



Rural City of
Wangaratta

Minutes

For the Scheduled Council Meeting
Council Chambers, Municipal Offices
62-68 Ovens Street, Wangaratta
6pm 25 February 2025

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1. Acknowledgement to Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands, on which the Rural City of Wangaratta communities reside. We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging, and celebrate and respect their continuing cultures. We are committed to walking beside all traditional owners as we move toward reconciliation.

2. Opening Prayer

Almighty God, we humbly ask thee to bless and guide this council in its deliberations so that we may truly preserve the welfare of the people whom we serve. Amen

3. Present

Councillors:

Irene Grant, David Fuller, Harry Bussell, Harvey Benton, Ashlee Fitzpatrick, Allison Winters, Tania Maxwell

Officers:

Brendan McGrath, Chief Executive Officer; Marcus Goonan, Director Community and Infrastructure; Sarah Brindley, Director Corporate and Leisure; Stephen Swart, Director Sustainability and Culture

Administration:

Executive Services Officer; Councillor and Executive Services Support Officer

4. Absent

5. Acceptance of Apologies & Granting of Leave of Absence

Order of Business

6. Citizen Ceremony

Nil

7. Confirmation of Minutes

Resolution:

(Moved: Councillor H Benton/Councillor A Fitzpatrick)

That Council read and confirm the Minutes of the Scheduled Meeting of 10 December 2024 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of the meeting.

Carried

8. Conflict of Interest Disclosure

In accordance with section 130 of the Local Government Act 2020 a councillor who has a conflict of interest in respect of a matter must disclose the conflict of interest in the manner required by Council's Governance Rules and exclude themselves from the decision making process in relation to that matter, including any discussion or vote on the matter and any action in relation to the matter.

Clause 28.1 of Council's Governance Rules requires a councillor to indicate that they have a conflict of interest by clearly stating:

- (a) the item for which they have a conflict of interest; and
- (b) whether their conflict of interest is general or material; and
- (c) the circumstances that give rise to the conflict of interest.

Immediately prior to the consideration of the item in which they have a conflict of interest, a councillor must indicate to the meeting the existence of the conflict of interest and leave the meeting.

A councillor who discloses a conflict of interest and leaves a Council meeting must not communicate with any participants in the meeting while the decision is being made.

9. Reception of Petitions

10. Hearing of Deputations

Presentation Of Reports

*For full transcript, please refer to the recording on the [Rural City of Wangaratta YouTube channel](#).
Time markers are noted in (minutes:seconds) format.*

11. Councillor Reports

Nil

Officers' Reports

12. Executive Services

Nil

Unconfirmed

13. Corporate and Leisure

13.1 Council Plan Actions and Indicators Quarter 2 (October - December 2024) (03:40)

Meeting Type:	Scheduled Council Meeting
Date of Meeting:	25 February 2025
Category:	Operational
Author:	Governance & Reporting Advisor
Approver:	Director Corporate and Leisure

No Council officers or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

Executive Summary

This report presents the 2024-25 Quarter 2 (October – December 2024) update for the Council Plan Strategic Indicators and Actions.

Resolution:

(Moved: Councillor A Fitzpatrick/Councillor H Benton)

That Council:

- Notes the Quarter 2 (2024-25) results for the Council Plan 2021-2025 Strategic Indicators and Actions as contained in the attached reports.

Carried

Background

Council Plan Actions

185 Council Plan Actions are to be completed during the 2024-25 financial year (**Attachment 1**). As this is the final year of the current Council Plan 2021-25, more emphasis will be placed on those items not reported as Completed or On Track.

As at the end of Quarter 2: 15 actions were recorded as complete; 165 actions as on track; and 4 actions as on hold, pending, off track or cancelled (see table below).

The items reported as on hold, pending or off track include the below (please refer to specific commentary in **Attachment 2**):

Action	Update
1.3.1.2 Advocate for the community by participating on the Regional Mental Health and Wellbeing Boards	Council was advocating for membership on the Regional Mental Health and Wellbeing Boards but these Boards are managed by the State Government and no longer exist.
2.2.4.4 Finalise the Municipal Early Years Plan.	The Municipal Early Years Plan is in development with the new completion date December 2025.
5.1.3.4 Develop a Traffic Management Plan to improve vehicle traffic flow throughout the central business district, including both short-term and long-term solutions.	A full review of previous work undertaken is to be completed. There are limited options with poor ROI. Council is proposing a town bypass as a long-term solution.
5.4.1.1 Expand the provision of street lighting throughout key pedestrian and cyclist routes.	An audit is currently being undertaken for our current street lighting infrastructure. This will help build a 5-year renewal program and also help identify locations with little to no lighting to be addressed.

Strategic Indicators

There are also 12 Strategic Indicators that can be reported on a quarterly basis. As at the end of Quarter 2, 8 were reported as meeting or exceeding the year-to-date target (within 5%) (**Attachment 3**). Pleasingly, the number of indicators meeting/exceeding the year-to-date target has increased significantly from previous years (8 currently compared with 5 and 6 in 2023/24).

The 4 Strategic Indicators not within 5% of the quarterly target were:

5.0.7 Active library borrowers within the municipality (YTD 5.96% - Target 14%) (note that this is no longer an official Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) measure)

- *This is a cumulative figure and won't be final until June 2025. Expect to get close to the target by the end of the financial year.*

6.0.1 Annual number of building permits issued for new dwellings (YTD 36 – Target 75)

Commentary received

- *This is subject to wider building activity and available staff resources.*

6.0.3 Planning applications made within required timeframes (Actual YTD 64.33% - Target 82%)

- *This is subject to the efficiency of both Council and the applicant. The number has improved from quarter 1 and further improvement expected in quarter 3.*

6.0.4 Planning application processing days (Actual YTD 72.67 – Target 55)

- *This is subject to the efficiency of both Council and the applicant. Improving on this remains a focus. Some improvement seen compared to quarter 1.*

Implications

Policy Considerations

There are no specific Council policies or strategies that relate to this report.

Financial/Economic Implications

There are no financial or economic implications identified for the subject of this report. Funding to deliver the actions in the Council Plan has been allocated via council's Annual Budget.

Legal/Statutory

The obligation to report on progress of delivery of the actions and priorities set out in the Council Plan actions is prescribed by the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Social and Diversity

The intended social benefits from delivering these actions are outlined in the Council Plan 2021-25.

Equity Impact Assessment (EIA)

There are no equity impacts identified for the subject of this report.

Environmental/Sustainability Impacts

The intended environmental/sustainability benefits from delivering these actions are also outlined in the Council Plan 2021-25.

Strategic Links**Council Plan 2021 – 2025**

This report supports the 2021-2025 Council Plan by providing an update on the organisation's progress in implementing its actions.

Risk Management

Council risks a reputational failure by failing to adequately monitor and deliver its key objectives. By the regular reporting of its Strategic Indicators and Actions, Council can ensure the appropriate level of monitoring and transparency occurs to mitigate this risk.

Risk Management Framework

Risks	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Failure to proactively monitor Council's progress against its Council Plan	2 – Unlikely	Moderate	5 – Medium	Schedule a standing bi-annual Council Meeting report.

Consultation/Communication

Council Plan actions are being progressively implemented by the appropriate officers across the organisation. The status of Council Plan actions and strategic indicators are reported to the executive management team and Audit & Risk Committee on a quarterly basis alongside other regular updates.

Officers believe that appropriate consultation has occurred and the matter is now ready for Council consideration.




Options for Consideration

There are no options for consideration.

Conclusion

The attached reports provide the community with an appropriate level of transparency on the progress of council's delivery against the actions and commitments set out in the Council Plan 2021-25.

Attachments

- 1 Completed and On Track Council Plan Actions 2024-25 - Quarter 2 
- 2 Off Track & Cancelled Council Plan Actions 2024-25 - Quarter 2 
- 3 Strategic Indicators 2024-25 - Quarter 2 

13.2 2024/2025 Quarter 2 Forecast Review (05:17)

Meeting Type:	Scheduled Council Meeting
Date of Meeting:	25 February 2025
Category:	Strategic
Author:	Management Reporting Coordinator
Approver:	Director Corporate and Leisure

No Council officers or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

Executive Summary

This report is presented to Council to provide an update of Council's financial performance and anticipated full year financial position based on developments over Quarter Two of this financial year.

Resolution:

(Moved: Councillor D Fuller/Councillor T Maxwell)

That Council approves the 2024/2025 Quarter 2 Forecast Review, including:

1. The increase in the projected full year accounting surplus from \$13.41m to \$14.80m.
2. The increase in capital works expenditure by \$450k to \$31.93m.
3. The Environmental Upgrade Agreement quarterly statement.

Carried

Background

Council has completed its second quarter financial reporting process to manage and monitor its financial performance against the 2024/25 Budget.

Council's 2024/25 Quarter 2 Forecast Report indicates increases to the forecast full year Accounting Surplus of \$1.39m and a decrease to the Adjusted Underlying Operating Result by \$142k. This is primarily driven by accounting recognition of unearned revenue relating to Capital Projects and the reduction of user fees at the Bowser Landfill.

Implications

Financial/Economic Implications Quarter 2 Forecast Review:

The Chief Executive Officer is of the opinion that a revised budget is not required, pursuant to Section 97(3) of the Local Government Act 2020.

Accounting surplus - Favourable Increase:

Council's forecasted Accounting Surplus increased by \$1.39m largely due to accounting recognition of unearned revenue adjustments relating to capital grants. These funds have been largely received however the timing of its recognition is tied to the completion of works delivery.

Council's capital works expenditure has increased from \$31.48m to \$31.93m, a net increase of \$450k. The increase can be largely attributed to expansion of the Flood Mitigation Strategy & Design program by \$367k.

Rural City of Wangaratta	FY24/25 Adopted Budget	FY24/25 Projected Full Year Forecast as at September	FY24/25 Projected Full Year Forecast as at Decemeber	Projected Full Yeat to Adopted Budget Variance
30th December 2024	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Income	96,267	95,900	97,195	1,295
Expenses	82,369	82,487	82,390	97
Accounting Surplus/Deficit	13,898	13,413	14,805	1,392
Add/(Less) Non-Operating Adjusted Underlying Result	10,940	13,143	14,677	(1,534)
	2,958	270	128	(142)
Capital Works Expenditure	29,931	31,483	31,933	(450)
Net Fav/(Unfav) Q2 Variance				(592)

The favourable increase in the accounting surplus is primarily due to positive movements in Capital Grants, Reimbursements, Employee Benefits, and Other Expenses. However, these gains are partially offset by unfavourable variances in Statutory Fees and Fines, as well as User Fees.

Statutory Fees and Fines, net decrease \$81k:

- Planning Permit revenue has decreased by \$100k because of fewer applications being submitted, driven by economic factors beyond the Council's control, such as the rising cost of living and higher development expenses.

User Fees, net decrease \$383k:

- Bowser landfill has seen reduced waste acceptance of \$300k due to cheaper alternatives at neighbouring councils, due to them benefiting from economies of scale and avoiding EPA levies, particularly in Albury. This reduction in waste intake will extend Bowser's lifespan by 7-8 years, delaying costly capital works.

Capital Grants, net increase \$1.49m:

- Increase due to recognition of unearned income from 24/25, Wangaratta Flood Mitigation Strategy and Design, \$677k.
- Increase due to recognition of unearned income from 24/25, Newman Street - Drainage Upgrade, \$213k.
- Increase due to recognition of unearned income from 24/25, Safe System Pedestrian Program, \$93k.
- New grant funding relating to Federal Blackspot Program, \$245k. This favourable variance is largely due to previously unexpected funding.

Reimbursements, net increase \$124k

- Rebate on Container Deposit Scheme from Cleanaway.

Employee Benefits, net decrease \$176k:

- Although there are some unfavourable trends in Employee Benefits totalling \$324k, a favourable impact of \$500K from unspent salaries due to vacancies has been recognised. A comprehensive review of the residual salaries forecast will take place in Q3 and it is anticipated further savings will be recognised.

Other Expenses, net decrease \$132k

- Related to the removal of a bad debts budget.

Refer to the Income Statement in the 2024/25 Quarter 2 Finance Report (Attachment 1) for full detail of the changes to Council's 2024/25 projected position.

Depreciation

Please note that the Year-to-Date and forecast depreciation figures are currently under review for Q3 to ensure accuracy.

Capital Works

Council's capital works expenditure has increased from \$31.48m to \$31.93m, a net increase of \$450k. The increase can be largely attributed to expansion of the Flood Mitigation Strategy & Design program by \$367k.

Year-to-date delivery of the Capital Works Program is \$6.3m, with a further \$11.1m of commitments in place. A full review of delivery status of 24/25 Capital Works is currently underway with the Capital Works to be deferred to 25/26 to be presented as part of Council's Quarter 3 forecast.

Balance Sheet

Council's working capital is in a strong position at 324% due to a high cash position from grant funding received in advance.

The second rates instalment was due in November and rates receivables continue to progress well with outstanding rates for the year of \$21.8m as of 31 December 2024.

