



Pyrenees
Shire Council

Agenda

Ordinary Meeting of Council

6:00 pm Monday 17 March 2025
Council Chambers
Beaufort Council Offices
5 Lawrence Street, Beaufort

Wadawurrung Country

Members of the public may view the meeting virtually via the livestream

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. WELCOME	3
2. STREAMING PREAMBLE	3
3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY	3
4. APOLOGIES.....	3
5. NOTICE OF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST BY COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS	3
6. CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES.....	4
7. BUSINESS ARISING	4
8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.....	4
9. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS	5
9.1. Councillor Activity Reports - February 2025.....	5
10. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS.....	7
10.1. Assembly of Councillors - February 2025	7
11. ITEMS FOR DECISION	10
11.1. Economic Development and Tourism	10
11.1.1. Grant Application - Beaufort Linear Walking and Cycling Paths	10
11.2. Asset and Development Services.....	13
11.2.1. Planning Scheme Amendment C52 - Pyrenees Flood Studies Implementation	13
11.2.2. Planning permit application PA23108 13 Canico Lane Hillcrest.....	17
11.2.3. Annual Electric Vehicle Charging Station Usage Report.....	33
11.2.4. Revision to Register of Public Roads.....	37
11.3. Corporate and Community Services	39
11.3.1. Community Grant Applications 2024-2025	39
11.3.2. IBAC Sandon Report Update.....	43
11.3.3. Old Beaufort Primary School Project - Status Update.....	45
11.4. Chief Executive Office	52
11.4.1. Reconciliation Advisory Committee - Annual Report	52
11.4.2. ALGA's 2025 Federal Election Funding Priorities.....	55
11.4.3. Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Listing	59
11.4.4. Tourism Midwest Victoria.....	61
12. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND GENERAL BUSINESS	64
13. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS	64
14. CLOSE OF MEETING	64

1. WELCOME

Welcome to this meeting of the Pyrenees Shire Council. Councillors will today deliberate and decide on a range of matters relevant to the work of Council in its communities for the welfare of the people of the Pyrenees Shire.

2. STREAMING PREAMBLE

- As the meeting Chair, I give my consent for this Ordinary Council Meeting to be streamed live, recorded and published online. Anyone who is invited to read out a question or make a submission will be recorded and their voice, image, and comments will form part of that livestream and recording.
- The Chair and/or the CEO have the discretion and authority at any time to direct the termination or interruption of livestreaming. Such direction will only be given in exceptional circumstances where deemed appropriate, that may include where the content of debate is considered misleading, defamatory or potentially inappropriate to be published.
- The live stream will stop prior to the closed section of the meeting and will recommence for the conclusion of the meeting.
- The public is able to view this livestream via our website at www.pyrenees.vic.gov.au.
- Should technical issues prevent the continuation of the live stream, the meeting will continue as long as a quorum can be maintained and, where possible, a recording of the meeting will be published on Council's website. Where a quorum cannot be maintained, the meeting will be adjourned until the issue is resolved or the meeting postponed to another time and date in accordance with Council's Governance Rules.

3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the people past and present of the Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Eastern Maar and Wotjobaluk tribes, whose land forms the Pyrenees Shire.

We pay our respect to the customs, traditions and stewardship of the land by the elders and people of these tribes, on whose land we meet today.

4. APOLOGIES

5. NOTICE OF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST BY COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS

6. CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the:

- Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 17 February 2025; and
- Closed Meeting of Council held 17 February 2025,

as previously circulated to Councillors, be confirmed.

7. BUSINESS ARISING

There was no business arising (items taken on notice) from the previous meeting held 17 February 2025.

8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public Participation

- Members of the community are encouraged to participate in public Ordinary Council Meetings by asking questions or presenting a submission.
- This can be done by attending in person or by submitting in writing, prior to 12.00 noon on the day of the meeting, online through Council's website, by mail or hand-delivered.
- If a question or submission is submitted in writing, this will be read by the Chair during public participation, stating the person's name and township.
- Question time will be held first, followed by public submissions.
- 30 minutes is allowed for the total period of public participation. Time extensions may be allowed at the discretion of the Chair subject to the provisions of the Governance Rules.
- A person may ask a maximum of two questions at any one meeting.
- The Chair will allocate a maximum of five (5) minutes to each person who wishes to address Council or ask question(s).
- The Chair, Councillor, or Council officer to whom a question is referred may immediately answer the question or take the question on notice for answering at a later date.
- There will be no discussion or debate with public attendees however Councillors may ask questions of the attendee for clarification.

9. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS

9.1. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS - FEBRUARY 2025

Cr Tanya Kehoe – Mount Emu Ward		
03/02/2025	Council Strategic / Presentations Briefing	Beaufort
10/02/2025	Council Briefing	Beaufort
11/02/2025	Department of Transport & PSC Exec. Meeting	Beaufort
12/02/2025	Pasture Recovery Workshop	Raglan
13/02/2025	Disaster Ready Fund Webinar	Virtual
17/02/2025	Council Briefing	Beaufort
17/02/2025	Council Meeting	Beaufort
19/02/2025	Avoca Depot Opening	Avoca
20/02/2025	Lexton Flood Study Community Consultation Session	Lexton
21/02/2025	Grampians 2025 & Beyond Forum	Ararat
24/02/2025	Jane Barton Wetlands Information Session	Snake Valley

Cr Simon Tol – Ercildoune Ward		
03/02/2025	Council Strategic Planning / Briefing Session	Beaufort
10/02/2025	Council Briefing	Beaufort
17/02/2025	Council Briefing	Beaufort
17/02/2025	Council Meeting	Beaufort
19/02/2025	Avoca Depot Opening	Avoca
20/02/2025	Lexton Flood Study Community Consultation Session	Lexton

Cr Megan Phelan – De Cameron Ward		
02/02/2025	Meeting with Redbank CFA	Redbank
03/02/2025	Council Strategic Planning / Briefing Session	Beaufort
09/02/2025	Council Plan – Planning with Cr Wardlaw	Moonambel
10/02/2025	Council Briefing	Beaufort
15/02/2025	Meeting with Barkly constituent	Moonambel
17/02/2025	Council Briefing	Beaufort
17/02/2025	Council Meeting	Beaufort
22/02/2025	Landsborough Resource Centre	Landsborough
22/02/2025	Barkly Unplugged	Barkly

Cr Rebecca Wardlaw – Avoca Ward		
03/02/2025	Council Strategic Planning / Briefing Session	Beaufort
07/02/2025	Avoca Arts & Gardens Committee Meeting	Avoca
09/02/2025	Council Plan – Planning with Cr Phelan	Moonambel
10/02/2025	Council Briefing	Beaufort
17/02/2025	Council Briefing	Beaufort
17/02/2025	Council Meeting	Beaufort
19/02/2025	Avoca Depot Opening	Avoca

Cr Damian Ferrari – Beaufort Ward		
03/02/2025	Council Strategic Planning / Briefing Session	Beaufort
10/02/2025	Council Briefing	Beaufort
11/02/2025	Beaufort Men’s Shed Announcement	Beaufort
17/02/2025	Council Briefing	Beaufort
17/02/2025	Council Meeting	Beaufort
19/02/2025	Avoca Depot Opening	Avoca

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes this report.

10. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS

10.1. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS - FEBRUARY 2025

MEETING INFORMATION			
Meeting Name	Councillor Briefing		
Meeting Date	3 February 2025 commenced at 4.00pm and closed at 7.00pm		
Meeting Location	Council Chamber, Beaufort		
Items Discussed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Old Beaufort Primary School 2. Grant Applications 3. Finance Report – Quarterly 4. Budget 5. Council Plan 2025-2029 6. Advocacy Program 		
ATTENDEES			
Councillors	Mayor Cr Tanya Kehoe Cr Damian Ferrari Cr Rebecca Wardlaw	Cr Simon Tol (4.10pm) Cr Megan Phelan	
Apologies	Nil.		
Staff	Jim Nolan (Chief Executive Officer) Douglas Gowans (Director Assets and Development Services) Kathy Bramwell (Director Corporate and Community Services)		
Visitors	Nil.		
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES			
Item No:	Councillor making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
Nil.			

MEETING INFORMATION			
Meeting Name	Councillor Briefing		
Meeting Date	10 February 2025 commenced at 4.00pm and closed at 7.30pm		
Meeting Location	Council Chamber, Beaufort		
Items Discussed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housing 2. Mandatory Training <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Land Use Planning b. Asset Management 3. Council Plan 2025-2029 4. PS Amendment C52 - Flooding 		
ATTENDEES			
Councillors	Mayor Cr Tanya Kehoe Cr Damian Ferrari Cr Rebecca Wardlaw		Cr Simon Tol Cr Megan Phelan
Apologies	Kathy Bramwell (Director Corporate and Community Services)		
Staff	Jim Nolan (Chief Executive Officer) Douglas Gowans (Director Assets and Development Services)		
Visitors	Roger Hastrich – RHVic (Item 1) Steve Dunn – RHVic (Item 1) Camille White – NCCMA (Item 4) Sharee Kearns – GHCMA (Item 4) Tony Baker – WCMA (Item 4) Amy Bell – NCCMA (Item 4)		
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES			
Item No:	Councillor making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
Nil.			

MEETING INFORMATION			
Meeting Name	Councillor Briefing		
Meeting Date	17 February 2025 commenced at 4.00pm and closed at 5.45pm		
Meeting Location	Council Chamber, Beaufort		
Items Discussed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Listing 2. Daly's Cottage – 460 Percydale Road 3. Flood Studies and Amendment C52 4. AJ Community Kitchen 5. CEO Update 		
ATTENDEES			
Councillors	Mayor Cr Tanya Kehoe Cr Damian Ferrari Cr Rebecca Wardlaw	Cr Simon Tol Cr Megan Phelan	
Apologies	Nil.		
Staff	Jim Nolan (Chief Executive Officer) Kathy Bramwell (Director Corporate and Community Services) Douglas Gowans (Director Assets and Development Services)		
Visitors	Trevor Budge (Item 1) Susan Fayad (Item 1) Amber Greenwell (Item 4)		
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES			
Item No:	Councillor making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
Nil.			

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes this report.

11. ITEMS FOR DECISION

11.1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

11.1.1. GRANT APPLICATION - BEAUFORT LINEAR WALKING AND CYCLING PATHS

Presenter: Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Ray Davies – Manager Economic Development and Tourism

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 22/02/02

PURPOSE

To seek Councils' endorsement of a \$400,000- application for funding to develop walking and cycling paths along the Beaufort Linear corridor, which will link the Goldfields Recreation Reserve and schools precinct with the swimming pool.

BACKGROUND

Council adopted the "Beaufort Linear Masterplan" in November 2024 which aligned to the objectives of the 2016 Beaufort Walkability Plan, Council Plan and Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan.

The Walkability plan states that Council will *"Promote and support a range of recreational walking and cycling options for residents and visitors of all ages, interests and abilities within town to improve health and wellbeing"*.

The list of opportunities in the Walkability plan included:

- *To improve the access to Lake Beaufort and support existing amenity*
- *To create a connection from Apex Park to the Beaufort Swimming Pool*
- *To investigate cycling /walking connections to the Trawalla State Park Campsite*

The Beaufort Linear Masterplan identifies a recreational corridor that encompasses the three abovementioned objectives.

Extensive community consultation occurred throughout 2023 during the development of the Beaufort Linear Masterplan which included:

- Community workshops
- A survey at the IGA supermarket and of businesses located along Neill Street
- Youth meeting at the skate park
- A site walk with traditional owners
- A site walk with members of the Beaufort Walkability group
- Site visits by council staff to residents located along the Linear corridor
- Meetings with Apex and Rotary club members
- A workshop with year eleven secondary college students and teaching staff
- Seeking submissions from community members unable to attend consultation events

The project has been well received by the Beaufort community and external funding is now required to deliver the elements detailed in the masterplan.

The Sport and Recreation Victoria “Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund” provides Council this opportunity as it includes a Community Facilities category incorporating “*walking/cycling trails particularly those easily accessible and linked to existing sports infrastructure*”.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

This project is well aligned to a number of Councils strategic objectives including:

- People and Place pillars within Council Plan
- Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan which prioritises active lifestyles
- Beaufort Walkability Plan
- Beaufort Linear Masterplan

The “Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund” provides an opportunity to access external funding to commence developing the walking and cycling paths identified in the Beaufort Linear Masterplan. The guidelines for the program align to the community’s aspirations to develop a pedestrian link between Beaufort Lake and the Beggs Street playground precinct.

The program requires Council to provide matching funding of one dollar to every four dollars from the Victorian Government.

A project budget of \$500,000- will enable Council to create paths from Beaufort Lake to Leichardt Street which will link the Goldfields Recreation Reserve and Schools precinct to the entry of the swimming pool at Leichardt Street.

An application of \$400,000- has been made in this instance.

Completion of the paths proposed in the submission would then leave a section of Beaufort Linear to complete from Leichardt Street to Neill Street across the former primary school oval, (land recently purchased by Council from the Education Department) to finalise a pedestrian link from the Lake to the Beggs Street playground and nearby business precinct.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

- 1c. Improve accessibility and inclusivity.
- 1d. Promote health, wellbeing, engagement and connection.
- 1e. Improve social outcomes.

Priority 2 - Place

- 2b. Enhance the liveability and resilience of our communities.

Priority 3 - Environment

- 3a. Continue being an environmentally progressive organisation.
- 3b. Foster a climate change resilient community.
- 3c. Encourage community care of biodiversity and natural values.

Priority 4 - Economy

- 4c. Encourage and invest in assets and infrastructure for commerce and community.

Enabling Principles

- a. Motivate and inspire community involvement
- b. Provide transparency and accountability

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Extensive community consultation has occurred through development of both the 2016 Beaufort Walkability Plan and 2024 Beaufort Linear Masterplan as outlined in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Council is seeking a sum of \$400,000- from the Victorian Government and Council will be required to contribute a sum of \$100,000- in matching funds if the grant application is approved.

Allowance for this will need to be incorporated into the 2025/26 budgets.

Risks identified with delivering this project include potential cost increases. Council has recently constructed paths along Neill St providing a strong level of confidence in budget estimates.

