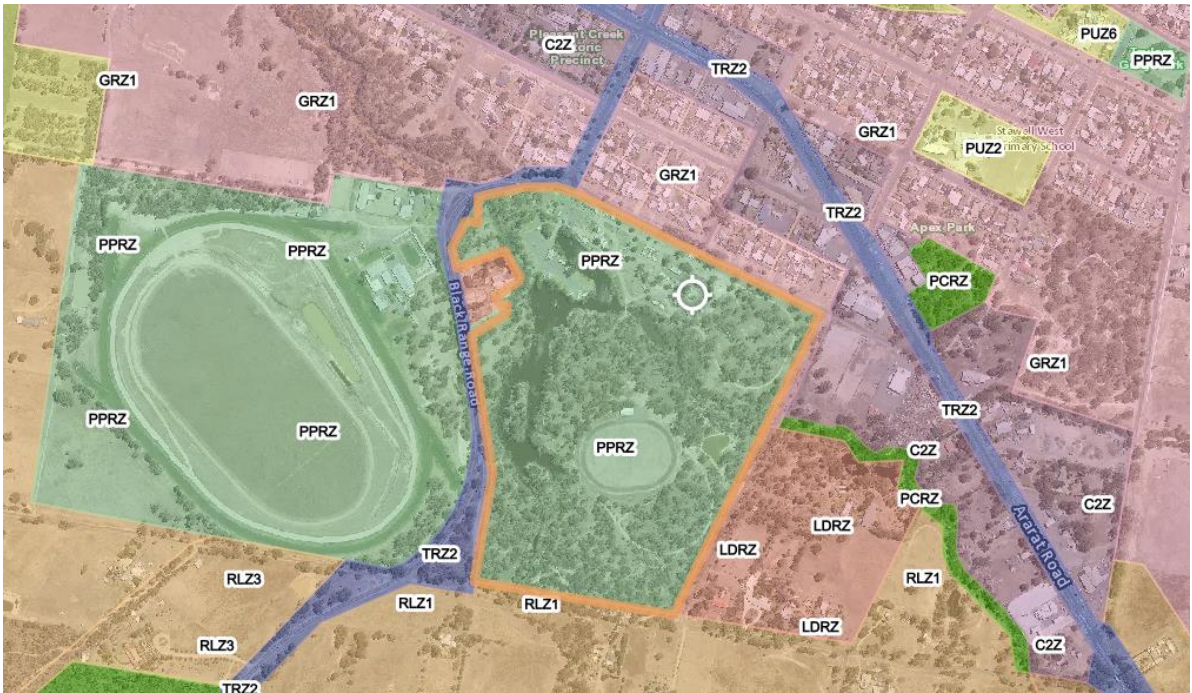
Image: Netting Style – camouflage print

Example of camouflage print of proposed fence

SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

The subject site is located on the southern side of Burgh Street. The irregular shaped site measures approximately 26.77 ha in size and is currently occupied by a caravan park. The site is generally flat and has extensive native vegetation in a parklands setting, accompanied with a lake, walking trails, and other park infrastructure.

The overall site is on the southern periphery of Stawell and is characterised by a range of residential and recreational uses, including parklands, caravan park, a horse racecourse, and low residential housing. There is also industrial uses further east towards the Western Highway corridor. The map below showing the confluence of zones around the PPRZ provides context for these mixed uses:



Zone Map provided by POZI

The site of the proposed fence is an interface between existing residential homes on Burgh Street to the north and the existing caravan park to the south, particularly the campsite area of the caravan park. The residential area is characterised by predominately single storey, detached dwellings all of which have a diversity of sitings, styles, and fencing. The Burgh Street road reserve is typically larger than residential streets measuring approximately 30 metres (front fences of dwellings are setback at least 15 metres from the road bitumen). There are tall native trees along parts of the northern side of the street and smaller shrubs planted along the southern side of the street close to where the current caravan park fence is located.

An aerial map is provided below. The subject site is outlined in orange.



Aerial Imagery from POZI

PERMIT HISTORY

The following planning permits have been issued to the land:

Permit Number	Description
5.2011.50.1	Development being three accommodation units and associated works

REFERRALS

The following internal and external referrals were undertaken:

Authority	Advice/ Response/Conditions	Report Response
Section 55 Referrals:		
WCMA	No objection. Referred as a Section 55 by mistake due to error on POZI Mapping. Council's mapping shows the FO affecting the proposal whereas WCMA's mapping does not show this. Standard condition still recommended.	Noted. Conditions will be placed on permit.
GWWater	No objection.	Noted. No concerns or conditions required.

Authority	Advice/ Response/Conditions	Report Response
Section 52 Referrals:		
Powercor.	No objection subject to conditions.	Noted. Conditions will be placed on permit.
DEECA	No objection.	Noted. No concerns or conditions required.

The application was referred internally and comments received as below:

Internal Council Referrals	Advice/ Response/Conditions	Report Response
Building	A building permit is required under the Building Regulations	Noted. A permit note will be placed on permit.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS

The application was required to be advertised pursuant to Section 52 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

The following forms of advertising were undertaken:

- Notices sent to owners and occupiers of adjoining land (includes opposite);
- One sign was placed on the land.

OBJECTIONS

Council has received 11 objections in response to advertising.

The key issues raised in the objections can be summarised as follows:

- Amenity impact from height and design of fence
 - Views and vistas to parkland blocked
 - Out of character design
 - Accumulation of waste in fence's netting
 - Potential noise pollution from wind whistle effects through the netting
- Decrease in property values
- Environmental impact

MEDIATION

The applicant made a Section 57A Amendment to reduce the height of the fence from 3.2 metres to 2.5 metres, as well as to reduce the length of the fence's extent. This did not result in any objections being withdrawn.

ASSESSMENT

The proposal in its current form does not gully comply with state and local planning policies, and generally satisfies the relevant decision guidelines. The principal issues can be summarised as follows:

STRATEGIC JUSTIFICATION

The following clauses are considered relevant to the proposal:

- Clause 02.03-5 Built environment and heritage
 - *Protect the neighbourhood character and heritage values of the shire's towns*
 - *Conserve the shire's natural, spiritual, cultural and built form heritage including heritage buildings, monuments, streetscapes and precincts.*
- Clause 02.03-7 Economic development
 - *Support the development of the shire's tourism industry based on the Grampians National Park, historic buildings and places, the ironbark forests, the lakes, events such as the Stawell Easter Gift, and the wine and food industry.*
- Clause 15.01-2S Building design
 - *Minimise the detrimental impact of development on neighbouring properties, the public realm and the natural environment*
 - *Ensure the form, scale, and appearance of development enhances the function and amenity of the public realm.*
 - *Ensure development is designed to protect and enhance valued landmarks, views and vistas.*
- Clause 15.01-5S Neighbourhood character
 - *Support development that respects the existing neighbourhood character or contributes to a preferred neighbourhood character.*
- Clause 15.01-5L Neighbourhood character – Northern Grampians
 - *Encourage new buildings to:*
 - *Match prevailing setbacks.*
 - *Address the street.*
 - *Visually contribute to the streetscape character.*
- Clause 17.04-1S Facilitating tourism
 - *Encourage the development of a range of well-designed and sited tourist facilities, including integrated resorts, accommodation, host farm, bed and breakfast and retail opportunities.*
- Clause 17.04-1R Tourism – Wimmera Southern Mallee
 - *Facilitate further development of nature-based tourism around key attractions such as the Grampians National Park, Little Desert National Park, major lakes and cultural heritage sites.*

As detailed in the policies above, there is strong support for enhancing tourism and associated accommodation, including the needs for existing accommodation businesses. The subject business, Grampians Gate Caravan Park is a key a tourist accommodation in the region which supports both Stawell and the Grampians area.

Nevertheless, development design should strive to respect the neighbourhood character and should not impact the amenity or valued vistas of an area. The height of the proposed fence in the existing built form context of the area and the views to the parkland within the subject property is excessive in terms of both blocking views as well as the sheer bulk of the design (camouflage netting). While there are no specific neighbourhood character objectives through a Neighbourhood Character Overlay (NCO), the residential area is void of fences this height and design. The height also appears to be at odds with general streetscape expectations within a residential built environment particularly that the residential side of the street enjoys vistas to parkland and its canopy line of trees.

ZONE

Clause 36.02 Public Park and Recreation Zone – Schedule (PPRZ)

The site is located within the PPRZ and the purpose of this zone is to:

- *To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.*
- *To recognise areas for public recreation and open space.*
- *To protect and conserve areas of significance where appropriate.*
- *To provide for commercial uses where appropriate.*

Pursuant to Clause 36.02-2 a permit is required to construct a building or carry out works. The fence is not exempt as it over 1 metre high.

The application was accompanied by landowner consent from DEECA pursuant to Clause 36.02-3.

Comment on Decision Guidelines – Clause 36.02-5

The proposal has received consent from the landowner (DEECA) who have not raised any concerns. Nevertheless, as discussed above, the proposal is not fully supported in its current form by the Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework.

There are no specific use, design, or siting guidelines however the development is not considered to be designed appropriately. The location of the fence is deemed suitable though the design of camouflage netting at a height of 2.5 metres appears to be out of character for the area.

If the proposed fence was shorter in height, it is considered that the current design of camouflage netting could be more acceptable as even though there are little or no examples of this design in the area, the setback of the dwellings to the proposed fence is a considerable distance owing to the 30 metre wide road reserve. Whilst some impact to views would still occur it is considered that some of parkland’s tree canopy would still be seen from Burgh St. The vegetation along the southern side of Burgh Street would also provide some buffering to the proposed netting design.

OVERLAYS

The only overlay affecting the location of the proposed fence is the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO). The fence is not triggered by this overlay as it is exempt pursuant to Clause 62.02-2.

PARTICULAR PROVISIONS

There is no particular provision to be considered.

RESPONSE TO OBJECTIONS

General Concern raised by Objections	Council’s response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amenity impact from height and design of fence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Views and vistas to parkland blocked - Out of character design - Accumulation of waste in fence’s netting - Potential noise pollution from wind whistle effects through the netting 	<p>It is acknowledged that the fence in its current height will block vistas to the parklands from Burgh Street residences. It is also considered that the out of character design of camouflage netting is exacerbated by the proposed height leading to and increased bulk and visual footprint. It is recommended that Council refuses the proposal in its current form but approves a shorter fence of 2 metre high. This reduced height is considered to make the fence and its material less of an impact to the streetscape, particularly that the wide road reserve of the street provides a considerable buffer.</p> <p>There is no evidence that the fence will produce noise impacts or accumulate rubbish, however, the fence is of a temporary nature and so the structure can be removed at any time.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease in property values 	<p>Property market impacts are not planning matters considered by the Planning Scheme.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental impact 	<p>The public landowner (DEECA) has consented to the proposal and has not raised any environmental concerns. As mentioned above, the fence is of a temporary nature and so the structure can be removed at any time, however, there is no evidence</p>

	that the proposal can cause a direct environmental impact.
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CLAUSE 65

The application is not fully consistent with the decision guidelines of Clause 65.01 – Approval of an application or plan. It is considered that the recommendation below for a reduced height will amend the application to better accord with the decision guidelines of Clause 65.01.

CONCLUSION

In order to ensure the proposal satisfies the requirements of the Northern Grampians Planning Scheme, it is recommended that Council approves the application subject to a reduction in the height of the fence from 2.5m to 2.0m. As such, it is recommended that Council issue a Notice of Decision to Approve a Permit subject to the following conditions:

Recommended Conditions

Amended Plans

1. Before the development starts, amended plans to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. When approved, the plans will be endorsed and will form part of the permit. The plans must be drawn to scale with dimensions noted. The plans must be generally in accordance with submitted but modified to show:
 - a) Maximum height of fence no higher than 2 metres
 - b) Locations of concrete planter boxes supporting the fence

Layout Not Altered

2. The development as shown on the endorsed plans must not be altered without the further written consent of the Responsible Authority.

Fence Maintenance

3. The fence hereby approved must be constructed and maintained to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
4. The plants in the concrete planter boxes supporting the fence hereby approved, must be maintained to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
5. Any damage to the fence netting hereby approved must be repaired immediately to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Temporary Fence

6. The fencing hereby approved is of a temporary nature and, at the future written request of the Responsible Authority, the fence must be removed and the area reinstated to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority, and at no expense to the Responsible Authority.

WCMA Condition

7. Any fencing within the floodplain (figure 1) must be of an open style that will not obstruct the conveyance of flood water across the property, for example post and wire or open pool style fencing. Prior to the commencement of works, detailed plans of the proposed fencing within the floodplain area must be submitted to Northern Grampians Shire Council for approval.

Powercor Condition

8. Any building/structures must comply with the clearances required by the Electricity Safety (Installations) Regulations.
9. Any construction work must comply with the Energy Safe Victoria's "No Go Zone" rules.
Notes: To apply for a permit to work go to our website:
<https://customer.portal.powercor.com.au/mysupply/CIAWQuickCalculator> and apply on line through the No Go Zone Assessment.
10. The property owner/builder should contact Dial before you Dig, before any excavation works are undertaken in the area. There is underground power assets within the area.

Permit Expiry (Development)

11. This permit will expire if one of the following circumstances applies:
 - a) The development is not started within two years of the date of this permit;
 - b) The development is not completed within four years of the date of this permit.

The responsible authority may extend the periods referred to if a request is made in writing before the permit expires or within six months afterwards (for a request to extend the time to commence the development) or twelve months after the permit expires (for a request to extend the time to complete the development).

9.3. Providing Sustainable Infrastructure

9.3.1. Stawell Aerodrome Master Plan Review

Author/Position: John Hunt, Manager Operations

Purpose

Council to consider the adoption of the Stawell Aerodrome Master Plan Review 2023.

Summary

In 2014 a review of the master plan was undertaken to incorporate all the developments that had occurred since 2008 and to indicate future development options. Council adopted this review in April 2015. Further development has occurred at the aerodrome since the adoption of the 2014 master plan. A further review has now been undertaken to bring the master plan up to date and to identify any additional future development options.

Recommendation

That Council adopts the Stawell Aerodrome Master Plan Review.

RESOLUTION

That Council adopts the Stawell Aerodrome Master Plan Review.

Moved: Cr Kevin Erwin

Seconded: Cr Trevor Gready

Carried

Background/Rationale

The review was necessary to update the master plan to guide development at the airport. In addition it is deemed necessary for projects to be considered competitive for State and Federal Government to obtain grant funding as the plan remains relevant and of strategic importance.

The master plan is required to be reviewed and amended to reflect changes that have occurred because of completed project work and to provide guidance for future development projects and provide justification for future grant applications.

It is important to note that the master plan is subject to change or amendment whenever the Council sees fit and will always be subject to the detailed design of each component to meet CASA Regulations, which can also change over time.

The master plan is not a legal requirement as such, but it is a desirable document to have as a planning tool to guide further works and inform grant applications.

Legislation, Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

Local Government Act 2020

Council Plan 2021-25 – Providing Sustainable Infrastructure

Civil Aviation Act 1988

Civil Aviation Safety Regulations 1998 (CASR)

Civil Aviation Regulations 1988 (CAR)

Civil Aviation Advisory Publications - CAAPs

Rules and practices for aerodromes

Civil Aviation Orders Manual of Standards (MOS) Part 139 - Aerodromes

Options

Option 1

To adopt the Stawell Aerodrome Master Plan Review 2023. **[recommended]**

Option 2

Defer the adoption of Stawell Aerodrome Master Plan Review for changes to be made. **[not recommended]**

Implications

The subject matter has not raised any sustainability issues (economic, social, environmental or climate change) or heritage/cultural, amenity, human rights/gender equality, privacy, risk management, budgetary and asset management implications.

Procurement

No procurement requirements apply for the subject of this report.

Community Engagement

Officers have sought comment from the Stawell Airport Advisory Committee, a committee made up of stakeholders who represent the interests of Council and commercial operators operating out of the facility. Comments regarding the review have also been sought from operators not represented by the committee.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The subject matter of this report does not raise any implications regarding innovation or improvements.

Collaboration

No collaboration with other councils, governments or statutory bodies was required for the subject of this report.

Officer's Declaration of Interest

All officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

John Hunt, Manager Operations

In providing this advice as the author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Attachments

1. Stawell Aerodrome Master Plan Review 2023 [9.3.1.1 - 28 pages]



**NORTHERN GRAMPIANS
SHIRE COUNCIL**

**STAWELL AERODROME
MASTER PLAN REVIEW**

September 2023

Specialist Airport Solutions Pty Ltd



**NORTHERN GRAMPIANS
SHIRE COUNCIL**

**STAWELL AERODROME
MASTER PLAN REVIEW
SEPTEMBER 2023**



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1 INTRODUCTION

In 2008 Airports Plus Pty Ltd was commissioned by the Northern Grampians Shire Council (NGSC) to undertake a Master Plan for the future development of facilities and infrastructure at Stawell Aerodrome (aerodrome). The NGSC adopted this Master Plan on 29 January 2009.

In 2014 Airports Plus Pty Ltd undertook a review of the Master Plan to incorporate all of the developments that had occurred since 2008 and to indicate future development options. The NGSC adopted this review in April 2015.

Further development has occurred at the aerodrome since the adoption of the 2014 Master Plan. A further review has now been commissioned to bring the Master Plan up to date and to identify any further future development options.

The author of this review has retired from Airports Plus Pty Ltd and now operates Specialist Airport Solutions Pty Ltd.

This review is based on discussions with Mr John Hunt, Manager Operations, NGSC and a number of tenants. The review also involved an inspection of the aerodrome, a feature survey of the entrance road and discussion with Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA). An aerial photo provided by NGSC and construction plans of Taxiway Bravo (Taxiway B) were also utilised during the review.

1.1 Change of standards

In August 2020 the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) made new regulations and standards for aerodromes in Australia. The standards document is Part 139 (Aerodromes) Manual of Standards 2019 (Part 139 MOS). Considerable changes have been made in this new standard which directly affect the aerodrome. Some of the facilities that do not meet the new standards have been grandfathered under a provision in the standards; this means that they can remain as they are until such time as they are upgraded for larger aircraft types.

Previously there were three levels of aerodromes; certified, registered and other. Now there are only two levels; certified and uncertified. Stawell Aerodrome moved from being a registered aerodrome to becoming a certified aerodrome which involved preparing an aerodrome manual which was submitted to CASA in April 2022. CASA are yet to accept the aerodrome manual as there is a significant backlog due to the increased number of new certified aerodromes and therefore an Aerodrome Certificate has not yet been issued for Stawell Aerodrome.

1.2 Aviation terminology used in this Master Plan Review

General Aviation (GA) is defined as all aviation activity at civil airports, other than an **air transport operation**. GA is divided into a number of sectors that includes air charter, private and corporate flying, local flying, pilot training and aerial work. Pilot training and aerial work dominate total GA hours flown in Australia. Helicopter operations are also normally classified as GA.

The following definition is extracted from the CASA Consolidated Dictionary.

- (1) An **air transport operation** is a passenger transport operation, a cargo transport operation, or a medical transport operation, that:

- (a) is conducted for hire or reward; or
 (b) is prescribed by an instrument issued under regulation 201.025.
- (2) Despite subclause (1), an air transport operation does not include an aerial work operation.

Air transport passenger numbers is the method used by CASA to determine the level of compliance required by certified aerodromes. The categories can be found in AC 139.A-03 v1.0 but commence at 0 up to 10,000, then 10,000 to 25,000, etc.