Environmental Upgrade Agreements – Quarterly Statement

Environmental Upgrade Agreements provide funding for sustainability or climate adaptation building upgrades. Under these loans, a lender provides finance to the property owner for the upgrade and repayment of the loan is administered through Council rates.

Section 181G of the Local Government Act 1989 requires that Council prepares a quarterly statement in respect of Environmental Upgrade Agreements.

There are two active Environmental Upgrade Agreements in operation with a total value of \$57,048.33. Charges due this year total \$4,263.48 with quarterly instalments of \$1,065.87 payable.

Legal/Statutory

In accordance with section 94 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act), Council must prepare a budget for each financial year. Additionally, section 101 of the Act requires Council to apply principles of sound Financial Management. Section 97 of the Act requires the Chief Executive Officer, at least every three months, to prepare a statement comparing the budgeted financial performance with the actual performance to date and present this report to Council.

Section 181G of the Local Government Act 1989 requires that Council prepares a quarterly statement in respect of Environmental Upgrade Agreements.

Social

Social benefits of the delivery of Council services and projects are outlined in the 2024/25 Budget and in the Council Plan 2021-25.

Environmental/Sustainability Impacts

Council budgets for and delivers several projects that support its Environmental Sustainability Strategy. Refer to the Council Plan 2021-25 for further details.

Strategic Links

Council Plan 2021 – 2025

This report supports the 2021-2025 Council Plan through the following objectives and actions:

1. Strengthening our Leadership

Undertake regular and transparent reporting against Council's Adopted Budget.

Risk Management

Risk Management Framework

Risks	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Poor performance against budget	M	M	M	Regular monitoring and reporting of the budget position

Consultation/Communication

Consultation has been undertaken with Council Managers and the Corporate Management Team. Officers believe that appropriate consultation has occurred, and the matter is now ready for Council consideration.

Options for Consideration

1. That Council endorses the Quarter 2 Forecast Review report – recommended.
2. That Council advises of any changes to the Adopted Budget and proposes an alternative recommendation for changes to the 2024/25 Budget.
3. That Council endorses the Environmental Upgrade Agreement quarterly statement.

Conclusion

This report compares actual performance with Council's 2024/25 adopted Q1 Forecast, adopted by Council on 10 December 2024. Council's Quarter 2 Forecast Review continues to be based on the best estimates of the Organisation as to its financial outlook.

Attachments

- 1 2024/25 Q2 Finance Report 

14. Community and Infrastructure

14.1 Rural City of Wangaratta Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2023-27 (07:30)

Meeting Type:	Scheduled Council Meeting
Date of Meeting:	25 February 2025
Category:	Strategic
Author:	Waste Management Coordinator
Approver:	Director Community and Infrastructure

No Council officers or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

Executive Summary

This report presents the Rural City of Wangaratta Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2023-27 (The Strategy) for adoption.

The Strategy has been developed in response to the rapidly changing waste management environment, and the legislative and policy framework changes. The Strategy will set the direction for the development and delivery of waste management and resource recovery services by the Rural City of Wangaratta up to 2027.

Resolution:

(Moved: Councillor D Fuller/Councillor T Maxwell)

That Council:

1. Adopts the Rural City of Wangaratta Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2023-27.

Carried

Background

The Strategy has been developed in response to the rapidly changing waste management environment, and the legislative and policy framework changes that have been implemented in to support best practice in the face of these changes.

The Waste and Resource Recovery sector in Victoria is one of the most regulated and legislated in Australia. Council is subject to the requirements of the Environmental Protection Act 2017, the Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021, the Recycling Victoria Policy (2020) in addition to the Planning and Environment Act (1987) and the Local Government Act (2020). From the Federal Government, Council is required to consider the National Waste Policy (2018) and the subsequent National Waste Policy Action Plans (2019&2020).

With recent changes to State and Federal government policies increasing the focus in the circular economy, increasing resources recovery for highest value use as close to the waste generation locations as possible. This “once in a generation” industry wide shift in approach to waste management provided the opportunity to review infrastructure and service delivery models in order to ensure compliance and best service for the community.

The Rural City of Wangaratta (Council) is responsible for delivering waste and recycling services the residential and public places it manages. Commercial services are also offered to those businesses that are best serviced by a regular kerbside collection. Additionally, Council also own and operate the Bower Landfill, the Wangaratta Organics Facility and publicly accessible transfer stations across the municipality. The Strategy can only consider those parts of the waste and resource recovery management cycle that it has direct influence over.

The Strategy is only looking to 2027. It is anticipated that this will bring it into alignment with future State Government requirements for the development of updated Local Government Strategies and Plans once the State Level Documents have been completed. Most of the actions from the current strategy have been completed, and with significant changes in the industry over the past couple of years a new direction was required.

Implications

Policy Considerations

The Strategy will update the current Waste Management Strategy 2018-23. The Strategy will provide more appropriate actions and guidance on delivery of infrastructure and services considering changes to the industry.

Financial/Economic Implications

There are no financial or economic implications identified for the subject of this report. Actions resulting from the Strategy will be costed through the long term financial plan, ongoing operations or costed into service delivery charges. These will be presented to Council through the life of the Strategy.

Legal/Statutory

The Strategy has been developed in response to the Environmental Protection Act 2017, the Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021, the Recycling Victoria Policy (2020) in addition to the Planning and Environment Act (1987) and the Local Government Act (2020).

Social and Diversity

The Strategy works alongside the Waste Services Policy, which also considers how services are provided to allow equitable access and delivery of services.

Equity Impact Assessment (EIA)

EIA's will be undertaken for any major operational changes or infrastructure project upgrades.

Environmental/Sustainability Impacts

The Strategy works to fulfil the requirements of the previously mentioned legislation, and supporting regulations, that all provide frameworks to improve environmental and sustainability outcomes. Improving resource recovery reduces the requirement for raw materials extraction, reduces greenhouse gas emissions and decreases the need for landfilling.

Strategic Links

Council Plan 2021 – 2025

This report supports the 2021-2025 Council Plan through the following objectives and actions:

3. Valuing our Environment

- 3.2 Reduce waste and enhance resource recovery
- 3.2.1.1 Develop the new Waste Strategy in consultation with the community.
- 3.2.1.2 Ensure service delivery is in accordance with the Recycle Victoria Policy
- 3.2.1.3 Ensure services and facilities are operated in compliance with the updated Environmental Protection Act.
- 3.2.1.4 Explore feasibility of commercial options to divert materials from waste and recycling streams.
- 3.2.1.5 Introduce a third glass-only bin into the community. Provide educational resources to households to ensure a successful uptake.

Rural City of Wangaratta 2033 Community Vision

This report supports the 2033 Community Vision through the following objectives:

Environment – Reduce Waste and Enhance Resource Recovery

- M1 Service our community by managing our waste and recycling streams
- M2 Strengthen positive behaviours throughout the community to minimise the negative impact of waste
- M3 Reduce waste and waste generation from Council Operations
- M4 Establish our community as leaders in the organics waste processing and associated resource recovery

Risk Management

Under the Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021, Councils as providers of waste and recycling or resource recovery services will have certain positive obligations including:

To provide certain services including a municipal residual waste service, recycling service including for glass, food and garden organics To comply with pre-sorting and separating of waste or recycling material (the detail of what requirements will apply will be specified in regulations yet to be made)

Council, as providers of a waste, recycling or resource recovery services:

Have a duty to give Recycling Victoria prescribed information, Any agreement entered into in connection with the provision of their services must incorporate the service standard that applies, As providers of essential waste, recycling or resource recovery services, a requirement to

minimise the risk of serious failure disruption or hindrance of services so far as reasonably practicable, Duties to keep records and information about the service provided, so far as reasonably practicable, and Duties to comply with service standards. Notably, failure to comply with any of the above obligations will be an offence, punishable by civil and criminal penalties of up to \$454,350 for Council.

However, the Act provides “checks and balances” in the form of review mechanisms applying to the numerous powers which Recycling Victoria will be able to exercise. For example, use of the exemption powers and the issuance of information gathering notices, improvement notices and prohibition notices will be reviewable at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal. Risk Management Framework

Risks	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Non compliance with legislation and regulations	2 – Unlikely	3 - Moderate	5 - Medium	Ensuring internal processes are followed, appropriate training undertaken and Staff have oversight of new regulations are they are created.

Consultation/Communication

This Strategy has been developed following an extensive community consultation. Between February and April 2023 Council received more than 270 responses from members of the community. This engagement primarily took the form of a survey and investigated the community’s use and value of Rural City of Wangaratta waste and resource recovery facilities and services, and what the community would like to see from future works in this space.

Following Council endorsement of the draft strategy it was placed on public exhibition between November & December 2023, receiving only a limited response Council Officers proceeded to further engage directly with representatives of the following community groups, organisations and internal RCoW departments:

- Wangaratta Urban Landcare Group.
- Sustainability Steering Group.
- Greta Landcare Group.
- Boomerang Bags
- Gateway Health
- Waste Department

In considering the further feedback received several minor changes to what was previously presented to Council in September 2023 were made including:

- Reference to existing 'Council Plan 2021 – 2025' objectives relating to waste mitigation & resource recovery.
- Reference to existing Council 'Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021 – 2026' objectives relating to waste related emission reduction.
- Further detail of Victoria's circular economy goals.
- An additional action to review the existing Council branding and slogan ('recycle right') in relation to waste mitigation & resource recovery.
- Summary Findings of the 2023 Community Waste Survey.

Level of public participation	Promises to the public/stakeholders	Tools/Techniques
Inform	An extensive comms campaign was undertaken during the the consultation period.	Websites, social media and newspapers.
Consult	Between February and April 2023 Council received more than 270 responses from members of the community	Survey
Involve	Stakeholder groups were directly consulted/engaged	One on one meetings with stakeholders
Collaborate	Feedback was integrated into final draft documents and then placed on exhibition	
Empower	The final Strategy will be considered by Council in February 2025.	Council meeting to consider adoption of the strategy.

Officers believe that appropriate consultation has occurred and the matter is now ready for Council consideration.

Options for Consideration

Option 1: Recommended

Adopts the Rural City of Wangaratta Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2023-27

Option 2: Not Recommended

Council could decide not to adopt a Waste Management Strategy and complete further community engagement.

Conclusion

The Strategy has been updated to reflect sector best practice and the provisions of the Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021. The Draft Policy is ready to be adopted by Council.

Attachments

- 1 RCOW Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2023-2027 

Public Questions

Luke Davies (08:41)

**Regarding the Council Organics Processing Facility
The “Waste & Resource Recovery Strategy” mentions that**

“Output from the facility has been limited....”

Question 1 – Why is this so, what is the problem with the quality of the compost being produced?

Director Marcus Goonan responded: The main reason for the limited output is that a large portion of the compost has been used for internal projects, which helps save money for ratepayers. As we increase our input the outputs will grow. There are no quality issues with the compost; in fact, improvements are being made to produce an even higher-grade product suitable for commercial farming. Meeting the compliance requirements to sell the compost in external markets does take time. With the new equipment, we can maintain a higher-quality product and remove more microplastics.

Question 2 – Can this compost be made available to residents of Wangaratta for use in our gardens?

Director Marcus Goonan responded: As outlined in the strategy, Council officers are focusing on finding suitable markets for the compost, particularly commercial markets. Currently, there is no infrastructure on-site to allow public collection of the compost.

Mary-Ann Sargent (10:22)

**The Waste & Resource Recovery Strategy states -
“Council officers will develop an education plan” acknowledging “education plays a pivotal role in improving waste and recycling outcomes”**

Question 1 – Will council employ a dedicated waste and recycling education officer?

Director Marcus Goonan responded: Council are currently in the process of advertising for a full-time Waste Project Officer. This role will have a focus on waste education, along with other project responsibilities within the waste management field.

Question 2 – Who will be conducting the outreach education efforts required to improve recycling outcomes?

Director Marcus Goonan responded: The outreach efforts will be a collaborative effort across the waste team. However, the primary responsibility for education will lie with the Waste Projects Officer.

Cassandra (11:22)

Re: Possibility of a future tip shop

Question 1 – Are there planning discussions happening now for how to install a tip shop at the transfer station?

Question 2 – The document mentions the future materials recovery facility – is this a reference to a future tip shop?

*Director Marcus Goonan responded: As part of the materials recovery process, in particular when our land fill is full, we will need to cart all our materials from Wangaratta to another location, so that actually means that we will need to put in additional sorting facilities at the Wangaratta landfill, so that's the reference for that. At that point in time, they would have to be having a conversation about what does the community want to see within that facility.
The idea of having a tip shop at the current site is not being supported by the Policy.*

14.2 Community Asset Committee Nominations (14:08)

Meeting Type:	Scheduled Council Meeting
Date of Meeting:	25 February 2025
Category:	Strategic
Author:	Community & Recreation Coordinator
Approver:	Director Community and Infrastructure

This report is presented to Council to endorse the nominations of volunteers to committees of management (COM) under the Community Asset Committee Instrument of Delegation. These are additional community members who have requested spots on their local committees of management, and Council officers are in support:

1. Whitfield Recreation Reserve
2. Old Murrumungee Hall
3. Bowmans Murrumungee
4. Edi Upper
5. Everton Hall & Recreation Reserve
6. Oxley Shire Hall
7. Myrree Hall
8. Moyhu Soldiers Memorial Hall
9. Eldorado Town Hall

The nominations are for a period of three years. A list of nominated members is attached.