CONCLUSION

The Community Infrastructure Fund submission will (if successful) provide the external funds necessary to construct a walking and cycling path between the Lake and Beggs Street which have been identified in the Beaufort Linear Masterplan.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorses the \$400,000- application for funding from the Victorian Governments Community Infrastructure Fund and
2. Makes provision for a sum of \$100,000- in the 2025/26 budgets to support applications for external funding of the Beaufort Linear Project or alternative pathways.

11.2. ASSET AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

11.2.1. PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENT C52 - PYRENEES FLOOD STUDIES IMPLEMENTATION

Presenter: Douglas Gowans - Director Asset and Development Services

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Rachel Blackwell – Manager Planning and Development Services

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No:

PURPOSE

This report is for the Council to note the progression of DRAFT Planning Scheme Amendment C52pyr, including support for public consultation and the Standing Advisory Committee pathway. The report is also seeking Council's approval to adopt the Waubra Preliminary Flood Investigation to include this study as part of the implementation of planning scheme amendment C52pyr.

BACKGROUND

The communities of Pyrenees Shire have experienced several devastating floods over the last decade, particularly around areas of Mt Emu and Lake Goldsmith.

The Council, Catchment Management Authorities (CMA) and consecutive governments have invested significant resources into developing the five completed flood studies to understand flood behavior and consideration of mitigation options.

The Raglan Flood Study was funded by Natural Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme. The Upper Mount Emu Creek Flood Investigation was funded by the former Department of Land, Waterways and Planning (DELWP), now Department of Environment, Energy and Climate Action (DEECA) Regional Flood Mapping Program. The Upper Avoca Flood Study and the Wimmera Flood Investigation were funded by the Natural Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme. The Waubra Flood Study was funded by the Pyrenees Shire Council.

These flood studies have been prepared to address flood resilience in regional communities, and have been undertaken in partnership with Glenelg Hopkins, Wimmera, and North Central Catchment Management Authority, the State Emergency Service (SES) and impacted communities. In many cases these flood studies were advocated for and supported by the relevant local communities.

A total of four of the completed flood studies have previously been adopted by Council with authorisation to proceed to a planning scheme amendment. The Council therefore has an obligation to the local community to implement these flood studies into the Pyrenees Planning Scheme in accordance with their recommendations. This recommendation is also shared in the Catchment Management Authorities Regional Flood Management Strategies (RFMS), Pyrenees Planning Scheme Clause 74.02-1 Further Strategic Work and the current Council Plan. Planning controls identify and communicate flood risk to life and property. They manage development to ensure it appropriately responds to flood hazard. Therefore, flood related overlays are the most efficient and effective form of flood mitigation.

The Waubra Preliminary Flood Investigation was prepared by Utilis and Hydro Spatial in 2019. This investigation represents the best available flood data for the area. The North Central CMA supports this investigation and inclusion of this best available data to inform the planning scheme amendment. Both this study and the regional strategies above recommend that a planning scheme amendment is undertaken to include flood controls within this area.

The draft Planning Scheme Amendment C52pyr will seek to implement the:

- Raglan Flood Investigation (2020)
- Upper Avoca Flood Study (2021)

- Upper Wimmera Flood Investigation (2014)
- Upper Mount Emu Creek Flood Investigation (2020) and;
- Waubra Preliminary Flood Study (2019).

Draft planning scheme maps, ordinances, the explanatory report, and all other required amendment documentation has been prepared to demonstrate to the community the modelled extent of flood controls recommended by the flood studies to be inserted in the Pyrenees Planning Scheme. These draft documents are appended to this report.

The impetus to undertake this Planning Scheme Amendment is supported under various legislation, including the Planning and Environment Act (1987), Water Act (1989), Building Act (1993), Local Government Act (2020), and the Climate Change Act (2017). Currently, development is occurring in areas without consideration of flood risk. Flood planning scheme controls form the basis for managing risk when considering further strategic planning for the Shire including future settlement and township planning, property, and planning information certificates as part of Section 32s documentation and building permits for flood prone land.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Pyrenees Shire contains a significant amount of flood prone land where flooding events have historically caused a substantial amount of damage to the natural and built environment. These areas consist of natural waterways and their associated floodplains. Many of these areas are not formally recognised by the Pyrenees Planning Scheme and the Council currently cannot appropriately respond to development on flood affected land.

The draft Planning Scheme Amendment C52pyr is required to implement the findings of the Raglan, Upper Avoca, Upper Wimmera, Waubra, and Upper Mount Emu Flood studies by introducing the Floodway Overlay (FO) and Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) into the Pyrenees Planning Scheme. The amendment also proposes to remove the Design and Development Overlay, Schedule 1 (DDO1) from the Scheme and replace it with the more appropriate flood related overlay control. The draft Planning Scheme Amendment C52pyr will ensure that the planning controls reflect the most recently mapped extent of riverine flooding for all mapped areas throughout the shire. Overall, the amendment will impact 1485 properties in the Shire. This includes removing an overlay from 180 properties which are not impacted by flooding.

Designating an area as subject to flood or inundation does not alter the likelihood of flooding but acknowledges the existing condition of the land and its potential to be inundated during certain rainfall and/or storm events. Existing homeowners do not need to act. The amendment will only affect landowners if their land falls within one of the proposed flood-related overlays and they wish to undertake building, works or subdivision. In such cases, a planning permit may already be required, depending on the proposal and the relevant planning controls. The amendment's intent is to encourage new buildings and works on land least affected by flooding and to ensure new developments are designed to minimize flood damage.

The council has received funding from both DEECA and Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) to complete this planning scheme amendment which has been with the council for some time. The council seeks to proceed with the Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) Ministerial Amendment process designed by the State Government to efficiently consider flood-related overlay planning scheme amendments. The Committee comprises appointed planning professionals with flood engineering and planning scheme amendment backgrounds. The SAC process will reduce the substantial time and resource burden on Council to complete the amendment process.

Across the state, about 15 Councils are implementing their flood studies into the planning scheme with funding from DTP and using the SAC process.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

- 1a. Prepare for emergencies and ensure community safety.
- 1c. Improve accessibility and inclusivity.
- 1d. Promote health, wellbeing, engagement, and connection.
- 1e. Improve social outcomes.

Priority 2 - Place

- 2b. Enhance the liveability and resilience of our communities.
- 2c. Promote responsible development.

Priority 3 - Environment

- 3a. Continue being an environmentally progressive organisation.
- 3b. Foster a climate change resilient community.

Priority 4 - Economy

- 4a. Support our local businesses and help to strengthen key industries.
- 4c. Encourage and invest in assets and infrastructure for commerce and community.

Enabling Principles

- a. Motivate and inspire community involvement
- b. Provide transparency and accountability
- c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

The planning scheme amendment process will provide the community with many opportunities to be informed and to consult with Council and the Glenelg Hopkins, Wimmera, and North Central Catchment Management Authorities. There will be two formal opportunities for the community to contribute to the process, the first-time during community consultation and the second time for unresolved submissions to be considered at the Standing Advisory Committee (SAC).

Individual landowner letters, FAQs, drop-in sessions, phone calls, in person meetings, onsite visits, local media and the Council website/engagement hub will ensure the community is informed of the amendment and will have the opportunity to collaborate, consult and have the required input into the amendment process.

The draft Planning Scheme Amendment C52pyr will be in consultation for 30 business days. The consultation will facilitate opportunities for affected landowners to be informed and consult with Council and the relevant catchment management authority regarding the proposed flood related overlay extents. If required, further modelling and analysis will be undertaken to ensure the overlays are being applied correctly.

The flood-related overlays are designed to prompt early consideration of flood risks in the planning process and provide development guidance and built-form standards on how these sites should respond to flood risk. The flood-related overlay controls ensure that land development is compatible with flood risk.

The Minister for Planning may refer any unresolved submissions to the Flood Related Amendments Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) where these submissions can be considered further independent engineering and planning experts.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

The costs of undertaking this amendment have been covered from funding from the DTP Regional Flood Amendments Program and DEECA. These costs have enabled Council to engage a Project Manager to act as a strategic planner for the term of Planning Scheme Amendment and cover professional consultation costs. If the Standing Advisory Committee requires expert witnesses from the CMAs these costs will be covered by the CMAs.

Costs that may be incurred by Council other than internal staff costs could include community consultation costs.

Council is endeavouring to reduce the potential risk and negative impacts on development that can occur from natural disasters. Applying flooding controls works as a protection mechanism for the affected properties, by enabling a flood hazard to be assessed when considering future land development.

Implementing flood controls enhances the understanding of flood risks before considering development. This informed approach enables more prudent decision-making during statutory planning assessments of applications on private land. The flood related overlays also interact with the Building Regulations, as flood risk will now be provided on a property or planning information certificate, a Section 32, and in some cases a Building Report and Consent under Regulation 153. This helps prevent unsuitable development in flood-prone areas, whether on public or private land.

CONCLUSION

The flood studies and the associated Planning Scheme controls improve flood preparedness for households and Council through the provision of up-to-date flood information and potential warning systems including flood mitigation.

Land use planning through the introduction of the relevant Floodway Overlay and Land Subject to Inundation Overlay controls will mitigate negative impacts for individuals, the community, and the environment.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Notes draft Planning Scheme Amendment C52pyr ordinance and mapping.
2. Supports the streamlined flood related overlay amendments Standing Advisory Committee pathway for Planning Scheme Amendment C52pyr.
3. Delegates the Pyrenees Shire Chief Executive to seek written consent from the Minister for Planning to prepare a draft amendment and give public notice of draft planning scheme amendment C52pyr.
4. Notes that community and stakeholder consultation will be undertaken on the draft Planning Scheme Amendment C52pyr ordinance and mapping once consent from the Minister for Planning is granted.
5. Adopts Waubra Preliminary Flood Investigation and approves commencing with a flood related overlay amendment via the Standing Advisory Committee pathway.
6. Notes that Council will be briefed after public consultation to consider whether to prepare, adopt, or approve the amendment under section 20(4) of the P&E Act or whether to refer unresolved submissions to a Standing Advisory Committee or contacted by the Ministers office.

11.2.2. PLANNING PERMIT APPLICATION PA23108 13 CANICO LANE HILLCREST

Presenter: Douglas Gowans - Director Asset and Development Services

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Rachel Blackwell – Manager Planning and Development Services

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: PA23108

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to consider planning permit application PA23108 for the use of land for animal husbandry (retrospective) on land at 13 Canico Lane Hillcrest.

BACKGROUND

The permit applicant has owned the subject land since 2011. The permit applicant purchased the land to reside on the property but to also use it for animal husbandry, as the site contained existing kennels and facilities associated with animal husbandry. The use of the land has been undertaken since 2011 as advised by the permit applicant.

In 2023, the planning and development team became aware of the property due to a complaint from an adjoining owner. The complaint related to the discharge of effluent onto an adjoining property and several amenity concerns associated with how the land was being used, including noise.

Council officers from the community safety and amenity, building, planning and environmental health departments inspected the property on a number of occasions to understand the concerns raised. Officers also met with surrounding neighbours. Following the investigation, it was noted that the use of the land did not accord with the Pyrenees Planning Scheme and therefore planning permit was required to bring the site in compliance and to seek to address the environmental health and amenity concerns raised by surrounding owners. In September 2023, an application for a retrospective planning permit was lodged for the use of land for animal husbandry at 13 Canico Lane, Hillcrest VIC 3351.

A request for further information was issued by the Council. The applicant provided the requested further information in December 2023. The application was advertised early in 2024, and Council received four (4) objections. Consultation has been undertaken with the objectors and applicant both in terms of consultation meeting and several site visits.

Following consultation with the objectors and applicant and appropriate referral of the application, further information was requested from the permit applicant, this included submission of a land capability assessment and rectification of the septic system to comply with EPA requirements. Water sampling of watercourses on the site and surrounding properties was also undertaken given the concerns raised.

The matters to be considered in the application are quite complex and include the involvement of the EPA, other agencies and multiple departments within the council which took substantial time. Council officers consider there is now enough information to decide on the application and to be satisfied that the concerns and objections raised can be addressed. It is also noted that the permit applicant recently amended the application to reduce the number of dogs from 20 dogs to 10 dogs.

The application has been assessed against the relevant provisions of the Pyrenees Planning Scheme. It is recommended that the Council issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit subject to Conditions.

THE SITE

The subject land is identified as Lot 2 on Plan of Subdivision 098633 and is commonly known as 13 Canico Lane, Hillcrest. The site is approximately 4.04 hectares, with Canico Lane accessible from the Smythesdale-

Snake Valley Road. The site is located 2.7 kilometres East of the Snake Valley township. **See Figure 1 below.** The land is relatively flat, with a gentle slope towards the north of the site.

The subject site is primarily rectangular in shape and has a 98-metre frontage to Canico Lane forming the northern boundary of the site. Much of the site is densely vegetated, with two cleared portions containing an existing dam and dwelling with ancillary buildings, which includes sheds, buildings, and yards for domestic animal husbandry. The dam is located on a dedicated but unnamed waterway in the south of the site and the dwelling and associated building area located in the northern portion of the site approximately 95 metres from the northern boundary.