2 AIRCRAFT PLANNING CRITERIA

2.1 Aerodrome Reference Code

The Aerodrome Reference Code is based on the characteristics of an aeroplane not the aerodrome. The critical characteristics of an aeroplane operating at the aerodrome unrestricted may not be the ultimate design aircraft for the aerodrome when it has fully developed. **Tables 1- 3** indicate how the elements of the Aerodrome Reference Code is determined using aeroplane characteristics:

Table 1: Aerodrome Reference Code number extracted from Part 139 MOS

Code element 1	
Code number	Aeroplane reference field length
1	Less than 800 m
2	Not less than 800 m
3	Not less than 1 200 m
4	Not less than 1 800 m

Table 2: Aerodrome Reference Code letter extracted from Part 139 MOS

Code element 2	
Code letter	Wingspan
A	Up to but not including 15 m
B	15 m up to but not including 24 m
C	24 m up to but not including 36 m
D	36 m up to but not including 52 m
E	52 m up to but not including 65 m
F	65 m up to but not including 80 m

Table 3: Outer Main Gear Wheel Span extracted from Part 139 MOS

Code element 3
OMGWS up to but not including 4.5 m
OMGWS 4.5 m up to but not including 6 m
OMGWS 6 m up to but not including 9 m
OMGWS 9 m up to but not including 15 m

Code element 1 in Table 1 above accounts for the aircraft take-off performance at maximum take-off weight (MTOW). Code element 2 in Table 2 above accounts for the wingspan of the aircraft and is the only determinant for the code letter of a taxiway. Code element 3 in Table 3 above is simply the width of the main undercarriage of an aircraft. Each aircraft is given a reference code by the aircraft manufacturer and this can be used for the purposes of planning the facilities required by that particular aircraft. Facilities that are not fully compliant with the standards found in Part 139 MOS can still be used by aircraft with higher code numbers and letters at the pilot's discretion. An example is a Code 3C aircraft operating on a Code 2B runway where the pilot predetermines that there are suitable safety margins in place for that aircraft to operate.

The Aerodrome Reference Code does not take into account the MTOW of the aircraft. The construction of pavements to handle aircraft operating at the aerodrome is an engineering and economic decision based on many factors. Currently there are no standards applied by CASA regarding minimum pavement strengths. For a pavement to be determined suitable for an aircraft operation the designated Pavement Classification Number (PCN) should match the Aircraft Classification Number (ACN) determined by the aircraft manufacturer. It is common practice in Australia for airport operators to issue Pavement Concessions to allow an aircraft with a slightly higher ACN number to operate on pavements that have a lower PCN.

2.2 Determining runway length, width and strength

The first step, when making a decision on what physical standards should be applied to an aerodrome through its development life, is to determine the most likely aircraft types that will operate. The aircraft that best represents the range of aircraft that could operate is then selected. The design aircraft will dictate the runway length, the width of the runway and taxiways, and the strength of all aircraft pavements.

It is not expected that the aerodrome will attract scheduled air transport operations in the next five years. However, air transport operations do occur with chartered aircraft operations on a regular basis. It is also possible that larger aircraft types will be added to fire suppression fleet activities in the next five years.

There are a number of aircraft commonly used in the Australian aviation industry for air transport operations. The majority of passenger operations into regional centres on the eastern seaboard are serviced by turbo prop aircraft with a seating capacity up to 70 passengers. The two most common aircraft types are Dash 8 and SAAB 340. The majority of Dash 8 aircraft are operated by Qantaslink, the majority being Dash 8-300 and Dash 8-400 aircraft. The majority of SAAB 340 aircraft are operated by Regional Express and Link Airways. These aircraft are often chartered for the transport of passengers to a specific location.

The most common types of corporate aircraft used in Australia are Cessna, Learjet, Beechcraft and Bombardier aircraft or similar which are used by many businesses as charter aircraft. The Beechcraft King Air 200/360 aircraft are used by Pel Air Aviation Pty Ltd (Pel-Air), the current contractor for Ambulance Victoria, and are also used as a charter aircraft. The RAAF use this aircraft type when operating into smaller aerodromes.

The Aeroplane Reference Field Length (ARFL) published by aircraft manufacturers for each aircraft type is part of the certification process and is only a guide when determining suitable runway length. There are many other factors that can influence

usable runway length including wind speed and direction, air temperature, weight of the aircraft and elevation of the aerodrome.

Table 4: Typical Aircraft Types

Aircraft Type	Reference Code	Seats	ARFL	MTOW (kg)	ACN
Dash 8-200	2C	36	948	15650	12
Dash 8-300	2C	50	1122	18642	14
Dash 8-400	3D	70	1354	29000	18
SAAB-340B	3B	35	1220	13155	8
Metro 23	3B	18	1341	7484	10
Cessna CJ2/525	1B	9	1024	5670	7
Learjet 55	3A	10	1292	9252	10
Beechcraft 200	1B	9	592	5670	3
Beechcraft 360	1B	12	1000	6880	5
M-18 Dromader	1B	-	400	5300	Nd*
AT-802	1B	-	650	7250	Nd*
S-2R Thrush	1B	-	750	2720	Nd*
CL 415	2C	-	820	19900	18
BAe 146	3C	-	1615	42000	23

Nd* - Not determined

Table 4 is a sample list of aircraft types operating in Australia and indicates the range of aircraft sizes that could operate into the aerodrome over the next five years. The physical facilities at the aerodrome are currently not suitable for some of the aircraft listed in Table 4. These shortcomings are discussed in Section 5.

Currently the heaviest and largest wingspan aircraft operating at the aerodrome are Code 1B agricultural aircraft used for crop spraying and fire suppression and Beechcraft 200/360 for aero medical transfers (refer Annex 1 for images of the design aircraft and a range of other aircraft referred to in Table 4).

The pavement strength is a major limiting factor for aircraft that could operate into the aerodrome. Increasing the pavement strength will allow a greater range of aircraft to operate and this is discussed further in Section 5.

2.3 Selected design aircraft

The selection of a design aircraft for Stawell Aerodrome is necessary to assist in planning for the future upgrading of facilities to cater for growth in aviation activity. Two aspects of development that need to be considered are the physical dimensions of the runways, taxiways, aircraft parking areas and the OLS associated with the runways and the general strength of the pavements to cater for the heaviest aircraft likely to operate in the future.

Standard practice when selecting a design aircraft is that all aerodrome facilities are constructed to cater for the design aircraft. However economic factors may prevent all facilities being constructed at the same time. Construction of facilities can be staged; i.e. taxiways may be of a lower standard until a trigger requires further upgrading work to be undertaken. However, land and clearance areas associated with proposed runways, taxiways, aircraft parking areas and the associated OLS should be protected to allow for the ultimate aircraft size.

A SAAB 340 aircraft with a MTOW of 13,155 kg and a wingspan of 21.5 m and an OMGWS of 7.6 m was selected as the design aircraft in the 2009 Master Plan and the 2014 Master Plan Review; at that time, it was a Code 3C aircraft. The aerodrome facilities have been upgraded to cater for the design aircraft.

With the introduction of Part 139 MOS the physical characteristics of the aircraft shown in Tables 2 and 3 above changed the SAAB 340 aircraft to a Code 3B due to its wingspan being less than 24 m. The OMGWS is still in the group of 6 m up to and not including 9 m. This review continues to support the design aircraft being a SAAB 340 in the short term. However, there may be a need to assess larger and heavier aircraft types in the future. Aircraft used for corporate charters and fire suppression activities now have MTOWs greater than the design aircraft.

3 AIRCRAFT ACTIVITY FORECAST

Aircraft activity forecasts are usually included in Master Plans but there are no historical statistics of annual aircraft activity available for the aerodrome. It has been determined that preparation of an aircraft activity forecast is not required due to the nature of GA aircraft operations at the aerodrome.

The largest single flying activity is conducted during the summer fire season when the aerodrome is used as a base for fire suppression aircraft. GA aircraft conduct flying training on a regular basis and the aerodrome is used as a base for contractors using agricultural aircraft for crop spraying activities. An increase in charter aircraft operations has occurred over the last 3 years with the construction of the Stawell Underground Physics Laboratory (SUPL) and the purchase of the abattoirs by Thomas Foods International (TFI). There has also been an increase in tourist flights conducted by helicopter from a base at the aerodrome.

The aircraft movement capacity of the current runway configuration is much greater than the actual number of aircraft movements and therefore there is no need to calculate the busiest peak hour or forecast the busiest peak hour for the next 10 years. The current physical runway configuration has the capacity for handling over 60,000 movements per annum. The number of aircraft movements is estimated to be approximately 15,000 movements per annum.

4 EXISTING FACILITIES

The aerodrome is situated 4 km southwest of the city of Stawell. The aerodrome elevation is 807 feet (246 m AHD). The aerodrome is situated on 90 ha of land; 43.4 ha are owned by the NGSC and the remaining 46.6 ha is Crown Land. The Council is appointed as the Committee of Management.

Runway 11/29, the two primary taxiways, a secondary taxiway and half the aircraft parking areas are situated on land owned by the NGSC. A small portion of Runway 18/36 is situated on NGSC land. The remainder of Runway 18/36 and half the aircraft parking area, which contains the aircraft refuelling facility, are situated on Crown Land.

4.1 Runways

Runway 11/29 is 1403 m long and 30 m wide and the central 23 m has a bituminous sprayed seal with a 10 mm/7 mm aggregate wearing course. The runway strip is 1540 m long and 90 m wide.

The runway is published in ERSA RDS as a Code 3 runway. The pavement rating published in ERSA is PCN 9 on a sub-grade classified as D with a tyre pressure rating of 650 kPa (94 psi) which allows aircraft with an ACN up to 9 to operate without restriction. The runway is equipped with a single stage low intensity runway edge lighting system. The runway lights can be activated by pilots on a dedicated radio frequency 119.1 MHz. The runway lights will shortly be replaced with LED fittings which will be more reliable. Currently, an application for funding is being prepared for the purchase and installation of a Precision Approach Path Indicator (PAPI) at each end of the runway. A PAPI is a visual lighting system that assists pilots during approach and will provide an enhancement for pilots when landing at Stawell Aerodrome.

Runway 11/29 is the primary runway due to the prevailing wind and the provision of night lighting. Aircraft operating on Runway 11 operate normal left-hand circuits but are required to operate right hand circuits when using Runway 29 at night due to high terrain.

Terminal instrument flight procedures are established for both Runway 11 and Runway 29. These procedures allow pilots to fly down to a minima on Runway 29 of 703 ft above the ground and 4 nautical miles (NM) from the threshold and on Runway 11 down to a minima of 528 ft and 3 NM from the threshold. If an aircraft is equipped to receive the weather station broadcast and the pilot has been trained in Vertical Navigation (VNAV) procedures, then the minima on Runway 29 is reduced to 443 ft at 2.5 NM and for Runway 11, 338 ft at 1.9 NM. These procedures enable aircraft to operate into the aerodrome in inclement weather as long as the runway is visible at the minima.

Runway 18/36 is 854 m long and 18 m wide and has a bituminous sprayed seal with a 10 mm/7 mm aggregate wearing course. The runway strip is 974 m long and 90 m wide. The runway is published in ERSA RDS as a Code 2 runway. The pavement is rated for aircraft up to a MTOW 5,700 kg with a tyre pressure of 450 kPa (65 psi). Aircraft operate normal left-hand circuits when operating on Runway 36 but right-hand circuits when operating on Runway 18 due to high terrain. No lighting is available on this runway for night operations and there are no published terminal instrument flight procedures for this runway.

4.2 Taxiways and aprons

Taxiway A provides access to the Terminal Apron from Runway 11/29. This 15 m wide taxiway has a bituminous sprayed seal surface with a 10 mm/7 mm aggregate wearing course and is suitable for aircraft with an OMGWS of 6 m but not including 9 m. The taxiway has night lighting consisting of blue taxiway edge lighting.

Taxiway B links Runway 11/29 with the Main Apron and the hangars and enters the runway approximately 40 m from the threshold of Runway 29. The taxiway has recently been reconstructed to achieve a compliant longitudinal grade and was widened to 10.5 m. The taxiway has a bituminous sprayed seal surface with a 10 mm/7 mm aggregate wearing course and is suitable for aircraft with a OMGWS of 4.5 m up to but not including 6 m. The taxiway has night lighting consisting of blue taxiway edge lighting.

Taxiway C links the aircraft parking area with Runway 18/36 and enters the runway approximately 150 m from the threshold of Runway 18. The taxiway has a bituminous sprayed seal surface with a 10 mm aggregate wearing course and has an average width of 8 m making it suitable for aircraft with an OMGWS up to but not

including 4.5 m. The longitudinal slope of this taxiway is applicable for a Code A taxiway.

The Terminal Apron is 1925 m² and has a bituminous sprayed seal surface with a 10 mm/7 mm aggregate wearing course. There is one designated aircraft parking position for aircraft up to SAAB 340 size.

The Main Apron is approximately 12,000 m² and provides aircraft parking areas for a number of hangars and for loading fire suppression aircraft. The apron has a bituminous sprayed seal surface with a 10 mm aggregate wearing course. A section of the apron is provided with aircraft tie-down cables.

4.3 Terminal

A small Terminal adjacent to the Terminal Apron contains toilets, a kitchen area, tables and chairs and a storeroom for the storage of aerodrome equipment. Adjacent to the Terminal is a gate which allows ambulance vehicles undertaking patient transfers direct access to aircraft on the designated aircraft parking position.

4.4 Hangars

Four hangars are located on the west side of the Main Apron. The most southerly hangar, operated by AGAIR, is approximately 600 m². Two smaller GA hangars are located east of Taxiway C; the most northerly hangar is now the base for Grampians Helicopters. A short private taxiway provides access to these hangars. This taxiway is not compliant with Part 139 MOS for a Code A taxiway. An office and pilot training room are located in a building on the west side of the AGAIR hangar. There is another small building, which is used for storage and as an office/pilot rest area (old Department of Transport building), located east of Taxiway A.

The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) has a major fire suppression base at the aerodrome for the Grampians Region and has expanded their facilities since the 2014 Master Plan Review. The base now has an additional 100,000 litre water tank, a fully off the grid 20 kW solar system, a fire-retardant spill holding dam, a multi-purpose building and an ATCO hut and 3 concrete helicopter parking pads to the south of the buildings. The taxiway that provides access to the concrete filling pad has been reconstructed and provided with a bituminous sprayed seal with a 7 mm aggregate wearing course.

DEECA are planning to update their master plan for the airbase in the future as there is an expectation that the base will expand further.

4.5 Other facilities

The refuelling facility has two fuel storage tanks; one for Jet A1 and the other for AVGAS and is leased and operated by AGAIR. A fuel truck operated by AGAIR is used to dispense Jet A1 fuel to aircraft as required.

An Automatic Weather Station (AWS) which is owned and operated by the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) is located southwest of the intersection of both runways. The Automatic Weather Information Service (AWIS) provided by NGSC can be accessed by pilots on frequency 122.575 MHz or by a BoM supplied telephone number on 03 8470 3220.

Electricity is supplied to the aerodrome site via overhead power lines that enter the northern boundary of the aerodrome. These lines then run underground to the main distribution cabinet and the power supply to the cabinet is 3-phase. Any future electrical power supply to hangars will need to be placed underground so that there is no interference with aircraft operations when the new taxiways are constructed. A standby emergency power generator provides emergency power for essential facilities including runway, taxiway and apron floodlighting during a primary power outage.

The water supply for the aerodrome enters the site on the northeast boundary immediately adjacent to the two small hangars east of Taxiway C. The water supply has been upgraded since the 2014 Master Plan Review and provides greater volume for the water storage tanks on the aerodrome.

Sewerage is not connected to the aerodrome. The Terminal and hangar toilets are connected to a septic collection system. The hangars along the Main Apron are also connected to this system. There is ample capacity for future connections.

Telephone is connected to the aerodrome via a pillar located on the corner of the fence adjacent to the old road entry point which leads onto the Main Apron.

5 ASSESSMENT OF FACILITIES

5.1 Physical characteristics

The adoption of a Code 3C aircraft as the design aircraft for applying physical standards has ensured that the upgraded facilities already in place have greatly enhanced the future potential use of the aerodrome. The design aircraft change of Code from 3C to 3B due to the change in Part 139 MOS does not affect the physical dimension of facilities already constructed; e.g. Taxiway Alpha (Taxiway A) is capable of handling aircraft with OMGWS between 6 m up to but not including 9 m and Taxiway B can handle aircraft with an OMGWS of 4.5 m up to but not including 6 m.

All aircraft that are currently operating on Taxiway B have a wingspan of less than 24 m which makes this taxiway capable of handling the largest fire suppression aircraft currently based on the aerodrome. If larger aircraft were to operate in the future as long as their OMGWS is less than 6 m then they can safely operate on Taxiway B at the pilot's discretion. Taxiway A can handle aircraft with a wingspan up to but not including 36 m.

5.2 Current deficiencies

5.2.1 Land ownership

There is currently no intention by the NGSC to negotiate the purchase or land swap of the sections of Crown Land managed by NGSC. This means that a portion of Runway 18/36 and an area of the Main Apron from the fuel facility to the northeast boundary fence and the entire forest area to the west of Runway 18/36 is Crown Land and is managed by NGSC for aerodrome use.

An example of the minor consequences of the NGSC not owning the Crown Land is illustrated by the two road reserves that separate the NGSC titles. One road reserve

dissects Runway 11/29 and the other is the extension of Aerodrome Road through the Main Apron and down the centreline of Runway 18/36.

Consolidation of the Council titles with the removal of the road reserves would enhance and provide certainty for future development options over the next 5 – 30 years.

5.2.2 Runway 11/29 pavement strength

Runway 11/29 has a published PCN 9 and a tyre pressure rating of 650 kPa (94 psi) which is suitable for all of the aircraft currently operating at the aerodrome and for the design aircraft. A number of requests to operate heavier aircraft have been received in the last 18 months because of the need to operate larger corporate jets, specifically transporting personnel to Stawell due to the increase in scientific and industrial development activities. The majority of these requests have been denied due to the risk of overloading the runway pavement.

5.2.3 Runway 11/29 width

With the introduction of Part 139 MOS the minimum runway width is now determined by the Code number and the OMGWS. This runway has a published runway width of 30 m with the central 23 m sealed. Table 5 below and the accompanying notes indicates that the runway has a non-homogeneous surface as only the central 23 m is sealed and the remainder of the runway is gravel. In future this could lead to certain aircraft types being unable to operate at the aerodrome due to their operations manuals not allowing their aircraft to operate on a 23 m sealed section of runway. Note 4 below is particularly relevant.

Table 5: Minimum runway width extracted from Part 139 MOS

Table 6.02 (1) Minimum runway width

Code number	OMGWS			
	Up to but not including 4.5 m	4.5 m up to but not including 6 m	6 m up to but not including 9 m	9 m up to but not including 15 m
1	18 m	18 m	23 m	–
2	23 m	23 m	30 m	–
3	30 m	30 m	30 m	45 m
4	–	–	45 m	45 m

Note 1 OMGWS means outer main gear wheel span.

Note 2 The combinations of code numbers and OMGWS for which widths are specified have been developed for typical aeroplane characteristics.