Resolution:

(Moved: Councillor H Bussell/Councillor A Fitzpatrick)

That Council endorses and discloses the nominations in the attached report to the following Community Asset Committees

1. Whitfield Recreation Reserve
2. Old Murrumungee Hall
3. Bowmans Murrumungee
4. Edi Upper
5. Everton Hall & Recreation Reserve
6. Oxley Shire Hall
7. Myrree Hall
8. Moyhu Soldiers Memorial Hall
9. Eldorado Town Hall

Councillor Harry Bussell disclosed the nominees:

Whitfield Recreation Reserve –
Kaye O’Kane, Graeme Stanyer

Old Murrumungee Hall –
Cecily Fletcher, Murray Bennett

Bowmans Murrungee –
Cecily Fletcher

Edi Upper –
Therese Holmes, Helen O'Donoghue, James Kiely, Monica Evans, Susan Lowe

Everton Hall & Recreation Reserve –
Kate Owen

Oxley Shire Hall –
Arthur Parker, Neil Barclay, Barbara Godde

Myrree Hall –
Carol Kunert, Sharon Jarrott, Paul Koulis, Nicole Warneer, Ken Malsem, Cath Fox, Ann Lacey, Geoffrey Lacey

Moyhu Soldiers Memorial Hall –
Deanne Burge, Travis Wright, Josie Sampson, Peter Shanley, Alan Sampson, Nerida Johnstone, Neil Jarrott, Damien Currie, Regina Callaway, Darin Bertles, Maxwell Baker

Eldorado Town Hall –
Doug Oldmeadow

Carried

Background

All appointments to Community Asset Committees are made in line with Council's policy governing appointments to Council Committees.

The Instrument of Sub-Delegation details in section 3.1(8) that all appointments to the committees will be made by Council in accordance with the Council policy governing appointments to Council Committees.

Implications

Policy Considerations

The Community Asset Committee Instrument of Delegation and the Appointment to Council Committees Policy apply to these nominations.

Financial/Economic Implications

There are no financial or economic implications identified for the subject of this report.

Legal/Statutory

The requirement for nominations is made in accordance with the Local Government Act

Social and Diversity

The Community Asset Committees provide an important service to their communities, providing a gathering place and social centre for their rural communities. A strong and vibrant committee will

benefit the community, and close links between the committee and Council will create greater awareness of needs in that community.

Equity Impact Assessment (EIA)

There are no equity impacts identified for the subject of this report.

Environmental/Sustainability Impacts

COM's are responsible for the management of any environmental issues relating to the land upon which their facilities are situated.

Strategic Links

Council Plan 2021 – 2025

This report supports the 2021-2025 Council Plan through the following objectives and actions:

1. Strengthening our Leadership

1.3.2.1 Continue to support the delivery of the Rural Placemaking Plans in partnership with our rural communities.

2. Nurturing our Wellbeing

2.3.2.1 With support and training, ensure that our community groups and committees have strong governance and are inclusive and viable.

2.3.3 Increase opportunities for people to connect to their community and each other.

2.3.4.1 Provide quality and accessible community facilities based on community needs.

3. Expanding our Economy

4.4.2 Enhance the activity in our rural townships

Risk Management

Risk Management Framework

Risks	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Governance risk associated with the sub-delegation of powers from the CEO to Community Asset Committees	3 - Possible	3 - Moderate	6 - Medium	The appointment of members by a formal resolution of Council reduces governance risk by ensuring that all members appointed to a committee are covered by Council's public liability insurance.

Consultation/Communication

Officers believe that appropriate consultation has occurred and the matter is now ready for Council consideration.

Options for Consideration

- That Council endorses the nominations to the following Community Asset Committees
- That Council does not endorse the nominations to the Community Asset Committees.

Conclusion

Council officers have reviewed the nominations received for endorsement to the relevant Community Asset Committees which will delegate the control, management and maintenance of its council owned community assets and uphold Councils requirements under the Local Government Act.

Attachments

- 1 Community Asset Committee Nominations - Confidential

15. Sustainability and Culture

15.1 Wangaratta Planning Scheme Amendment C83 - Consideration of Submissions and Next Steps in the Amendment Process (18:25)

Meeting Type:	Scheduled Council Meeting
Date of Meeting:	25 February 2025
Category:	Strategic
Author:	Strategy Planner
Approver:	Director Sustainability and Culture

No Council officers or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

Executive Summary

The Low Density and Rural Residential Strategy 2021 (Rural Component) addresses provision of housing at the Low Density scale (minimum lot size 2000 square metres) and Rural Living scale (typically ranging from 2 ha – 8 ha minimum lot size) and is applicable to all areas of the municipality with the exception of recommendations relating to urban Wangaratta.

This strategy is split into two components: (1) the Low Density and Rural Residential Strategy (Rural Component), adopted by Council in December 2021, which this report focuses on, and (2) the Low Density and Rural Residential Strategy, Wangaratta Component Additional Investigations Report (which was adopted by Council in September 2024).

The Low Density and Rural Residential Strategy (Rural Component), provides the strategic justification for, and underpins Wangaratta Planning Scheme Amendment C83. Amendment C83 proposes changes to local policy, zoning and overlays, and makes appropriate corresponding administrative changes to the Wangaratta Planning Scheme to implement the recommendations of the rural components of the Strategy. Local policy changes are applicable across the municipality, while zone and overlay changes focus on areas in Glenrowan, Milawa and Oxley.

Amendment C83 was conditionally authorised by the Minister for Planning (under delegation) on 23 April 2024 to proceed to exhibition. The amendment proceeded to exhibition between 22 August - 30 September 2024. During this period 16 submissions were received, with most in support of the amendment, some requesting changes to the amendment and 2 with outstanding objections to the amendment.

This report is presented to Council to consider the submissions received and matters raised in response to the public exhibition process. This report also informs and advises Council about the content of submissions, key issues raised and how issues are addressed. It further seeks Councils agreement to:

- Make changes to the exhibited amendment to respond to submissions (as detailed in this report).

- Refer Amendment C83 and all submissions to a Planning Panel for independent review as the next step in the amendment process in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.
- Seek Councils agreement to allow Officers to continue to work with submitters to respond to and resolve any outstanding matters in the lead up to the Planning Panel Hearing.

Resolution:**(Moved: Councillor H Benton/Councillor D Fuller)**

That Council:

1. Considers all submissions to Wangaratta Planning Scheme Amendment C83 – Low Density and Rural Residential Strategy 2021 (Rural Component) and makes changes to the exhibited amendment as detailed and recommended in this report and its attachments, pursuant to Sections 22 and 23 of the *Planning and Environment Act, 1987*
2. Refers Wangaratta Planning Scheme Amendment C83 and its submissions to a Panel appointed under Part 8 of the *Planning and Environment Act, 1987*
3. Formally requests the appointment of a Panel in accordance with Section 23 (1)(b) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
4. Continues to work with submitters with unresolved submissions to attempt to reach a solution that can be presented to a Panel
5. Notify submitters of Council's decision

Carried**Background**

The Wangaratta Low Density and Rural Residential Strategy 2021 was undertaken to understand and respond to the need for low density and rural residential zoned land in the municipality as part of an overall response to provision of housing and responding to population growth.

The Strategy was adopted in part by Council, in December 2021. The part adopted related to recommendations to all areas of the municipality except for urban Wangaratta, (where Council resolved to undertake additional investigations). The additional investigations were undertaken and are the subject of a separate report adopted by Council in September 2024.

The Low Density and Rural Residential Strategy, 2021 (Rural Component) provides the basis for changes to the Wangaratta Planning Scheme under Amendment C83. **Attachment 1** provides the explanatory report which gives more detailed information about Amendment C83.

What Amendment C83 Proposes

The amendment proposes to:

- Amend local Settlement Policy (at Clause 11.01-1L-01,02 and 03) to avoid future subdivision in the Northern Foothills of Glenrowan (this also requires the deletion of the Development Plan Overlay Map from this precinct) and change the direction of future subdivision and development to the east of the existing townships of Oxley and Milawa to better address bushfire risks (noting currently the growth front is directed north in Oxley and west in Milawa).
- Amend local subdivision design policy in Low Density Residential and Rural Living Zones (at Clause 15.01-3L) to ensure subdivision design responds to amenity, safety (particularly in the context of bushfire risk), diversity and sustainability principles.
- Amends Schedules 1 and 2 to Clause 32.03 Low Density Residential Zone to set out minimum subdivision size that responds to preferred built form outcomes.
- Introduce Schedules 8 and 9 to Clause 43.02 Design and Development Overlay to articulate sustainability, character, safety (particularly bushfire design) and infrastructure requirements that make a positive contribution to the built environment in areas impacted by rezoning in Oxley and Milawa.
- Rezones land in Precinct E (b) of the Milawa Township Development Plan from Farming Zone to Low Density Residential Zone (with an indicative lot capacity of 50 lots in the short term).
- Rezones land in Precinct H of the Oxley Township Development Plan from Farming Zone to Rural Living Zone Schedule 2 to reflect the scale of development and remove the administrative burden of planning permits for activities that align with rural residential living. (This will not result in additional subdivision).
- Rezones land in Precinct F (b) of the Oxley Township Development Plan from Farming Zone to Low Density Residential Zone (with an indicative capacity of 78 lots in the short to medium term)
- Makes other administrative changes to the Wangaratta Planning Scheme (at Clauses 72.03, 72.08 and 74.02). planning maps and overlay maps to facilitate these changes.

Public Exhibition of Amendment C83

Amendment C83 was publicly exhibited formally between 22 August – 30 September 2024. Public notification of the amendment included:

- Direct notification to prescribed Ministers, government departments and statutory authorities.
- Direct notification to approximately 4000 property owners and occupiers impacted by the proposed changes.
- Display of Amendment exhibition material and mapping at Council Offices
- Display of Amendment exhibition material and mapping online.
- Public notices published in the Wangaratta Chronicle on 16 August 2024 and in the Victorian Government Gazette on 22 August 2024

Submissions to Amendment C83

To date, Council have received 16 submissions in response to the exhibition of the amendment. Of these submissions:

- 8 were received from authorities and 8 were received from landowners and community members.
- 10 support the amendment/had no objection to the amendment,
- 2 objected to the amendment or part of the amendment,
- 4 partly supporting and partly objecting to the amendment,
- 8 requested changes to the exhibited document.

Attachment 2 provides a summary of the submissions received and responses to those.

Key Issues

An analysis of the submissions, along with a response and outcome is contained in **Attachment 2**. The key issues raised in submissions can be summarised as:

- *Environmental Impacts* – particularly relating to vegetation, ground and surface water, potentially contaminated land, land fill gas separation distances and industrial land use separation distances.
- *Environmental Risks* - particularly flooding and impacts on additional development and Bushfire risk – its noted that both outstanding submissions are dealing with issues relating to bushfire risk and mitigation measures.
- *Infrastructure and Servicing requirements* – particularly reticulated water and sewer; and road safety and connectivity.

Submissions in support of the amendment generally:

- Supported the change in direction of the development fronts in Oxley and Milawa to minimise risk posed by bushfire
- Support development in townships as they are serviced locations
- Indicated that development will assist in alleviating pressure posed by the 'housing crisis'

Submissions objecting to the amendment raised very specific issues relating to:

- Future development: specifically, the ongoing ability of individual landowners to develop property into the future, based on being able to mitigate bushfire risk.
- Avoiding battle axe lots: specifically, a submission raised concern about the impacts of a strategy relating to avoiding battle-axe handles as a means of access when creating new lots.

Requested changes to the exhibited documents generally:

- Proposed strategies to be elaborated on and make points clearer on specific areas of interest from authorities.
- Make requests that are at odds with technical information underpinning the amendment.
- Requests to make changes to the amendment documents that are outside the scope of the amendment, for example:
 - o Property rating.
 - o Making changes to planning policy not impacted by the amendment.

It is noted whilst these requested changes raise important and valid considerations, they are not always addressed by making changes to exhibited amendment documents.

Attachment 2 explains how requests for changes to the Amendment are proposed to be addressed and responded to and explains how exhibited documents will be updated, if considered appropriate. Key changes proposed include:

- Update Explanatory Report to reflect (potential) contaminated land investigations
- Changes to Clause 11.01-1L-03 – Oxley Township
- Changes to Clause 15.01-3L
- Changes to DDO8 (Design and Development Overlay 8)
- Changes to DDO9 (Design and Development Overlay 9)

Further information about proposed changes can be found in **Attachment 2**.

Pre-Set Panel Hearing Dates

Pre-set Panel Hearing dates were approved and exhibited as part of the Amendment. A delay in considering this report (in part attributed to Council elections) resulted in Council being unable to meet the exhibited pre-set Panel Hearing dates. The revised and confirmed Pre-Set Panel Hearing dates are as follows:

- Directions Hearing: Week beginning Monday, 25 March 2025
- Panel Hearing: Week beginning Monday, 29 April 2025

Next Steps in the Amendment Process

The diagram below shows the steps in the planning scheme amendment process.