The entire site is subject to the Rural Living Zone and Bushfire Management Overlay. Adjoining land is also subject to the Rural Living Zone, while land to the North of the Smythesdale-Snake Valley Road is within the Farming Zone as **shown in Figure 2 below.**

Land subject to the Rural Living Zone immediately adjacent to the subject site comprises similar allotment sizes and contain one dwelling and dense vegetation. Land to the south-east of the site features native and planted vegetation, while land to the north and west are larger allotments used for agricultural purposes such as grazing and broadacre cropping. **Photos of the subject land are provided as Attachment 1.**



Figure 1: Aerial image showing subject site and surrounding area

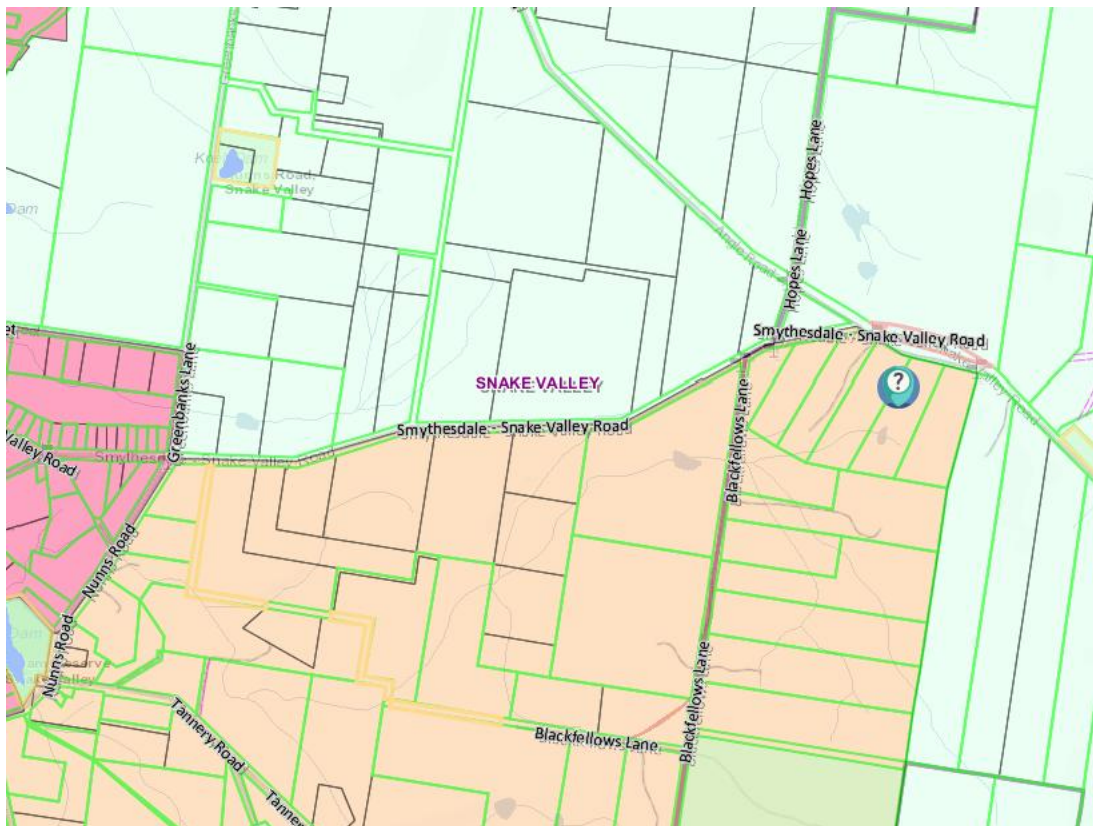


Figure 2: Zoning of the subject land and surrounding properties including proximity to Snake Valley

THE PROPOSAL

It is proposed to use the land at 13 Canico Lane Hillcrest for Animal Husbandry – *Sebasam West Highland White Terriers*. The owner is a member of Dogs Victoria. [Welcome To Dogs Victoria](#) and the Westie Club Victoria [Westie Club of Victoria - Home | Westie Club of Victoria](#) and has been breeding west highland terriers for 30 years.

The application for a Planning Permit states in the kennel management plan that:

- During the day, the dogs are housed in exercise yards with toys and activities. Two –three dogs are kept in each yard. If it is hot/cold dogs are returned to kennels. Dogs are exercised which comprises daily walks on leads around the property.
- At night, the dogs are kept in their individual kennels. There are ten kennels in total within the main kennel building. The kennel area is heated, and air conditioning is provided. The kennels are noise attenuated.
- The kennels are cleaned each day. The beds are hosed and dried. All feeding, watering utensils and toys are also cleaned daily.
- Domestic rubbish which is collected is disposed of in the domestic waste which is collected weekly. (noted that in the original application it was disposed of on the property).
- in the event of an emergency ie bushfire (site is in a bushfire management overlay) the owners can evacuate to dogs to Ballarat. The property is also maintained with defendable space around the dwelling and outbuilding with grass kept low and sprinkler systems throughout the property. The kennel area may form shelter for animals in the case of a fire. The property is not subject to any flooding.
- A daily care routine is adopted for the dogs. This includes monitoring of changes in behaviors, signs of illness or injury to determine health or welfare concerns. The puppies within a litter are continually observed and the mother is integral in the care. If any issues arise veterinary care is sought.
- All puppies are vaccinated when microchipped at 8 weeks of age.

- Given the breed of dog, they are bathed every four weeks and trimmed every 10-12 weeks or more frequently if required
- Puppies are fed five times daily on a mixture of milk, farex and minced steak. Adult dogs are fed daily with a variety of tinned food which is complemented with olive oil, kelp powder, raw eggs, and flaxseed oil.
- The puppies are handled frequently during the day and night including feeding and cleaning. As the puppies mature the puppies socialise together. Music and toys provide activity.
- The adult dogs are subject to a routine which includes feeding, walking, socialising and play.
- A variety of vets are utilised including
 - o Ballarat Pet Farm Vet
 - o Ballarat Country Vets
 - o Smythesdale Animal Hospital
 - o Beaufort Vets and Valley Vet can be called in an emergency.
- The earliest that a puppy can go to a new home is 8 weeks (about 2 months). All puppies are microchipped, immunised and vet checked. Vet records and puppy care notes are provided to all new owners.
- Old dogs and puppies if rehomed will be desexed and health checked before being placed with new owners. Prospective homes are carefully chosen, ie someone who has previously purchased a puppy.
- Archival pedigrees of the west highland terriers go back to 1979 and are registered. A copy of the pedigree is supplied for all puppies and adult dogs.
- The owner is a member of dogs victoria. [Welcome To Dogs Victoria](#) and the Westie Club Victoria [Westie Club of Victoria - Home | Westie Club of Victoria](#) and has been breeding west highland terriers for 30 years.
- All dogs are registered with the council.
- The contact details of all new homes are retained.

The permit applicant originally applied to use the land for animal husbandry for a maximum of 20 dogs (inclusive of puppies) at the premises at any one time. This has recently been reduced to ten adult dogs overall as the owner is seeking to reduce the capacity of the operation. The application has been formally amended to reflect this.

While the site has been utilised for animal boarding or keeping in kennels in the past. Existing use rights cannot be established as there was insufficient information to determine this. The application primarily seeks approval to use the site for breeding and keeping.

The application is accompanied by:

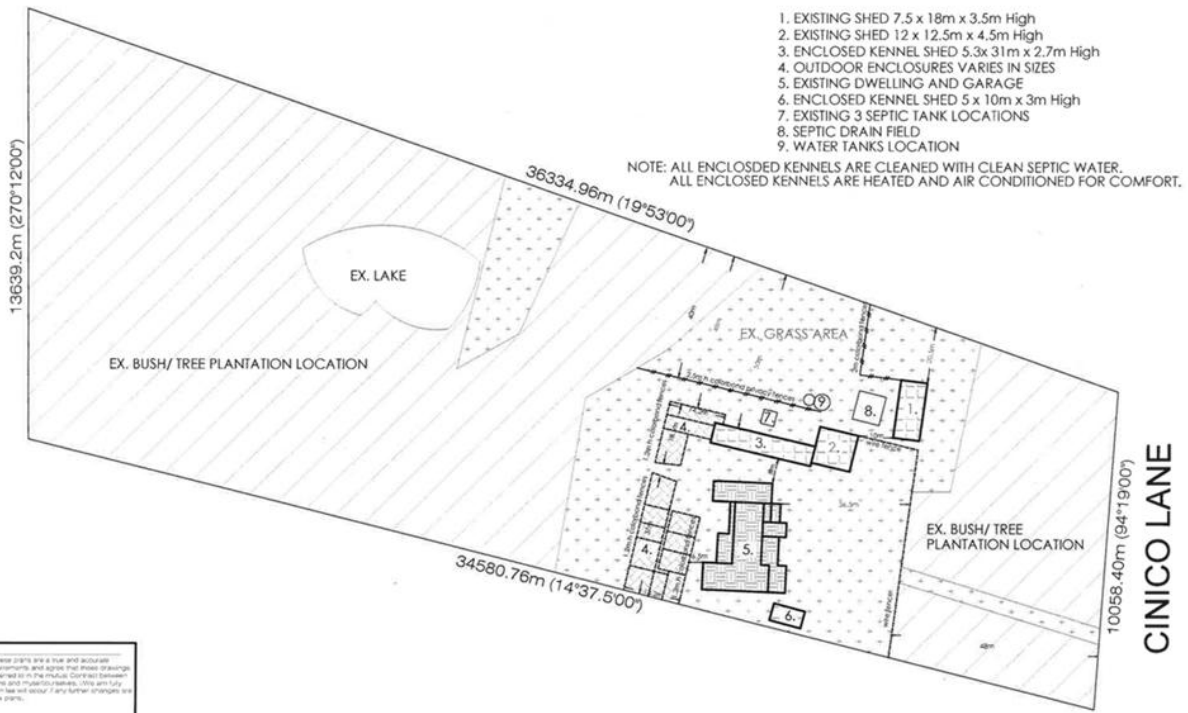
- A site plan
- A floor plan of the existing building to be used for breeding and animal keeping
- A copy of the Certificate of Title and Title Plan
- A written description of existing and proposed business operations and management.

The application documentation is included as Attachment 2.

The application proposes to use the land for Animal Husbandry which is defined under Clause 73.03 as: *Animal Husbandry - Land used to keep, breed, board, or train animals, including birds.*

The application does not propose the construction of any additional buildings or works on site. There are no changes to existing vehicular access points to or within the site and no vegetation is proposed to be removed.

In accordance with Clause 35.03-1 (Rural Living Zone) of the Pyrenees Planning Scheme a planning permit is required to use the land for Section 2 Use. The land use of Animal Husbandry is not specifically listed in Section 2, but as it is not listed in Section 1 or 3 is it deemed a Section 2 use under the Scheme and can be considered.



I hereby certify that these plans are a true and accurate copy of the original drawings and that they have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Building Act 1993 and the Building Regulations 2006. I am a registered architect and my name is entered in the Register of Architects maintained by the Board of Architectural Regulation. I have signed these plans on the date shown below.

Date: _____

Figure 3: Site Plan

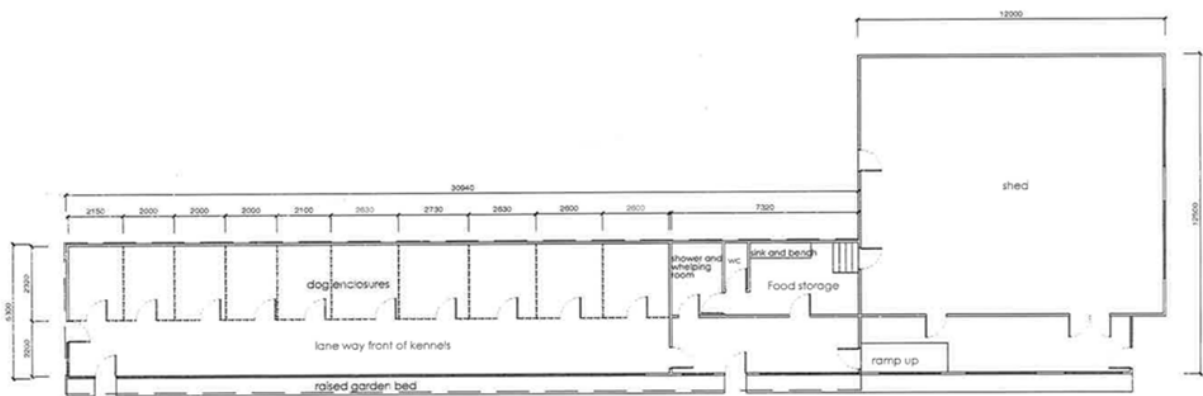


Figure 4: Floor Plans of building to be used for Animal Husbandry.

RESPONSE TO NOTICE OF APPLICATION

Council has received four objections in response to advertising. The key issues raised in the objections can be summarised as:

A copy of the objections is provided in Attachment 3.

The issues raised in the objections will be addressed throughout the discussion on the key issues relating to the proposal.

- Amenity impacts including
 - Number of dogs to be kept on the site.
 - Barking dogs – throughout the day and in the early hours of the morning.
 - Concern for dog welfare.

- The onsite disposal of effluent and faeces including
 - Potential impact upon the natural water course to the rear of the property
 - Implications for surrounding landowners including impact to the water quality.
 - Biosecurity risks for surrounding landowners with grazing operations.

- Fire prevention strategies
 - The above biosecurity risks for grazing landowners impacts their potential to implement fire prevention strategies including the grazing of stock within the surrounding bushland.

- Concerning behaviours
 - Several residents have identified ongoing concerning behaviour from the permit applicant including them walking the property at night shining torches which disturbs surrounding residents and their pets.

REFERRAL OF APPLICATION

Internal Referrals

Referral	Advice/Response/Conditions
Environmental Health	<p>From an Environmental Health perspective, before we can provide any further advice on actions that need to be taken, we need to ascertain what wastewater is being treated where at the property. For this, we would need the property owner to provide the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A plumbers report mapping out the wastewater system currently on site, showing the location and size of any tanks, what wastewater is being discharged into these tanks (i.e. domestic wastewater/blackwater/greywater or kennel wash down water, and the location and size of any wastewater disposal areas (length, width and location of any trenches) for each of the tanks <p>If the wash down water from the kennels is being discharged into the septic system for the house,</p>

	<p>this is not permitted and a Permit to Alter the wastewater system for the house may be required and the current septic system will need to be brought into current code requirements. Through this process we may require an LCA or soil test report to be conducted/provided.</p> <p>The public health risk from washing down water only (provided that all solid waste is discarded elsewhere such as Council waste bins) would be minimal as the soil acts to treat any of the water generated this way.</p> <p>If the onsite wastewater management system and the wash down water from the kennels is treated adequately on site, then this would minimise any potential public health risk from the kennels.</p> <p>Further information including LCA information and a plumber's report was requested on the 17 June 2024.</p> <p>This information was submitted by the applicant in December 2024 and found to be satisfactory.</p> <p>No objection subject to conditions relating to noise, general amenity, and disposal of animal waste.</p>
Local Laws	No objection. They will need to comply with the Domestic Animals Act, Regulations, and any relevant codes of practice for Victorian dog breeders.