Note 3 The choice of minimum runway width lies with the aerodrome operator having regard to the aircraft type which the facility is nominated to serve, bearing in mind that an aircraft must be operated in accordance with its aircraft flight manual or supplement which specifies the required minimum runway width. The minimum runway widths presented in Table 6.02 (1) do not guarantee that all aircraft types correlating to a code number and the corresponding OMGWS will be able to utilise the runway in accordance with the aircraft flight manual or supplement. Aerodrome and aircraft operators should consult with each other to ensure that aircraft may safely utilise the runway width provided at the aerodrome.

Note 4 The runway width determined in accordance with this MOS is normally considered to be the width of a runway of homogeneous runway surface material. If an aerodrome operator chooses to provide a runway width consisting of non-homogeneous runway surface material, aircraft operations to the reported runway width may be limited. For example, a runway with an 18 m centre-sealed surface and 2.5 m of adjacent rolled gravel on each side is not considered to be a 23 m runway for the purposes of minimum width determination as documented in the aircraft flight manual or supplement.

The definition of homogeneous and the accompanying note extracted from Part 139 MOS below further indicates the limiting nature of a runway with a non-homogeneous surface.

homogeneous runway surface means a runway surface that has a consistent surface finish across its full width.

Note A non-homogeneous runway surface means a runway surface that has different surface finishes across its full width. A non-homogeneous runway surface may result in differing friction, loading, and wet weather characteristics. Thus, it may limit the operations of some aircraft types depending on the requirements of the aircraft flight manual.

5.2.4 Runway 11/29 and 18/36 length

Runway 11/29 has a published length of 1403 m; this runway length could restrict larger aircraft from operating at the aerodrome. Fire suppression aircraft currently operating under lease by the State Government are larger than what are currently operating at the aerodrome. The airbase established at the aerodrome and its continued expansion indicates how strategically important the aerodrome location is for effective firefighting operations.

Runway 18/36 is suitable for current light aircraft operations when cross winds reduce the useability of Runway 11/29. High terrain to the south effectively inhibits any lengthening of this runway.

5.2.5 Runway 11/29 strip

This runway strip is fully graded to a width of 90 m and meets the standards in Part 139 MOS. However, the total width of the runway strip which has been grandfathered at 90 m is now required to be 280 m. As the northern boundary of the aerodrome is only 75 m from the centreline of the runway the only way to achieve a fully compliant runway strip would be to purchase all of the properties on the northern side of the aerodrome if they became available; this is not feasible for the medium term.

5.2.6 General aviation (GA) areas

The GA areas at the aerodrome are substantial and currently meet the demands for aircraft parking. However, two infill areas either side of Taxiway B could be constructed and sealed to assist aircraft movements and provide additional aircraft parking areas. The area to the west of Taxiway B could be constructed without any change to the existing drainage system. However, to achieve a suitable area for aircraft parking on the east side of Taxiway B it would be necessary to pipe the open unlined drain and therefore this area would only be developed in the medium-long term.

The expansion of the Main Apron to the north to provide access to the most northern hangar site and the sealing of the pavement now presents a problem; the width of the Code A taxiway that would be used by aircraft to access this hangar is infringed by the perimeter fence which is inside the taxiway strip. In the short term a marking could be placed on the apron at right angles to the parking clearance line and painted across the apron to where the fence changes direction to the southeast. The marking would be a single broken yellow line with the words facing south indicating that all powered aircraft must be towed beyond that point.

In the long term if the demand for hangar sites led to the requirement to construct a hangar on the most northerly site and the tenant needed to be able to taxi in and out of this location, then the perimeter fence would need to be moved so that it is 15.5 m from the centreline of the taxiway and the centreline would need to be 15.5 m from the parking clearance line that has been painted along the edge of the apron.

To achieve this compliant Code A taxiway the access road along the northeast boundary of the aerodrome would need to be moved further east and the fence to be moved east. To enable this realignment to occur approximately 0.3 ha of land would need to be available from the adjoining land owner (GMMWater) (*refer to 6.8 of this report*).



Apron expansion and access road



Access road/boundary fence looking south

6 FUTURE AERODROME FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

6.1 Growth factors

The growth factors that have influenced the aerodrome's development are still relevant and will continue to influence future development. The DEECA airbase has continued to expand and this has led to AGAIR increasing their number of aircraft permanently based on the aerodrome. The State Government leased a C130 and a Dash 8-400 for the 2022/2023 fire season as a trial to assess the effectiveness of these aircraft. Although the Dash 8-400 has limited access to regional Victorian aerodromes the C130 is capable of operating from aerodromes the size of Stawell. Other aircraft types such as the CL-415 would also be capable of operating from Stawell in the future if required.

The growth of tourism in the region has been bolstered by Grampians Helicopters providing helicopter flights to nearby wineries and tourist attractions; this includes the GHAN off train experiences of the Grampians when the train stops at Stawell during the summer.

The marked increase in charter aircraft traffic is mainly due to the developments in Stawell of SUPL and TFI which will continue to grow.

In addition to increasing numbers of chartered flights, TFI have identified the potential for airfreight to form part of their meat product exports. Furthermore, the aerodrome has the potential to grow visitor offering through air related events/shows.

Northern Grampians Shire Council is investigating the holding of an air show at the aerodrome to promote the use of the facility and for the obvious tourism benefits.

6.2 Land ownership

As indicated earlier the resolution of the ownership of the entire aerodrome site could be pursued to remove any uncertainty that may restrict future development options for the aerodrome. Currently the Crown Land on the aerodrome site can only be used for aerodrome purposes and the NGSC has resolved not to pursue the purchase of the Crown Land.

Leasing of hangar sites rather than selling them freehold provides the NGSC with planning control over the use of the hangar sites and the types of businesses that can be undertaken in these hangars.

As indicated earlier, the removal of the road reserves on the site and then the consolidation of the NGSC land titles would ensure that the NGSC area of the aerodrome site was able to provide protection of the aerodrome under the NGSC planning scheme and ensure that future development planning on the site can occur under NGSC control.

6.3 Runway 11/29

The length of Runway 11/29 is suitable for the range of aircraft expected to operate at the aerodrome over the next 5 years. Larger aircraft may commence operations at the aerodrome in the future. It is envisaged that these aircraft would be using the aerodrome as a maintenance base and therefore would only be operating with a minimum weight. If the size of fire suppression aircraft does increase it may be necessary to lengthen Runway 11/29 to cater for these aircraft types.

This Master Plan Review has removed a possible extension of the runway at the eastern end due to it not being a cost-effective project. It is possible to lengthen the runway at the western end if land is purchased on the other side of Commercial Road and this road was realigned into a new road reserve as provided for in the 2014 Master Plan Review.

A preliminary proposed layout of the runway is at Plan No. 3 which would provide a compliant runway with the Part 139 MOS standards with a minimum 90 m x 60 m RESA outside the runway strip at the western end. The runway extension at the western end is 250 m long giving a total runway length of approximately 1653 m. This may be reduced slightly to provide for a compliant RESA at the east end.

The runway surface would need to be widened to 30 m to ensure that the runway was fully Code 3 compliant runway and that there was no limit due to aircraft operational requirements.

The strength of the runway may also need to be increased to accommodate heavier aircraft that could be based on the aerodrome and an increase in heavier aircraft used for charter operations operating at the aerodrome. Strengthening may involve providing the runway with an asphalt overlay of a nominal thickness of 100 mm or, at a higher monetary cost, to provide an additional crushed rock pavement on top of the existing pavement and then an asphalt overlay.

Preliminary work has been undertaken by Pitt & Sherry with the provision of a Technical Note produced to establish if a Falcon 8X could operate into the aerodrome. The Technical Note indicated that an additional 270 mm of pavement

would be required to increase the PCN from 9 to 24 or the addition of 100 mm of wearing course to increase the PCN from 9 to 14 if that aircraft was to use the runway.

Planning and implementation of the runway extension, widening and strengthening could be undertaken in stages:

- i. Prepare a business case for each step in the proposed upgrade of the runway, which should include preliminary design and cost estimates and investigate sources of funding.
- ii. Purchase the land at the western end of the aerodrome when available.
- iii. Provide a bituminous sprayed seal to the remaining unsealed section of the runway.
- iv. Increase the strength of the runway to the desired PCN, depending on the MTOW of future aircraft operations in the medium and long term.
- v. Design the runway extension including road realignment at the western end.
- vi. Construct western extension, if required.

The work to extend the runway would only commence if larger aircraft were required to operate from the aerodrome to ensure fire protection of Western Victoria or an increase in air transport operations occurred due to the growth of industry in the region.

The Obstacle Limitation Surfaces (OLS) associated with this runway has been grandfathered and therefore meets the current requirements stated in Part 139 MOS.

6.4 Taxiway A

The continuation of Taxiway A north of the Code C Terminal Apron, shown on **Plan 2**, provides access to large hangar sites east of the taxiway and smaller hanger sites west of the taxiway as provided in the 2014 Master Plan Review.

The additional taxiway, providing access to a future area of hangars, has been allowed for (**refer Plan 2**) west of Taxiway A has also been retained in this Master Plan Review. As indicated in the last report the taxiway route is not final and it may be feasible to access the apron from a taxiway joining Taxiway A. Decisions about the location of the final taxiway route can be made closer to the time of construction. At this stage it is only planned to be a Code B taxiway (10.5 m wide).

6.5 Aircraft parking areas

Over the last three years pavement works have increased the size of the existing aircraft parking areas adjacent to the Main Apron. In addition, aircraft tie-downs have been provided for more aircraft along the northern edge of the Main Apron.

The expansion of the Main Apron to the south can now more easily be undertaken with the realignment of Taxiway B. Infilling of the area west of Taxiway B can be undertaken when additional funds become available to provide additional parking for fire suppression aircraft.

Expansion of the Terminal Apron will be required to provide access to the first large hangar site north of the Terminal. The construction of an additional large apron to

service future hangars north of the proposed Code B taxiway will also provide additional aircraft pavement areas in the long-term future. Since the 2014 Master Plan Review clean fill has continued to be delivered to site to assist in the development of the first stage of the new hangars and taxiway.

The sequence of undertaking construction of expanded aircraft parking areas will depend entirely on whether there is a demand for parking of aircraft without associated hangars or if future tenants require hangar access for their aircraft. Due to practical constraints, i.e. earthworks, it may be more practicable to construct the most westerly line of hangars and associated taxiway in the first instance.

With the purchase of one of the private hangars east of Taxiway C by Grampians Helicopters and the operation of up to 3 helicopters now permanently based at the aerodrome the need for a grass helicopter parking area has been shown on **Plan 2** immediately east of Taxiway C. The front of this parking area will need to be 15.5 m from the taxiway centreline and the area should be defined with blue helicopter apron edge markers (refer Part 139 MOS, Section 8.07). The final width and length of the parking area should be negotiated with Grampian Helicopters.

6.6 Future hangar development

Currently there are three hangar sites available for immediate occupancy. One further large hangar site is available (Stage 1, **Plan 2**). An additional seven small hangar sites (Stage 2, **Plan 2**) could be made available on the western side of the aerodrome site with minimal earthworks involved. However, a taxiway and access road would need to be constructed to provide access to these hangars.

If AGAIR requires an additional hangar it may now be possible, due to the realignment of Taxiway B, to erect a hangar immediately south of their existing hangar and still provide apron parking areas on the south side. A detailed feasibility study would need to be undertaken to ensure that the hangar height remains below the OLS and that there is sufficient area for aircraft to taxi past the hangar to park on the south side.

Future development of more hangar sites (Stage 3, **Plan 2**) would require major earthworks to fill the gully and dams that exist on this part of the aerodrome site.

A significant restraint is the need to remove native vegetation as under the State planning requirements expensive additional vegetation offsets are required to replace any native vegetation removed.

The remainder of the aerodrome site is currently Crown Land managed by NGSC. The area south of the DEECA complex is reserved for expansion of this facility.

The forest area to the west of the aerodrome site has no development potential as access is restricted and the topography makes it unsuitable for development. Ownership of the forest area may be an asset in the longer term offsetting the carbon footprint of the aerodrome. It may also provide an opportunity to use this area to provide native vegetation offsets that will be required when native vegetation is removed for aerodrome development purposes.

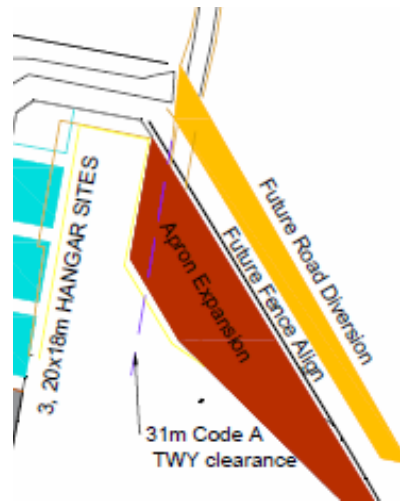
6.7 Aviation fuel

The fuel facility owned and operated by AGAIR provides sufficient storage capacity and 24-hour access and meets the requirements for aviation fuel for the life of this Master Plan Review.

6.8 Vehicle access to the aerodrome

The internal road layout provides easy access to all existing hangars adjacent to the Main Apron. Aerodrome Road provides access to the private hangars and the DEECA airbase.

As discussed earlier in this report, to provide access to the last hangar site at the northern end of the Main Apron for aircraft with a wingspan up to 15 m realignment of Aerodrome Road, where it runs parallel to the apron, must be considered so that the boundary fence can be moved east to provide a Code A taxiway strip. The plan below indicates where the edge of the taxiway strip, marked in purple broken lines, needs to be established. To enable the fence to be moved the road would need to be relocated approximately 15 m east to allow unrestricted access to the hangar by Code A aircraft. If it is possible to annex a small area of GWMWater land, approximately 0.3 ha, then the road could be diverted in a straight line to continue Aerodrome Road.



7 FUTURE AERODROME UTILITY REQUIREMENTS

7.1 Electricity

The existing power connection can be upgraded to 500 kVA with only minor works required. Currently, each hangar is restricted to a 40 amp supply from the distribution cabinet. If a larger supply was required then that would trigger a connection upgrade. DEECA now has a 20 kW solar array that provides all of that site's requirements. There is no electricity available for the two most easterly private hangars on the aerodrome site.

7.2 Water

The water supplied to the Terminal and hangar area has been upgraded to increase the volume of flow available to the aerodrome. DEECA has installed an additional 100,000 litre water tank to increase that site's storage capacity. Planning is underway by the CFA to install a 250,000-litre water tank on the eastern edge of the Main Apron to provide additional storage for filling aircraft involved in fire suppression activities.

As the internal road system is developed provision has been made for services including water to be installed.

7.3 Sewerage

There is currently no sewerage connection to the aerodrome site.

The current septic system has the capacity to accommodate further development over the next 3 - 7 years. It is planned that as each new hangar line and access road is developed the septic waste water lines will be incorporated in the service easement.

7.4 Telephone

Telstra provides telephone lines onto the aerodrome site from a telephone main that runs along the western side of Aerodrome Road and terminates at a pillar located at the old access gate. The telephone main located on the western side of Aerodrome Road can be upgraded to a 50 pair cable, when required. The demand for telephone services is not expected to exceed the available capacity in the next 5 – 7 years.

8 PLANNING CONTROLS

The current planning scheme has an Airport Environs Overlay (AEO) which adequately covers the area around the aerodrome that requires protection for current and future aircraft types.

A Design and Development Overlay (DDO4) has also been included in the planning scheme that protects the current and future OLS from inappropriate development that may infringe the approach and take-off surfaces.

9 SUMMARY OF THE MASTER PLAN REVIEW

The following is a summary of the Master Plan Review recommendations:

- Continue the staged development of taxiways, aprons, hangars, utility requirements and internal access roads to meet ongoing demand.
- Continue discussions regarding the requirements to extend Runway 11/29 in the future if larger fire suppression aircraft are required to be based at the aerodrome. Consider purchasing the land west of the aerodrome when it becomes available on the market to cater for a runway extension to the west.
- Close the road reserves that cross the aerodrome site and convert the reserves to freehold land title then consolidate all land titles covering the aerodrome site held by NGSC onto one title.

- Prepare development guidelines for GA hangars so that the buildings are standardised to assist in orderly development on leased sites and to ensure the protection of access by taxiing aircraft.
- Negotiate with GWMWater to allow for the realignment of a section of Aerodrome Road, parallel with the proposed Stage 1 hangar development area, to provide suitable taxiway clearance for aircraft accessing the most northerly hangar site on the Main Apron.

9.1 Trigger points

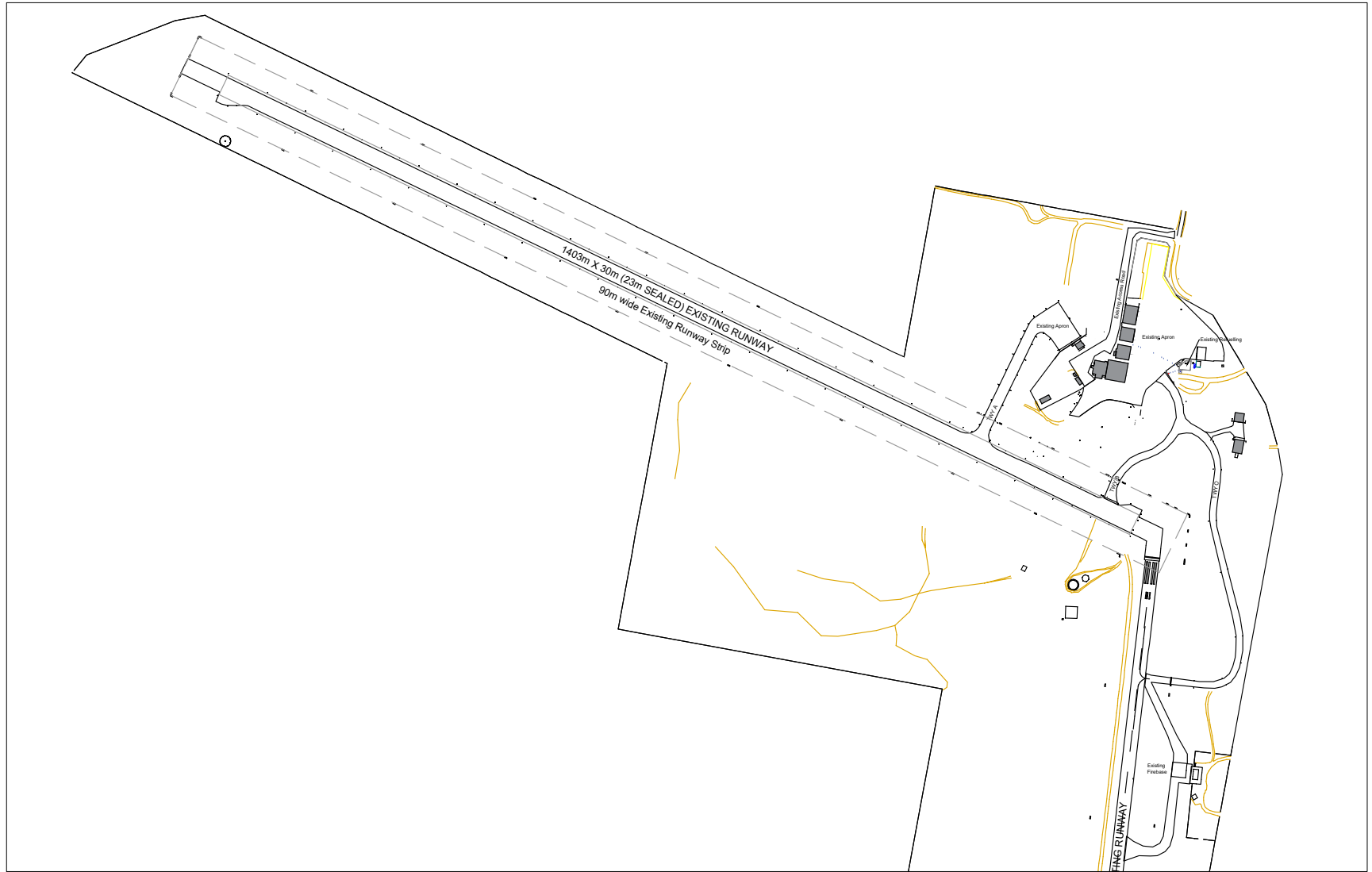
The following table indicates the expected trigger for the development of aviation facilities which are listed in the order of probable occurrence.