The first 2 steps have been completed for Amendment C83. This report deals with step 3 and provides Council with the opportunity to consider submissions received and recommends proceeding to a Panel as the next step. Should this occur, following the completion of the Panel a further report detailing the Panel's recommendations will be presented to Council for decision.

Implications

Policy Considerations

Other relevant Council policies considered in the development of this amendment include consideration of key actions from the:

- **Domestic Wastewater Management Plan:** in managing impacts of wastewater in unsewered areas
- **Environmental Sustainability Strategy:** in planning for growth and particularly subdivision design that reduces greenhouse gas emissions, protects the natural environment and makes efficient use of existing resources.
- **Roadside Conservation Management Plan:** Noting an earlier version of the Strategy underpins the Vegetation Protection Overlay Schedule 2 – Vegetation of Conservation Significance which applies to an area of Oxley under consideration for low density residential development and includes relevant management strategies that protect significant flora and fauna must be considered and adhered to.
- **Walking and Cycling Strategy:** which identifies recreational and off-road cycling and walking networks to improve non-vehicular transport opportunities for shorter trips in Oxley and Milawa.

Financial/Economic Implications

Financial – Costs associated with the amendment including statutory fees and Panel costs (administrative fees and required technical expert witness/es) are covered by Councils operational budget.

Economic – The addition of residential housing could be considered to benefit viability of the townships like Milawa and Oxley and small businesses operating in them.

Legal/Statutory

Amendment C83 abides by the requirements of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and other relevant legal/statutory processes.

Social, Diversity and Equity Impact Assessment (EIA)

In relation to the requirements of the *Gender Equity Act 2020* Planning Scheme Amendments are putting existing changes (i.e. changes proposed by a strategy already adopted by Council) into legislation are not considered to be a policy program or service. Therefore, an Equity Impact Assessment has not been undertaken.

Environmental/Sustainability Impacts

Sustainability impacts have been considered throughout the development of the Low Density and Rural Residential Strategy and policy implemented into the Wangaratta Planning Scheme has an obligation to consider and attempt to minimise risk to the natural environment.

Specific areas that have been considered and addressed include flooding by avoiding development in areas impacted by flood activity and bushfire, by planning for settlements that avoid locating new development in areas assessed as high risk at the landscape scale in settlement planning.

Strategic Links

Council Plan 2021 – 2025

This report supports the 2021-2025 Council Plan through the following objectives and actions:

1. Valuing our Environment

3.4.2 Look after our rivers and waterways:

3.4.4.2 Work in partnership with our community to preserve and improve our waterways.

3.4.2.3 Work to ensure that access and use of our waterway's balances water preservation and health

3.4.2.4 Promote the significance and importance of our rivers and creeks to build community pride, care and protection

2. Growing with Integrity

3. 6.1.1 *Facilitate attractive long-term residential growth opportunities*

6.1.1.2 Identify opportunities for residential land supply to accommodate future population growth

6.1.2 Ensure a range of housing options to meet the needs of the community including affordable housing

6.1.2.1 Ensure sufficient land supply is available to accommodate a range of housing options

6.1.2.2 Encourage a variety of lot sizes in new residential estates.

6.1.2.5 Facilitate a sustainable balance between growth and development, and the protection of existing agricultural land.

6.3.1 Ensure decision making upholds a balance between environmental sustainability, the need for development and the acknowledges the risks to the landscape.

6.1.3.2 Ensure future settlements are designed and located to consider the risks of climate change including fire, flood and other natural hazards.

Rural City of Wangaratta 2033 Community Vision

This report supports the 2033 Community Vision through the following objectives:

Building Environmentally Sustainable Communities: L2 Facilitate design and development that creates sustainable communities.

Growth in the right areas: AA1 Facilitate attractive long-term residential growth opportunities

AA2 Ensure a range of housing options to meet the needs of the community including affordable housing.

Communities that are safe and protected: Ensure decision making upholds a balance between environmental sustainability, the need for development and acknowledges the risk to landscape.

Risk Management

Consultation/Communication

Level of public participation	Promises to the public/stakeholders	Tools/Techniques
Inform	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives and or solutions	Public exhibition as required by the Planning and Environment Act.
Consult	To obtain public feedback on analysis alternatives and or decisions.	Public exhibition as required by the Planning and Environment Act.
Involve	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered	Post exhibition engagement with submitters to work through issues raised in submissions and find solutions that address the matters (where possible)

Consultation has occurred in the development of the Low Density and Rural Living Strategy which underpins the policy and strategy that are proposed for inclusion in the Wangaratta Planning Scheme. Consultation has occurred in accordance with the requirements of the public exhibition process of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the matter is now ready for Council consideration.

Options for Consideration

Option 1: Recommended Option

That Council consider all submissions and refer the Amendment and submissions to a Planning Panel for independent review.

This option ensures the statutory process is followed and provides the best opportunity to proceed with the amendment whilst ensuring that community and landowner concerns are appropriately considered.

Option 2: Not recommended

Make all changes requested by submitters and submit the amendment for approval.

This is not recommended as some submissions are requesting changes that are in direct opposition to the recommendations of the underpinning technical assessments.

Option 3: Not recommended

Abandon the amendment.


This is not recommended as it will not fulfill Council's previous decision to implement the recommendations of the Low Density and Rural Residential Strategy (Rural Component). Further it would reduce diversity for future housing stock and not represent value in the way Councils resources are used. Abandoning the amendment effectively ends the process.

Conclusion

Wangaratta Planning Scheme Amendment C83 proposes to implement the recommendations of the Low Density and Rural Residential Strategy (Rural Component). Considering the

submissions to the amendment and the recommendation to refer the amendment to the Panel will allow for an independent body to review the effectiveness of planning tools used to implementing the Strategy's recommendations into the planning scheme. It is a further opportunity for submitters to talk about the concerns raised in submissions to ensure all matters have been understood and appropriately addressed, whilst following statutory obligations of the amendment process. Should Council agree, a Panel will be held, and a report will be provided by the Panel Chair, making recommendations about the best way to resolve outstanding matters raised in submissions. It's noted a further report to Council will outline any recommendations from a Panel process, prior to making any final decision about the adoption of the amendment in its final form.

Attachments

- 1 Attachment 1 - Explanatory Report 
- 2 Attachment 2 - Submission Summary 

Public Questions

Richard Hughes (20:23)

**RE: Item 15.1 Wangaratta Planning Scheme Amendment C83
Consideration of Submissions and Next Steps in the Amendment Process**

Questions -

1. In 2013 Wangaratta Council commissioned Terramatrix to undertake a comprehensive Bushfire Risk Assessment Study for the Glenrowan township to identify which areas, if any, were suitable for development to assist with the Glenrowan Structure Plan. The report issued January 2014 identified Precinct 2, area now known as H(a) & H(b) within Warby Range Estate, as suitable for future Rural Living Zone development. The Council's Structure Plan then included both H(a) & H(b) within the Glenrowan Structure Plan. Council then approved the rezoning of H(a) to Rural Living Zone, with H(b) being included in an Overlay to ensure that H(b) would be rezoned in the near future.

Question: Why did Council not rezone area H(b) at that time??

2. The Rezoning for area H(a) was completed in 2018 and Planning permit 18/160 for area H(a) was issued by Council for 17 Rural Living Lots (min 2 Ha size) on 18/07/2019. The engineering plans for the construction of the final 3 lots have recently been submitted to Council for approval. The design of services for the 17 lots within H(a) was based on the future adjacent development of area H(b) with larger watermains currently installed and Outcrop Road was to form part of a future 'loop' road access. Outcrop Road is currently a 'dead end' road. Within Attachment #2 of Council Item 15.1 the CFA are noted as 'submitter #16. The CFA notes "the provision of perimeter roads as a buffer to bushfire hazard"'.

Questions: Will the rezoning of area H(b) provide this 'perimeter road' (linking of Outcrop Road to Upper Taminick Road) that will create a buffer to bushfire hazard??

Also will the rezoning of area H(b) to Rural Living satisfy the CFA normal requirement of a dual exit access being provided for all the existing homes in times of emergency??

Lastly, will the rezoning of area H(b) enable the completion of a 'looped' watermain system to provide a more guaranteed water supply in times of emergency for existing homes??

3. Wangaratta Council adopted a Low Density and Rural Residential Strategy (by Urban Enterprise) in 2021. A municipal wide Strategic Bushfire Assessment was prepared by Nexus Planning as part of this project and underpinned the major directions of the Strategy and included an assessment of the Glenrowan township, in the context of the municipality. A Bushfire Assessment focused on the Glenrowan Township was prepared by Terramatrix in 2014.

Question: The report prepared by Nexus Planning as part of the 2022 Strategy has comprehensively assessed multiple townships at the municipal scale only. A detailed localised assessment of the Glenrowan township was not undertaken as part of the new Strategy. In light of the previous recommendations by Terramatrix of the Bushfire benefits of developing areas H(a) & H(b) as Rural Living Zones, and subsequent adoption of these recommendations by Council to provide added Bushfire protect for the Glenrowan Township population, why was not a further detailed localised assessment undertaken by previous Council staff prior to seeking of Council's approval??

4. The Terramatrix Bushfire Study noted bushfire threats to the existing township population from both the North (Warby Ranges) and the North-West (farmlands). The greater Bushfire threat is posed by the bushfires from the N-W due to the fire travelling 'uphill' (eg. the Marysville devastating fire travelled in an uphill direction). The existing Council endorsed overlay was to ensure the rezoning of area (H(b) to Rural Living Zone occurred to provide an area of 'First Defence' for such a bushfire heading uphill towards the Glenrowan township.

Clause 13.02 clearly states that the protection of life is one of the paramount aims.

Question: Why is the future Bushfire safety of the approximate 1,100 residents living within the Glenrowan township barely raising a mention within the report recommendation to Council??

5. Following up from the extensive work undertaken by Council in respect to the future development of areas around Glenrowan following the 2009 Victorian Bushfires (Terramatrix report was funded by the State Government) it would only seem logical that after Clause 13.02 came into place that Council would seek an update of the 2014 Terramatrix report accordingly. In fact, as stated above, no detailed localised assessment of the Glenrowan township was undertaken as part of this new Rural Development Strategy. However, Spiire planners, on behalf of the owner of land area H(b) commissioned in 2022 such a 'detailed localised assessment' report for Glenrowan township be prepared by Practical Ecology following the creation of Clause 13.02.

Question: Why is the findings of this detailed report by Practical Ecology not included within the information provided to Councillors as part of their decision making process whether to retain, or not, the existing development overlay for the added protection of Glenrowan township from Bushfire? I believe all relevant data is to be provided to Councillors in order for them to make the proper informed decision

Our Request to Council is:

- a.) Retain the current Glenrowan Overlay
- b.) Rezone the appropriate areas within the Overlay

Director Stephen Swart responded: This matter is being reported to this Council meeting to consider the next stage of the Planning Scheme Amendment process with a recommendation to

refer the amendment to an independent Panel. The questions raised by Mr Hughes about this Planning Scheme amendment and the strategy that provides justification for the amendment will be considered as part of the independent Panel process, should Council decide to refer the matter to a Panel. Submitters will have an opportunity to participate in the Panel process. The Panel will make recommendations to Council about the merits of the amendment.

Jenny Hart (21:33)

Under what grounds would Council consider a late submission to this amendment (under the Planning Scheme Amendment it is allowed at Council's discretion)?

Director Stephen Swart responded: we are typically pretty lenient when it comes to that. We try to accept submissions right to the point in time where decisions are being made. This matter, if Council decides to refer to a Panel, any late submissions would probably have to be made to the Panel and it would be at their discretion whether they would consider it.

So the process is to make a submission to the Panel? Or the Council?

Make a submission to both Council and Independent Panel. That process isn't very clear within the Act.

15.2 Draft Events & Attractions Strategy (24:43)

Meeting Type:	Scheduled Council Meeting
Date of Meeting:	25 February 2025
Category:	Strategic
Author:	Event Attraction Coordinator
Approver:	Director Sustainability and Culture

No Council officers or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

Executive Summary

The draft Events & Attractions Strategy 2025-2029 (refer **Attachment 1**) is ready for public exhibition.

The Events and Attractions Strategy sets out the Rural City of Wangaratta's future intentions in the support, curation and delivery of events within the municipality. Aligning with the vision of the community, and the Council Plan, this Strategy provides direction on decision making, event opportunities, goals and aspirations for the delivery of Council events, attraction of marquee events and the support of community events.

Key priorities were identified from consultation conducted. These priorities have been developed into the strategic objectives outlined below and in the Strategy.

The five strategic objectives are:

1 – Collaboration

Develop partnerships that support the delivery of events within the Municipality.

2 – Attraction & Marketing

Increase the tourism and economic benefit to the community through marquee event delivery and support, via council funded or commercially operated events.

3 – Resource Management

Reduce environmental impacts, improve sustainability and increase community accessibility at events held within the Municipality.

4 – Alignment

Formalise event funding criteria and post event evaluation to ensure investment aligns with the council plan.