External Referrals

Referral	Advice/Response/Conditions
Agriculture Victoria (DEECA Pet and Animal Welfare) (S52)	The council's Animal Management team are responsible for providing the Domestic Animal Business permit. This permit should be shared with the Animal Management team for assessment as to whether the permit meets the required Code of Practice standards.
Central Highlands Water (S52)	No objection. No comments.
Glenelg Hopkins CMA (S52)	<p>The CMA does not object to the granting of a permit.</p> <p>The CMA has no flooding information for this property. This does not mean that the property will not flood. The waterway located on the property is part of the headwaters to a tributary of Baillie</p>

	<p>Creek (see Figure 1). Given the development is located on land higher than, and approximately 100m from the waterway, the CMA has no conditions.</p> <p>Please include the following notation on a permit should one be granted. “Note: A Designated Waterway passes through the property. Any work in, on or around a designated waterway requires a license from the Glenelg Hopkins CMA. Please visit their website at www.ghcma.vic.gov.au for more information.”</p>
<p>Country Fire Authority (S52)</p>	<p>CFA does not object to the change of use of this site. As there are existing buildings on site and no further development proposed and currently being used to accommodate animals, CFA has no further requirements.</p>
<p>Environmental Protection Agency (S52)</p>	<p>EPA inspected the property in May 2024. A copy of the inspection report is provided as Attachment 4.</p> <p>Compliance advice given by EPA Part 5.7 of the Environment Protection Regulations 2021 creates new ongoing obligations on a person in management or control of an Onsite Water Management System (e.g., septic tank). These include an obligation to operate the system correctly, maintain it in good working order, and ensure it does not overflow. There is also a new duty to keep maintenance records, and a duty to notify the council as soon as practicable if the system poses a risk of harm to human health or the environment or is otherwise not in good working order.</p> <p>Inspection outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPA may issue notices and/or directions (including remedial and non-remedial notices). • Follow-up inspection or other actions. <p>o EPA has forwarded official information to the Pyrenees Shire for review and follow up action.</p> <p>Further information including LCA information and a plumber's report was requested on the 17 June 2024.</p> <p>This information was submitted by the applicant in December 2024.</p> <p>January 2025 No concerns. Please include note on the permit.</p>

	<p>The amended Environment Protection Act 2017 came into effect on 1 July 2021. The general environmental duty (GED) is a centerpiece of the laws. It applies to all Victorians. If your business engages in activities that may give rise to a risk to human health or the environment from pollution or waste, you must understand those risks and take action to minimise them as far as reasonably practicable. This involves a continuous, preventative approach and should be undertaken with the understanding that where an operation presents low-level risks, or already has appropriate risk mitigation measures in place, further mitigation measures may still be necessary at a future point.</p>
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ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The proposal generally accords with the PPF (Planning Policy Framework) including the Municipal Planning Strategy of the Pyrenees Planning Scheme. The key issues are as follows:

- The Rural Living Zone
- The onsite disposal of effluent and faeces
- Amenity Impacts
- Other matters

The Rural Living Zone

Clause 35.03 Rural Living Zone) provides the following purposes:

- *To provide for residential use in a rural environment.*
- *To provide for agricultural land uses which do not adversely affect the amenity of surrounding land uses.*
- *To protect and enhance the natural resources, biodiversity and landscape and heritage values of the area.*
- *To encourage use and development of land based on comprehensive and sustainable land management practices and infrastructure provision.*

Pursuant to Clause 35.03 a planning permit is required to use the land for animal husbandry. (Land used to keep, breed, board, or train animals, including birds.)

The use is considered appropriate for the following reasons:

- The proposed use and development of the land for animal husbandry is considered to accord with the Rural Living Zone's purpose and objectives. It is considered that this land use can be appropriately managed as implemented by appropriate conditions of approval and will not adversely impact the amenity of surrounding land uses.
- The dogs are both domestic pets of the property owner and are kept for use for commercial breeding purposes.
- The dogs are registered and will be kept in secure kennels and yards. These comprise internal housing in runs and fenced outdoor areas. The kennels are cleaned daily, and solid waste is disposed of appropriately. A waste management plan will be required as a condition of approval. All concerns relating to effluent and feces disposal have been addressed.

- All dogs will be provided with the required registration, and breeding will only be undertaken as an established breeding business.
- The maximum number of dogs on the site will be limited to no more than 10 adults over the age of thirteen weeks.
- The application was referred to the EPA. EPA considered the proposal to be low risk provided issues such as noise and waste/ wastewater management can be addressed, and that the proposal is subject to a management plan.
- The application was also referred to Agriculture Victoria (DEECA) who provided a letter of advice recommending that the use be managed in accordance with current legislation. This would include the:
 - Domestic Animals Act 1994,
 - Domestic Animals Amendment (Puppy Farms and Pet Shops) Act 2017
 - Domestic Animals Regulations 2015 and.
 - Code of Practice for the Operation of Breeding and Rearing Businesses (2014).

The onsite disposal of effluent and faeces

As noted in the background to this application this matter stemmed from the permit applicant undertaking works to the onsite wastewater treatment system which resulted in effluent from the subject land impacting neighbouring properties. The site was therefore in breach of the Environmental Protection Act, and Regulations including the General Environmental Duty (GED) and the Pyrenees Planning Scheme.

It is understood that the Council became aware of the property following reports from neighbors in 2022. The current planning team and Council officers from the community safety and amenity, building and environmental health departments became involved and inspected the property from March 2023 onwards to understand the concerns raised. Officers also met with several surrounding neighbors.

As the use of the land did not accord with the planning scheme it was determined that a planning permit was required to bring the site in compliance and to seek to address the environmental health and amenity concerns raised by surrounding owners.

During the application's advertising, surrounding owners came to understand from the application documentation that the owner was disposing of animal feces to the property's rear in a pit adjacent to a dam. The dam is connected to an unnamed watercourse which traverses through the rear of properties on Canico Lane and Blackfellows Lane to the west. Residents were overly concerned about the impact of the feces on the water quality of the watercourse and that this could potentially have an impact upon the biosecurity of their properties and grazing stock.

Following the meeting with the residents, council officers contacted the EPA and central highlands water and arranged for water testing of all dams and watercourses in the vicinity. The EPA also inspected the property and reiterated the need for a plumber's report and land capability assessment to ensure that the effluent disposal system was compliant, and any rectification works were completed. The community safety and amenity officer also liaised with Animal Welfare and Dogs Victoria etc. and recommended that animal feces be disposed of in the general waste and that any pits for the disposal of feces be remediated as soon as possible.

We advised the permit applicant of the Environment Protection Regulations 2021 which creates ongoing obligations on a person in management or control of an Onsite Water Management System (e.g., septic tanks). This includes an obligation to operate the system correctly, maintain it in good working order, and ensure it does not overflow. The GED requires owners to keep maintenance records, and a duty to notify a council as soon as practicable if the system poses a risk of harm to human health or the environment or is otherwise not in good working order.

The environmental health team also visited several properties near the subject land and undertook water testing, which was sent to Central Highlands Water for review. The results of this testing concluded that all samples contained no salmonella and exceptionally low levels of E. coli suggesting no public health concern and very unlikely that they have been contaminated by any wastewater issues in adjoining properties.

Based on this information council officers are satisfied that the environmental values of the waterway can be conserved thereby according with Clause 12 Environmental and Landscape Values (Clause 12.03 Waterbodies and Wetlands of the Pyrenees Planning Scheme. In addition, Central Highlands Water and Glenelg Hopkins CMA have no concerns in this context. Permit conditions requiring that animal waste be disposed of in the general domestic waste and details of the location of waste storage will ensure that these requirements are adhered to.

If relation to effluent disposal on the site the permit applicant has complied with the request of the EPA and Council's environmental health department, and we are satisfied that effluent is now contained on site.

Amenity Impacts

The objectors have raised concerns regarding the number of dogs kept on the site and dog welfare. Neighbours are also frequently impacted by the noise of barking dogs particularly throughout the day and in the early hours of the morning. This is an issue that has been ongoing for several years.

Clause 13.07 Amenity Human Health and Safety is of relevance to the consideration of this matter. Clause 13.07-1S Land Use Compatibility states that planning should ensure that use or development of land is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses and that we should avoid locating incompatible uses in areas that may be impacted by adverse off-site impacts from commercial, industrial, and other uses.

As noted above the use of the land for animal husbandry is considered to be suitable in the context of the Rural Living Zone. The infrastructure including the kennels facility and yards are established on the site. The onsite effluent disposal and disposal of waste have been addressed through the application process as demonstrated.

The permit applicant has reduced the number of adult dogs on the site down to 10 total and it is considered that there is existing infrastructure in place on the site is suitable for that number.

Concerns raised regarding animal welfare have been investigated by the community safety and amenity team in association with Dogs Victoria and DEECA and they have no concerns. They consider that the use complies with relevant acts and guidance relating to animal husbandry. They consider the site to be a suitable operation and with a planning permit and suitable permit conditions off site impacts such as barking can be addressed.

In relation to noise it is considered reasonable that there is some barking of dogs in a rural living context and that there would be some barking associated with the site, however this should not be unreasonable.

Permit conditions including the requirement for fencing and screening of the western site boundary adjacent to the kennels and yards will seek to screen the use from the adjoining property to the east where the noise would be most apparent. It is understood that the applicant has erected some fencing on this boundary and undertaken some screen planting it is however considered that this could be further enhanced to provide an additional visual barrier and enhanced noise attenuation.

The ongoing management of the use including the confinement of dogs during the evenings in their kennels which are noise attenuated and restrictions on feeding time and general nuisance requirements will ensure that noise is appropriately managed.

Other matters

Other matters raised by the objectors include ongoing concerning behaviour from the occupants of the subject land including, walking the property at night, shining torches which disturbs surrounding residents and their pets.

Clause 65.01 directs that before deciding on an application the responsible authority must consider relevant matters. This includes the effect on the environment, human health, and amenity of the area.

The nature, scale and setting of the use is not considered to result in any unreasonable amenity impacts beyond the property boundary. Amenity impacts to be considered are limited to noise and other minor potential disturbances as addressed above.

The concerning behaviors identified are not considered to be related to the land use being considered and in fact it is highly likely that this would continue if the land use were not supported.

As discussed above officers can seek to address any amenity impacts to be considered by the planning scheme through the appropriate operation of any land use/business which can be managed via appropriate planning permit conditions to ensure that the land use is compatible with surrounding land use and any amenity impacts can be minimized. We however cannot control the general behaviors or nature of landowners.

In this case a retrospective permit application is being considered to bring the use of the land into compliance with the Pyrenees Planning Scheme. Planning permit conditions provide the council with an enforcement mechanism to ensure that the site is appropriately used and managed, and that the amenity of the area is maintained to an acceptable level.

The permit applicant has been cooperative in pursuing the planning permit process and has met all requirements requested. Council officers are satisfied that the matters raised have been resolved and recommend support for the proposal.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

1d. Promote health, wellbeing, engagement, and connection.

1e. Improve social outcomes.

Priority 2 - Place

2a. Sustain and enhance unique character of our communities.

2b. Enhance the liveability and resilience of our communities.

2c. Promote responsible development.

Priority 4 - Economy

4a. Support our local businesses and help to strengthen key industries.

Enabling Principles

b. Provide transparency and accountability

c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

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

ATTACHMENTS

1. Att 2 [11.2.2.1 - 29 pages]
2. Att 3 [11.2.2.2 - 7 pages]
3. Att 4 [11.2.2.3 - 4 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

The council's assessment of the application and management of the planning permit process has been partially met by the fees paid pursuant to the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

- Pyrenees Planning Scheme
- Planning and Environment Act 1987

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

Issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit for the Use of the land for animal husbandry, subject to the following conditions.

Amended Plans Required

1. Before the use 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. The plans must be generally in accordance with the plans submitted but modified to show:
 - a. The distances from the shed and yards to surrounding sensitive uses, including dwellings, and environmental setbacks to waterways, etc.
 - b. Nomination of all visual and noise screening (including the type, height, and materials) of screening and yards to protect surrounding land uses and sensitive land uses, including dwellings.
 - c. The wastewater disposal area shown and located to prevent impacts to waterways, water quality, and is appropriately buffered and fenced.
 - d. The provision of a landscape plan for all vegetation screen planting as per the requirements of Condition 3.
 - e. The provision of a detailed waste management plan as per the requirements of Condition 19.
 - f. The provision of a business management as per the requirements of Condition 9.

Layout not Altered

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

Landscape Plan

3. Prior to the commencement of any works, a landscape plan must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. When approved the plan will form part of the permit.

The landscape plan must include:

- a. a survey (including botanical names) of all existing vegetation to be retained and/or removed.
- b. details of surface finishes of pathways and driveways.
- c. a planting schedule of all proposed trees, shrubs, and ground covers, including botanical names, common names, pot sizes, size at planting, sizes at maturity, and quantities of each plant.

Completion and Maintenance of Landscaping Works

4. Prior to the use of the site all landscape works forming part of the approved Landscape Plans must be completed to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. The landscaping shown on the approved landscape plan must be maintained to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority for 18 months from the practical completion of the landscaping. During this period, any dead, diseased, or damaged plants or landscaped areas are to be repaired or replaced during the period of maintenance and must not be deferred until the completion of the maintenance period.

Lighting

5. External lighting must be designed, baffled, and located so as to prevent any adverse effect on adjoining land to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Noise Control - Noise Limit and Assessment Protocol

6. Noise emissions from the premises must not exceed the limits set out in the Environmental Protection Authority's (EPA) Noise limit and assessment protocol for the control of noise from commercial, industrial and trade premises and entertainment venues (Noise Protocol), or its successor or equivalent

General Amenity - After Construction

7. The use must be managed to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority so that the amenity of the area is not detrimentally affected including through the:
 - a. transportation of materials, goods, or commodities to or from the land.
 - b. appearance of any building works or materials.
 - c. emission of noise, artificial light, smell, fumes, smoke, vapour, steam, soot, ash, dust, water, waste products, grit, or oil.
 - d. presence of vermin.

Animal Waste

8. No animal waste is to be discharged into the onsite wastewater management system (septic) located at the property. all animal waste is to be disposed of in the domestic waste.

Business Management Plan

9. Prior to the commencement of the use a plan shall be provided which includes detail of how the business would comply with Code of Practice for the Operation of Breeding and Rearing Businesses (2014). The plan should be to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority and

endorsed to form part of the permit.

General Management

10. The use must be managed and operated at all times in accordance with the requirements of:

- a. Domestic Animals Act 1994,
- b. Domestic Animals Amendment (Puppy Farms and Pet Shops) Act 2017
- c. Domestic Animals Regulations 2015 and.
- d. Code of Practice for the Operation of Breeding and Rearing Businesses (2014).