Facility Upgrade	Trigger Point	Timing
Establish a grass helicopter parking area east of Taxiway C	Provide parking for at least 2 – 3 helicopters	1 – 2 years
Deliver Investment Logic Map (ILM) and Business Case that demonstrates the social and economic benefits of Option 2 below.	Provide a robust evidence base for investment.	1 – 2 years
Establish a sub-committee or working group to help facilitate implementation, including securing funding.	An ILM/Business Case that demonstrates a positive cost versus benefit of Option 2 below.	1 – 2 years
NGSC to advocate at the federal level for funding streams for regional airport development projects in line with the Australian Airports Association (AAA) Federal Advocacy submission.	To provide funding support for further development of the aerodrome facilities.	1 – 2 years
Widen Runway 11/29 pavement to 30 m to remove the non-homogeneous section of the runway	Remove restrictions to certain aircraft types operational criteria	2 – 5 years
Provide additional apron for aircraft parking south of AGAIR hangar	Increase aircraft parking required	2 – 5 years
Option 1 – Strengthen Runway 11/29 by providing an asphalt overlay to allow for heavier aircraft to operate	Increase in requests for heavier aircraft to operate at the aerodrome	2 – 5 years
Option 2 – Strengthen Runway 11/29 by adding additional base course and asphalt overlay	Larger aircraft permanently operating on aerodrome	2 – 10 years

Trigger Points cont'd

Facility Upgrade	Trigger Point	Timing
Prepare for Stage 2 and Stage 3 hangar and aircraft taxiing and parking areas, including internal access roads	Demand for hangar sites of various sizes	Ongoing
Continue to upgrade utilities	Dependent on hangar development and utility requirements	Ongoing
Acquisition of the road reserves that cut through the aerodrome site	Ensure protection of aerodrome site for future development	Next 5 years
Consolidation of land titles to one title to assist with the management of the site	Ensure protection of the aerodrome site under the NGSC planning scheme	Next 5 years
Purchase land to the west of the aerodrome to provide for a Runway 11/29 extension	When land becomes available at market prices	Next 5 – 10 years
Extend Runway 11/29 to the west to provide a longer take-off distance	Larger aircraft based at aerodrome requiring extra runway length	Next 5 – 10 years

PLAN 1 – Current Aerodrome Layout



DRAWN	P. FITZGERALD
DATE	21.10.2014
SURVEYED	
DATE	
ARCHIVED	
DRAWING No.	SWL1003 Sheet 2 of 2 Sheets

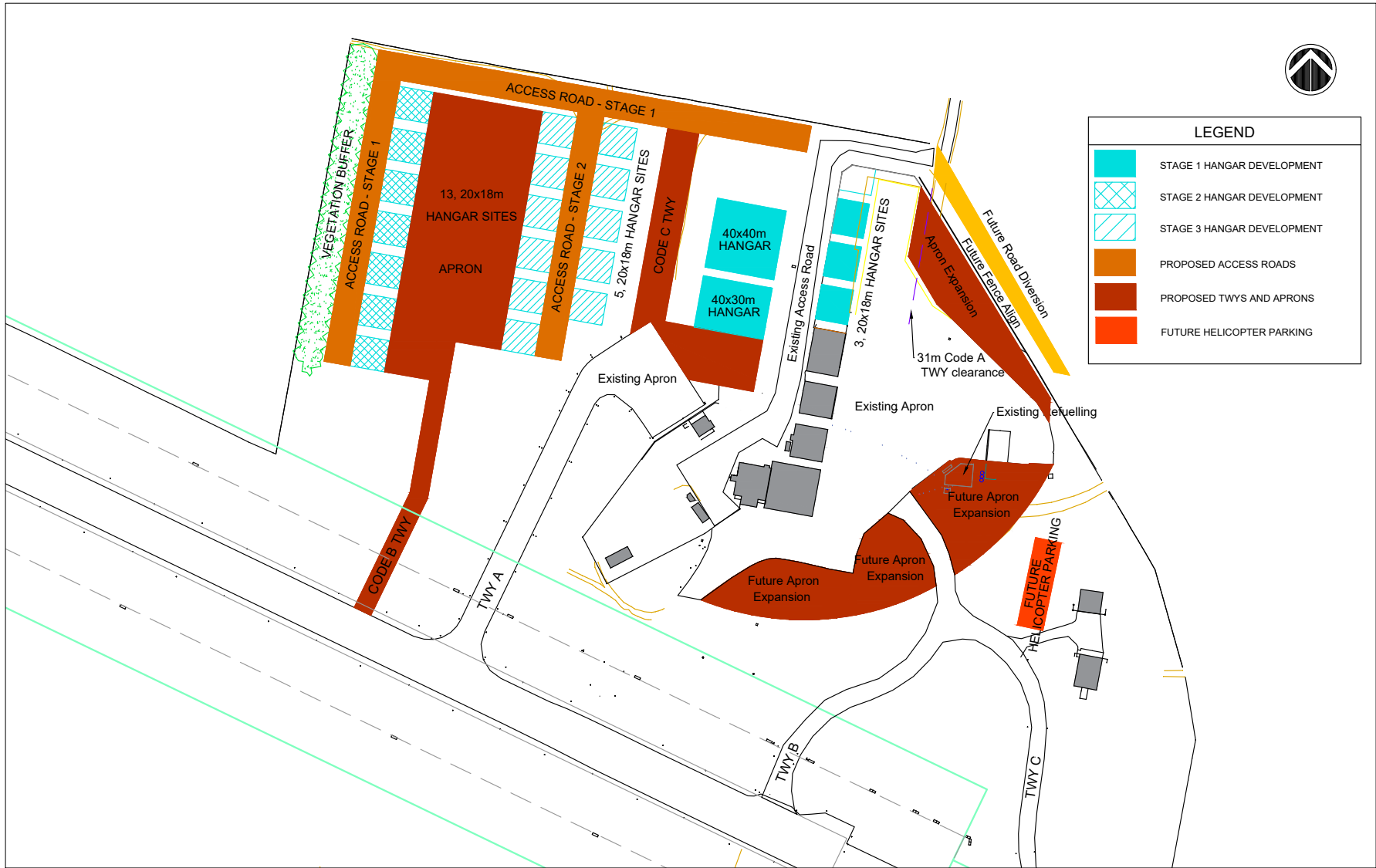
CLIENT
STAWELL AERODROME
MASTERPLAN - CURRENT CONDITIONS
PLAN 1



Scale 1:5000 @ A3

AMENDMENTS		
DATE	AMENDMENT	SIGNED
JULY 2023	UPDATED WITH COMPLETED WORKS	PPF

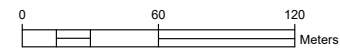
PLAN 2 – Stages 1, 2 and 3 Hangar Development



LEGEND	
	STAGE 1 HANGAR DEVELOPMENT
	STAGE 2 HANGAR DEVELOPMENT
	STAGE 3 HANGAR DEVELOPMENT
	PROPOSED ACCESS ROADS
	PROPOSED TWYS AND APRONS
	FUTURE HELICOPTER PARKING

DRAWN	P FITZGERALD
DATE	21.10.2014
SURVEYED	
DATE	
ARCHIVED	
DRAWING No.	SWL1003 Sheet 1 of 1 Sheets

STAWELL AERODROME
MASTERPLAN - APRON AREA
PLAN 2



AMENDMENTS		
DATE	AMENDMENT	SIGNED
June 2020	Updated for Masterplan Review	

PLAN 3 – Runway 11/29 extension to the west

ANNEX 1 – Images of aircraft



SAAB 340B



DASH 8 – 200



Air Tractor 802



CL 415



King Air 360



Cessna CJ2/525

9.4. Improve Organisational Effectiveness

9.4.1. Council Meeting Schedule 2024

Author/Position: Mary Scully, Manager Governance

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to set the schedule for Council Meetings for 2024.

Summary

Council must set the date, time and place of Council Meetings, this can be done as a schedule of meetings or at various times during the year.

Council Meetings are currently held on the first Monday of the month and commence at 12.30pm. It is usually Council's practice to hold Council Meetings alternating between Stawell and St Arnaud.

Recommendation

That Council adopts the proposed meeting schedule for 2024, as listed in the report.

RESOLUTION

That Council adopts the proposed meeting schedule for 2024, as listed in the report.

Moved: Cr Eddy Ostarcevic

Seconded: Cr Kevin Erwin

Carried

Background/Rationale

This report allows Council the opportunity to consider the location and starting time of its meetings. If Council agrees to continue its practice of meeting on the first Monday of the month at 12.30pm, alternating between Stawell and St Arnaud, a proposed meeting timetable is provided for consideration.

Date	Meeting	Location	Time
Monday 5 February	Council	Stawell	12.30pm
Monday 4 March	Council	St Arnaud	12.30pm
Monday 8 April	Council	Stawell	12.30pm
Monday 6 May	Council	St Arnaud	12.30pm
Monday 3 June	Council	Stawell	12.30pm
Monday 24 June (Budget and Council Plan adoption)	Council	St Arnaud	12.30pm
Monday 1 July	Council	Stawell	12.30pm
Monday 5 August	Council	St Arnaud	12.30pm
Monday 2 September	Council	Stawell	12.30pm
Monday 7 October	Council	St Arnaud	12.30pm
Monday 11 November	Council	Stawell	12.30pm
Monday 11 November (Statutory Council Meeting)	Council	Stawell	6pm
Monday 2 December	Council	St Arnaud	12.30pm

Legislation, Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

Council Plan 2021-25 – Improve Organisational Effectiveness

Options**Option 1**

That Council adopts the proposed meeting schedule as listed. **[recommended]**

Option 2

The Council amends the proposed meeting schedule. **[not recommended]**

Implications

The subject matter has not raised any sustainability issues (economic, social, environmental or climate change) or heritage/cultural, amenity, human rights/gender equality, privacy, risk management, budgetary and asset management implications.

Procurement

No procurement requirements apply to this report.

Community Engagement

Public notices will be provided to the community via local newspapers, social media and on Council's website to inform the community of the Council Meeting schedule for 2024 once approved and adopted by Council.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The subject matter of the report does not raise any implications regarding innovation or improvements.

Collaboration

No collaboration requirements apply to this report.

Officer's Declaration of Interest

All officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

Mary Scully, Manager Governance

In providing this advice as the author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Attachments

Nil

9.4.2. Appointment of Council Committee Delegates/Representatives 2024

Author/Position: Mary Scully, Manager Governance

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to appoint the councillor and officer delegates for 2024.

Summary

Councillors and officers commit to representing Council through involvement with a number of advisory committees, organisations and support groups. This involvement includes, but is not limited to, attending meetings, providing advocacy, and acting as the conduit through which the group's ideas and plans are communicated to Council.

Recommendation

That Council appoints the councillor and officer delegates for 2024 as detailed in the attached report.

RESOLUTION

That Council appoints:

- 1. the councillor and officer delegates for 2024 as detailed in the attached report; and**
- 2. Cr Murray Emerson and Cr Trevor Gready to the Wimmera Southern Mallee Central Highlands Regional Group of the Municipal Association of Victoria.**

Moved: Cr Murray Emerson

Seconded: Cr Trevor Gready

Carried

Background/Rationale

The committees, organisations and groups are established for a variety of purposes including providing advice to Council, making particular types of Council decisions such as planning decisions, those established that have been delegated a power or duty by the Council, those required by legislation, and others established in order to provide a regional focus on a particular issue.

Councillors also have an opportunity to be involved with numerous local groups and those detailed in the attachment are those that Council may be directly involved with or have been asked to be part of.

Councillors have had an opportunity to consider the various delegations to the committees, organisations and groups and have agreed to the majority of appointments as detailed in the attachment.

Legislation, Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

Council Plan 2021-25 – Improve Organisational Effectiveness

Options

Option 1

The Council appoints councillors and officer delegates to the various Council committees. **[recommended]**

Option 2

The Council does not appoint delegates to the various Council committees and takes no further action. **[not recommended]**

Implications

The subject matter has not raised any sustainability issues (economic, social, environmental or climate change) or heritage/cultural, amenity, human rights/gender equality, privacy, risk management, budgetary and asset management implications.

Procurement

Council provides for the cost of memberships and meeting attendance in its annual budget.

Community Engagement

There has been no community engagement at this time however committees, organisations and groups will be notified once a Council representative has been appointed.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The subject matter of the report does not raise any implications regarding innovation or improvements.

Collaboration

There is no opportunity for collaboration as each council must pay for its own memberships.

Officer's Declaration of Interest

All officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

Mary Scully, Manager Governance

In providing this advice as the author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Attachments

1. Council Committees Representatives Delegates List **[9.4.2.1 - 3 pages]**

Council Committees Representatives/Delegates List – 4 December 2023

Committee	Purpose	Delegates	Term of appointment
Audit and Risk Committee Audit and Risk Committee Charter	The Audit and Risk Committee has the responsibility to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the compliance of Council policies and procedures with the overarching governance principles, the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and any Ministerial directions. • Monitor Council's financial and performance reporting. • Monitor and provide advice on risk management and fraud prevention systems and controls. • Oversee internal and external audit functions. 	Cr Erwin Cr Rob Haswell	The Councillor Representatives will be appointed annually at Council's December meeting.
CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee Policy and TOR	Advisory committee to council to establish and oversee the process to enable council to appoint the CEO.	All Councillors	Appoint at least three Councillors, one of whom will be the Mayor, to the Committee. All councillors form the Committee
Queen Mary Gardens Advisory Group	Established to provide advice on the care and manage QMG and Pioneer Park	Cr Ostarcevic	1 Councillor (Chair) 4 year term
St Arnaud Recreation Advisory Group Terms of Reference	To provide advice regarding Lord Nelson Park, King George Park and Goldfields Reservoir	Cr Ostarcevic PhD (Chair) Cr Hyslop	Up to two Councillors (one who will be appointed as Chairperson who will have voting rights, noting that any vote will be taken in consultation with the second Councillor representative) 24-month term for members
Stawell Aerodrome Advisory Committee	To research and act as a consulting and advising body to the Council to support and guide the strategic management and development of the Stawell Aerodrome and its surrounds.	Cr Erwin Cr Rob Haswell	
Stawell Gift Event Management Pty Ltd (SGEM)	Management committee to focus on the Stawell Gift's long-term sustainability.	Cr Emerson (Chair) Director Strategy, Prosperity & Engagement	Term of Chair = 2 years 2 members from Council, 1 should be an officer
Stawell Harness Racing Club Community Grants Panel	Panel for community grants program	Cr Haswell	

Committee	Purpose	Delegates	Term of appointment
Stawell Recreation Advisory Group Terms of Reference	To provide advice regarding North Park and Central Park	Cr Dempsey (Chair) Cr Emerson	Up to two Councillors (one who will be appointed as Chairperson who will have voting rights, noting that any vote will be taken in consultation with the second Councillor representative) 24-month term for members
Sunraysia Highway Improvement Committee Constitution	Six member councils – to pursue improvement and upgrading of Sunraysia Highway	Cr Ostarcevic PhD Director Infrastructure and Amenity	
Walkers Lake Advisory Group Terms of Reference	Formed to investigate and advise Council on the establishment of Walkers Lake as a recreational lake	Cr Erwin (Chair) Cr Hyslop	One Councillor (who will chair meetings) 4-year term for members
Memberships	Purpose	Delegates	
Grampians Tourism Board	Peak industry body which delivers a coordinated approach to marketing, product development, infrastructure investment and industry development for the Grampians Region.	CEO	
Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Delegate/s Representative/s MAV Board Rules NGSC is part of the MAV regional group - Wimmera Southern Mallee Central Highlands Group	Incorporated by Act of Parliament; Council delegates represent NGSC that is a member council	Cr Emerson Cr Gready (substitute delegate)	MAV Representatives: Council must appoint one councillor as a delegate and one councillor as a substitute delegate to the Association. Appointments must be made by a resolution of the participating member council
Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Board MAV Board Rules	The MAV Board comprises 5 delegates from non-metro councils, each being elected by delegates of 2 of the 5 regional groups of non-metro councils to which their participating member council belongs (NWMA)	Cr Emerson	Must be a NGSC representative to the MAV; elected by regional delegates; 2-year term
Rail Freight Alliance RFA Mission	24 rural and regional Councils advocating for rail standardisation and upgrading of all key rail lines in Victoria to world class transport standards, a competitive, independent and non-discriminatory Open Access rail freight system and seamless freight logistics that will facilitate the movement of bulk freight by rail rather than by road	Cr Gready	

Memberships	Purpose	Delegates	
Western Highway Action Committee Constitution	Group working to gain improvements for the Western Highway	Cr Erwin Director Infrastructure and Amenity	
Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Transport Group	Group of six councils (and VicRoads) focusing of regional road transport projects	Cr Erwin Director Infrastructure and Amenity	
Wimmera Development Association (WDA) Advisory Board	The peak economic development organisation for the Wimmera Southern-Mallee region which supports existing local businesses and promotes economic development opportunities to investors within and outside the region	Cr Erwin (Council) CEO (ex officio)	Note: transitioning to new model over next 12 months.
East Grampians Rural Pipeline Project Customer Consultative Committee	Committee provides input into the development of detailed designs for the EGRP project and advise on potential customer views and issues that could arise from the development of a water-supply scheme	Cr Gready	
Supported Groups	Purpose	Delegates	
Central Grampians LLEN Board of Management	LLENS are led by a volunteer Board of Management and support children and young people to actively participate in education, training, employment and the community. The Board has sought a nomination for the board under the local government category.	Cr Dempsey	
North Central LLEN St Arnaud	LLENS are led by a volunteer Board of Management and support children and young people to actively participate in education, training, employment and the community.	Cr Hyslop	
Great Western Futures Committee	Local Progress Association	Cr Gready	
Halls Gap Residents & Ratepayers Association	Local Residents Association	Cr Gready	
Lake Fyans Recreation Area Committee of Management		Cr Gready	
St Arnaud Community Access Network (SCAN)		Cr Ostarcevic PhD	
Stawell Neighbourhood House	The Stawell Neighbourhood House offers a variety of activities including recreational and craft, accredited and non-accredited vocational courses for the community.	Cr Dempsey	

9.4.3. Proposed Road Naming - Maddocks Road

Author/Position: Mary Scully, Manager Governance

Purpose

To consider undertaking the process to name an unnamed road between Horsham Road and Grampians Road, Stawell.

Summary

Council officers have requested that an unnamed road between Horsham Road and Grampians Road, Stawell be named due to requirements for Council to maintain this road. As Council is the road naming authority, Council is asked to consider giving public notice of its intention to name the road in recognition of the Maddocks family.