5 – Review & Assess

Review the current council event program and event attraction program to ensure community satisfaction, and assess council supported events in line with community and council priorities.

Actions are identified within the draft Strategy to achieve these objectives.

Resolution:**(Moved: Councillor T Maxwell/Councillor A Winters)**

That Council:

1. Endorses the draft Events & Attractions Strategy 2025-2029 for a 30-day public exhibition period, to share the plan with the community and stakeholder groups.
2. Reviews and adopts the Events & Attractions Strategy 2025-2029 at a future meeting, taking into consideration any submissions made.
3. If no submissions are received requiring changes to the Events & Attractions Strategy 2025-2029, adopts the report without further resolution.

Carried**Background**

In 2018 Council adopted the 2018-2023 Events & Attractions Strategy which set out the future direction in support, curation, and delivery of events within the municipality. The Strategy outlined some key challenges and shortcomings to be addressed throughout the implementation plan such as –

- required consolidation of event funding;
- development of policies, procedures and application forms pertaining to events and their delivery;
- collate venue maps of public spaces and fact sheets that support event organisers;
- increased resourcing in the events team to support community and commercial organisations to work with Council;
- develop signage to be used at Council supported events;
- support community events with knowledge, reduced rates and identifying funding opportunities;
- formalise the old rodeo grounds as the preferred events precinct for major events; and
- support the attraction and delivery of major events to boost the economy and tourism.

The events landscape has changed, and it is timely that the Strategy is reconsidered to meet the needs of the community where they are today and looking into the future.

It is evident that there is a strong desire from our community to ensure that we are a welcoming, accessible and inclusive community with a culturally diverse event calendar. This is something that Council will be focusing on in the revised Strategy to build a community that is strong and connected.

Implications**Policy Considerations**

This Strategy is directly linked to the Council Plan and has further connections to -

- Recreation Strategy 2024-2033
- Economic Development & Tourism Strategy 2024-2029

- Waste Management Strategy 2018-2023
- Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026
- Community Access & Inclusion Plan 2019-2022

Financial/Economic Implications

While there are no direct financial implications to this report, the Strategy does recommend and prioritise actions for Council to deliver. These costs will need to be reflected in project bids, through grants and operational budgets as identified within the Strategy.

Legal/Statutory

There are no legal/statutory implications identified for the subject of this report.

Social and Diversity

The social, well-being and emotional benefits of events present in various ways including an increased appeal of liveability and a connectedness that can see a ripple effect through our community.

The Connection needs analysis commissioned by the Grit & Resilience Program says that *“Connected communities are engaged, safer and are more likely to have higher rates of volunteerism than those with less connection. Social connection provides meaning, purpose, support and a sense of belonging. With connection, we are better able to regulate stress”*.

Equity Impact Assessment (EIA)

Objective 3 within the draft strategy has deliverables in relation to community accessibility at events to ensure everyone is welcome, and event planning to increase diversity and cultural inclusion at Council delivered events.

Environmental/Sustainability Impacts

Council are committed to developing waste wise event guidelines as part of the draft strategy which will be applicable to Council events, and events taking place on Council land and will address waste, recycling and noise minimisation.

Strategic Links

Council Plan 2021 – 2025

This report supports the 2021-2025 Council Plan through the following objectives and actions:

2 Nurturing our Wellbeing

2.1.1.2 Deliver arts, culture and exhibition programs that recognise, support and address issues of mental health and social inequities.

2.3.1.1 Deliver annual events and initiatives that focus on celebrating diversity, connection, belonging for everyone within our community.

Include the delivery of drug, smoke and alcohol-free events into the annual events calendar.

3 Valuing our Environment

3.2.3.1 Reduce waste, paper and water usage in Council facilities and events through education.

5 Enhancing our Lifestyle

5.2.1.1 Increase the representation of our cultural story and history throughout our community and recognise its impact on our sense of place.

5.2.1.2 Deliver projects in partnership with our indigenous and cultural groups to celebrate the diversity and history of our region.

5.2.2.2 Organise the Wangaratta Australia Day ceremony and support rural community to deliver Australia Day events.

5.2.2.3 Continue to promote recognise and celebrate NAIDOC week within our community.

5.2.2.4 Partner with local community groups to increase the support and inclusion of our population that were born overseas.

5.5.1.1 Deliver a diverse and engaging annual program of events that caters to the needs of the community.

5.6.1.1 Deliver a diverse annual calendar of accessible community events throughout the municipality that provide opportunities for community members to connect.

5.6.1.2 Plan for and develop infrastructure in key strategic spaces that can facilitate the delivery of community-based events.

5.6.2.1 Support groups and clubs to deliver events to their members and the broader community.

5.7.1.1 Ensure planning for new and redeveloped community facilities incorporates universal design principles

Risk Management

Risk Management Framework

Risks	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
The community may not feel that their personal feedback has been heard in the draft strategy	3 - Possible	Minor	5 - Medium	Council will adopt best practise techniques when the public exhibition period starts to clearly communicate and educate people about the draft strategy and how they can provide feedback. In addition key user groups and members of industry will be directly engaged to review and provide feedback.
Community may feel that their organisation or community group are underrepresented.	3 - Possible	Minor	5 - Medium	Council will adopt best practise techniques when the public exhibition period starts to clearly communicate and educate people about the draft

				strategy and how they can provide feedback. In addition key user groups and members of industry will be directly engaged to review and provide feedback.
Sever adverse weather or public safety may impact on our ability to deliver on the strategy.	1 - Rare	Moderate	4 - Low	Thorough event planning including scenarios for adverse weather and public safety.

Consultation/Communication

To date the following community engagement activities have occurred throughout 2023* to inform the development of the draft Plan (*the development of the plan was stalled due to staff secondment):

- Community session at the Wangaratta Performing Arts & Convention Centre
- Community session at the Wangaratta Sports & Aquatic Centre
- Informative session with Councillors
- Workshop held with Youth Council
- Workshop held with Corporate Management Team at Council
- Workshop held with the Waste Management & Sustainability Teams
- Workshop held with Horticulture Team
- Electronic survey was open for 46 days to the public

Officers believe that appropriate consultation has occurred and the matter is now ready for Council consideration.

Options for Consideration

1. That Council endorses the draft Events & Attractions Strategy 2025-2029 for public exhibition for 30 days (Recommended).
2. That Council does not endorse the draft Events & Attractions Strategy 2025-2029 for public exhibition.

Conclusion

The draft Events & Attractions Strategy 2025-2029 is ready for public exhibition and community feedback.

Attachments

- 1 Events & Attractions Strategy - DRAFT 

Unconfirmed

15.3 CBD Car Parking Payment System (27:18)

Meeting Type:	Scheduled Council Meeting
Date of Meeting:	25 February 2025
Category:	Operational
Author:	Manager - Economic Development, Environment & Compliance
Approver:	Director Sustainability and Culture

No Council officers or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

Executive Summary

The current car parking payment machines in the Wangaratta CBD are at the end of their life. Maintaining a workable payment system in the CBD is important as it continues a 'user pays' system and contributes to the provision and maintenance of car parking in the CBD. This report is presented to Council to consider options for the replacement of the car parking payment system within the Wangaratta CBD.

Recommendation:

That Council:

1. Endorses the replacement the 72 current car parking payment machines in the Wangaratta CBD by reducing the number of new parking meters to 16 and maintaining the EasyPark App as a payment method throughout the CBD (Option 1 described within this report).

Resolution:

(Moved: Councillor H Bussell/Councillor H Benton)

Councillor H Bussell moved an alternate motion:

That Council:

1. Endorses the replacement of the current parking payment system in the Wangaratta CBD with the EasyPark app as the only payment method.
2. Puts appropriate and proactive arrangements in place to assist uptake by new users of the app
3. Requests officers to consider and implement a simple alternative payment or permit system for community members that do not have an appropriate device to use EasyPark or are unable to use the EasyPark app.
4. Receives quarterly updates on how this system is progressing and functioning and a review report being submitted to Council in June 2026.

Carried

Background

Having sufficient, good quality and accessible car parking in the Wangaratta CBD contributes to an attractive CBD to the benefit of both visitor and businesses. Council has a paid parking system in place in the Wangaratta CBD to help cover the cost of providing and maintaining car parking in the CBD. Paid parking has been in place in the Wangaratta CBD for many years.

The current car parking payment system in use in Wangaratta's CBD includes:

- 72 car parking payment machines located throughout the Wangaratta CBD area. These machines take cash only.
- EasyPark App for payment via phones or similar devices.

The current payment machines were installed in 2015 and have reached the end of their life. They run off the 3G network which is no longer being supported. Whilst the machines are still able to accept coin payments, alerts when faults occur are not transmitted resulting in Council officers having to undertake additional checks to ensure machines are still operating correctly. The current machines are breaking down regularly. A review of the usage of the current machines show that 20 of them have recorded minimal usage.

The EasyPark App was introduced more recently as a payment option for car parking in relevant areas in Wangaratta's CBD. Since the App's introduction its usage has doubled and in the 2023/24 financial year 43% of parking payments received were via the App. The App allows users to pay only for time used and can be used throughout the CBD parking area including the privately operated parking area of the Co-Store.

A review of the CBD car parking payment system has been completed. It included consideration of types of machines, locations, running costs, revenue and opportunities to reduce the number of physical machines within the CBD. Options for the replacement of the payment system considered as part of this work and their key implications for Council and our community are shown in the table below:

Options		Initial implications	Ongoing implications
Option 1:	Reducing the number of parking meters to 16 and maintaining the EasyPark App as a payment method throughout the CBD (see Attachment 1).	Lower initial cost compared to Option 2 as fewer machines would need to be purchased and installed. Other initial cost would include Parts of our community do not support paid parking in the CBD.	Maintains a 'user pays' system. Maintains the income from parking payments to contribute to providing and maintain car parking in the CBD, including cost associated with the Co-Store parking contract. Ongoing maintenance of machines. Maintains the benefits of encouraging turn-over of vehicles. Negative community perceptions relating to paid

			car parking.
Option 2:	Reducing the number of machines to 52 and maintaining the EasyPark App as a payment method throughout the CBD (see Attachment 2).	Higher initial cost compared to Option 1 as more machines would need to be purchased and installed. Other initial cost would include Parts of our community do not support paid parking in the CBD.	<p>Maintains a 'user pays' system.</p> <p>Maintains the income from parking payments to contribute to providing and maintain car parking in the CBD, including cost associated with the Co-Store parking contract.</p> <p>Ongoing maintenance of machines.</p> <p>Maintains the benefits of encouraging turn-over of vehicles.</p> <p>Negative community perceptions relating to paid car parking.</p>
Option 3:	Only accepting payment via the EasyPark App and not having the option of paying via physical machines.	<p>Low initial cost. Only requires rParts of our community do not support paid parking in the CBD.</p> <p>Some users may need assistance with using the App.</p> <p>Consideration will need to be given to situations where users cannot access the App.</p>	<p>Maintains a 'user pays' system.</p> <p>Maintains the income from parking payments to contribute to providing and maintain car parking in the CBD, including cost associated with the Co-Store parking contract.</p> <p>Maintains the benefits of encouraging turn-over of vehicles.</p> <p>No ongoing maintenance of machines.</p> <p>Negative community perceptions relating to paid car parking.</p>
Option 4:	Not having paid on street parking in the CBD	Low initial cost. Only requires r	<p>Council will need to absorb more of the cost associated with providing and maintaining car parking in the CBD, including cost associated with the Co-Store parking contract.</p> <p>Reduced turn-over of vehicles which may lead to fewer vacant parking spaces</p>

			being available at times.
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(Note: New machines proposed in Options 1 and 2 will be able to take both cash and card payments.)

A long-term financial analysis of these options is included in the **Attachment 3** (confidential attachment). This financial analysis included consideration of: upfront cost of new machines, cost of removing existing meters, signage / marking changes, staff cost, software costs, materials, contractual commitments (including the Co-Store contract) and income from parking. The net financial result of each option over a period of 8 years (the expected useful life span of new parking machines) for each option is shown in the table below:

Option 1:	-\$282,000
Option 2:	-\$620,000
Option 3:	+\$221,000
Option 4:	-\$1.56M

Officers have considered this financial analysis, accessibility, technology, digital inclusion, financial sustainability and how Council can support our community with the use of a new system, and recommend Option 1 as the preferred new parking payment system in Wangaratta's CBD because:

- It offers users a range of payment options (cash, card and App) and is therefore more inclusive compared to some other options with limited payment methods;
- The reduced number of machines requires a relatively low initial outlay compared to Option 2;
- It will maintain parking income which contributes to providing sufficient and well-maintained parking within the CBD;
- It will contribute to Council's longer term financial sustainability by limiting the negative net financial result expected over the next 10 years.
- It retains a 'user pays' system and the benefits of encouraging turn-over of vehicles.

Implementing Option 1 will significantly change the parking payment system in the CBD compared to the current system, including:

- A reduction the number of payment machines available.
- Changing the locations of payment machines will be available in.
- Offering more payment options.
- Limiting the availability of machines to some areas in the CBD (see **Attachment 1**) which makes the EasyPark App the only practical payment option in some areas due to the distance to payment machines.