Maximum number of dogs

11. No more than ten (10) adult dogs over the age of thirteen weeks may be accommodated or kept on the site at any one time.

General Use Conditions

12. The dog kennels must allow for dogs to be confined in a fully enclosed area at night which shall be insulated with noise abatement material to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority, so as to reduce the effects of barking noise on the surrounding area.
13. Feeding of adult dogs must only occur between the hours of 7.00am and 8.00pm in Winter and 7.00am and 9.00pm at other times.
14. No dogs shall be kept on the site unless a person is residing on the property on a full-time basis during the time that the use for the purposes of dog keeping occurs.
15. Dogs must not create a nuisance through barking, wandering, waste or any other nuisance which may cause detriment to the surrounding area to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
16. Noise levels emanating from dogs kept on the property must not cause nuisance to adjoining landowners.
17. The kennels, any exercise yard or dog compound must be kept in a clean, tidy, and sanitary condition always to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Access to dogs

18. Access to all dogs must be restricted solely to:
- a. the permit holder,
 - b. a veterinary surgeon,
 - c. a member of the permit holder's family,
 - d. a person over the age of 18 years entrusted with the care or effective control of the dogs ("a nominated responsible person"),

e. a person accompanied by the permit holder or a nominated responsible person, or

f. a person acting in an emergency.

Details of Waste Storage Areas

19. Details of waste collection and storage areas shall be provided prior to the commencement of use. Storage bins shall be screened from view of the street and adequately covered to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority to minimise dispersal of material by wind or water and vermin and pest insect access. Appropriate controls shall be implemented to restrict the movement of wind-blown litter and prevent the site appearing unsightly. No litter shall be discharged beyond the boundaries of the site. All storage areas shall be surfaced and capable of being washed down with wastewater being directed to sewer via an appropriate litter trap. No odour shall be emitted from any waste storage areas so as to cause offence to adjoining property occupiers to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Expiry - Use

20. This permit as it relates to use will expire if the use does not start within 2 years after the issued date of this permit.

In accordance with Section 69 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, an application may be submitted to the responsible authority for an extension of the period referred to in this condition.

21. This permit allows the use of the land only by (Sebasam West Highland White Terriers 13 Canico Lane Hillcrest). If (Sebasam West Highland White Terriers) ceases to use the land, this permit will expire.

Notes

Bushfire Prone Area

This site is located within a designated Bush Fire Prone Area. Compliance with AS3959 is required.

EPA

The amended Environment Protection Act 2017 came into effect on 1 July 2021. The general environmental duty (GED) is a centrepiece of the laws. It applies to all Victorians. If your business engages in activities that may give rise to a risk to human health or the environment from pollution or waste, you must understand those risks and take action to minimise them as far as reasonably practicable. This involves a continuous, preventative approach and should be undertaken with the understanding that where an operation presents low-level risks, or already has appropriate risk mitigation measures in place, further mitigation measures may still be necessary at a future point.

GHCMA

A Designated Waterway passes through the property. Any works in, on or around a designated waterway require a licence from the Glenelg Hopkins CMA. Please visit their website at www.ghcma.vic.gov.au for more information.

11.2.3. ANNUAL ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATION USAGE REPORT

Presenter: Douglas Gowans - Director Asset and Development Services

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Emma Poyser – Executive Assistant to the Directors

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 30/18/06

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the use of the Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations located in Avoca and Beaufort.

BACKGROUND

At the December 2023 Council meeting, Council resolved for regular EV charging usage reports to be presented as data is collected. The most recent of these reports was presented to Council in May 2024.

The Electric Vehicle charging stations located in Avoca and Beaufort were fully funded Council allocated Federal funds and relied on the principles provided by the Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA) technical reports that supported EV charging stations in townships where there were multiple activity options for the visitors with EV vehicles. Two EV chargers at Beaufort were supplied directly by the State Government.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The usage report provided by Evie Networks includes information such as the number of sessions for each month and the charging time and kilowatts provided, with data broken down for each location. The Evie Networks report contains the Co2 emissions saved due to the replacing of Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) vehicles and the Co2 emissions saved using GreenPower, along with a comparison of the energy usage and Co2 emissions saved.

The following graphs taken from this report show the sessions per month for the amalgamated EV charging stations from 01 April 2024 to 31 January 2025.

Month	Beaufort Sessions	Avoca Sessions
April	179	39
May	151	47
June	169	37
July	197	48
August	164	33
September	159	44
October	154	37
November	136	49
December	125	39
January	155	38
Total	1589	411

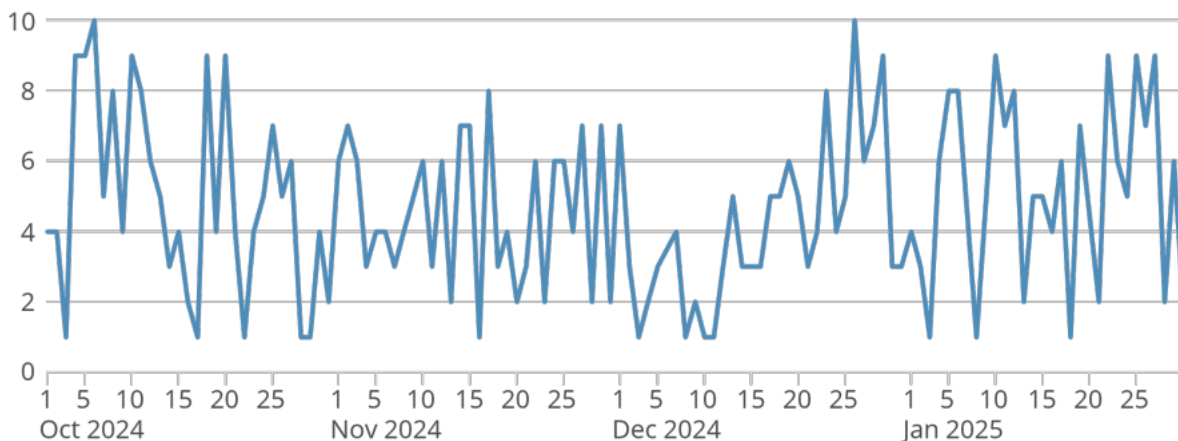
The table below demonstrates an increase in the usage sessions for the Avoca EV charging station.

The Beaufort EV charging saw a usage increase in the months of October and November with a significant decrease in the usage of the EV charging stations in December and January. Historically, these months have shown an increase in the usage sessions due to school holidays and the summer period when tourism is at its peak across Victoria. The decrease in usage seen below for the December and January months could be attributed to less travel due to the current economic climate and the recent fires in the Grampians.

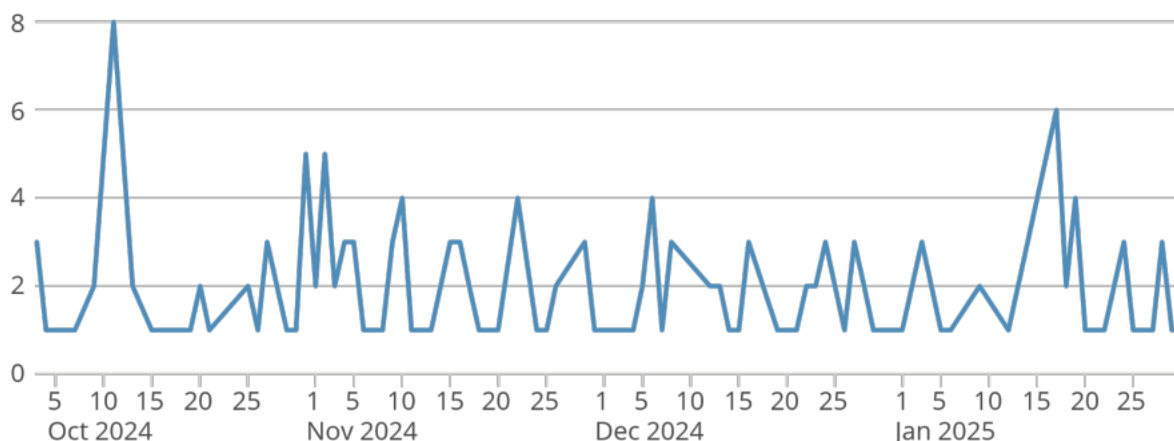
Month	Beaufort 2023	Beaufort 2024	Avoca 2023	Avoca 2024
October	129	154 ↑	20	37 ↑
November	116	136 ↑	20	49 ↑
December	176	125 ↓	25	39 ↑
January	164	155 ↓	36	38 ↑

The combined total for Amphitheatre during the reporting period was 14 sessions which would generally account for the overflow of the Avoca charging stations.

As further demonstrated in the graphs below, the number of sessions per day peaks during public holiday periods and weekends, troughs can be seen during weekdays and when school terms begin.



A significant increase in the number of sessions per day can be seen in the month of October for Avoca, this may be attributed to Danihers Drive which was held on the 11th of the month with approximately 250 vehicles travelling through Avoca.



The average duration for each charging session in Beaufort across the reporting period was 31 minutes. The average duration for each charging session in Avoca across the reporting period was 33 minutes.

Comprehensive reports for the EV sites can be found in the attachments of this report.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 3 - Environment

- 3a. Continue being an environmentally progressive organisation.
- 3b. Foster a climate change resilient community.

Priority 4 - Economy

- 4c. Encourage and invest in assets and infrastructure for commerce and community.

Enabling Principles

- c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

The community engagement that contributed to developing the current council plan had a strong emphasis on environmental protection and action on climate change resilience.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Standard Site Usage Report Beaufort- Mar- Sep 2024 [**11.2.3.1** - 3 pages]
2. Standard Site Usage Report Beaufort Oct 2024- Jan 2025 [**11.2.3.2** - 3 pages]
3. Standard Site Usage Avoca Report Mar- Sep 2024 [**11.2.3.3** - 5 pages]
4. Standard Site Usage Report Avoca Oct 2024- Jan 2025 [**11.2.3.4** - 3 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

The installed EV charging stations demonstrate that Council is committed to providing renewable options for energy to power vehicles. This in turn addresses climate change impacts produced from the use of fossil fuels.

Council has a contractual agreement with Evie (Fast Cities Australia) to manage, operate & maintain both charging station sites reducing any potential risks if sites were managed directly. Power bills are from a renewable source and are paid for by Evie.

The capital investment in the current sites has been made possible with government funding. While this report notes a minor increase in usage overall from 2023 to 2024, this would not appear to justify any additional capital investment in new sites given Council's financial constraints and unless with external funding.

CONCLUSION

The Electric Vehicle Charging Sites at Beaufort and Avoca have been operating well and continue to have a generally increasing amount of usage.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. receives an annual electric vehicle charging station usage report
2. continues to monitor and report on usage at the EV charging sites
3. not provide funds in the 2025/26 capital budget for additional EV charging sites in the Pyrenees shire given the usage at the existing sites.

11.2.4. REVISION TO REGISTER OF PUBLIC ROADS

Presenter: Douglas Gowans - Director Asset and Development Services

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Tim Day, Manager Assets

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 58/02/02

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider adoption of the revision to the Register of Public Roads.

BACKGROUND

Council is required to maintain a Register of Public Roads in accordance with the *Road Management Act 2004*.

Under the *Road Management Act 2004 s19* a road authority is required to keep a register of public roads which defines those roads for which they are the Coordinating Road Authority. The register must include amongst other things: (a) the name of the public road, or if unnamed, a description which enables the particular road to be easily identified; (b) the date on which the road became a public road; and (c) the classification of the public road.

Council's Register of Public Roads has been reviewed and updated.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Council officers have recently undertaken a periodic review of the network of roads within the municipality. The review has identified that, in addition to newly adopted roads, several corrections and amendments to the register are required.

The corrections and amendments can be identified under the following categories:

- Correction of Coordinating and Responsible Road Authorities
- Correction of road length
- Amendment to the road hierarchy
- Amendment of locational descriptions
- Aligning the road register with boundary demarcations
- Identification of road reserves subject to an Unused Road Licence that are named or provide unique access for addressed properties
- Extension of existing roads
- New roads

The Register of Public Roads requires that the hierarchy of the road is identified.

Council has adopted 5 classes of road – Link; Collector; Local Access 1; Local Access 2; and Local Access 3. In addition to these, unused roads may be identified in the register where they provide property access despite being subject to a licence. Boundary roads are those roads forming the boundary of the municipality that are managed by the adjoining Council. Ancillary areas include car parks, parking bays, roads within property boundaries, within Crown Reserves, or within unreserved Crown Land that are used by vehicles but do not form part of the road network.

The hierarchical classification and basis for the classification is defined in the Register.

Road lengths are calculated directly from source data. This data is actively maintained to correct road classification, lengths and responsible authorities. Roads that have been adopted through resolution of Council are added to the register which results in minor changes to summary totals at each review.

The revised Register of Public Roads is provided as an attachment to this report and includes the following additions and deletions.

Additions:

- Bradshaw Swamp Road (885m) Homebush;
- Evans Lane (990m), Homebush;
- Rivetts Road (664m) Amphitheatre;
- Humffray Street (215m) Amphitheatre.
- Eurambeen-Settlement Road (4280m) Buangor.

Deletions: Baangal Station Entry Lane – private road.

Renamed: Knott Lane (formerly Anderson Lane), Avoca; Webb Street (formerly unnamed) Avoca; Kirkland Court (formerly unnamed), Beaufort – adopted by Council

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 4 - Economy

4b. Invest in road infrastructure to improve connectivity for commerce and community.

Enabling Principles

b. Provide transparency and accountability

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Council's Register of Public Roads is a public document available on Council's website and at its customer services counter.

ATTACHMENTS

1. PSC Register of Public Roads - 7 March 2025 [**11.2.4.1** - 53 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

The Register of Public Roads is an essential document in relation to the management of risk associated with the management and maintenance of public roads. The register identifies the extent of Council's responsibilities in relation to the inspection and maintenance obligations by class of road defined in its Road Management Plan.

CONCLUSION

The revision to Council's Register of Public Roads is provided for consideration and adoption by Council.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Adopts the revised Register of Public Roads.