Recommendation

That Council gives public notice of its intention to name the unnamed road between Horsham Road and Grampians Road, Stawell as Maddocks Road.

RESOLUTION

That Council gives public notice of its intention to name the unnamed road between Horsham Road and Grampians Road, Stawell as Maddocks Road.

Moved: Cr Kevin Erwin

Seconded: Cr Murray Emerson

Carried

Background/Rationale

Council is the road naming authority for local roads in accordance with Schedule 10 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, which empowers Council to name roads. Any road naming must be in accordance with Geographic Place Names legislation.

Council officers have asked that the unnamed road between Horsham Road and Grampians Road, Stawell (highlighted in the image below) be named due to the road being included on council's Road Register for regular maintenance.

It is Council's practice to name roads after original landholders to recognise the contribution of early families to the area. Officers sought comment on an appropriate name from the Stawell Historical Society and it was recommended that the road be named as Maddocks Road as the Maddocks Cordial Factory was located on this road and the Maddocks family have lived and contributed to the town of Stawell for over 144 years. The agreement of Mr Ron Maddocks to the proposed name was obtained.

Jane Maddocks and her son John sailed from England and arrived and settled in Stawell in 1864 to live closer to his uncle. John Maddocks lived and worked along the unnamed road after he took over running the aerated water and cordial factory which he inherited from his uncle, for more than 20 years until his death in July 1898.

In 1878 John married Janet Hyslop and had four children who also grew up in Stawell, John, William, Jeannie and Jessie. John was held in high regard as he worked actively in the community as a member of the Stawell Band and the Stawell Volunteer Fire Brigade, in which he held the position of Captain for many years until his death in 1898. When John passed away, the cordial factory continued to be operated by John and Janet's sons, John and William Maddocks for a few more years until the business closed.

Council officers liaised with the Stawell Historical Society and Mr Ron Maddocks in respect of identifying notable women in the family to align with the Gender Equity Victoria Put Her Name On it Campaign. While the achievements of women in the Maddocks family, like many women of this era, were not formally documented, their contribution and support of the Maddocks men over time goes without saying and it is proposed that the naming of the road as Maddocks Road recognises the contributions of both Maddocks women and Maddocks men to Stawell and District for over 144+ years.

Legislation, Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

Council Plan – Improve Organisational Effectiveness

Naming Rules for Places in Victoria



Legislation, Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

Council Plan – Improve Organisational Effectiveness

Naming Rules for Places in Victoria

Options

Option 1

Council agrees to give public notice of its intention to name the unnamed road as Maddocks Road.

[recommended]

Option 2

That Council considers an alternative name and agrees to give public notice. **[not recommended]**

Option 3

That Council takes no further action. **[not recommended]**

Implications

Any identified sustainability issues (economic, social, environmental or climate change) or heritage/cultural, amenity, human rights/gender equality, privacy, risk management, budgetary and asset management implications have been addressed in this report.

Finance – The naming of roads incurs administration, advertising and signage costs.

Risk Management – The naming of roads is a means to minimise risk and ensure the prompt delivery of emergency services.

Asset Management – The level of service will not increase as a result of the road being formally named. Signage is proposed

Gender equality – Gender Equity Victoria (GV) is working closely with Geographic Names Victoria (GNV) to better promote equality in place naming and commemoration and council officers liaised with the Stawell Historical Society and the Maddocks family for records to recognise notable women in the family; unfortunately no formal records could be obtained.

Procurement

No procurement requirements apply for the subject of this report.

Community Engagement

Community engagement is an important part of the road naming process and the giving of public notice will allow community members an opportunity to comment prior to the road being formally named.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The subject matter of this report does not raise any implications regarding innovation or improvements

Collaboration

No collaboration with other councils, governments or statutory bodies was sought or provided.

Officer's Declaration of Interest

All officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

Mary Scully, Manager Governance

In providing this advice as the author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Attachments

Nil

9.4.4. Quarterly Finance Report

Author/Position: **Graham Haylock, Manager Financial Services**

Purpose

To advise Council of the Financial Report for the first quarter ended 30 September 2023, which includes projects carried forward from the prior 2022-23 financial year.

Summary

This report discloses:

1. The Financial Report for the first quarter ended 30 September 2023.
2. The value of projects operating and capital to be carried forward from the 2022-23 financial year for completion during the 2023-24 financial year.

Recommendation

That Council notes the Financial Report for the first quarter ended 30 September 2023.

RESOLUTION

That Council notes the Financial Report for the first quarter ended 30 September 2023.

Moved: **Cr Eddy Ostarcevic**

Seconded: **Cr Kevin Erwin**

Carried

Background/Rationale

This report is the first financial report for the 2023-24 financial year that assesses Council's performance against the adopted budget. It also includes the value of projects, operating and capita, to be carried forward from the 2022-23 financial year for completion during the 2023-24 financial year.

The report shows the forecast end of year result for the current financial year based on actual results to 30 September 2023, together with percentage variations to the adopted budget.

Legislation, Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

Local Government Act 2020

Council Plan 2021-25 – Improve Organisational Effectiveness

Options

Option 1

That Council notes the Financial Report for the first quarter ended 30 September 2023 without amendments.

[recommended]

Option 2

That Council notes the Financial Report for the first quarter ended 30 September 2023 with amendments. **[not**

recommended]

Implications

The subject matter has not raised any sustainability issues (economic, social, environmental or climate change) or heritage/cultural, amenity, human rights/gender equality, privacy, risk management, budgetary and asset management implications.

Procurement

This report does not raise any procurement agreement matters.

Community Engagement

No community engagement was required.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

This report incorporates the impact of new accounting standards and better practice reporting.

Collaboration

No collaboration was required to complete this report.

Officer's Declaration of Interest

All officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

Graham Haylock, Manager Financial Services

In providing this advice as the author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Attachments

1. Quarterly Finance Report - September 2023 **[9.4.4.1 - 12 pages]**

Financial Report

30 September, 2023



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FINANCE REPORT - SEPTEMBER 2023: CARRY FORWARDS

Summary of Variations

The variation between the 2023/24 Adopted Budget and the 2022/23 Actuals made up of the following components: -

\$000's	
Opening Cash	
Additional Cash @ 30 June 2023 vs 2024 Opening Budgeted Cash Position	11,490
Explanation of Additional Cash	
<i>Carry Forward to 2023/24:</i>	
Capital Works	6,152
Capital Projects	3,801
Operating Projects	1,312
Operating Programs	440
	11,705

Summary of Carry Forwards	\$ Carry Forward	\$ Actuals (Sept Qtr)
Capital Works		
Expenditure budgeted for in 2022/23 - to be expended in 2023/24		
Buildings program		
Stawell Animal Pound	23,058	-
North Park Leisure Complex (SSAC)	155,304	534
St Arnaud Pool Complex - Pool	2,795	-
Energy Efficiency Project	34,183	20,955
St Arnaud Tennis Club Renewal	28,000	782
Navarre Recreation Reserve	22,740	-
Stawell Library Refurbishment	272,148	2,700
Great Western Netball Clubrooms	53,300	500
Buildings program Subtotal	591,528	25,471
Heavy Plant Replacement Program	22,385	-
Roads program		
Final Seal Program .. McKay Rd	3,548	-
Final Seal Program .. School rd	11,000	-
Final Seal Program .. McKay Rd	8,500	-
Kerb & Channel Program .. Montague St	33,750	-
Major rural roads Program .. Salt Creek Rd	360,756	12,792
Resheeting Program .. Tottington Rd	15,000	-
Rural & Residential Program .. Glenvale Rd	10,000	-
Transport dev Program .. Baldwin Plains Rd	900,000	-
Transport dev Program .. Queens Ave	49,556	28,117
Urban Rd Improvement Program .. Stawell - Sumner St	36,776	383
Rehabilitation Program .. Banyena - Pimpinio Rd	711,859	50,384
Rehabilitation Program .. Crowlands Rd	31,342	38,425
Rehabilitation Program .. Lake Rd	69,633	-
Inf Footpaths Program .. Stawell - Abattoir Rd	4,200	-
Inf Bridge Renewal Program .. - Baldwin Plains Rd	110,000	5,000
Inf Bridge Renewal Program .. Carrols Bridge Rd	112,000	-
Inf Bridge Renewal Program .. Dunolly Rd	33,000	-
Inf Bridge Renewal Program .. Greens Creek Rd	500,000	-
Inf Bridge Renewal Program .. Kooreh Rd	428,000	-
Inf Bridge Renewal Program .. Landsborough Rd	6,581	11,700
Inf Bridge Renewal Program .. Landsborough Rd	794,477	315,882
Inf Bridge Renewal Program .. Landsborough Rd	16,436	-
Inf Bridge Renewal Program .. Wallaloo East Rd	110,000	5,000
Inf Bridge Renewal Program ..Wallaloo East Rd	500,000	-
Inf Bridge Renewal Program .. Wallaloo East Road	271,515	-
Inf Bridge Renewal Program .. Wallaloo East Rd	157,515	12,800
Inf - Streetscape Program ..School Rd	7,818	-
Inf - Streetscape Program ..St Arnaud Napier St	44,485	-
Inf - Streetscape Program ..Halls Gap Peak Trailhead	200,000	-
Roads program Subtotal	5,537,747	480,483
	6,151,660	505,954

Capital Projects

Stawell Aerodrome Open Spaces	186,490	26,352
St Arnaud Sporting Club	43,905	-
Central Park Netball Court Upgrade	97,525	-
Waste Action Plan	834,294	16,705
Halls Gap Rear Laneway	200,000	-
Great Western Trail	377,257	600
Heath Street Bridge Halls Gap	589,684	169,946
North Park Netball Courts - Sporting Surfaces	45,000	12,894
Bellfield Bikepath Development, Halls Gap	10,294	-
Stawell Skate Park - Minor Structures	518,160	613,050
Stawell Cemetery - Site Prep	296,288	25,032
Stawell Cemetery - Water Infrastructure	50,000	-
Cultural Heritage Trail - Minor Structures	16,775	3,100
Walkers Lake Reserve	111,884	-
Emergency Recovery	128,000	24,064
Walkers Lake Access Path	75,000	-
Transfer Station Upgrade	220,515	35,199
	3,801,071	926,942

Operating Projects

Great Western Future Plan	14,173	-
Community Grants Program	14,385	85,967
Marnoo Flood Study	12,800	-
Stawell Flood Investigation	132,000	17,685
St Arnaud Retention Dam Flood Mitigation	65,000	4,800
Increased Capacity Marrang Kinder & ELC	79,998	33,810
Community-Wide Approach to Resilience	150,000	-
LG Business Concierge & Hospitality	60,000	-
Ready for Life, Early years	149,850	2,206
Gatherings 2023	48,000	48,000
RCTP - ERP project (Corporate Systems)	142,273	39,543
RCTP - EDRMS project (Records System)	152,443	-
CCCF Sustainability Support	73,039	41,145
Great Western Clubrooms Detailed Design	60,000	-
Northern Grampians Public Place Recycling	157,678	3,420
	1,311,639	276,576

Operating Programs

Information Services - Cyber Audit	20,000	-
Information Services - Equipment replacement	18,000	-
KISP	49,406	1,846
Workforce Planning work	30,000	-
Kinder Central Enrolment	26,327	-
Heritage Study; OS Strategy; Sport & Rec Strategy	171,114	77,665
Stawell & Great Western & St Arnaud Planning	42,500	-
Home Maintenance	7,503	-
Aged Friendly Communities	28,590	-
Aged Services	41,740	-
Aged Services - Flexible Service Response	5,194	-
	440,374	79,511

Total Carry Forwards	11,704,744	1,788,983
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Cash Flow Statement as at 30 September, 2023

	Actuals	Forecast Budget	Adopted Budget	Forecast vs Adopted \$	% of Forecast used	
Cash flows from operating activities						
Rates and charges	5,555,757	20,261,000	20,135,000	126,000	27.4%	
Statutory fees and fines	35,489	356,000	356,000	-	10.0%	
User fees	475,372	1,955,000	1,955,000	-	24.3%	
Grants Operating	1,692,443	11,103,000	11,103,000	-	15.2%	
Grants Capital	109,920	5,607,000	5,607,000	-	2.0%	
Contributions Operating	24,627	73,000	73,000	-	33.7%	
Contributions Capital		108,000	108,000	-	0.0%	
Interest received	71,503	221,000	221,000	-	32.4%	
Other	281,806	542,000	542,000	-	52.0%	
Employee costs	(5,107,366)	(19,167,000)	(19,039,000)	(128,000)	26.6%	1
Materials and services	(3,899,756)	(12,351,512)	(10,427,000)	(1,924,512)	31.6%	1
Other payments	(334,647)	(1,175,385)	(1,161,000)	(14,385)	28.5%	1
Net cash provided by operating activities	(1,094,851)	7,532,103	9,473,000	(1,940,897)	-14.5%	
Cash flows from investing activities						
Payments for Property, infrastructure, Plant & Equipment	(2,658,130)	(21,523,848)	(11,882,000)	(9,641,848)	12.3%	1
Proceeds from sale of Property, infrastructure, Plant & Equipment	-	90,000	90,000	-	0.0%	
Net cash used in investing activities	(2,658,130)	(21,433,848)	(11,792,000)	(9,641,848)	12.4%	
Cash flows from financing activities						
Finance costs	-	(43,000)	(43,000)	-	0.0%	
Net cash used in financing activities	-	(43,000)	(43,000)	-	0.0%	
Net decrease / increase in Cash & Cash Equivalents	(3,752,982)	(13,944,745)	(2,362,000)	(11,582,745)	26.9%	1
Cash & Cash Equivalents at beginning of period	26,623,024	26,623,024	15,133,000	11,490,024	100.0%	
Cash & Cash Equivalents at end of period	22,870,042	12,678,279	12,771,000	(92,721)	180.4%	

Notes:

1 Forecast Budget adjusted to recognise prior year projects carried forward into the current year.

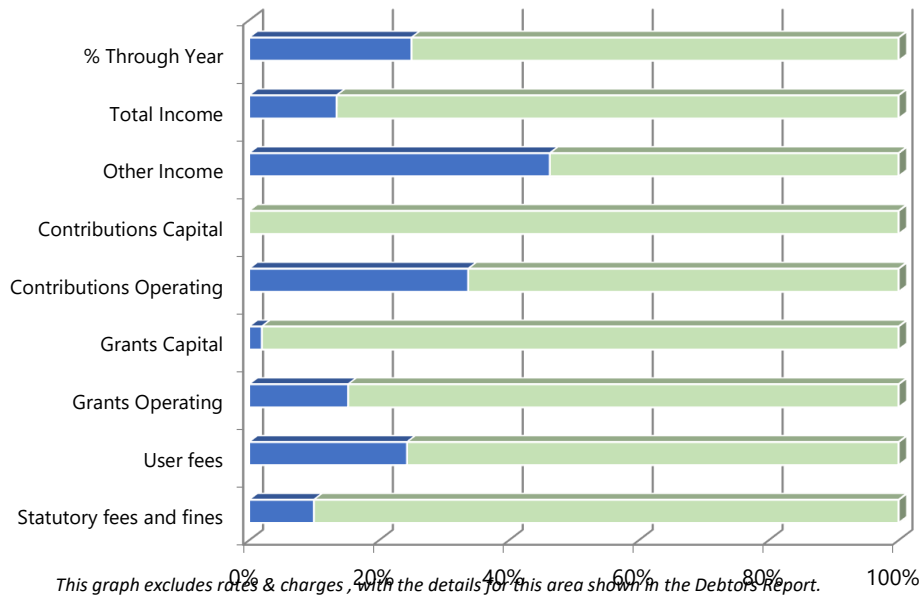
Operating Statement as at 30 September, 2023

	Actuals	Forecast Budget	Adopted Budget	Forecast vs Adopted \$	% of Forecast used	
Revenue						
Rates and charges	20,260,893	20,261,000	20,135,000	126,000	100.0%	1
Statutory fees and fines	35,489	356,000	356,000	-	10.0%	
User fees	475,372	1,955,000	1,955,000	-	24.3%	
Grants Operating	1,692,443	11,103,000	11,103,000	-	15.2%	
Grants Capital	109,920	5,607,000	5,607,000	-	2.0%	
Contributions Operating	24,627	73,000	73,000	-	33.7%	
Contributions Capital	-	108,000	108,000	-	0.0%	
Other Income	353,309	763,000	763,000	-	46.3%	
Total Revenue	22,952,053	40,226,000	40,100,000	126,000		
Expenses						
Employee costs	5,062,435	19,167,000	19,039,000	128,000	26.4%	2
Materials and Services	5,780,589	12,351,512	10,427,000	1,924,512	46.8%	2
Depreciation	-	14,276,000	14,276,000	-	0.0%	
Amortisation - Right of Use Assets	-	40,000	40,000	-	0.0%	
Borrowing costs	-	43,000	43,000	-	0.0%	
Other expenses	334,647	1,175,385	1,161,000	14,385	28.5%	2
Total expenses	11,177,671	47,052,897	44,986,000	2,066,897	23.8%	
Surplus (Deficit) for the period	11,774,382	(6,826,897)	(4,886,000)	(1,940,897)	-172.5%	

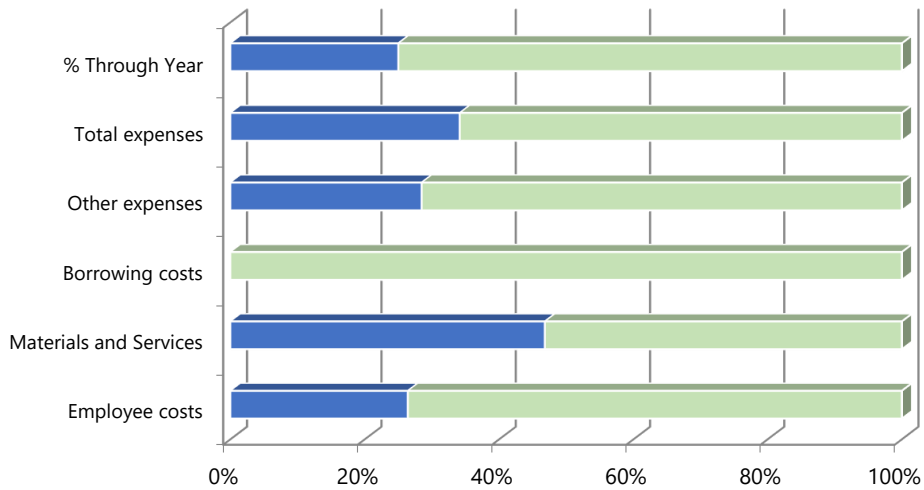
Notes:

- 1 Forecast Budget adjusted to recognise supplementary rates
- 2 Forecast Budget adjusted to recognise prior year projects carried forward into the current year.