As part of the transition to using the new payment system it is proposed that Council officers will be made available for a period to introduce users to the new systems and assist them with navigating the payment options available.

Council officers have initiated a tender process for the supply, install of new parking machines and removal of the old machines. This process has been undertaken in preparation for implementing Council's decision about the future of parking machines within the Wangaratta CBD (the subject of this report).

Implications

Policy Considerations

Wangaratta Car Parking Plan.

Financial/Economic Implications

The FY24/25 budget has an allocation of \$314,000 for the replacement CBD carparking payment system which includes removal and disposal of old parking meters, bay marking and signage updates.

Legal/Statutory

There are no legal/statutory implications identified for the subject of this report.

Social and Diversity

Provisions for all payment types for car parking within the CBD area will offer a consistent and reliable approach for all members of the public.

Equity Impact Assessment (EIA)

There are no equity impacts identified for the subject of this report.

Environmental/Sustainability Impacts

Council officers will need to ensure that proper disposal of old parking machines needs to be undertaken.

Strategic Links

Council Plan 2021 – 2025

This report supports the 2021-2025 Council Plan through the following objectives and actions:

1. Strengthening our Leadership

1.2 An efficient and effective council

1.2.1 Ensure Councils financial sustainability through transparent and accountable financial management

Rural City of Wangaratta 2033 Community Vision

NA

Other strategic links

Wangaratta Car Parking Plan

Risk Management

Risk Management Framework

Risks	Consequence	Mitigation Action
Community opposition to paid carparking in the CBD	Negative community feedback	Clear communication and assistance with new system
Not upgrading payment	Loss of revenue – budget impacts	Complete upgrade of

machines result in loss of revenue from faulty machines	Reduced ability to provide and maintain car parking in the CBD	payment machines
Removal of payment systems	Loss of Income – long term financial impacts Reduced ability to provide and maintain car parking in the CBD	Maintain CBD car parking payment

Consultation/Communication

This report relates to the replacement of the existing car parking payment system in Wangaratta's CBD and no specific community consultation has been undertaken. This report is informed by user reports about broken / jammed machines and concern about not being able to pay for parking in these situations.

Options for Consideration

Option 1 (Recommended)

Endorse procurement and installation of 16 upgraded car parking payment machines to be strategically placed in high use parking areas in the CBD, updating of signage and bay markings and the removal of existing car parking payment machines.

Option 2 (Not Recommended)

Endorse procurement and installation 52 upgraded car parking payment machines, updating of signage and bay markings and the removal of old car parking payment machines.

Option 3 (Not Recommended)

Endorse replacing the current parking payment system with Easy Park App payment only. Removal of all car parking payment machines throughout CBD and update all parking signage throughout CBD.

Option 4 (Not Recommended)

Removal of car parking payments from CBD area. Time restrictions will remain in place.

Conclusion



The current car parking payment machines in use in the Wangaratta CBD have reached the end of their life. A review of the CBD car parking payment system has been completed to inform a way forward for car parking payments, including consideration of options for replacement of machines.

It is recommended that Council endorses implementing Option 1 described above which will replace the 72 current car parking payment machines with 16 new machines. These new machines will be used in combination with the EasyPark App to provide full range of payment options available.

Council's procurement process will be followed to purchase and install the endorsed replacement payment system.

Retaining paid car parking in the CBD will help ensure Council is able to provide and maintain car parking in the CBD at current standards and continues a 'user pays' approach.

Attachments

- 1 Potential location of 16 replacement payment machines 
- 2 Potential location of 52 replacement payment machines 
- 3 Long Term Financial Analysis - Confidential

Public Questions

Kieran Klemm (28:40)

RE: Item 15.3 CBD Car Parking System

Options 1-3 contain the following information;

Maintains the income from parking payments to contribute to providing and maintaining car parking in the CBD, including cost associated with the Co Store Parking Contract.

Maintains the benefits of encouraging turn-over of vehicles

Option 4 contains the following information;

Council will need to absorb more of the cost associated with providing and maintaining car parking in the CBD, including cost associated with the Co Store Car Park.

The costs associated with the four options over an eight year period;

Option 1	-\$282,000
Option 2	-\$620,000
Option 3	+\$221,000
Option 4	-\$1.56M

**Under Risk Management Framework;
Risks; Removal of Payment System.**

Consequence; Loss of Income, Long Term Financial Impacts.

The initial contract signed by Council Officers with the owners of the Co Store, and promoted as a great deal, was regarded by ratepayers as a "White Elephant" and a "Millstone" around their Necks

I am led to believe that the "Co Store Car Park" has changed ownership and is now held by one of the biggest investment Companies in the World.

Question 1 – Did Council have any input regarding their "LEASE" payments at the change of ownership?

Director Stephen Swart responded: Council has no record of the property changing ownership and has not been approached by the owners about payments under the parking agreement.

Question 2 – Is there a "Sunset Clause" in the contract, or will Council be liable for indexed payments FOREVER?

Director Stephen Swart responded: The agreement commenced in 2014 and is in place for a period of 20 years, with the option to be extended. If not extended the agreement will come to an end in 2034.

Guy Robertson (31:31)

I have read in the local paper that a Council meeting will soon debate whether or not to keep the parking meters at Wangaratta.

I would like to ask whether the revenue raised from parking meters substantially exceeds the cost of meter attendants, clerical time following up unpaid fees and maintenance of the meters. This revenue should not include parking fines for overstaying time limits as these could remain (with reduced attendant staffing) whether or not the meters do.

If the parking revenue is not a significant source of funding for the council (as I suspect), then I suggest it should be discontinued. The disadvantages of local metered parking include:

- discouragement of potential customers for in-town shops, restaurants and entertainment venues**
- bad council relations with the local public and visitors as the council is seen as mean-spirited compared with many other local areas who do not charge for parking**
- additional pressure on free parking spots that locals come to know**

Two or three years ago, I asked council for the costs and revenue of metered parking. I was told this information is not being collected. If that is still the case, and if the council wishes to continue metered parking, I would like to request that the decision to continue is accompanied by a decision to begin as soon as possible recording separately, at least the revenue from meters. This would give a reasonable basis for estimating the profit or loss from metering because the annual costs could be fairly easily and accurately estimated. Also, I would request that the decision to continue metering should be reviewed in, say 12 months, when better data is available.

Director Stephen Swart responded: Council's Annual Report for the 2023/24 financial year lists revenue from parking as \$317,000 and includes revenue from paid parking and parking permits, but excludes fines.

As parking is paid for upfront there are no additional costs associated with following up unpaid parking fees. Administrative and maintenance costs associated with parking meters are lower than the revenue generated.

Staff costs will remain regardless of whether there are paid parking and have been included in the cost analysis of all options presented to Council today.

Garry Beal (34:08)

Has there been a formal consultation process with CBD businesses as well as the users, being rate payers, regional visitors and tourists?

Director Stephen Swart responded: There has not been a formal consultation process with those groups you mentioned there. This is about replacing an existing payment system. Typically under those circumstances we wouldn't go through a consultation process as you describe.

In that same theme, it was stated to the benefit to businesses and visitors, so how can you ascertain the benefit to businesses and visitors if you have not gone through a consultation process?

Director Stephen Swart responded: The context of saying to the benefit of visitors and businesses was to say that having sufficient, good quality, accessible car parking available in the CBD is a benefit to businesses and visitors.

You made mention that it's about keeping good quality car parks, may I remind you that we have car parks in the Hospital precinct, West End, Appin Street, Muntz Street, Yarrunga, I believe all good quality, all time limited free parking, so I don't know how you distinguish them. How do you distinguish the difference between CBD quality car parks which is paid, versus the non-paid car parks which exist?

Mayor Irene Grant responded: merely the fact that it's the CBD, that's the essential difference.

Adrian Fox (38:20)

Secretary of Business, Wangaratta Chamber of Commerce

Could someone on the Panel explain how in tune is the proposed motion with the wishes of the Wangaratta public?

Mayor Irene Grant responded: we're replacing an existing system. There's probably no such thing as free parking because whatever Council does in terms of parking comes at a cost and if we don't obtain revenue from parking which is a user pay system, then we've got to find the revenue in other ways. Council has a rate cap which reduces the ways in which we can raise funds, and the user paid parking has been in place since the 1960s, if not before, and so it would be reasonable that we would continue it.

Do the figures in the options include the lost revenue?

CEO Brendan McGrath responded: yes.

Trevor (42:04)

Is the paid parking going to be cash?

Mayor Irene Grant responded: Council is looking at a number of options and we are considering that today.

Brian Fox (42:52)

If you choose to purchase new machines, change will be impossible for maybe 5 years.

Mayor Grant responded: We are considering the options.

What's the rush? Why can't we leave this matter on the table for the next Council Meeting for the Councillors to vote, and during that time, write to me to say how you will match parking revenue with the budget. And I will take it to my members (Chamber of Commerce).

Mayor Irene Grant responded: You're actually not the decision maker here tonight, we will be doing that.

Anne Dunstan (45:19)

This process references that part of the revenue helps maintain the parking spaces within the CBD. I have become a carer for a disabled father and noticed recently that a lot of the disabled car parks are moving location as the requirements for disabled parking have changed to have more space around them, etc. which is reducing the number of car parks within our CBD, and our beautiful trees that are in our CBD are actually hampering the usage of a lot of our spaces by bigger vehicles that most of us are driving.

Is there a direct correlation between income that is generated from our parking meters to the direct payments of our CBD car parks?

Director Stephen Swart responded: There's a direct correlation between the income we get from a paid system and some of the costs associated with providing car parking. Tonight we talked about a contractual arrangement for instance, there's also some staff involved in that. In terms of the maintenance of specific areas or how they are used, I don't think there are, I couldn't think of a direct correlation.

I am an active business owner in Wangaratta and I feel frustrated that there's been many people making references that business owners have been consulted and making sweeping statements based on our behalf. Whilst I know that they are generally speaking, I generally have the opinion that parking meters with that very small limited number of parks in the CBD allows for movement so that shops are not left with cars out the front all day.

15.4 Report for noting: Procurement Exemption for Development Contributions Plan Projects (59:13)

Meeting Type:	Scheduled Council Meeting
Date of Meeting:	25 February 2025
Category:	Strategic
Author:	Director Sustainability and Culture
Approver:	Director Sustainability and Culture

No Council officers or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to notify Council that the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has approved an exemption from the public tender requirements of Council's Procurement Policy for the upgrade of a second section of Christensen Lane by the developers of adjacent land in lieu of required contributions (known as Works-in-Kind) under a Development Contributions Plan (DCP).

The upgrade of Christensen Lane is identified as an infrastructure project approved for delivery within the Wangaratta North-West Growth Area DCP. Council's Procurement Policy (see **Attachment 1**) requires a report to be presented to Council for noting when an exemption of this nature is approved.

Resolution:

(Moved: Councillor A Fitzpatrick/Councillor H Benton)

That Council:

1. Notes the procurement exemption approved by the CEO to facilitate the upgrade of a section of Christensen Lane under the North-West Growth Area Development Contributions Plan and as required by Council's Procurement Policy.
2. Notes a specific exemption for similar future Development Contributions Plan projects to be delivered as Works-in-Kind will be considered for inclusion in Council's Procurement Policy when it is next reviewed.

Carried

Background

Council has two approved DCPs for the North-West and South Growth Areas. These DCPs identify infrastructure projects required to service the growth areas and for which development contributions must be paid by landowners in these areas.

In some cases, the DCP projects are delivered by developers as Works-in-Kind in exchange for the associated credits identified for the project in the DCP.

DCP projects delivered as Works-in-Kind do not trigger the requirement under the *Local Government Act 2020* to comply with Council's Procurement Policy. However, there are instances where the final form of DCP projects is not entirely consistent with the DCP but remain closely connected to the DCP project and arise naturally from the scope of the DCP project, such as variations due to detail design or construction standards. Council has received legal advice that in these instances Council may still not be required to comply with its Procurement Policy depending on the specifics of each project. It is Council's practice to consider appropriate exemptions under the Procurement Policy when these circumstances arise to remove any uncertainty about compliance with the policy and the Local Government Act.

Council's Procurement Policy identifies circumstances that are exempt from public tendering and other competitive processes. Council's CEO has the authority to consider and decide requests for such exemptions. The category of exemption available for DCP projects under the circumstances described above is 'Exceptional Circumstances' as the other available categories do not apply. The policy requires a report to be presented to Council for noting when an exemption is approved under the 'Exceptional Circumstances' category.

In March 2024 the CEO approved an exemption under the Procurement Policy for an initial section of Christensen Lane, and this was subsequently reported to Council for noting as required under the Procurement Policy. More recently a further proposal was received for Works-in-Kind to upgrade a second part of Christensen Lane in lieu of required contributions under the DCP and the CEO has approved an appropriate exemption under the Procurement Policy to facilitate this proposal.

Similar circumstances are likely to occur again as part of the development of Wangaratta's Growth Areas and officers will consider adding a specific category of exemption to the Procurement Policy when the policy is next reviewed to help facilitate the intended infrastructure outcomes of the DCPs.