11.3. CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

11.3.1. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATIONS 2024-2025

Presenter: Kathy Bramwell - Director Corporate and Community Services

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Ned Patterson – Community Wellbeing and Grants Coordinator

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 36/28/06

PURPOSE

Following review of applications received against 2024 / 25 Community Funding Program Annual Grants, this report provides recommendations for the Council to award funding.

BACKGROUND

Pyrenees Shire Council's Community Funding Program aims to build stronger communities that deliver improved outcomes for our residents and visitors. Council provides several grant categories in recognition of the valuable contribution that community organisations and local business make to the social, cultural, economic, and environmental wellbeing of Pyrenees Shire. Funding is eligible for programs held within the geographical boundaries of Pyrenees Shire, or those that benefit many Pyrenees residents.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Applications opened Tuesday, 10 December 2024, and closed Monday, 17 February 2025. Following a communication and engagement program, 41 applications were received, collectively requesting \$130,368.84.

Applications were received for a diverse scope of projects, delivered broadly across our Shire. After the application period closed, a review panel of Council officers assessed applications. All applications were reviewed against advertised eligibility guidelines and selection criteria.

Through the assessment phase, two applications were withdrawn by applicants, resulting in a total of 39 applications being formally assessed.

Attachment 1 summarises the outcome of this process, with applications progressing to Council recommendation. Officer recommendation is to fund all applications except for one assessed as ineligible according to Program Guidelines.

All projects are recommended to be funded to requested values, excepting the following five projects:

- Lexton Football Netball Club – Telecommunications Improvement:
Request exceeds guidelines financial cap of \$2,000 for equipment. Officers will work with the applicant and the local Community Asset Committee to realise the full project intent and scope.
- Avoca Friends of the Pool – Sitting Safely in the Shade:
A reduced project cost was ascertained with the applicant throughout assessment process, decreasing the need for the original requested grant amount to successfully deliver works.
- Avoca Arts & Gardens Group – Outdoor Amenity Enhancements:
Several civil works project components were identified and agreed to be removed from the project scope as they required further investigation and design.
- Avoca Riding Club – Annual Dressage Day:
Recommending a reduced grant value in alignment with guidelines and project scale.

- Beaufort Football Netball Club – Beaufort Car & Truck Show:
Recommending a reduced grant value in alignment with guidelines and project scale.

One application by the Snake Valley & District Historical Society was assessed as ineligible, as Program Guidelines are explicit that the Program cannot fund programs pertaining to ongoing operation expenses.

Following the assessments, officers recommend that the Council award community grants to the value of \$106,361.50. Funding of applicants will be conditional upon securing all relevant Permits (i.e., Building, Planning and Local Law / Event), contributing funding (where required) and entering into a Funding Agreement.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

- 1a. Prepare for emergencies and ensure community safety.
- 1b. Support a vibrant community arts, culture and heritage environment.
- 1c. Improve accessibility and inclusivity.
- 1d. Promote health, wellbeing, engagement and connection.
- 1e. Improve social outcomes.

Priority 2 - Place

- 2b. Enhance the liveability and resilience of our communities.

Priority 3 - Environment

- 3b. Foster a climate change resilient community.

Priority 4 - Economy

- 4a. Support our local businesses and help to strengthen key industries.
- 4c. Encourage and invest in assets and infrastructure for commerce and community.

Enabling Principles

- a. Motivate and inspire community involvement

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

The availability of the Program was advertised in local media, via available social media channels and through direct advice to groups registered on Council's community, event, and business databases.

Council officers delivered 7 applicant support sessions to assist groups to scope and complete applications. These sessions were held in various community settings including the Snake Valley Hall, the Avoca Library and Resource Centre, the Lexton Community Hall, the Landsborough Community Resource Centre, and the Beaufort Library and Resource Centre.

In addition, council officers made themselves available to support application development through individual applicant support sessions (phone, face to face or online).

Council officers had discussions regarding 58 projects over the course of the community engagement period. Those projects not submitted were due to volunteer capacity to complete applications, or decisions by applicants to defer until the next program.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Community Funding Program 2024 25 Panel Recommendation (1) [11.3.1.1 - 7 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Officer recommendation results in delivery of the program within available annual grant and event sponsorship budgets, with recommended grants totaling \$106,361.50. Although above the community grant budget for this financial year, re-allocation of funds still available from the positive ageing budget and recovery program was considered appropriate due to the nature of the programs involved.

Risks regarding the implementation of the program have been controlled through the requirement of all applicants to provide budgets, financial statements, evidence of other contributing funding, insurance documents and appropriate acquittal of any previous grants.

A scored assessment process of applications, utilising promoted eligibility criteria, mitigates risk through a fair, consistent, and transparent process.

CONCLUSION

The Council's Community Funding Program provides financial support to strengthen our community, increases participation and strengthens economic growth across our Shire. Many of these programs align with the Council's strategic priorities and recommendations are made for the Council's consideration.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Awards grant funding with the Community Funding Program at a total value of \$96,361.50:
 - a. Avoca Cemetery Trust for 'Minor Equipment' - \$1,638.00
 - b. Avoca Community Arts & Gardens Inc. for 'A&G Precinct Outdoor Amenity Enhancements' - \$6,100.00
 - c. Avoca Friends of the Pool for 'Sitting Safely in the Shade' - \$1,580.00
 - d. Avoca Men's Shed for 'New Router Table' - \$1,789.00
 - e. Avoca Riverside Market Incorporated for 'Get Involved project' - \$2,000.00
 - f. Beaufort and District Historical Society for 'Lighting the Courthouse' - \$1,000.00
 - g. Beaufort Apex Club for 'BBQ Upgrade Project' - \$2,000.00
 - h. Beaufort Blue Light Motorcycle Club for 'Beaufort Blue Light Motorcycle Club Car Park Improvements' - \$7,000.00
 - i. Beaufort Cricket Club for 'Women's cricket integration program' - \$2,000.00
 - j. Beaufort CWA for 'Branded Marquee and event equipment' - \$2,000.00
 - k. Beaufort Guides Support Group Inc. for 'Beaufort and District Junior Disco Program' - \$2,000.00
 - l. Beaufort Men's Shed for 'Beaufort Men's Shed Pressure Cooker' - \$400.00
 - m. Beaufort Photography Group (Auspiced by Pyrenees Arts Council) for 'Beaufort Photography Group - Exhibition at Art Trax' - \$2,000.00
 - n. Beaufort Primary School for 'Installation of "Choose Tap" water fountain' - \$2062.00
 - o. Beaufort Services Group Inc for 'Replacement of the timber flooring of our Op Shop' - \$7,000.00
 - p. Business for Beaufort for 'Second Computer for Radio 88 Beaufort' - \$2,000.00
 - q. Carngham Recreation Reserve for 'Safety and compliance of players and spectators' - \$7,000.00
 - r. Carngham Recreation Reserve for 'Waste Management program' - \$1,000.00
 - s. Lake Goldsmith Steam Preservation Association for 'Safety barriers' - \$2,000.00
 - t. Landsborough & District Historical Group Inc. for 'Railway Station Heritage signage program' - \$6,002.00
 - u. Lexton Community Hub (Community Asset Committee) for 'Free public water refill station'

- \$5,142.50

- v. Lexton Football Netball Club for 'Telecommunication improvement' - \$2,000.00
 - w. Lexton Rural Fire Brigade for 'Brigade facilities enabling volunteerism and information sharing' - \$998.00
 - x. Magnum Bonum Recreation Reserve for 'Mag Dam Remediation' - \$2,000.00
 - y. Moonambel Arts and History Group Inc for "On The Edge" - 2025 Photographic competition and exhibition' - \$2,000.00
 - z. Pyrenees Community House for 'Meet The Neighbours' - \$2,000.00
 - aa. Pyrenees Community House for 'Outdoor Event Equipment' - \$2,000.00
 - bb. Raglan Hall & Recreation Reserve Committee Inc for 'Kitchen Facilities Upgrade' - up to \$4,400.00
 - cc. Snake Valley and District Historical Society for 'Risk reduction project: Electrical & fire safety' - \$350.00
 - dd. Trawalla & District Rec Reserve for 'Kitchen upgrade' - \$2,000.00
 - ee. Uniting Church Carngham - Snake Valley for 'Heritage Month Concert' - \$2,000.00
 - ff. Waterloo Community Group for 'Water tank replacement' - \$1,500.00
 - gg. Waterloo Community Group for 'Waterloo Community Christmas in July' - \$2,000.00
 - hh. Waubra Community Hub for 'Upgraded kitchen and bar facilities' - \$4,400.00
2. Awards funding with the Tourism Sponsorship Program, event category to the value of \$10,000.00:
- a. Pyrenees Grape growers & Winemakers Association for Pyrenees Unearthed Festival 2025, 2026 & 2027 – Under a 3-year agreement: \$5,000.00 in 2024-2025 program; \$4,000.00 in 2025 – 2026 program; \$3,000.00 in 2026-2027 program.
 - b. Beaufort Football Netball Club for 'Beaufort Car & Truck Show' - \$4,000.00
 - c. Avoca Riding Club for 'Avoca Riding Club Annual Dressage Day' - \$1,000.00

11.3.2. IBAC SANDON REPORT UPDATE

Presenter: Kathy Bramwell - Director Corporate and Community Services

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Kathy Bramwell – Director Corporate and Community Services

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 16/23/02

PURPOSE

This report provides an update to the Council on the State Government response to the 34 recommendations made within the 2023 Operation Sandon report issued by the IBAC (Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission).

BACKGROUND

Operation Sandon was a 2023 investigation by the IBAC into allegations of corrupt conduct involving Councillors and property developers in the City of Casey in Melbourne's south-east. It also examined the effectiveness of Victoria's systems and controls for safeguarding the integrity of the state's planning processes.

The investigation found several Councillors within the City of Casey accepted payments, gifts, or other benefits including political donations in exchange for support on planning matters that favoured the interests of a property developer.

While Operation Sandon related to the conduct of the property developer and certain Councillors, the special report also focuses on weaknesses in the Casey Council's governance and the processes and procedures that enabled private interests to improperly affect council decision-making.

Operation Sandon highlighted areas where council governance could be improved. A summary document is attached to this report focusing on the key findings related to council governance. A summary of the report is attached for Council reference.

Following issue of the report, Pyrenees Shire Councillors and officers considered the findings and recommendations relating to council governance and a review of the Council's practices against the findings and recommendations was conducted, with the following governance changes being implemented at that time:

- A focus was implemented on identifying where decisions may be inadvertently 'made' at a Council briefing only to be ratified at a formal Council meeting. Although it was found not to be deliberate, it was considered that this could happen, and this focus allowed Councillors and officers to be more aware of the need to prevent this.
- A prohibition on 'en bloc' voting at Council meetings was implemented. Formerly, reports for noting by the Council were voted on together as a single item, preventing full transparency of the reports to community. This practice ceased in mid-2023 and reports designated as 'for noting' are now voted on individually.

Other areas included within the proposed reforms, that were within the power of a single council to implement, were found to already be in place.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

IBAC's proposed reforms contained within the Sandon Report were designed to be implemented by a cross-section of local and state government to minimise the significant risks identified in Operation Sandon from recurring. IBAC recommended that the Premier report public on the action taken in response to the relevant recommendations by 27 January 2025.

A government response to the special report has been published and is attached to this report for Council information. The State Government either supported or supported in principle the majority of the recommendations. Some regulatory or support improvements for councils have already been implemented:

- A mandatory Councillor Code of Conduct was introduced in late 2024 in preparation for the general local government elections.
- A mandatory Councillor training program was introduced in 2024 including induction training and refresher training mid-term.

Recommendations for the Local Government Minister to develop and implement other model documents, including Governance Rules and Transparency Policy have yet to be implemented.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Enabling Principles

b. Provide transparency and accountability

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Sector CEOs and officers continue to engage across the sector on Operation Sandon and its subsequent recommendations.

ATTACHMENTS

1. IBAC Summary - Operation Sandon 2023 [11.3.2.1 - 8 pages]
2. Government- IBA C- Operation- Sandon-response [11.3.2.2 - 18 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Significant risks to councils relating to fraud and corruption were identified through the investigation. Subsequent to the investigation, City of Casey Councillors were dismissed and replaced by a commissioner until the general election in 2024.

CONCLUSION

Operation Sandon commenced in 2017 with a final report published in Parliament in 2023. The investigation identified significant corrupt conduct involving Councillors and property developers in the City of Casey, resulting in the Council being dismissed. Following the investigation, IBAC made 34 recommendations for the sector to prevent future similar corrupt activity. The State Government has provided its response to the recommendations with some already being implemented.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Provides the update information to its Audit & Risk Committee for information, and
2. Continues to engage with the sector and relevant oversight agencies to support the development and implementation of appropriate measures and controls to mitigate future corruption risks in Council.

11.3.3. OLD BEAUFORT PRIMARY SCHOOL PROJECT - STATUS UPDATE

Presenter: Kathy Bramwell - Director Corporate and Community Services

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Kathy Bramwell – Director Corporate and Community Services

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 2425-009

PURPOSE

This report provides an update on the State Government project to develop a master plan and identify early works for the old Beaufort primary school site.

BACKGROUND

The old Beaufort primary school (BPS60) site is currently owned by the State Government. The site part in question contains several classroom buildings and recreational space. It is bordered by Leichardt Street, Neill Street (Western Highway) and Hill Street. The site has been deemed as surplus to requirements and in 2019 the Council was offered a “First right of refusal” to express interest in the site for a community purpose, which was declined, except for the old school oval site to the west of the property which was subsequently purchased by the Council. The public land portion of the site is also the subject of a Native Title claim.

Constant interest has been expressed by the Beaufort community and in particular the BPS60 Group in redeveloping the site for community benefit, and a Social Enterprise Plan associated with the site was produced in late 2019. In February 2022, a petition with 2000 signatures was produced seeking support for site refurbishment addressed to the Victorian Parliament, which read:

We, the undersigned residents of Victoria ask the Legislative Assembly of Victoria to recommend to the State Government:

That the ownership of the school oval and green areas on the former Beaufort Primary School 60 site, 7-25 Hill Street Beaufort be transferred to Pyrenees Shire Council for community use, at no cost to the community, in line with a council decision made on 10/12/2019.

That the remaining land and buildings on the former site be gifted to the community for a Community Hub in collaboration with Pyrenees Shire Council.

For a package of funding (\$3.5 million) for repurposing the buildings and surrounds (see point 2), enabling the development of a fully sustainable, fit for purpose, not-for-profit Community Hub.