Ordinary Operating Revenue Progress



Ordinary Operating Expenditure Progress



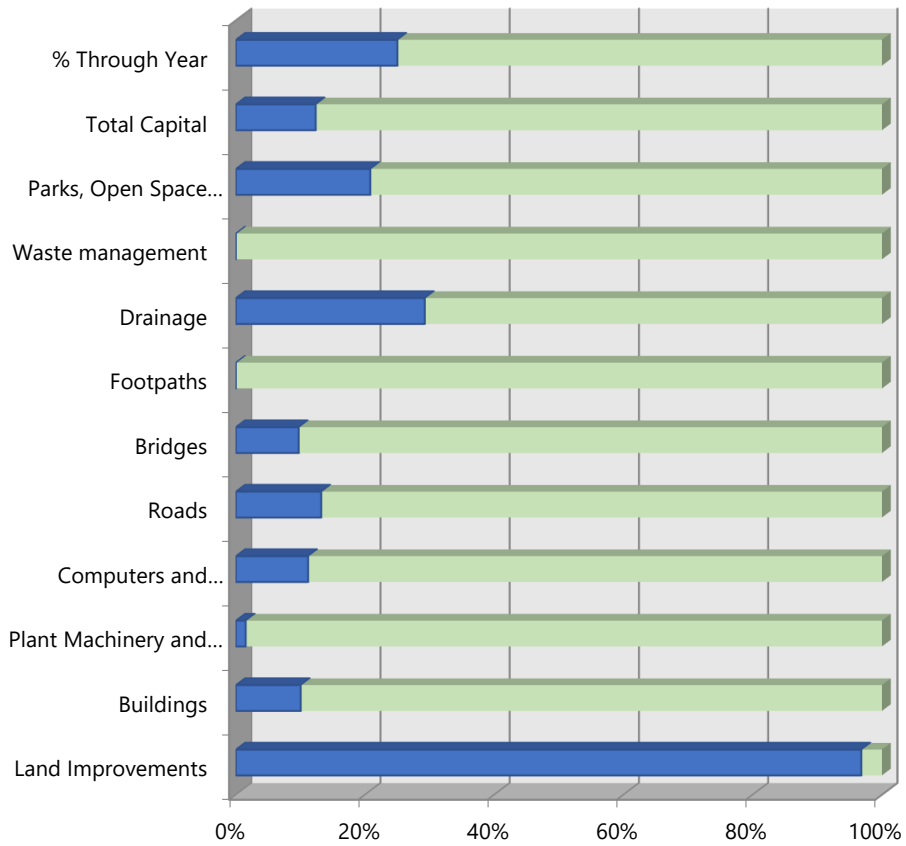
Capital Works as at 30 September, 2023

	Actuals	Forecast Budget	Adopted Budget	Forecast vs Adopted \$	% of Forecast used	
Revenue						
Land Improvements	3,872	4,000	-	4,000	96.8%	
Buildings	233,135	2,322,928	1,731,400	591,528	10.0%	1
Total Property	237,007	2,326,928	1,731,400	595,528	10.2%	
Plant Machinery and Equipment	14,661	963,385	941,000	22,385	1.5%	1
Computers and telecommunications	7,015	62,700	62,700	-	11.2%	
Total Plant and Equipment	21,676	1,026,085	1,003,700	22,385	2.1%	
Roads	995,613	7,534,194	5,105,984	2,428,210	13.2%	1
Bridges	385,841	3,963,524	924,000	3,039,524	9.7%	1
Footpaths	-	262,000	262,000	-	0.0%	
Drainage	23,401	80,000	75,800	4,200	29.3%	
Waste management	-	1,549,294	715,000	834,294	0.0%	1
Parks, Open Space and Streetscapes	994,591	4,777,707	2,060,000	2,717,707	20.8%	1
Total Infrastructure	2,399,447	18,166,719	9,142,784	9,023,935	13.2%	
Total Capital Works Expenditure	2,658,130	21,519,732	11,877,884	9,641,848	12.4%	

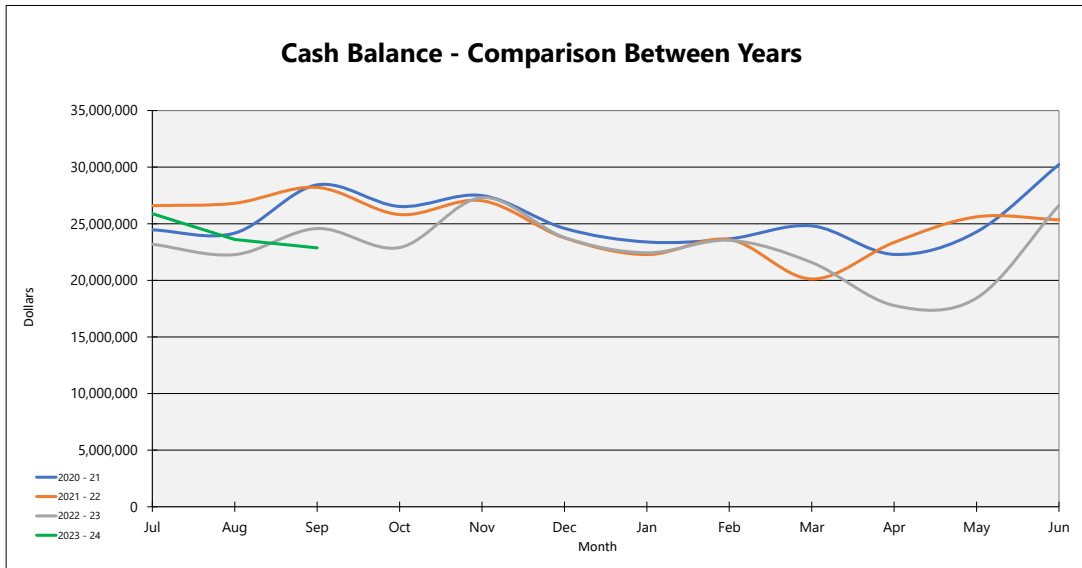
Notes:

1 Forecast Budget adjusted to recognise prior year projects carried forward into the current year.

Capital & Project Expenditure Progress



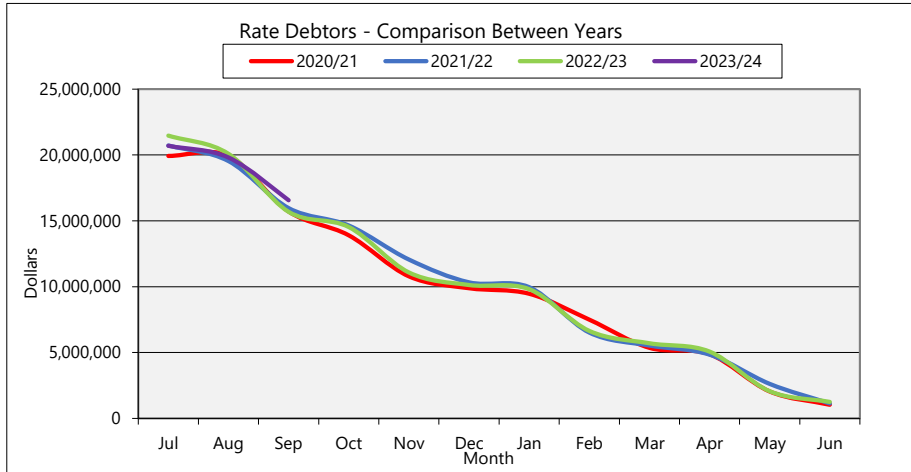
Cash and Investments as at 30 September, 2023



Total Cash Balance at Month End

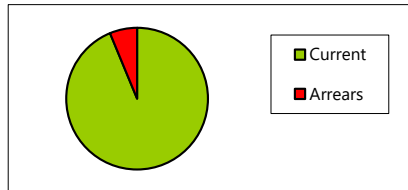
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
2019 - 20	18,642,143	18,424,373	20,885,437	20,496,673	22,711,437	22,520,759	21,226,659	23,831,676	21,993,073	19,771,946	25,394,596	27,206,212
2020 - 21	24,458,405	24,173,971	28,436,358	26,525,969	27,490,366	24,592,324	23,388,847	23,663,702	24,811,535	22,290,630	24,280,838	30,230,677
2021 - 22	26,594,594	26,813,020	28,211,375	25,807,441	27,033,930	23,750,045	22,274,406	23,607,188	20,121,050	23,354,913	25,609,380	25,346,744
2022 - 23	23,190,093	22,271,414	24,579,815	22,898,950	27,307,669	23,789,682	22,432,629	23,536,006	21,579,899	17,776,702	18,436,519	26,623,024
2023 - 24	25,886,555	23,604,567	22,870,042									

Debtors Reports as at 30 September, 2023



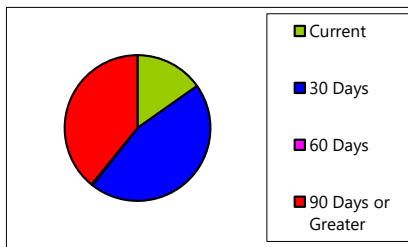
Rates Debtors YTD

	\$	%
Current	15,530,494	94%
Arrears	1,033,751	6%
Total	16,564,245	100%



Sundry Debtors YTD

	\$	%
Current	104,691	15.2%
30 Days	312,188	45.4%
60 Days	1,799	0.3%
90 Days or Greater	269,160	39.1%
Total	687,837	100%



Details:

Current	Not due yet.
Current	A \$ 20k invoice for software reimbursement is due from Southern Grampians Shire and a \$ 26k invoice is due for HACC services from Grampians Health Care
30 days	\$ 266k is for rates in lieu of which only a quarter was due by 30th September.
90 Days or Greater	\$ 165k Department of Jobs made up of two grant instalments, Heath Street Bridge and Stawell Housing Project and a long standing cemetery debt of \$ 61k.

Loan Report - Budget 2023/24

Borrowing Principles:

Indebtedness

Our level of debt will not exceed 60% or \$12.1 million of rates and charges revenue.

Indebtness Calculation Check 4.9% ✓

Debt Servicing Costs

Our level of annual debt servicing costs (principal plus Interest) will not exceed 5% or \$2 million of our total operating revenue.

Debt Servicing Calculation Check 0.2% ✓

Loans Budgeted 2023/24

Principal

	\$000's
Loans Outstanding as at 30 June, 2023	1,000
Add proposed new loans 2023/24	-
Less scheduled repayments 2023/24	0
Loans Outstanding as at 30 June, 2024	1,000

Expiry of Existing Loans

	Expiry	Current Balance \$000's
Loan 20	Jun-26	1,000
		1,000

9.4.5. Financial Hardship Policy and Rate Collection Policy

Author/Position: **Graham Haylock, Manager Financial Services**

Purpose

To approve Council's updated *Financial Hardship Policy* and *Rate Collection Policy*.

Summary

Council's *Financial Hardship Policy* and *Rate Collection Policy* have required significant amendments following the outcomes of the Victorian State Government's 2020 Rating Review, the 2021 Ombudsman's Report and the subsequent *Local Government Legislative Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Act 2022*.

The intent of the new legislation is to ensure councils proactively engage with ratepayers to explore payment arrangements and solutions, thereby improving the way that rates are collected. More punitive actions, such as debt collection and legal action, can only be taken if ratepayers refuse to engage and other approaches are exhausted.

Recommendation

That Council approves the updated *Financial Hardship Policy* and *Rate Collection Policy*.

RESOLUTION

That Council approves the updated *Financial Hardship Policy* and *Rate Collection Policy*.

Moved: Cr Trevor Gready

Seconded: Cr Kevin Erwin

Carried

Background/Rationale

Council's *Financial Hardship Policy* and *Rate Collection Policy* have been updated following significant changes to legislation, especially the *Local Government Legislative Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Act 2022*. The updates also respond to the findings of the 2021 Ombudsman's report on how councils deal with financial hardship.

The key focus is to ensure that councils proactively engage with ratepayers, including those experiencing financial hardship.

Key changes

Financial Hardship Policy:

- define both hardship and financial hardship and the circumstances when assistance will be applied
- must not require a ratepayer to be assessed by a Financial Counsellor
- applications for hardship relief or financial hardship to be via written application with supporting documentation
- rate waivers available in special circumstances at the discretion of Manager Financial Services and/or CEO
- interest waivers can be provided by Coordinator Property and Revenue.

Rate Collection Policy:

- Council must engage earlier and more proactively with ratepayers
- must offer interest free payment plans and deferrals and define the application process and conditions for each
- deferrals to be for a period to the end of financial year or 12 months maximum
- legal action must not be undertaken until 24 months after arrears notice is issued or payment plan default notice is issued.

Legislation, Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

Local Government Act 2020

Local Government Legislation Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Act 2022

Ministerial Guidelines Relating to Payment of Rates and Charges – Draft August 2023

Council Plan 2021-25 – Improve Organisational Effectiveness

Options

Option 1

That Council approves the updated *Financial Hardship Policy* and *Rate Collection Policy*. **[recommended]**

Option 2

That Council does not approve the updated *Financial Hardship Policy* and *Rate Collection Policy*. **[not recommended]**

Implications

The subject matter has not raised any sustainability issues (economic, social, environmental or climate change) or heritage/cultural, amenity, human rights/gender equality, privacy, risk management, budgetary and asset management implications.

Procurement

No procurement requirements apply for the subject of this report.

Community Engagement

No community engagement was required for the subject of this report.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The subject matter of this report does not raise any implications regarding innovation or improvements.

Collaboration

No collaboration with other councils, governments or statutory bodies was required for the subject of this report.

Officer's Declaration of Interest

All officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

Graham Haylock, Manager Financial Services

In providing this advice as the author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Attachments

1. Financial Hardship Policy Draft 2023 [9.4.5.1 - 6 pages]
2. Rate Collection Policy [9.4.5.2 - 7 pages]

Financial Hardship Policy (Interim)



October 2023




Northern Grampians Shire Council
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Financial Hardship Policy (Interim)



Council Policy

Responsible director

Responsible officer

Functional area

Date adopted by Council

Review date

Director Corporate and Community Services

Manager Financial Services

Financial Services

Purpose

The purpose of the Financial Hardship Policy (Interim) is to provide a framework for financial relief to support ratepayers who are struggling to pay their rates due to the impacts of life events such as natural disasters, severe illness, the loss of employment or family violence.

The policy also aims to provide a clear understanding of the options and assistance available to assist property owners and ratepayers who are experiencing payment difficulties to assist them to better manage payment of their rates.

Background

Municipal rates, fees and charges are a primary source of revenue for Northern Grampians Shire Council to ensure the ongoing delivery of a range of important services to the community. Council recognises that it has a responsibility to provide relief to ratepayers suffering hardship whilst maintaining the necessary cashflow to ensure continued levels of service delivery to the community.

Outcomes of the State Government's 2020 Rating review, the 2021 Ombudsman's Report and the subsequent *Local Government Legislative Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Act 2022* have led to significant changes being required to Council's 2017 policy.

The intent of the new legislation is to ensure councils proactively engage with ratepayers to explore payment arrangements and solutions and that more punitive actions can only be taken if ratepayers refuse to engage, and other approaches are exhausted. Such actions will improve how Council deals with people experiencing Financial Hardship and will incentivise working with ratepayers early and proactively as part of Council's core business.

Scope

This policy applies to property owners and ratepayers of the Northern Grampians Shire in accordance with Sections 170, 171, 171A and 172A of the *Local Government Act 1989*, the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government Legislative Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Act 2020*.

The scope of the policy extends to all property owners and ratepayers who are identified as having the intention to pay their rates but who do not have the capacity to do so.

The policy applies to all revenue items listed on the rates notice and includes interest charges.

Assistance will only be provided to individuals experiencing financial hardship for the payment of rates on their principal place of residence.

Financial Hardship Policy (Interim)

Applications will be considered for hardship (as opposed to 'financial hardship'), on other property types, for example, secondary residences, farms and commercial and industrial properties. Refer to Council's Rate Collection Policy.

Where there are joint owners of a property, and one of the owners is not experiencing hardship, the owner not experiencing hardship is still liable to pay the full amount of rates and charges on the land.

Financial Hardship is defined for the purpose of this policy as being serious circumstances whereby a ratepayer cannot afford the necessities of life for themselves and/or for dependants, or that the payment of rates and charges would mean that they cannot afford the necessities of life. It involves the inability of a ratepayer to meet their financial obligations rather than an unwillingness to do so. Necessities may include food, accommodation and essential medicines. The circumstances causing this situation may include illness, unemployment, the impacts of a natural disaster, family violence or other factors resulting in an unforeseen change.

Hardship (as opposed to 'financial hardship') is defined as being a situation where payment may be detrimental to the ratepayer's quality of life, but where the ratepayer is still able to afford the necessities of life. This may be due to a short-term situation or experience.

Ratepayers experiencing hardship may be eligible for consideration of a payment arrangement, or deferral. Refer to Council's Rate Collection Policy for details of the hardship assistance measures available.

Policy Objective

The objective of this policy is to provide a clear framework for the eligibility and assessment of hardship and financial hardship claims, recognising that ratepayers may find themselves experiencing financial hardship because of unexpected life events. Early identification of financial difficulty is paramount to preventing any escalation of the debt level. Ratepayers will be encouraged to identify themselves to Council and will be always treated fairly and with respect and confidentiality. Relevant staff will take proactive steps to identify ratepayers in hardship or suffering vulnerability and will be provided with appropriate training where needed.

Policy

Generally, the level of assistance provided by Council will be proportionate to the degree of hardship being experienced but will be tailored to suit an individual ratepayer's circumstances. All applications made will be considered on their individual merit.

Ratepayers will be asked to submit a written or on-line application for assistance and may be asked to provide supporting evidence such as bank statements and pay slips to verify claims. Council staff will be available to provide assistance with completion of application forms in some cases. Applications for hardship and financial hardship will be available on Council's website and at Customer Service offices.

Council will consider the applications and provide written advice to the ratepayer within 15 working days.

Assistance may be offered by in the form of payment plans, deferrals, or in exceptional cases, waivers.

Financial Hardship

Ratepayers will be asked to submit a written or on-line application for assistance. Council staff will be available to help with completion of application forms. Applications for financial hardship will be available on Council's website and at Customer Service offices. Council will review the application and provide written advice to the ratepayer within 15 working days.

All applications will be objectively assessed based on the information provided by the customer. Applicants may be expected to provide relevant supporting evidence with their application, which may include bank statements, Centrelink information and pay slips and may be asked to verify claims or to provide further information where necessary. Council undertakes to seek only relevant information and supporting documentation from ratepayers and to offer referrals to financial counselling or support organisations where requested, but to remain flexible if ratepayers do not want to utilise counselling services.

Financial Hardship Policy (Interim)

In cases where the applicant is reasonably unable to acquire the required documentation to substantiate their claim for financial hardship, Council will assess the situation on a case-by-case basis. Such circumstances might include a natural disaster, or significant family violence.

If a ratepayer is deemed to be experiencing financial hardship, interest charges will be waived and Council undertakes that it will not undertake debt collection or legal action whilst the owner/ratepayer is experiencing genuine financial hardship.

Payment plans and Deferrals

Payment plans and deferrals are available for those ratepayers who are suffering short term hardship or who have some capacity to pay. Further details can be found in Council's Rate Collection Policy.

If a ratepayer is deemed to be experiencing hardship, interest charges will be waived.

Council officers will assess the application to establish if the ratepayer is in a situation to afford to make payments and if the ratepayer is experiencing genuine financial hardship.

If a ratepayer wishes to set up a payment plan, or if a rate deferral is granted, they will be subject to the same conditions as set out in Council's Rate Collection policy.

The default payment option for payment plans is direct debit. Other payment options (including Centrelink deductions) may be considered at the discretion of the Manager Financial Services on an individual case basis.

Applications for payment plans and hardship will be available on Council's website and at Customer Service offices.

Applicants will be expected to provide supporting evidence, which may include bank statements and pay slips and may be asked to verify claims or provide further information.