Implications

Policy Considerations

The following Council policies or strategies that relate to this report:

- Wangaratta North-West Growth Area Development Contributions Plan
- Procurement Policy

Financial/Economic Implications

No Council payments are involved as the relevant project will be delivered as Works-in-Kind in lieu of required contributions under the DCP.

DCPs identify Works-in-Kind as a preferred mechanism to deliver most projects identified in the DCPs. Appropriate exemptions under the Procurement Policy help to facilitate delivery of these previously considered and approved projects using this preferred mechanism and in a timely manner i.e. when the projects are required to support approved development.

Legal/Statutory

- *Planning and Environment Act 1987* as it relates to Development Contributions.
- *Local Government Act 2020* as it relates to procurement.
- Wangaratta Planning Scheme.

Social and Diversity

DCP infrastructure projects support residential development in approved Growth Areas to help meet the housing needs of our community.

Environmental/Sustainability Impacts

There are no environmental/sustainability impacts identified for the subject of this report.

Strategic Links**Council Plan 2021 – 2025**

This report supports the 2021-2025 Council Plan through the following objectives and actions:

1. Growing with Integrity

- Facilitate attractive long-term residential growth opportunities.
- Ensure a range of housing options to meet the needs of the community, including affordable housing.
- Sustainable infrastructure that supports new growth.
- Provide an efficient and effective permit system.

Rural City of Wangaratta 2033 Community Vision

This report supports the 2033 Community Vision through the following objectives:

- The right growth in the right areas

Other strategic links

This report supports the implementation of the North-West Growth Area Structure Plan and Development Contributions Plan.

Risk Management

Risks were considered prior to approving the procurement exemption including:

- undertaking analysis of proposed works and rates to ensure they represented value for money and are consistent with the intended outcomes of the DCP; and
- requiring the proposed works to be in accordance with an approved detail design and specifications.

Conclusion

Council's CEO has approved an exemption from the public tender requirements of Council's Procurement Policy to facilitate the upgrade of a second section of Christensen Lane by the developers of adjacent land in lieu of required contributions under a DCP. The policy requires a report to be presented to Council for noting when such an exemption is approved by the CEO.

Attachments

- 1 Council's Procurement Policy 

15.5 Planning Permit Application 24/083 - 31 Ford Street, Wangaratta (Creative Precinct) (1:03:13)

Meeting Type:	Scheduled Council Meeting
Date of Meeting:	25 February 2025
Category:	Strategic
Author:	Planning Coordinator
Approver:	Director Sustainability and Culture

No Council officers or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

Executive Summary

This report is presented to Council to make a determination on whether to grant a planning permit or refuse to grant a planning permit for an application for the buildings and works (including partial demolition) for the extension of an existing place of assembly, function centre and art gallery (Wangaratta Performing Arts and Conference Centre and Gallery), a reduction of car parking requirements and variation to a sewer easement at 31 Ford Street Wangaratta.

The subject site is located within the Commercial 1 Zone, and is affected by the Heritage Overlay (HO13), Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 1, and the Parking Overlay – Schedule 1 of the Wangaratta Planning Scheme. A copy of the proposed development plans is included at **Attachment 1**.

A total of 8 submissions were received to the application (7 objections and 1 letter of support). The grounds of objection largely relate to the reduction of car parking requirements, but also include concerns regarding long term planning for the site and surrounds, emergency services access, location of Visitor Services, and amenity issues.

A detailed officer's assessment of the application is located at **Attachment 2**.

Based on the attached officer's assessment it is recommended that a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit be issued, as the proposal is considered to represent an orderly planning outcome that is considerate the context of the site and surrounds.

Resolution:

(Moved: Councillor D Fuller/Councillor A Fitzpatrick)

That Council:

1. Issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit, subject to the conditions outlined in **Attachment 2**.

Carried

Background

This report is being presented to Council to make a determination on Planning Application PlnApp24/083 as the application received more than four objections. A total of seven (7) objections, and one (1) letter of support were received. The grounds of objection, and Council's response to those concerns, are discussed in further detail in the officer's assessment at **Attachment 2**.

The key issues discussed later in this report and as part of the officer's assessment report include:

- Traffic and car parking supply.
- Urban design and heritage.
- Enhancement of the creative precinct.

A detailed description of the site and surrounds, and the proposal, are included in the officer's assessment at **Attachment 2**.

Assessment under the Planning and Environment Act 1987

A detailed assessment of the application against the relevant policies and provisions of the Wangaratta Planning Scheme (the Scheme) and the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act) is included at **Attachment 2**. The following table shows the policies and provisions that have been considered.

Planning Policy Framework, Zoning, Overlays, and Particular and General Provisions

Section	Clause	Provision
Planning policy Framework and Municipal Planning Strategy	02.03-5	Built form and heritage
	02.03-7	Economic development
	11.03-1L-02	Wangaratta Central Activities Area
	15.01-1S	Urban design
	15.01-2S	Building design
	15.01-4S	Healthy neighbourhoods
	15.01-5S	Neighbourhood character
	15.01-5L	Neighbourhood character
	17.04-1S	Facilitating tourism
	17.04-1R	Tourism – Hume
17.04-1L	Facilitating tourism	
18.02-4S	Roads	
Zone	34.01	Commercial 1 Zone
Overlays	43.01	Heritage Overlay (HO13)
	43.02	Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 1
	45.09	Parking Overlay – Schedule 1
Provision	52.02	Easements, restrictions and reserves
	52.06	Car parking
	52.34	Bicycle facilities

Decision Guidelines	65.01	Decision Guidelines – Approval of an Application or Plan
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Implications

Policy Considerations

Council's local planning policies (given effect by the Wangaratta Planning Scheme) are of relevance to this report. These policies are considered and addressed within this report and in the Assessment Report at **Attachment 2**.

Financial Implications

There are no specific financial implications to Council arising from this report although there may be potential costs should this matter proceed to the Victorian Civil Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).

Legal/Statutory

All procedures associated with the lodgement and assessment of this application have been carried out in accordance with the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Cultural Heritage

The subject site is not located within an area of Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity.

Social

The application is for the provision of social infrastructure being part of the 'creative precinct' of the Wangaratta township.

Equity Impact Assessment (EIA)

There are no equity impacts identified for the subject of this report.

Environmental/Sustainability Impacts

Environmental and sustainability matters have been considered in this report.

Referrals/Public Notice

The application was referred to Council's Technical Services Unit (parking, access and drainage) and North East Water (sewerage considerations) who did not object to the issue of a permit subject to conditions.

Notice of the application was given to adjoining and surrounding landowners and occupiers, a notice was placed on site and in the Wangaratta Chronicle. To date, 7 objections and 1 letter of support have been received.

Strategic Links

Council Plan 2021 – 2025

This report supports the 2021-2025 Council Plan through the following objectives and actions:

4.4. Vibrant and engaging places

4.4.1.3 – Implement the Wangaratta Central Activity Area Urban Design Framework.

Rural City of Wangaratta 2033 Community Vision

This report supports the 2033 Community Vision through the following objectives:

- BB1 – Ensure new development is facilitated and does not conflict with existing land uses.
- BB2 – Provide an efficient and effective permit system.

Risk Management

It is not considered that there are any relevant risks to Council beyond those associated with standard statutory process (such as any decision being appealed at VCAT).

Risk Management Framework

Risks	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Appeal of decision at VCAT	Possible	Minor	Low	Appropriate representation of Council at VCAT.

Options for Consideration



1. Council issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit for Application PInApp24/083 subject to conditions (recommended); OR
2. Council issue a Notice of Refusal to Grant a Planning Permit for Planning Application PInApp24/083.

Conclusion

Planning application PInApp24/083 is considered to represent an orderly planning outcome and is generally in accordance with the relevant policies and provisions of the Wangaratta Planning Scheme. The proposal has provided a well considered design outcome that is respectful of the heritage fabric and existing performing arts and convention centre structure on the subject site. The design will be largely obscured by the existing development on the land whilst also ensuring that the heritage elements that contribute to the significance of the site remain as primary features. The reduction of car parking requirements is considered to be appropriate in this instance as the availability of parking within 400m of the subject site is able to support the parking demand for the site.

Therefore, the proposal is considered to be appropriate and should be supported.

Attachments

- 1 Proposed plans 
- 2 Officer's Assessment Report 

15.6 Tourism Events Funding Grant Funding – Correction (1:06:04)

Meeting Type:	Scheduled Council Meeting
Date of Meeting:	25 February 2025
Category:	Strategic
Author:	Economic Development and Tourism Coordinator
Approver:	Director Sustainability and Culture

No Council officers or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

Executive Summary

Each year Council's Tourism Events Funding Program provides financial assistance to event organisers for the promotion and development of their festivals and events.

At the 10 December 2024 Council Meeting, Council resolved to award funding to five events as part of the Tourism Events Funding Program – Grant Stream for the 2025 calendar year. One of the five successful events was the Wangaratta Cruise Night, however the recommendation included in the Council report incorrectly listed the organisation applying for funding for this event as the 'Wangaratta Early Holden Car Club Inc'. The correct organisation for this event is the Wangaratta Rod and Custom Club Inc., as referenced in the attachment to the December Council report.

This report seeks to amend the December 2024 Council resolution to correct this error and ensure the funding for the Wangaratta Cruise Night event is awarded to the Wangaratta Rod and Custom Club Inc.

Resolution:

(Moved: Councillor H Bussell/Councillor T Maxwell)

That Council:

1. Notes the resolution made on 10 December 2024 in respect of Agenda Item 15.2 incorrectly identified the Wangaratta Early Holden Car Club Inc as the successful recipient of funding under the Tourism Events Funding Program for the Wangaratta Cruise Night event instead of the Wangaratta Rod and Custom Club Inc.
2. Amends the resolution made on 10 December 2024 in respect of Agenda Item 15.2 to replace reference to the 'Wangaratta Early Holden Car Club Inc' with 'Wangaratta Rod and Custom Club Inc'.

Carried

Options for Consideration

There are nil options available for consideration.

Conclusion

Council is requested to correct an error within a previous resolution to award funding under the Tourism Events Funding Program – Grant Stream for 2025 to the correct organisation to support the Wangaratta Cruise Night event.

Attachments

Nil.

Unconfirmed

16. Special Committee Reports

Nil

17. Advisory Committee Reports

Nil

Unconfirmed

18. Minutes of Advisory Committee Meetings

18.1 Minutes of Advisory Committee Meetings (1:07:38)

Meeting Type: Scheduled Council Meeting
 Date of Meeting: 25 February 2025
 Author: Councillor and Executive Services Support Officer

No Council officers or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

Executive Summary

Minutes of Advisory Committee Meetings and committee reports are reported to Council for information (please refer attachments.)

Date	Meeting details	Refer
17 September 2024	Audit and Risk Committee	Attachment
5 August 2024	Arts and Culture Committee	Attachment
2 December 2024	Arts and Culture Committee	Attachment

Resolution:

(Moved: Councillor H Benton/Councillor A Winters)

That Council notes the minutes of these Advisory Committees.

Carried

Attachments

- 1 17 September 2024 Audit and Risk Committee Minutes 
- 2 5 August 2024 - Arts and Culture Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes 
- 3 2 December 2024 - Arts and Culture Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes 

19. Notices of Motion

Nil

20. Urgent Business

21. Public Question Time

21.1	<p>Rod Cogan (1:08:35)</p> <p>RE: C86 Planning Scheme Amendment - Rezoning of Public Park Recreation Zone to Public Use Zone for the construction of a sewerage treatment facility.</p> <p>Question – Does Council consider it appropriate and justifiable for the proponent, Bislake Pty Ltd, to financially benefit from the rezoning of public recreation land to satisfy sewerage treatment requirements necessary to facilitate the development of 233 plus lots on Lot2 PS744661D, their privately owned property.</p> <p><i>Director Stephen Swart responded: The Planning and Environment Act allows proponents to propose Planning Scheme Amendments. In this case the proposal includes the development of an Integrated Water Management System to facilitate not only the development on the proponent's land but to also facilitate development elsewhere.</i></p> <p><i>The merits of the proposal will be considered by an independent Panel and the Panel will make recommendations to Council.</i></p>
21.2	<p>June Anderson (1:10:03)</p> <p>RE: C86 Planning Scheme Amendment – Open Space Equity</p> <p>Question – Looking at the width of the streets and quality of park and green spaces within Arlington Park Estate and from the images purported on the advertising board for Stage 5 of Warby View Estates (also used on Real Estate websites), why is Council willing to accept the absolute bare minimum 5% open space requirements of development on the southern side of Wangaratta? Do you want your legacy as a Councillor to be represented by "the bare minimum"?</p> <p><i>Director Stephen Swart responded: The Wangaratta Planning Scheme requires an open space contribution of 5% for residential subdivisions. The proposal makes provision for more than 5% open space.</i></p> <p><i>The merits of the proposal will be considered by an independent Panel and the Panel will make recommendations to Council.</i></p>