The Council has consistently been in support of residents’ wishes to redevelop the site for community benefit, with the proviso that the Council has no interest in long-term management of the portion of the site currently occupied by buildings. In March 2020 the Council confirmed this position through the following resolution:

That Council:

- 1. Notes the progress of the Social Enterprise Plan for the former Beaufort Primary School site.*
- 2. Supports the community’s desire that the State provide the former Beaufort Primary School site for community purposes into the future.*

- 3. Supports the development of the site being self-funded, as far as is practicable, by the sale of specific parcels of land within the site, as well as from the proceeds of other public land sales in the Beaufort area.*
- 4. Supports the site being zoned appropriately to facilitate such sales.*
- 5. Advises the Minister of Planning and the Department of Treasury and Finance of its position.*
- 6. Encourages those involved with the social enterprise plan to establish an entity to manage the development of the site into the future.*

In November 2021, the Victorian Planning Minister made an amendment to the Pyrenees Planning Scheme to rezone the land from Public Use Zone to General Residential Zone and introduced a Heritage Overlay over land containing the Heritage building assets

In November 2022, the State Government via Martha Haylett MP (Member for Ripon) announced \$800,000 to develop a masterplan and early works for the conversion of the old Beaufort primary school site into a new community hub.

In late 2024, the Pyrenees Shire Council agreed to deliver this project on behalf of the State Government and, following a tender to appoint a suitable contractor in late 2024, this project has now commenced. All costs associated with this project are fully funded by the State Government.

The site parts associated with this project include land parcels 5 and 6 on the plan below, may include parts 1, 2 and 4 if considered appropriate and will align with the Council's Linear Project which includes parcel 3.



ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The project will define the future of the old Beaufort primary school. It will deliver a community-informed master plan for the site together with a fully-costed action plan identifying recommendations for early works to protect the site and prepare it for implementation of the master plan. The project focus is for the site to become a future vibrant and financially sustainable community hub for the Beaufort community.

The master plan will support the sourcing of future government funding to implement the master plan through evidencing community need and ability to create a financially sustainable management model for the future.

The project will be delivered in two stages:

- Stage 1 – to deliver a master plan and fully costed early works action plan, including commencement of some early works (delivery by November 2025), and
- Stage 2 – deliver the balance of early works identified in the action plan (delivery from 2025 to late 2027). Stage 2 will be delivered separately.

A project control group (PCG) has been convened, comprising of council officers and a community representative appointed by the Beaufort PS60 Group. The project control group reports to a State Government Department Steering Committee led by the Department of Families, Fairness & Housing, and comprising of representatives from:

- Community Inclusion, Veterans and Youth, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (Chair)
- Director, Community Inclusion, Carers and Volunteers, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (alternate Chair)

- Pyrenees Shire Council
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
- Victorian School Building Authority, Department of Education
- Sector Investment, Local Government Victoria
- Regional Development Victoria

The project is governed by a range of milestones included within the project plan and key performance indicators include adherence to approved timelines and budget.

The Consultant

Following a tender process in late 2024, the consultant (Public Realm Lab [Public Realm Lab](#)) was appointed to undertake the necessary research and engagement to deliver the project outcomes of stage 1, with stage 2 planned to commence later in 2025.

A good range of seven tenders submitted for the contract and Public Realm Lab was chosen because of their vision for the project, the similarities with previous projects delivered in rural and regional areas, and their value for money offering. Previous relevant experience includes:

DEMONSTRATED EXPERIENCE							
PROJECTS - PAST AND CURRENT ↴		DEMONSTRATES ↴					
		STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	MASTER PLAN	COMMUNITY FACILITIES	SECURED FUNDING	HERITAGE REVITALISATION	LOCAL GOVERNMENT CLIENT
	Rutherglen Place Plan & Rutherglen Heritage Rail Community Precinct Indigo Shire Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Powerhouse Place Community and Tourism Precinct Mildura Rural City Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Woodend Cycling and Community Hub Macedon Ranges Shire Council	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Meeniyah Community Hub and Public Toilets South Gippsland Shire Council	✓		✓	✓		✓
	Beechworth Rail Trail Community Precinct Indigo Shire Council	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	Monash Campus Master Plan Monash University	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	Salt Water Innovation and Science Hub (SWISH) Maribyrnong City Council	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	Seddon Neighbourhood Plan Maribyrnong City Council	✓	✓	✓			✓
	Colac Civic, Rail and Health Precinct Colac Otway Shire Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Agilent Campus Master Plan Agilent Technologies	✓	✓	✓			
	MDAS Master Plan Mallee District aboriginal services	✓	✓	✓			

Project deliverables

The following are key deliverables of the project Stage 1:

1. Strategic Direction via a Master Plan – for the future development and use of the site considering community and social needs, facilities, landscape, and environment – understanding the options, the implications of each option, the risks and what other projects might be doing.
2. Recommendations for infrastructure – for the preservation of the heritage listed and other infrastructure and their potential use as community use and managed facilities.
3. Early works scope requirements – provision of guidance on early works needed to preserve heritage assets, remove/decommission unwanted assets, improve site safety, and prepare the site for future uses as determined by the master plan options.
4. Operational and governance methods – options for community group management / occupancy of buildings intended for future community use, so that they continue to be a sustainable and valuable community asset.

All deliverables and the final report for Stage 1 are scheduled to be delivered by 30 November 2025.

Risks and challenges

A risk management plan for the project is under development but some challenges have been identified and will be managed:

- Community engagement – ensuring the community views are sought as widely as possible on future uses and that their expectations are carefully managed.
- Traditional Owner visions – separate Native title Claims by two separate traditional Owner Groups and managing their vision for the future site.
- Hazardous materials – potential for asbestos or other contaminants with regard to preservation works and/or building removal.
- Development capacity and approvals – appropriate permit approvals and measuring of utility capacity for development.
- Ongoing viability – ensuring future management, maintenance, financial sustainability and governance of the community-use components of the site.

Engagement commencement

Meetings between council officers and consultant representatives have been held to determine the methodology around the community engagement which commenced in March.

Engagement is an integral part of this project and is planned to include surveys and drop-in sessions aimed at all residents, targeted engagement with identified key local stakeholders including those who might be interested in future tenancies or involvement, and with internal Councillors and officers – many of whom live within the local area. Engagement commenced on 5 March with an interview with Cr Ferrari as Ward Councillor, who gave an overview of the Beaufort community's vision for the site. Once the initial engagement period is well advanced, the contractor will provide a briefing on the project and engagement findings to the Council.

Further engagement will be conducted once master plan drafting has commenced to seek feedback.

Project progress

Project methodology and governance arrangements are in place with regular communications being held between members of the steering committee, project control group and consultants. Council project supervision is being led by Kathy Bramwell supported by experts within the PCG.

Access currently must be supervised, and the site was inspected in March by council officers and the consultant, along with a heritage advisor. It was identified that the site needs greater protection than is currently present, to prevent further damage through vandalism, and this is being investigated.

The project will involve local research and consider existing community places available and their use, and how the site could become a sustainable proposition for the future – potentially through inclusion of residential or permissible commercial activities.

Post this project, there is a likely need for further funding beyond the \$800,000 committed by the Victorian government and in Martha Haylett's announcement of the election promise she acknowledged this. The BPS60 Group had a total estimate of approximately \$3.5 million, but the actual need will be determined through the master plan process.

Progress reports will be provided to Council throughout the duration of the project.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

- 1b. Support a vibrant community arts, culture and heritage environment.
- 1d. Promote health, wellbeing, engagement and connection.

Priority 2 - Place

- 2b. Enhance the liveability and resilience of our communities.

Priority 4 - Economy

- 4c. Encourage and invest in assets and infrastructure for commerce and community.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Community engagement will form a large part of this project and the outcomes will be based upon information gained. Engagement started in March and will continue over the next couple of months through surveys, face-to-face sessions, and targeted engagement with key stakeholders. An engagement summary report forms part of the formal deliverables of this project.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Effort continues to ensure that the Council faces no financial risks associated with this project. Council is delivering the project on behalf of the State Government, and it is fully-funded through an \$800,000 State Government election promise. Council has indicated, and the consultant is fully aware, that the Council has no wish to form part of the future management of the site once master planning and plan implementation is complete.

CONCLUSION

Council has committed to delivering a project, on behalf of the State Government, to develop a master plan and identify early works recommendations, for the old Beaufort primary school site in Hill Street. The project has commenced, and the appointed consultant has started community engagement. Progress reports will be provided to the Council during the project duration, which is due to end in November 2025.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. receives the project progress report as provided in this report,
2. re-affirms the intent of the Council resolution of 2020 that the community, or another entity, not the Pyrenees Shire Council, be enabled to manage the development of the site into the future, and
3. requires council officers to provide a further report to Council on the matter once a draft Master plan has been prepared, or earlier if required.

11.4. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

11.4.1. RECONCILIATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE - ANNUAL REPORT

Presenter: Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 16/19/04

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on Reconciliation and Council's Reconciliation Advisory Committee (RAC).

BACKGROUND

Plan Victoria

The Victorian government's Plan for Victoria which was released in March 2025 includes Self Determination and Caring for Country as one of the five Pillars of the Plan. A copy of the plan can be accessed here:

[Final-Plan-for-Victoria-For-Web.pdf](#)

VALGS

The Victorian and Aboriginal Local Government Strategy (VALGS) sets out recommendations by the Victorian Government for Local government with the view to advancing Aboriginal self-determination. A copy of the VALGS can be accessed here:

https://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0029/183935/Victorian-Aboriginal-and-Local-Government-Strategy

The following report is provided in the context of this strategic direction.

Pyrenees Shire Council Reconciliation Action Plan

Pyrenees Shire Council endorsed the 2021-2024 Reconciliation Plan in February 2019, following adoption of the plan, a Reconciliation Advisory Committee was formed.

The purpose of the Reconciliation Advisory Committee is to support the successful implementation of Pyrenees Shire Council's Reconciliation Plan and in doing so, work towards realising Pyrenees Shire Council's Reconciliation Vision.

Pyrenees Shire Council's Reconciliation Plan states the following vision of reconciliation for the Council:

Council is committed to reconciliation and aspires to be a leader within the broader community to advance reconciliation locally with other stakeholders. Council's vision for reconciliation involves the following enduring commitments:

- A holistic, whole of organisation approach that engages all staff in reconciliation including increasing knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.
- Strong healthy relationships between Council and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents and Traditional Owners that support continual dialogue to inform decision making.
- Taking a leadership role, to drive the identification and implementation of reconciliation issues and actions across our municipality. To build engaged and inclusive communities that embrace diversity and ensure First Nations community members thrive.
- The implementation of relevant and quality actions based on evidence, involving the evaluation of effectiveness and accountability to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
- Increasing the cultural inclusion and subsequent participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents in Council functions, programs, events and services.

Membership on the Reconciliation Advisory Committee is as follows:

- The CEO
- Manager Community Wellbeing and Partnerships
- Manager People and Culture
- Staff from units responsible for a significant number of actions or whose actions are complex and will benefit from cross directorate support.
- Representatives from the municipality's Traditional Owners.
- Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander community members who are supportive of the Council's Reconciliation Plan and can provide advice on organisational reconciliation.
- Representatives from relevant organisations within the municipality that are supportive of the Council's Reconciliation Plan and can provide advice on organisational reconciliation
- Representatives of the community who have experience in being actively involved in this space, or looking to be more involved in positive community change.

A Reconciliation Action Committee is established and meets approximately twice yearly as part of the implementation of the Plan.

There are several pieces of legislation in place relevant to Traditional Owners including:

- Native Title Act 1993
- Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010
- Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

Path to Self-Determination

In respect of the Traditional Owners with a presence within the Pyrenees Shire, these are on a journey towards self-determination as set out on P47-51 of The Plan for Victoria (referenced above) and the following matters are of relevance to Council:

- Dja Dja Wurrung - a Recognition and Settlement Agreement (RSA) with the State of Victoria is in place along with a Land Use Activity Agreement both of which outline responsibilities and expectations of local government. The LUAA can be found here: <https://www.firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au/dja-dja-wurrung-land-use-activity-agreement>
- Wadawurrung – A native title claim is with the Federal Court. Pyrenees Shire Council is one of the Respondents to the claim. While Orders have been issued, the matter will take some time to resolve.
- Barengi Gadjin Land Council (representing the Wotjobaluk TO) - a Recognition and Settlement Agreement (RSA) with the State of Victoria is in place which outlines expectations for local government.
- Eastern Maar – there are currently boundary matters to be resolved with Wadawurrung over an area in the south east of the Pyrenees Shire, and native title claim exists on parts of crown land within Pyrenees. An RSA is currently in development.

RSA's are accessible here: <https://www.firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au/recognition-and-settlement-agreements>

Action by the Victorian government in recent years to advance self-determination involves voice, truth and treaty:

Voice – The First People’s Assembly has been established

Truth – The Yoorrook Justice Commission has been established to oversee hearings of truth, and two reports have so far been released.

Treaty – A Treaty Authority has been established to oversee treaty negotiations.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The Reconciliation Action Committee comprises of 14 external members and 7 internal staff members. One meeting of the RAC was held in 2024.

Due to the Council Elections, a second meeting of the RAC was not held in 2024. A letter was sent to members of the committee providing an update on the Council Elections.

While some progress has been made to implement the Reconciliation Plan as outlined in the attached progress report, there is still more work to be done.

A further meeting of the RAC is proposed to be held mid 2025.

The plan is scheduled for review, and Council direction is sought before undertaking the review in the context of the new Council Plan.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

1d. Promote health, wellbeing, engagement and connection.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2023.08 - PSC Reconciliation Plan 2021-2024 - Progress Report August 2023 [**11.4.1.1** - 12 pages]

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Notes the information contained within this report, and the strategic direction provided by the Victorian government relating to Aboriginal Self-Determination and Caring for Country
2. Commits to continue the journey of reconciliation with Aboriginal people and the Traditional Owners within the Pyrenees Shire
3. Undertakes a review of the Reconciliation Action Plan 2021-24 in consultation with the Reconciliation Action Committee
4. Provides for up to \$5,000 in the 2025/26 budget towards implementation of reconciliation actions

11.4.2. ALGA'S 2025 FEDERAL ELECTION FUNDING PRIORITIES

Presenter: Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 44/04/02

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek council's support for the Australian Local Government Association's (ALGA's) 2025 federal election priorities and ALGA's national 'Put Our Communities First' advocacy campaign.