A rate deferral agreement will cease and rates will become immediately due in the following circumstances -

- If the owner or ratepayer ceases to own the property
- If the owner or ratepayer does not reapply for consideration within 15 working days after being advised of the end of the deferral period by Council.
- If there is a material alteration to the ratepayer's circumstances which would no longer cause hardship if payment was made.

Rate waiver

Cases of serious financial hardship will be assessed by Council officers on a case-by-case basis for consideration of a waiver of rates and will be referred to the Manager Financial Services and/or Council's Chief Executive Officer for consideration.

The property for which a rate waiver will be considered must be the ratepayers principal place of residence.

All applications for hardship and/or financial hardship will be considered within 15 working days of receiving the application and all required supporting documentation. Council will advise applicants in writing of the outcome. All applications will be treated with the utmost respect and as being strictly confidential in accordance with Council's Privacy Policy.

Applications for financial hardship will not be considered for more than one year prior to the current rating year in which the application was received by Council. Any prior year applications will be referred to the Manager Financial Services and Council's Chief Executive Officer for consideration.

In cases where economic abuse or family violence are identified, Council will take steps to ensure that other owners cannot access confidential information relating to hardship or financial hardship applications and will ensure that the other owner/s cannot delay or prevent the application.

Financial Hardship Policy (Interim)

Any ratepayer who provides false or misleading information in support of an application or who fails to notify Council of a change in their circumstances relevant to an application will be guilty of a 10 penalty units offence and may face fines. The provision of false or misleading information will also be grounds for the cancellation of any plan, deferment or waiver, and will result in rates becoming payable immediately and the reinstatement of interest charges.

Where an applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome of an application, they may request a review of the decision by outlining the grounds for review. The request for a review must be in writing and addressed to the Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Executive Officer may exercise discretion in matters relating to this policy, including referral of matters raised in writing to an appropriate Council briefing session.

Reporting

Reports will be provided to Council at least annually on (but not limited to)-

- The total balance of unpaid rates, charges, and interest
- The number of occupancies (assessments) with unpaid rates and charges and interest
- The number of occupancies (assessments) on payment plans; and
- All occupancies not on payment plans with unpaid rates and charges of three years or more and reasons why the land has not been sold or transferred under Section 181 of the Local Government Act 1989.

Council has put certain measures in place to protect ratepayer data. The following measures include:

- Limited access to rating data
- Limited access to EDRMS debt collection records
- Limited access to debt collection notes
- Matters discussed with debtors are not shared with other staff members.

Legislation and Standards

Local Government Act 1989

Local Government Act 2020

Local Government Legislative Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Act 2020

Penalty Interest Act 1983

Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014

Ministerial Guidelines

Responsibilities

The Manager Financial Services is responsible for review of this policy. Council is responsible for setting the policy and the Coordinator Property Revenue and Customer Support and the Rates Officer, Revenue Officer, Property & Revenue Assistant and Customer Support officers are responsible for the administration of processes as set out in this policy.

Review

Assessment of the policy will be undertaken every four years to align with the Council term to ensure it remains current with the Council's goals, processes, aims and requirements and as a means by which to reduce Council's exposure to risk. Triggers for an earlier assessment include legislative changes and introduction of new systems or procedures, including the release of Ministerial guidelines.

Communication and implementation

Northern Grampians Shire Council website.

Staff training will be provided as required.

References

Rate Collection Policy

Revenue and Rating Plan

Ministerial Guidelines

Victorian Ombudsman Investigation into how local councils respond to ratepayers in financial hardship, 2021

Compliance

- Local Government Act 2020*
- Local Government Act 1989*
- [*Gender Equality Act 2020*](#)
- Child Safety Act 2015*
- [*Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*](#)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- Fair Work Act 2009*
- [*Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*](#)
- Health Records Act 2001*
- Freedom of Information Act 1982*
- Climate Change Act 2017*
- Local Government Legislative Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Act 2020*

Privacy and Data Protection compliance

All Council policies must consider the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and the *Victorian Protective Data Security (VPDSS) Standards* which adopt a risk-based approach to protective data security. This policy includes relevant, identified security risks and governance arrangements in place to protect security across the domains of information, personnel, ICT and physical.

Gender Equality compliance

Council has considered if gender equality principles, workplace gender equality of rights, opportunities, responsibilities and outcomes and the promotion of gender equality in the development of this policy. These have been determined to be not relevant to this policy.

Charter of Human Rights compliance

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

Definitions

- Payment Plan:** Any documented plan to pay off the due amount over an agreed period for payment of a rate or charge under Section 171B of the *Local Government Act 1989*
- Deferral:** A postponement of the payment, in whole or in part, for a specified period and subject to conditions set by Council under Section 170 of the *Local Government Act 1989*
- Waiver:** The relinquishment or removal of the liability to pay and may include whole or in part of rates and charges and interest under Sections 171, 171A and 172 of the *Local Government Act 1989*
- Policy:** What we will do and why (eg legislation governs Council actions)

Review history

Date	Review details	Action

Rate Collection Policy



October 2023







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Council Policy

Responsible director	Director Corporate and Community Services
Responsible officer	Manager Financial Services
Functional area	Finance
Date adopted by Council	
Review date	

Purpose

The purpose is to establish and implement a consistent framework for the effective collection of property rates and charges within statutory requirements as specified in the *Local Government Legislative Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Act 2022*, the *Local Government Act 1989* and the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Background

This policy replaces the former Rates and Charges Debt Collection Policy to ensure that Council meets the requirements of current legislation.

Municipal rates, fees and charges are a primary source of revenue for Northern Grampians Shire Council. To ensure the ongoing delivery of a range of important services to the community, Council must ensure that its cash flow is managed effectively.

Outcomes of the Government's 2020 Rating review, the 2021 Ombudsman's Report and the subsequent *Local Government Legislative Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Act 2022* have led to significant amendments being required to Council's 2019 policy.

The intent of the new legislation is to ensure councils proactively engage with ratepayers to explore payment arrangements and solutions thereby improving the way that rates are collected. More punitive actions, such as debt collection and legal action, can only be taken if ratepayers refuse to engage, and other approaches are exhausted.

Scope

This policy applies to all property owners and ratepayers of the Northern Grampians Shire in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* and the *Local Government Legislative Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Act 2020*.

The policy applies to all revenue items listed on the rates notice and includes interest charges.

Policy Objective

To provide an equitable standard process for collection of outstanding rate payments.

Whilst carrying out its responsibility to manage and collect outstanding rates and charges debts, Council is committed to:

- Ensuring that the process is transparent to all ratepayers, Councillors and staff
- Treating all people fairly and consistently under this policy
- Treating all matters under this policy confidentially and
- Treating all people with respect and sensitivity in considering their circumstances

Council undertakes to seek only relevant information and supporting documentation from ratepayers and to offer referrals to financial counselling or support organisation where requested, but to remain flexible if ratepayers do not want counselling services.

Policy

In order to achieve this commitment, Council will apply a Standard Collection Process for Unpaid Rates accounts.

Final notices will be forwarded for all unpaid rates accounts within two weeks of the due date of the 4th instalment, requiring full payment of the account before 30 June of that year. The final notice will clearly state the following -

- The full amount overdue and the date by which payment is required
- That payment plans are available upon application
- That deferrals may be available in some circumstances
- That those experiencing hardship or financial hardship should make application for special consideration

Ratepayers who have unpaid accounts at the end of the financial year and who do not have a current payment plan will be contacted by Council staff by one of the methods below, with an aim to encourage payment or a repayment arrangement. Preferred contact is -

1. telephone
2. email
3. posted letter

Results of contact attempts will be documented by Council staff.

Ratepayers will be allowed 15 working days for response or to lodge a payment application.

Where there is no response, the account will be referred to Council's debt collection agency for the issue of an engagement pack. This pack is tailored to assist Council to make the initial engagement with ratepayers, with the intention of setting up a repayment plan. The engagement pack involves contacting the ratepayer by -

1. Email (where an address is available) or letter (where no email is available)
2. Two-way SMS with a link to the Council portal
3. Phone call

Where the ratepayer refuses to engage with Council or with the debt collection agency after issue of the engagement pack, Council must not commence a proceeding under Section 180(1) of the *Local Government Act 1989* for an unpaid rate or charge until it has been at least 24 months since the person was notified. Council must not initiate a proceeding under Section 180(1) if the person has deferred payment, entered into a payment plan, or paid via another payment option.

If the account is lodged with Council's debt collection agency and a legal complaint is issued, further steps may be taken as follows (but is not limited to):

- Magistrates Court Judgement
- Magistrates Court Summary of Oral Examination
- Solicitor's letter to mortgagee
- Wages garnishee
- Sheriff's Warrant

Any legal action undertaken will incur the Magistrates Court civil procedure scale of costs, which may be added to the debt owed on the property.

Failing all other reasonable measures taken to engage with the ratepayer and recover unpaid rates and charges, and where a minimum of three years rates have accrued, Council may elect to proceed with the sale of property to recover outstanding rates, as legislated by Section 181 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Payment plans

Ratepayers experiencing financial difficulty will be encouraged to pay outstanding rates by setting up a payment plan based on the ratepayer's capacity to pay. Council will assist the ratepayer to ensure that the arrangement is mutually acceptable. All applications must be made in writing and Council will consider the applications and provide written advice to the ratepayer within 15 working days.

Applications for payment plans will be available on Council's website and at Customer Service offices.

Rate Collection Policy

Applicants will be expected to provide supporting evidence, which may include bank statements and pay slips and may be asked to verify claims or provide further information.

Payments will generally be calculated over a 12-month period; however longer-term arrangements will be considered in some circumstances.

Council will accept the following payment options for payment plans:

1. Fortnightly direct debits
2. Monthly direct debits
3. Fortnightly Centrepay deductions

Other payment options *may* be considered at the discretion of the Manager Financial Services on an individual case basis.

Direct debits and Centrepay agreements are both written agreements thereby meeting the legislated requirements and are both easily monitored for defaults.

If a payment plan is accepted by Council, a waiver of interest must be provided. The payment plan will continue until the current debt amount, as detailed in the letter issued to the ratepayer, is paid in full. The letter issued to the ratepayer will also set out all conditions of the plan, including the duration of the plan, the amount of each instalment and the frequency of instalments. The letter will also provide details under which the plan may be cancelled and how the ratepayer will be informed of any such cancellation.

If two scheduled payments have dishonoured or not made, then Council will write to the ratepayers asking them to immediately pay the two missed payments and will also advise them that the plan will be cancelled should a third consecutive payment be missed.

A payment plan will lapse if three scheduled payments have not been made. Council will advise the ratepayer in writing of that scenario and that it will be Council's intention to recover the overdue debt in accordance with Section 180(1).

If the plan is cancelled, interest will start to accrue from the cancellation date. If the account remains unpaid, it will be lodged with Council's debt collection agency after the expiration of 24 months from the date of cancellation.

Further payment plans will not be accepted within a 24-month period, except in the circumstances of financial hardship. Separate application will be required for consideration of financial hardship.

Deferrals

Ratepayers experiencing hardship may make written application for a deferral of rates under Section 170 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Hardship (as distinct from 'financial hardship') may be defined as being where a person has limited or low income and where the payment of rates and charges may be detrimental to their quality of life but where the ratepayer is still able to afford the necessities of life. This may be due to a shortterm situation or experience. A deferral suspends the requirement to pay for a specified period and may be provided in whole or in part, subject to conditions set by Council.

Deferrals will only be considered as a short-term measure with a maximum period of 12 months from the date of acceptance. After 12 months, applicants must reapply for a re-assessment of their circumstances.

Interest will be waived for the period that a deferral is granted.

Council will advise the acceptance of a deferral in writing within 15 working days of the application.

Where there are joint owners of a property, and one of the owners is not experiencing hardship, the owner not experiencing hardship is still liable to pay the full amount of rates and charges on the land.

Applications will be considered for hardship (as opposed to financial hardship), on other property types, for example, secondary residences, farms and commercial and industrial properties. Refer to Council's Debt Collection Policy.

A rate deferral agreement will cease and rates will become immediately due in the following circumstances -

- If the owner or ratepayer ceases to own the property
- If the owner or ratepayer does not reapply for consideration within 15 working days after being advised of the end of the deferral period by Council.

Waivers

Ratepayers experiencing serious financial hardship may make application for consideration of a waiver of rates under Section 171 of *the Local Government Act 1989* and Council's Financial Hardship Policy (Interim).

Where an applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome of an application, they may request a review of the decision by outlining the grounds for review. The request for a review must be in writing and addressed to the Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Executive Officer may exercise discretion in matters relating to this policy, including referral of matters raised in writing to an appropriate Councillor Briefing.

Reporting

Reports will be provided to Council at least annually on (but not limited to)-

- The total balance of unpaid rates, charges, and interest
- The number of occupancies (assessments) with unpaid rates and charges and interest
- The number of occupancies (assessments) on payment plans; and
- All occupancies not on payment plans with unpaid rates and charges of three years or more and reasons why the land has not been sold or transferred under Section 181 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Council has put certain measures in place to protect ratepayer data. The following measures include:

- Limited access to rating data
- Limited access to EDRMS debt collection records
- Limited access to debt collection notes
- Matters discussed with debtors are not shared with other staff members.

Legislation and Standards

Local Government Act 1989

Local Government Act 2020

Local Government Legislative Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Act 2020

Penalty Interest Act 1983

Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014

Responsibilities

The Manager Financial Services is responsible for review of this policy. Council is responsible for setting the policy and the Coordinator Property Revenue and Customer Support and the Rates Officer are responsible for administration of processes as set out in this policy.

Review

Assessment of the policy will be undertaken every four years to align with the Council term to ensure it remains current with the Council's goals, processes, aims and requirements and as a means by which to reduce Council's exposure to risk. Triggers for an earlier assessment include legislative changes and introduction of new systems or procedures.

Communication and implementation

Northern Grampians Shire Council website.

References

Revenue and Rating Plan
Financial Hardship Policy (Interim)

Compliance

- Local Government Act 2020*
- Local Government Act 1989*
- [Gender Equality Act 2020](#)
- Child Safety Act 2015*
- [Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014](#)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- Fair Work Act 2009*
- [Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006](#)
- Health Records Act 2001*
- Freedom of Information Act 1982*
- Climate Change Act 2017*
- Local Government Legislative Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Act 2020*

Privacy and Data Protection compliance

All Council policies must consider the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and the *Victorian Protective Data Security (VPDSS) Standards* which adopt a risk-based approach to protective data security. This policy includes relevant, identified security risks and governance arrangements in place to protect security across the domains of information, personnel, ICT and physical.

Gender Equality compliance

Council has considered if gender equality principles, workplace gender equality of rights, opportunities, responsibilities and outcomes and the promotion of gender equality in the development of this policy. These have been determined to be not relevant to this policy.

Charter of Human Rights compliance

It is considered that this policy does not impact on any [human rights](#) identified in the *Charter of Human Rights & Responsibilities Act 2006*.

Definitions

Policy: What we will do and why (eg legislation governs Council actions)

Payment Plan: Any documented plan to pay off the due amount over an agreed period for payment of a rate or charge under Section 171B of the *Local Government Act 1989*

Deferral: A postponement of the payment, in whole or in part, for a specified period and subject to conditions set by Council under Section 170 of the *Local Government Act 1989*

Waiver: The relinquishment or removal of the liability to pay and may include whole or in part of rates and charges and interest under Sections 171, 171A and 172 of the *Local Government Act*

1989

Rate Collection Policy

Review history

Date	Review details	Action

Background/Rationale

The development of the annual budget is part of an integrated process that ensures appropriate resource allocations are made to service Council's long term activities and initiatives.

The policy sets out principles to guide decision making and will ensure that it is clear who is responsible for the preparation and consideration of the annual budget and how performance against the adopted budget will be reported.

This policy document is supported by a number of operational and organisational documents, which are designed to assist with the implementation of the policy.

Legislation, Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

Local Government Act 2020

Council Plan 2021-25 – Improve Organisational Effectiveness

Options

Option 1

That Council approves the updated *Budget Development and Management Policy*. **[recommended]**

Option 2

That Council does not approve the updated *Budget Development and Management Policy*. **[not recommended]**

Implications

The subject matter has not raised any sustainability issues (economic, social, environmental or climate change) or heritage/cultural, amenity, human rights/gender equality, privacy, risk management, budgetary and asset management implications.

Procurement

No procurement requirements apply for the subject of this report.

Community Engagement

No community engagement was required for the subject of this report.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The subject matter of this report does not raise any implications regarding innovation or improvements.

Collaboration

No collaboration with other councils, governments or statutory bodies was required for the subject of this report.

Officer's Declaration of Interest

All officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

Graham Haylock, Manager Financial Services

In providing this advice as the author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Attachments

1. Budget Development and Management Policy **[9.4.6.1 - 7 pages]**

Budget Development and Management Policy



November 2023







Northern Grampians Shire Council
LIVE | WORK | INVEST | VISIT

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Budget Development and Management Policy



Council Policy

Responsible director

Responsible officer

Functional area

Date adopted by Council

Review date

Director Corporate & Community Services

Manager Financial Services

Financial Services

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the framework for the development and approval of the annual budget at the Northern Grampians Shire Council, and the circumstances in which Council would formally revise the budget.

Background

The Northern Grampians Shire Council is the custodian of significant community assets. These assets have an enormous impact on the delivery of programs, services and projects therefore it is crucial that they are well managed.

The development of the annual budget is part of an integrated process that ensures appropriate resource allocations are made to service Council's long-term activities and initiatives.

The Council Plan and the Financial Plan (10-year) and its underpinning strategies inform the budget development process. The annual budget needs to consider Council Plan initiatives, external influences and any new initiatives.

Development and adoption of an annual budget is required under the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act). Progress reporting on performance against the adopted budget is also required under the Act.

Notwithstanding the requirements of the Act, it is critical that expected income and expenditure is assessed in order to understand the impact on Council's financial position and to enable effective management and monitoring of community funds.

Scope

This policy applies to the Mayor, Councillors, Chief Executive Officer, all delegated purchasing officers, all other Council staff, temporary employees, contractors and consultants while engaged by Council who contribute to the development of the annual budget.

Policy Objective

The policy sets out principles to guide decision making and will ensure that it is clear who is responsible for preparation and consideration of the annual budget and how performance against the adopted budget will be reported.

Budget Development and Management Policy

This policy document is supported by a number of operational and organisational documents which are designed to assist with the implementation of the policy.

Policy

Northern Grampians Shire Council is committed to:

- sound budget management practices
- open and transparent communication with the community in the development, presentation and reporting of financial information
- providing economically and socially sustainable services to the community.

Council will maintain a strategic approach to the delivery of services, capital works and projects to ensure that the budget enables the objectives and strategies of the Council Plan.

Budgets will be developed by management based on agreed service levels as set by Council and will be presented to Council for consideration and adoption.

In Council's Financial Plan, a set of financial management principles have been adopted, providing key strategic directions to inform Council's financial decisions.

These principles will guide Council in the development of its annual budget and long-term financial plans.

General Financial Principles

Sustainable Budgeting Principle

- Council will implement a sustainable financial strategy that:
 - caters for short and long term
 - factors in community expectations
 - is linked to the Council Plan
 - is committed to achieving an annual surplus to contribute to capital projects
 - is consistent with the financial management principles outlined in s101 of the Act.