21.3	<p>Jenny Hart (1:11:06)</p> <p>RE: C86 Planning Scheme Amendment - Planning Panel Representation</p> <p>Question – Have council engaged the services of an external planning consultancy company to represent Council at the Planning Panel Hearings, scheduled in March and May 2025? If Council has engaged external consultants, please explain why and the objective of such representation?</p> <p><i>Director Stephen Swart responded: Council has not engaged an external consultant to represent it at the Panel hearing.</i></p>
21.4	<p>Tony Roman (1:11:46)</p> <p>Re - C86 Planning Scheme Amendment - Traffic Management</p> <p>Question – When Milnes Creek Drive was initially built, the road was not designed for the traffic capacity of the high density proposed in Pln24/2024. At least One Third (1/3) of the 233 lots, approximately 76 lots, will use the shortest route to enter/exit via Milnes Creek Drive, then up Wenham’s Lane or onto the smaller residential roads (Bradbury Drive, Thomas Wedge Drive, Donovan Drive) towards Cribbes Road. What is Councils plan for managing the increased traffic volumes in these local streets and the increased traffic flow onto Murdoch Road.</p> <p><i>Director Stephen Swart responded: Council required Traffic Impact Assessment to be completed and submitted with the proposal. Submissions were received about this aspect during the public exhibition of the proposal. The independent Panel will consider this, and other relevant issues and will make recommendations to Council about the merits of the proposal.</i></p> <p>Suggests Council redesign the roads.</p> <p><i>Director Stephen Swart responded: It's important to reflect where we are at in this process. Council decided at the last meeting for this item to go to an independent Panel – that is the place where these matters should be discussed.</i></p>

21.5	<p>Jenny Hart (1:15:33)</p> <p>Clarification requested from Director Swart – The hearing only allows 10 minutes – how do we introduce such complicated topics. Can we follow up with meetings with you for assistance?</p> <p><i>Director Swart responded: Happy to have a conversation about the Panel process and how that works, we would unfortunately not be able to give you advice as to how to make your submission or how to go about making your arguments at that Panel, that would be up to you.</i></p> <p><i>The Panel process is controlled by Planning Panels Victoria and they set the rules around them, so you would have received correspondence from them directly, and they may ask you questions like do you actually want to talk to your submission or not, and then they allocate time in accordance with that. But just to go back to where I started, I would be very happy to talk to anybody about how that planning process works.</i></p>
21.6	<p>Lucca Grassi (1:17:39)</p> <p>RE: C86 Planning Scheme Amendment - Integrated Water Management Facility</p> <p>Question – If the Integrated Water Management Facility to be constructed for sewerage treatment is claimed to be a sustainability innovation why isn't the facility being placed within the land being subdivided for the use and benefit of the 233 subdivided lots and their immediate surrounds? Given all other subdivisions in Wangaratta are now required to put sewerage tanks underground within their own subdivided land area, why is this facility being placed on public land and constructed as an above ground facility?</p> <p><i>Director Stephen Swart responded: Underground sewerage tanks referred to that are associated with other residential developments elsewhere in Wangaratta are all located within public land. In the case of Amendment C86, the proposed sewerage solution will be further considered through the independent Panel process.</i></p> <p>I can't comprehend how they'd put in a treatment plant with a pond in public parkland. Why not on the other side of Clarkes Lane where it is farming land, why is it between houses?</p> <p><i>Director Stephen Swart responded: this proposed facility will not just facilitate this development, but those beyond that. It will also have additional public benefits in that it will produce recycled water that can be used for irrigation on sports fields, including Council's sports facilities, but also at the school there. The issue about the location is that this is the proposal that we have in front of us. This is the proposal that would have to be considered, and will be considered, through the Panel. I've mentioned tonight, quite boringly so, that the Panel will look at the merits of this proposal and make recommendations to Council. That was just my way of reiterating that when it comes to the merits of any part of this proposal, including this part of the proposal, the Panel is the right process right now, and Council will look at those recommendations from the Panel report when they become available.</i></p>

21.7	<p>Jenny (1:21:44)</p> <p>Re: C86 Planning Scheme Amendment</p> <p>Question regarding traffic – Is Council working with Vic Roads and with the developers to look at strategies as to how the local traffic, the rate payers of Wangaratta, can get out of their streets and onto Murdoch Road?</p> <p><i>Director Stephen Swart responded: I think my response will sound very similar to a previous response where Council required a Traffic Impact Assessment to be completed and submitted with the proposal. A Traffic Impact Assessment was completed and considers those types of things you mentioned. I understand that people might not be entirely happy with what they are seeing in this proposal, not just from a traffic point of view, but also from a range of other perspectives, and the place to make your arguments about that is at the Panel hearing.</i></p> <p>Has Council taken into account that more subdivisions are to occur out in that area. Council needs to have input with the developers.</p> <p><i>Mayor Grant responded: yes they will have those discussions at that time.</i></p> <p>How recent was that Traffic Assessment done?</p> <p><i>Director Stephen Swart responded: I'm not certain about the exact date, but I'm aware that some concerns were raised about when the traffic counts were done as part of that Traffic Impact Assessment. I'm also aware that the proponents repeated some of those traffic counts because of that feedback.</i></p>
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21.8	<p>Claire Russell (1:25:49)</p> <p>Re: Merriwa Park</p> <p>What is the state of play for the pumping system in the lagoons?</p> <p><i>Director Marcus Goonan responded: No further update since the email I sent to you on 14/01/2025</i></p> <p><i>The piece of work that we promised that we were doing has been installed, that's the 65mm pump line all the way down to the river. The reality is, once it gets as dry as it is, it physically can't pump enough water to continue to maintain the lagoon in a pristine fashion. We need to understand, again, and I know that you accept, that it has been extremely dry, these things will dry out during dry periods. Part of the reason why the fountains haven't been running is 1) try not to ruin the pumps because obviously there's quite a lot of silt in the bottom at the moment, but also that evaporation doesn't have a huge benefit, but it does have some benefit. We continue to try to manage the water levels in those lagoons, but what we really need is some rain.</i></p> <p>The walls of the lagoon are also continuing to deteriorate and crumble. Is there any money in the budget to do some repairs there?</p> <p><i>Mayor Irene Grant responded: Budget discussions will be coming up and the community can put in their submissions then.</i></p> <p>Is there some plan with the gardening team to remove some of the Phragmites?</p> <p><i>Director Marcus Goonan responded: Yes there is, but now is not the time to do that because the ecosystem, as you rightly pointed out down there is pretty fragile without a significant amount of water, so yes, we have some plans to deal with some of the Phragmites down there, it's just we need the water levels to be back up and much higher to do that. The other thing that it does cause, of course, when we remove the Phragmites, is it will cause a lot more cloudiness in the water which then impacts the water quality and the animals that are in it. It also reduces the amount of water in the lagoons obviously, taking them out, so it does have a number of knock on effects, that's why we just have to wait until the right time of year.</i></p>
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21.9	<p>Tom James (1:32:06)</p> <p>Questions - A very large and old River redgum was recently felled at 23-49 Parfitt Road.</p> <p>Are council aware of this removal of native vegetation?</p> <p>Were permits issued for its removal and if so why as nothing could possibly be built on the land it occupied?</p> <p>If no permits were issued, what is councils response to the illegal removal of this ancient tree. It should be noted that other native vegetation has been removed and large limbs and boughs from other River Red gums have been cut.</p> <p>Will the arborists who undertook the work be questioned if the works did not have permits as they also should be held responsible for illegal works and not be able to claim ignorance.</p> <p>I trust that this removal will be investigated by council and action taken if found to be without permits.</p> <p><i>Director Stephen Swart responded: Council officers have been in contact with the owners of the land about this matter. The owners are of the view the removal of the vegetation on the land did not require a planning permit as it is exempt under the Wangaratta Planning Scheme. Council officers have commenced a process of confirming this.</i></p>
21.10	<p>Joan McKenzie (1:33:30)</p> <p>Re: C86 Planning Scheme Amendment</p> <p>Concerned about quality of life of people going to live in that estate. No green space or backyard space for children to play.</p> <p><i>Mayor Irene Grant responded: there is demand for smaller lot sizes, and most estates now offer a variety of options.</i></p> <p><i>Director Stephen Swart responded: In terms of the design of the proposal, it certainly does include a variety of lot sizes, including smaller ones, and that's a requirement under the Planning Scheme to ensure that there's products, housing products, on the market for different uses or different needs.</i></p> <p><i>Green space is above the required 5% as per the Planning Scheme. The Panel will assess.</i></p>

21.11	<p>Rod Cogan (1:38:30)</p> <p>Will the bores in the area be decommissioned as mentioned by North East Water representative?</p> <p><i>Director Stephen Swart responded: No, I have not heard anything about that.</i></p> <p><i>Mayor Irene Grant responded: We will take it on notice and talk to North East Water.</i></p>
21.12	<p>John Bock (1:40:34)</p> <p>Former Municipal Engineer</p> <p>Re: C86 Planning Scheme Amendment</p> <p>Council had the opportunity to consider rezoning this land prior to this development. Because it's done with this proposal, the public have lost the ability to oppose.</p> <p>Why has Council considered this joint proposal?</p> <p><i>Director Stephen Swart responded: early on, when this proposal was discussed with us at Council, we certainly considered not doing a combined process and having the land proposed for rezoning first, which would go through the similar process to the one that we are following now so that people would have the opportunity to have a say about the rezoning only. They would have no details about what is being proposed on the land in terms of housing design, lot sizes, where open space is going to be, where roads will be, none of that would be available. The other thing we wouldn't know anything about is the way sewerage treatment would work in this case. Because of that, and the public benefit that was talked about relating to the treatment of sewerage, and recycled water being made available to irrigation, and also the additional capacity that the treatment plant will deliver for development outside of this land, we thought it would be better to do a combined process. That way people get the full picture of what's being proposed, and we also get an opportunity to, I guess, safeguard some of those community benefits through planning permit conditions.</i></p> <p><i>Draft planning permit conditions were exhibited as part of this proposal and to me that's a big opportunity for people to look at. If this development goes ahead, these are all the conditions that will have to be met, and those conditions could be amended by the Panel, so the Panel could recommend changes to those conditions. In my mind there were very clear reasons for us to say lets put the entire development out to the community in one go, not just a rezoning with no detail about what potentially goes on that land in the future.</i></p>

21.13	<p>Colin Henderson (1:46:54)</p> <p>Director Swart mentioned the sewerage treatment plant is for this development and for the “development beyond”. What is that other development?</p> <p><i>Director Stephen Swart responded: if I’m remembering correctly, this proposal is for 233 residential lots, and the proposal is that the treatment plant would provide an additional capacity for another 100 lots outside of this land. Where they are has not been identified, it just provides additional capacity within our system to accommodate another 100 lots. As you know, the capacity of our treatment system has been a challenge for us for a few years and this is a way to help with that.</i></p> <p>So school gets the water, other people may use the water during the summer time, winter time we’ve got an excess of water. How are we going to prevent another Wangaratta sausage factory odour spreading in the community?</p> <p><i>Director Stephen Swart responded: That’s one of the points I made earlier, does the excess water go into the creek, that’s certainly the proposal at this point in time. One thing to note is that this facility will need to meet all EPA requirements, so water will have to be treated to a specific standard before it can be released into the creek. They will have to get an EPA licence before they can go ahead with the operation of this facility.</i></p> <p>Re: Wangaratta Woodworkers Club</p> <p>Restoration of the gates which are now on display at the park [The Stockbridge]. We were told there would be a covering for those gates to preserve them for the future. When will the covering be put in place?</p> <p><i>Mayor Irene Grant responded: I have never heard that, but yes I will ask about it.</i></p>
21.14	<p>Jill Lindquist (1:50:06)</p> <p>Question 1 – regarding The Draft Gambling Policy- was this adopted in full?</p> <p><i>Director Marcus Goonan responded: Yes, both the Policy to Reduce Harm From Gambling and the Strategic Plan to Reduce Harm From Gambling were adopted at the March 2024 Council meeting.</i></p> <p>Question 2 – RCOW membership as a council with the Alliance for Gambling Reform was promised at the March 2024 meeting at Whitfield. My last enquiry in October 2024 said that the council was ‘in discussion’ with AGR. Has membership been finalised?</p> <p><i>Director Marcus Goonan responded: No, it hasn’t been finalised yet. Council Officers met with AGR in May 2024 and received a membership outline. After confirming our intent to join, we didn’t receive an invoice. We followed up in June and November 2024, but received no response. We plan to reach out to AGR again in early March.</i></p>

21.15	<p>Dean Hurlston</p> <p>Question 1 – What is the approximate cost per public Council meeting for Councillor and staff meals, refreshments and beverages? (If applicable).</p> <p><i>Response - Council only provide catering for the four Council meetings held at Rural Council Meetings each year. No catering is provided at meetings held at the Rural City of Wangaratta Council offices. Each meeting has a catering budget of \$300. Catering is provided for Councillors, Council staff and Community members in attendance at these meetings.</i></p> <p><i>Council reach out to local volunteer organisations, hall committees and/or local cafes for our catering of rural meetings to ensure we are supporting local organisations and businesses within these communities.</i></p>
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22. Confidential Business

Nil

23. Closure of Meeting

The Meeting closed at 7:51pm.