BACKGROUND

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) is the national voice of local government, representing 537 councils across the country. In structure, we are a federation of state and territory local government associations.

ALGA was founded in 1947 and, in 1976, established a secretariat in Canberra reflecting growing links with the Australian Government and an awareness of local government's emerging national role.

ALGA provides a range of services to their member associations and, through them, local councils throughout Australia. These include:

- Representing local government on national bodies and ministerial councils, including representation by our president on the National Federation Reform Council
- Policy development to provide a local government perspective on national affairs, as well as providing submissions to government and parliamentary inquiries
- Raising the profile and concerns of local government at the national level by lobbying the Australian Government and Parliament on specific issues and running campaigns to secure agreed policy objectives
- Providing information on national issues, policies and trends affecting local government, and
- Providing forums for local government to guide the development of national local government policies.

The next Federal Election must be held by 17 May 2025.

Working in conjunction with its member state and territory associations, the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) has developed a framework and resources for a national advocacy campaign that will run in the lead up to this election.

Based around the tagline of "Put Our Communities First", the goal is to secure additional federal funding that will support every council to play a bigger role delivering local solutions to national priorities.

All Australian councils have been asked to participate in this campaign to ensure a coordinated approach that will deliver the best possible outcomes.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The Put Our Communities First campaign will advocate for new federal funding to be distributed to all councils on a formula-basis, similar to the Commonwealth's Roads to Recovery Program, or the previous Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program.

This will ensure that every council and community benefits and support local decision making based on local needs.

ALGA has developed free campaign resources that can be adapted and used by all councils to ensure a consistent and effective approach.

Participating in a national advocacy campaign does not preclude this council from advocating on additional local needs and issues, but it will strengthen the national campaign and support all 537 Australian local governments.

The five national funding priorities have been determined by the ALGA Board – comprised of representatives from each of Australia’s state and territory local government associations – and align with key national priorities.

These five funding priorities are:

- \$1.1 billion per year for enabling infrastructure to unlock housing supply
- \$500 million per year for community infrastructure
- \$600 million per year for safer local roads
- \$900 million per year for increased local government emergency management capability and capacity, and
- \$400 million per year for climate change adaptation.

Further information on each of these priorities is listed below.

Housing enabling infrastructure

A lack of funding for enabling infrastructure – including roads, and water and sewerage treatment connections and facilities – is a significant barrier to increasing housing supply across the country.

Research from [Equity Economics](#) found that 40 per cent of local governments have cut back on new infrastructure developments because of inadequate enabling infrastructure funding.

This research also shows that achieving the National Housing Accord’s housing targets would incur an additional \$5.7 billion funding shortfall on top of infrastructure funding gaps already being felt by councils and their communities.

A five year, \$1.1 billion per annum program would fund the infrastructure that is essential to new housing developments, and Australia reaching its housing targets.

Community Infrastructure

ALGA’s [2024 National State of the Assets report](#) indicates that \$8.3 billion worth of local government buildings and \$2.9 billion worth of parks and recreation facilities are in poor condition and need attention.

Introduced in 2020, the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program supported all councils to build, maintain and upgrade local facilities, with \$3.25 billion allocated on a formula basis.

This program had a significant impact, driving an almost \$1 billion improvement in the condition of local government buildings and facilities; and a \$500 million per year replacement fund would support all councils to build, upgrade and revitalise the community infrastructure all Australians rely on.

Safer Roads

Councils manage more than 75% of Australia’s roads by length, and tragically more than half of all fatal road crashes in Australia occur on these roads.

In 2023 the Australian Government announced that it would double Roads to Recovery funding over the forward estimates, providing councils with an additional \$500 million per year.

However, recent independent research by the [Grattan Institute](#) highlighted a \$1 billion local government road maintenance funding shortfall, meaning there is still a significant funding gap.

Providing local government with \$600 million per year tied to road safety programs and infrastructure upgrades would support all councils to play a more effective role addressing Australia's unacceptable road toll.

Climate adaptation

Local governments are at the forefront of grappling with climate impacts as both asset managers and land use decision makers.

However, funding and support from other levels of government has failed to keep pace, placing an inequitable burden on councils and communities to fund this work locally.

A \$400 million per year local government climate adaptation fund would enable all councils to implement place-based approaches to adaptation, delivering local solutions to this national challenge.

Emergency management

Fires, floods and cyclones currently cost Australia [\\$38 billion per year, and this is predicted to rise to \\$73 billion by 2060](#).

Australian councils play a key role preparing for, responding to and recovering from natural disasters, but aren't effectively funded to carry out these duties.

The Government's \$200 million per year Disaster Ready Fund is significantly oversubscribed, especially considering the scale and cost of disaster mitigation projects.

Numerous national reviews – including the [Colvin Review](#) and [Royal Commission into Natural Disaster Arrangements](#) – have identified the need for a significant uplift in local government emergency management capability and capacity.

A \$900 million per year fund would support all councils to better prepare their communities before natural disasters, and more effectively carry out the emergency management responsibilities that have been delegated to them.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

1a. Prepare for emergencies and ensure community safety.

Priority 2 - Place

2b. Enhance the liveability and resilience of our communities.

Priority 3 - Environment

3b. Foster a climate change resilient community.

Priority 4 - Economy

4b. Invest in road infrastructure to improve connectivity for commerce and community.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Supports the national federal election funding priorities identified by the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA); and
2. Supports and participates in the Put Our Communities First federal election campaign; and
3. Writes to the local federal member(s) of Parliament, all known election candidates in local federal electorates and the President of the Australian Local Government Association expressing support for ALGA's federal election funding priorities.

11.4.3. VICTORIAN GOLDFIELDS WORLD HERITAGE LISTING

Presenter: Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 62/12/10

PURPOSE

This report provides an update on the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid.

BACKGROUND

The Central Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid is a collaborative project involving the fifteen local government areas that comprise the 1850's Victorian goldrush area. The project has been evolving for many years and is being led by City of Ballarat, Greater City of Bendigo and the Victorian Goldfields Tourism Executive.

The intention of the project is to seek a UNESCO World Heritage listing of the Central Victorian Goldfields region to generate a transformative impact on tourism, jobs, public and private investment.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

For the first time ever, the Australian Government has officially given the green light for the Victorian Goldfields to seek World Heritage Listing. This marks a historic milestone after 35 years of continued advocacy. The addition of the Victorian Goldfields to UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List signifies a major step forward in the group's efforts to achieve UNESCO recognition.

After 12-months on the Tentative List, a formal nomination can be submitted to UNESCO.

The journey to World Heritage Listing for the Victorian Goldfields is a collaborative effort. Fifteen councils across Victoria, Traditional Owners, the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments, and local and international experts are working together on the bid.

Tentative Listing recognises Victorian Goldfields' outstanding global heritage significance and seeks to celebrate and protect the region's multi-layered history – from the First Peoples living on Country to the goldrush and subsequent waves of immigration.

Achieving UNESCO World Heritage status will bring extensive benefits to the region's local communities. A 2024 economic assessment found that the listing could see 2.5 million new visitors to the Victorian Goldfields Region over 10 years, with an estimated visitor spending increase into local economies of over \$500 million.

Now is the time to get involved and get behind this important moment, ensuring the rich heritage of the Victorian Goldfields is recognised on a global stage, conserving it for future generations to appreciate and enjoy

A copy of the media release relating to the milestone is attached to this report along with an FAQ for the project.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

1b. Support a vibrant community arts, culture and heritage environment.

Priority 2 - Place

2a. Sustain and enhance unique character of our communities.

Priority 4 - Economy

4a. Support our local businesses and help to strengthen key industries.

ATTACHMENTS

1. victorian-goldfields-faq-world-heritage-tentative-list [11.4.3.1 - 4 pages]
2. Media- Release- Victorian- Goldfields- Given- Green- Light-to-go-for- World- Heritage- Listing-final [11.4.3.2 - 3 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Financial contributions to the Goldfields World Heritage Project have been included in the 2024/25 and 2025/26 budgets.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Acknowledges the positive step forward in securing the Australian government support to seek World Heritage Listing for the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage
2. Continues to support and advocate for the project where appropriate noting the anticipated significant economic benefits to the region if the bid is successful

11.4.4. TOURISM MIDWEST VICTORIA

Presenter: Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 62/10/04

PURPOSE

Is to inform the Council about ongoing participation with Tourism Midwest Victoria, the Destination Management Plan and Local Area Action Plan, and to seek updates on the implementation of the plans.

BACKGROUND

Council became a member of Tourism Midwest Victoria upon its inception eighteen months ago.

The incorporated Visitor Economy Partnership encompasses the City of Ballarat, Moorabool Shire, Golden Plains Shire, Hepburn Shire and Pyrenees Shire Councils.

Councillors recently received an update on TMV activities by the chair, Hon. John Pandazopoulos.

Previously Council have received updates about the development of two strategic documents which it has endorsed being:

1. A region wide Destination Management Plan (DMP) and
2. Local Area Action Plan (LAAP) specific to individual local government areas and in this case the Pyrenees Shire LAAP

The development of these documents has been made possible by funding from the Victorian Government as a component of the Statewide review of Regional Tourism Boards and the establishment of Visitor Economy Partnerships. While these plans have included in kind contributions in terms of officer time, Council has not had to contribute funds to the development of these documents.

The purpose of the DMP is to set the strategic direction for the TMV region while the LAAP is a subset of the DMP which is specific to the Pyrenees Shire. Each council partner will have their own individual LAAP specific to their local government area.

The Pyrenees LAAP superseded the 2016 – 2019 Tourism Strategy.

The methodology of developing the DMP and LAAP's included:

- A survey across each of the five local government areas
- Detailed analysis of tourism data incorporating an understanding of visitor demographics
- A synopsis of related tourism plans at a state and regional level
- An examination of the visitor profiles of people coming to the region
- Analysis of expenditure data, visitor numbers, trends and forecasts to understand priority markets
- Workshops with tourism operators within each LGA
- One on one consultation with tourism operators
- Consultation with Pyrenees Grapegrowers and Winemakers Association
- Consultation throughout the strategic process with a working group comprising local government tourism staff from across the TMV region and State Government representatives.

- Consultation with the TMV board which comprises five industry representatives elected to the board and the CEO (or delegate) from each of the local government partners.
- Three council briefings

The DMP and LAAP's have a ten-year timeframe from 2024 to 2033.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Copies of the draft DMP and Pyrenees LAAP are attached to this report.

The DMP provides a framework to support the ongoing development and growth of the entire Midwest region while the Pyrenees LAAP relates specifically to the Pyrenees Shire. These strategies are aimed at ensuring the regions visitor economy continues to be sustainable and appealing to locals and visitors alike. It does this by:

- Supporting the development of a collaborative environment between the wider community and industry, and one that supports businesses to flourish.
- Offering a partnership approach with First Peoples that encourages a better understanding of needs and values, while supporting the development of a collaborative environment between First Peoples, the wider community and industry.
- Leveraging the existing strengths of the region including natural, built experiences and its people, to leverage the recovery of the visitor economy.
- Identifying and supporting the development of new and enhancement of existing experiences and attractions.
- Encouraging operators to work collaboratively as a region to create a unique visitor experience.
- Seeking to improve the resilience, skills, and networking opportunities for the region's operators.
- Connecting the region with its neighbours and partners, working to leverage these connections for the mutual benefit of the community and visitors.
- Recognising the need for stronger regional positioning to offer a consistent set of values and themes to illustrate what the region stands for, and what the consumer can expect to get from it.

The Pyrenees LAAP identifies the development of the following tourism initiatives as priorities for the Pyrenees:

- Undertake a destination brand exercise
- Development of cycle experiences around Beaufort, Avoca and Moonambel
- Redevelopment of Beaufort Lake Caravan Park
- Boutique accommodation
- A centralised cellar door experience
- Streetscape enhancements in Avoca and Beaufort

The DMP and Pyrenees LAAP incorporate detailed action plans and proposed expenditure budgets.

Information on TMV activities including industry news, research and reports, data, marketing, and other information can be viewed at the TMV website here: [Home - Tourism Midwest Victoria](#)

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 4 - Economy

4a. Support our local businesses and help to strengthen key industries.

4c. Encourage and invest in assets and infrastructure for commerce and community.

Enabling Principles

- b. Provide transparency and accountability
- c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Pyrenees- Shire- LAA P-final [11.4.4.1 - 72 pages]
- 2. Tourism- Midwest- Victoria- SDMP [11.4.4.2 - 72 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Council has previously endorsed an annual financial commitment to TMV of \$40,000- comprising a \$30,000- membership and up to \$10,000- for collaborative buy in throughout the year.

The agreement Council has with TMV allows for annual CPI increases. This funding allocation is proposed to be included in Councils draft 2025/26 Budget.

The action plans within the DMP and LAAP identify a range of activities requiring further investment by the LGA partners and other stakeholders.

Any further investment sought of Council for TMV initiatives that are beyond the abovementioned thresholds will either be accommodated within approved annual budget allocations for Economic Development and Tourism or alternatively reported to Council for its approval.

CONCLUSION

The DMP and Pyrenees LAAP have been prepared following broad consultation with community, tourism operators, tourism and business associations, and local government partners.

The documents summarise the priority actions and directions which TMV will focus on over the ten- year lifespan of the strategies. The action plans within each of these strategies identify the means of achieving the strategic objectives to grow the tourism industry across each of the Local Government Areas.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Acknowledges the partnership with Tourism Midwest Victoria as an important means to grow the visitor economy
- 2. Seeks to ensure regular reporting on the implementation of the regional Destination Management Plan (DMP) and the Local Area Action Plan (LAAP)

12. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND GENERAL BUSINESS

13. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

CLOSURE OF MEETING TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

That, pursuant to the provisions of Section 4.1.1(c) of Council's Governance Rules, and Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2020, the meeting be closed to the public in order to consider confidential items.

RECOMMENDATION

That the meeting be closed to members of the public in accordance with Section 4.1.1(c) of Council's Governance Rules, and Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2020, in order to discuss the confidential reports listed below:

- 15.1 - Daly's Cottage
- 15.2 - CEO Employment

14. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Ordinary Meeting of Council closed at _____