Cash Management Principle

- Council will manage cash to ensure sufficient levels to meet its requirements and will:
 - aim to maintain a minimum cash balance of 20% above the sum of current deposits and current interest bearing liabilities, plus the amount of reserve funds as determined appropriate
 - maintain sufficient cash to avoid overdraft interest.

Revenue Principles

Rates and Charges Revenue Principle

- Council will:
 - review rates annually following the announcement of the rate cap set by the Minister
 - consider making an application for a higher cap should there not be sufficient income to fund the:
 - Council Plan
 - Financial Plan
 - to meet current expenditure commitments.
- Differential rating should be applied as equitably as is practical and will comply with the *Ministerial Guidelines for Differential Rating*.
- Where it is possible to identify the direct benefit of a service, charges should reflect the cost of the service to help reduce rates subsidies.
- Council will consider pricing and contracts to deliver waste services that:
 - reduce waste to landfill
 - increase reuse of resources through recycling and avoidance initiatives
 - encourage community understanding of waste management

- are in line with legislative requirements and best practices
- are cost neutral through appropriate fees and charges and rating strategies.

User Fees Principle

- Council will set fees and charges having regard for:
 - pricing principles (profit, break even, subsidy)
 - marketplace competition
 - users capacity to pay
 - equity between services
 - community service benefit
 - benchmarking of similar services.
- Costs will include:
 - overheads
 - identification of service subsidy.
- Council will:
 - increase fees based on cost increases
 - consider pricing to encourage behaviour changes
 - advocate for statutory fees not governed by Council to be increased appropriately.

Grant Revenue Principle

- Council supports funding from other levels of government and will seek to maximise all appropriate external funding opportunities.
- Council opposes cost shifting, and where cost shifting occurs Council will communicate to its community the impact of these cost impositions.
- Council will only accept external funding if consistent with the Council Plan.
- Council will avoid distortion of priorities due to the availability of external funding.
- Funds received from other levels of government would be expected to meet full direct and indirect costs.
- Where Council chooses to subsidise a funded service the contribution should not outweigh the community benefit.

Borrowing Principle

- Borrowing will not be used to fund ongoing operations.
- Where possible debt will be increased only to the extent that:
 - the costs savings are realised from investment in capital
 - debt servicing costs are funded from future revenue streams.
- Borrowings are appropriate for funding large capital works where the benefits are provided to future generations.
- Council will maintain its debt at levels which are sustainable, with:
 - indebtedness <60% of rate and charges revenue
 - debt servicing cost <5% of total revenue (excluding capital revenue).

Asset Management Principles

Council will acquire and dispose of assets in the best interests of the community.

Asset Rationalisation Principle

- When disposals occur Council will ensure that:
 - there is clear Council or community need
 - a thorough community and financial assessment is undertaken
 - sales of property will not be used to fund operational expenditure.
- Council will ensure that regular review of asset rationalisation is conducted.

Asset Renewal Principle

- Council will provide well maintained community assets that are:
 - fit for purpose
 - provide best possible community benefit
 - within the financial capacity of the Council.
- Council will provide for ongoing asset maintenance and renewal for existing assets by:
 - basing maintenance and renewal on condition rating and interventions set by asset management strategies
 - anticipating and managing risks of asset failure
 - committing to increasing expenditure on renewal to sustainably manage assets
 - ensuring appropriate expenditure is provided for compliance and safety regulations.

New Asset Principle

- Council will ensure that community has access to infrastructure that meets its needs with regards to current and future needs.
- Construction and acquisition of new assets must:
 - remain within the limitation of Council's financial and resource capabilities
 - provide clear tangible benefits
 - consider both current and future generations
 - consider asset substitution as a source of funding new assets
 - consider consolidation of services where appropriate
 - undertake financial analysis with regard to resultant additional operational maintenance and renewal costs.

Service Delivery Principles

Expenditure Review Principle

- Council will review levels of expenditure.
- Ongoing service reviews will assess service in accordance with:
 - a demonstrated community need
 - stakeholder views
 - access, equity of need and benefit to the community
 - community expectation of service level and quality
 - legislative imperatives
 - identification of alternative providers, both public and private
 - Council's capacity to provide the service
 - availability of Victorian or Australian Government funding
 - other budget priorities.

In addition to these principles, Council will consider private/public partnerships, shared services and collaborative projects where appropriate.

Monitoring and reporting

Council is committed to ensuring that community resources under its control are used for approved purposes and that all risks to Council's finances are properly managed.

Management is responsible for monitoring budgets on an ongoing basis. An annual carry forward report and comprehensive quarterly financial reports reviewing progress and performance compared to the adopted budget, including forecasted adjustments, will be reported to Council in line with the requirements of the Act.

Variations to the adopted budget that are unplanned and unavoidable will be reported to Council through the financial reports. Where a change of project scope results in a material financial implication Council will be briefed prior to the variation being reported.

Revised Budget

Under the Act Council must revise their budget if there are material circumstances affecting their financial operations and position.

Northern Grampians Shire Council will formally revise their budget if:

- there is a requirement to borrow more than estimated in the original budget, or
- there is a material difference (>10%) to rates and charges revenue to be raised.

Legislation and Standards

Local Government Act 2020

Local Government (Finance & Reporting Regulations) 2020

Responsibilities

Council is responsible for setting service levels and adopting an annual budget that is financially responsible and aligns with the Plan.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for developing and presenting a budget that enables the objectives and strategies of the Plan and is based on the agreed service levels established by Council.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for monitoring and reporting progress against the adopted budget on an ongoing basis.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the budget process.

Communication and implementation

Northern Grampians Shire Council's website

Community consultation will be conducted inline with Council's Community Engagement Policy

References

Council Plan

Financial Plan

10 Year Financial Plan Policy

Revenue and Rating Strategy

Community Engagement Policy

Annual Budget Timetable

Compliance

- Local Government Act 2020*
- Local Government Act 1989*
- [Gender Equality Act 2020](#)
- Child Safety Act 2015*
- [Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014](#)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- Fair Work Act 2009*
- [Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006](#)

Budget Development and Management Policy

- Health Records Act 2001
- Freedom of Information Act 1982
- Climate Change Act 2017
- Other

Privacy and Data Protection compliance

All Council policies must consider the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and the *Victorian Protective Data Security (VPDSS) Standards* which adopt a risk-based approach to protective data security. This policy includes, where relevant, identified security risks and governance arrangements in place to protect security across the domains of information, personnel, ICT and physical.

Gender Equality compliance

Council has considered if gender equality principles, workplace gender equality of rights, opportunities, responsibilities and outcomes and the promotion of gender equality in the development of this policy. These have been determined to be not relevant to this policy.

Charter of Human Rights compliance

It is considered that this policy does not impact on any [human rights](#) identified in the *Charter of Human Rights & Responsibilities Act 2006*.

Definitions

Policy: What we will do and why (eg legislation governs Council actions)

Review history

Date	Review details	Action
February 2014	Policy developed	Presented to Council Briefing 24 March, 2014
April 2014	Policy adopted	Adopted by Council 7 April, 2014
29 February 2016	Annual review and amended	Minor housekeeping only - reported to Councillor Briefing
April 2017	Annual review and amended	Amendments to asset management to reflect Council's limited capacity to pay for infrastructure. Removal of Workforce Principles and some minor amendments
19 March 2018	Annual review, no amendment	Reported to Councillor Briefing and discussed during budget process
April 2019	Annual review, no amendment	Reported to Councillor Briefing and discussed during budget process
November 2023	Minor updates to reflect the latest legislation requirements.	

10. Notices of Motion or Rescission

Nil

11. Reports from Councillors/Committees

Queen Mary Gardens Advisory Group Minutes – 18 October 2023

Councillors provided brief reports on their activities on behalf of Council since the last Council meeting.

Cr Dempsey said this month had been as busy as every other. She reported on her attendance at the Stawell Neighbourhood House AGM as a council representative and said there are positive steps moving forward for the committee getting the house back on track post COVID, changes in leadership. She reported she had also attended the Grampians Health and Grampians Community Health AGMs at which both acknowledged this month's gender based violence campaign 16 Days of Activism and that they were safe places. She said she also attended the Women's Health Grampians AGM with a similar topic of discussion including intersectionality, showcasing projects of equality for all. She said through funding the group has been able to more than double their staffing base which covers the Grampians region. She promoted the Men Speaking Up on Violence Against Women Forum which she will be MC and said it is a joint initiative of the group, Ararat Rural City Council and Northern Grampians Shire Council as part of the 16 Days of Activism campaign. She referred to the Statutory Council meeting last month and said she had received an overwhelming amount of feedback from the community and councillors from other shires across the state, there has been 700 YouTube views and disappointing feedback received on how the community witnessed the meeting unfolding and the disrespectful nature that was provided. She said she believed this needed to be highlighted because we know through the AICD course that culture and tone is set from the top and we as councillors and leaders for our community must be setting that tone and provide opportunity for all.

Cr Ostarcevic reported on attending various local community meetings at which a recurring theme was the image portrayed by the poor appearance of buildings in St Arnaud including the St Arnaud and Botanical Hotels. He reported on a meeting with the local Victoria Police Acting Commander who provided good details on community policing and his presentation to SCAN with details on the number of servicing officers that St Arnaud should have versus what they currently do have, noting that they are operating on half strength; 7-9 new officers are expected. He said he had attended the launch of the Resilience Ready Program for emergencies, including recovery, being rolled out. He said he placed a wreath from Council on Remembrance Day that had a tremendous turnout and spoke about the NGSC Signage Strategy in Stawell roll out. He said a significant issue coming up for the Stuart Mill Water Supply Inc is the implementation of the Water Act and how that will be implemented in terms of its role within the Murray Darling Basin Catchment; he will be attending a meeting with Peter Walsh and Mark Williams this week. He said he attended the Sunraysia Highway Improvement Committee meeting where discussion on the Highway and the standards that apply to designing roads suitable for 2023 and beyond with B-Doubles and road trains. He asked anyone who has a damaged vehicle as a consequence of the poor standard of roads send their bill to the Minister. He said Neal Rowath and others had been looking at the parlous state of the Mechanics Institute awning that he believes is beyond repair and a risk of injury to passing foot traffic. He said similarly the St Arnaud Town Hall has water issues that the community wants to see addressed. He said we need to promote how our community clubs and service providers can register their club names and organisations to receive refunds from the Container Deposit Scheme.

Cr Gready reported on attending the Northern Grampians Transition Forum to keep abreast of wind farms and VNI West projects and said officers are doing a good job of extracting information out of the government. He said he had also attended the VLGA Civility in Land Governance session that concentrated on governance and how we run council's meetings and how councillors should act, adding that all councillors should attend as we have a bit to learn after the last few weeks. He said he had attended the Great Western Future Committee meeting and thanked Mrs Justine Kingan for all her help with the planned projects and priorities and in particular the importance of not just jumping in and putting things in place that should not be. He said he attended the Southern Wimmera Renewable Research Association meeting involving some locals; it will be an ongoing forum for the VNI West Transmission line and for farmers to have a say. He said he had attended the VLGA Housing Key Workers in Victorian Towns meeting that highlighted the need for housing, sat in on the Cities of Nature meeting and said while they concentrate on cities there are some great ideas we can take to help us in country town with our parks and gardens and how we set up new estates.

Cr Gready attended the VLGA AGM and Remembrance Day in Stawell. Cr Gready said he wanted to explain why he has to use his mobile phone during council meetings after receiving negative feedback from people who had watched the Statutory Meeting online. He said the reason he uses his mobile phone is because he has hearing difficulty and as the phone does not set the volume automatically he has to go into his phone to increase the volume if someone in the meeting is speaking too softly. He said it will look like he is messing around with his phone but he is actually setting the volume so he can hear the meeting conversation.

Cr Emerson said it has been a busy month spent on overhead powerlines, wind towers and reintroduction of the planning process in Victoria. He said he has also attended councillor briefings and meetings and said there are heaps of opportunities out there for councillors who want to put their hand up, they are endless and you could go to a meeting everyday.

Cr Erwin reported on his activities including Remembrance Day, Legacy Dinner at Ararat, Regional Institute of Australia session, the Central Park mural and catch up with the Hutchings family who have just published their family history. He congratulated Elie Enock, one of our Vanuatu community who following a 7.4m shot put at the Pacific Games is now eligible to compete at the Paris Summer Paralympic Games in 2024. He spoke on his visit to the Surat Basin Brisbane Queensland to look at some of the pros and cons for alternative energy coal seam gas. He said the key message take away was do not sign anything. He said finally he attended the Business Strengthening event in St Arnaud that was well run.

Cr Haswell reported on the activities undertaken during his first period as Mayor. He said he had a Governance session for new Mayors, met with the Department of Transport and Planning about current issues with children's crossings in our shire and attended the first of three VLGA Forums, focusing on tax on short stay accommodation to free up housing. He said his first official engagement was Remembrance Day in Stawell, he had a radio interview with ABC Mornings Rebecca Lowe where they focused on the St Arnaud pre prep building, VNI West, and a quarterly catch up with Grampians Health CEO and Chair. He said he had been very critical of Grampians Health in the recent past and they have made a lot of improvements in that time. He said he is happy to report that there has been enormous improvements in the hospital and medical center in Stawell especially. He said the MAV ran a rural and regional forum in Bendigo that he attended online. He also attended the Southern Wimmera Renewables Research Association meeting to discuss nearby wind farms and opened the GP100 miler at Halls Gap that is a new 164km running race along the Grampians Peaks Trail; there were over 300 contestants. He said he attended a MAV online meeting with councillors and representatives from regional councils listening to their ideas and challenges and had a look at the new Pre prep building in Stawell that is very impressive, stylish and well laid out.

RESOLUTION

That the reports be received.

Moved: Cr Kevin Erwin

Seconded: Cr Murray Emerson

Carried

Queen Mary Botanic Garden Advisory Committee minutes, 18th October 2023

Present Lyn Box, Jo Hamilton, Deirdre Freeman, Dorothy Patton and Brenda Proctor

Apologies Janelle Patching, Ros Small and Cr Eddie Ostarcevic

Minutes from previous meeting – True and Correct. Lyn Box-moved, seconded Dorothy Patton

Matters arising previous meeting

Terms of reference-Dorothy to advise Health Pohl OK, we will review in 12 months' time.

Extra ordinary meeting minutes, moved Dorothy Patton 2nd Dee Freeman

Janelle advised she will draft letter re historical society for members.

True and correct, Lyn Box moved, Ros Small seconded .

Business arising

Palms- Jo advised re Palm size, smaller so they acclimatize better but they are more easily stolen.

Foxtail approx. - \$2000 decided to pricey for a 50cm pot couple of metres high.

Bangalow, Pony Tails, European Fan Palms, Cycads, Kendia, Cabbage, Windmill cannot find Bizmark.

Some to be planted in dinosaur garden other between salvia garden and drain. Probably better choosing smaller palms and get more of them, Jo will talk with Jason for final say, Jo has multi stemmed grass tree to plant behind pergola on Millett street and also has plants to be planted at our next working bee in November. Jason to plant standard crab apple between the 2 crab apples spears. Palms refer to be planted in summer they will be in before Christmas will be sorted and ordered this week.

Gardeners report

Nil gardeners report

Other business

Light show very good-feedback

Sign still not gone- railway yet to be resolved.

Plaques on bench seats-wording changed by Jenny, Jason Has plaques.

Playground-approached by Mel Watts re –rocks she's happy for us to choose, Eaglehawk playground discussed – Dee to provide photos.

Mosaic Wall – general discussion, committee agree not to go in the gardens we feel it should stay where it is.

Speed limit-done – pedestrian crossing up to NGS

Seniors day- very successful-feedback

Next working bee- Jo will check to see if more drameria required.

Next meeting 06th December- General Meeting

Meeting closed. 6.37pm

12. Urgent Business

Nil

13. Public Question Time

Peter Rose, 62 Archdale Road, Carapooee and Ian Moerman, 34 Murray Road, Carapooee

Q.1. What are Council's future intentions in relation to the Mine Lane pit at Carapooee? We have observed trucks occasionally entering the site and we are aware that it still contains quantities of packing sand. Local residents wish to see the whole site properly rehabilitated.

Mr Fithall, Director Infrastructure and Amenity provided the following response:

While excavation of material out of the site has ceased at present, it is believed that there is further material within the work authority that can be obtained. Further investigation is planned to determine the extent of material available, to inform the future management of the site.

In the meantime, the work authority remains in place which allows Council to continue to use and undertake activities out of the site in accordance with our approvals.

Like any Earth Resource Work Authority, Council is required to rehabilitate the area back to existing conditions once the activities under the work authority have concluded.

Jane Sutherland, 64 Alma Street, St Arnaud

Q.1. What interaction has the Council had with the EPA regarding water leakage from the St Arnaud Pool?

Q.2. What actions are being taken to repair the leakages at the St Arnaud swimming pool?

Q.3. When is the pool expected to re-open?

Mr Fithall responded and said we have been working on investigating the leakages over the last nine months. We have undertaken a structural analysis of the site and undertaken a radar geological investigation of the site. He said those efforts have effectively concluded that the pool is structurally geologically sound and the leak is not a factor of those things. He said we believe that the leaks are occurring in the pipe work and surrounding infrastructure that enables the pool to operate. At the moment we have some work in place to capture water leaking out of the pool into a sump pump that we are putting back into the pool. Our requirement with the EPA is that we are not allowed to have water leaking into the stormwater system. He said every time we believe we are getting somewhere with it, after a couple of days the leak comes back. We believe we have a handle on the leak we will be able to open the pool. He said at this point in time he cannot make comment on when that will be.

Jane Grant, 40 Millett Street, St Arnaud

Q.1. Is the Northern Grampians Shire Council aware that the Elms in Golden Street and the Yellow Gums in Market Square car park were nominated to the National Trust early in July 2023?

Q.2. Can the Northern Grampians Shire Council confirm or deny it knew about the nomination of the Elms before the public knew it intended to place the charging stations beneath the Elms?

The Mayor informed Mrs Grant that her questions would be taken on notice.

The Mayor informed all persons who had submitted questions that all questions would be responded to in writing.

14. Closure of Meeting Pursuant to Section 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020

A Council or delegated committee may resolve that the meeting be closed to members of the public if it considers it necessary because a circumstance specified below apply:

The circumstances are-

- (a) the meeting is to consider confidential information; or
- (b) security reasons; or
- (c) it is necessary to do so to enable the meeting to proceed in an orderly manner.

If the circumstances specified in subsection (b) or (c) apply, the meeting can only be closed to the public if the Council has made arrangements to enable the proceedings of the meeting to be viewed by members of the public as the meeting is being held.

14.1. C3 2023/24 - Provision of Transfer Station Services - St Arnaud

RESOLUTION

That item 14.1 be considered in Closed Council as it deals with confidential information as detailed in section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Moved: Cr Kevin Erwin
Seconded: Cr Eddy Ostarcevic Carried

RESOLUTION

That the meeting be closed to consider the item listed pursuant to section 66 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Moved: Cr Kevin Erwin
Seconded: Cr Eddy Ostarcevic Carried

OPEN COUNCIL

The Chief Executive Officer reported on the item discussed in Closed Council.

14.1 Council agreed to award contract C3 2023/24 - Provision of Transfer Station Services - St Arnaud to NK & KM Birthisel trading as EcoSwish Recycling for their submitted schedule of rates.

15. Close

There being no further business the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 1.36pm.

Confirmed



CR ROB HASWELL
MAYOR

Date: 5 February 2024