yass valley council

the country the people

Ordinary Meeting of Council

Thursday 24 July 2025
4:00 PM
Yass High School
Grampian Street, Yass

ATTACHMENTS TO REPORTS

Ordinary Meeting of Council

Attachments to Reports

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XX July 2025

The Hon. Chris Minns MP
Premier
kogarah@parliament.nsw.gov.au

The Hon. Daniel Mookhey MLC
Treasurer
office@treasurer.nsw.gov.au

The Hon. Ron Hoenig MP
Minister for Local Government
office@hoenig.minister.nsw.gov.au

Dear Premier, Treasurer and Minister

Cost shifting onto Yass Valley Council

I write to you on behalf of Yass Valley Council to seek your commitment to work in partnership with the local government sector to address the issue of cost shifting. Cost shifting arises where the NSW Government forces councils to assume responsibility for infrastructure, services and regulatory functions without commensurate funding or funding mechanisms.

The unrelenting growth of cost shifting to councils, coupled with rate pegging, is increasingly eroding any possibility of financially sustainable local government and risking the capacity of councils to deliver the essential infrastructure and services required by their communities.

The latest research commissioned by Local Government NSW (LGNSW)[1] shows that the increase in cost shifting has continued unabated by various NSW Government policies.

The cost shifting report, produced by independent consultants Morrison Low for the 2023/2024 financial year, reveals that $1.5 billion of expense has been imposed onto councils. This is an increase of approximately $140 million (10 per cent) since the last report for the 2021/22 financial year, when the total cost shift was estimated at $1.36 billion.

This also now represents an inflated cost of $497.40 for each ratepayer, an increase of $36.72 from 2021/22.

For Yass Valley Council, this cost impost coupled with rate pegging, means that:

- Council can only deliver the basic critical needs of the community in relation to community infrastructure
- Council is heavily reliant on external grants to deliver community infrastructure that meets the needs of the community noting that Council is often unable to meet state and federal co-contributions requirements. Examples Gravel resheeting, heavy patching and road resealing, the Yass main street and village masterplans, and pool upgrade.

[1] Cost shifting report available online at www.lgnsw.org.au/costshifting

- External funding is needed to build resilience into infrastructure such as 'building back better' our roads, culverts, and bridges, along with meeting community service level expectations for road maintenance.

This decades-long practice of cost shifting is continuing to undermine the financial sustainability of the local government sector.

The November 2024 report of the parliamentary inquiry into the ability of councils to fund infrastructure and services recognised the impact of cost shifting and called for the NSW Government to identify opportunities to reduce cost shifting to local government. This call must be heard and acted upon.

I therefore urge you to take immediate action to address this through a combination of regulatory reform and appropriate funding.

Addressing this longstanding matter would demonstrate a commitment from your government to work in partnership with councils for the benefit of the communities we all serve.

For further information or to arrange a meeting, please contact Mayor Jasmin Jones at jjones@yass.nsw.gov.au or on Mobile 0427 830 910 or Yass Valley Executive Assistant Ms Chloe Johnson cjohnson@yass.nsw.gov.au.

Your sincerely,

Cr Jasmin Jones
Yass Valley Mayor

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TERMS OF REFERENCE
YASS VALLEY COUNCIL CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER PERFORMANCE REVIEW PANEL

1. Role

The Performance Review Panel's role includes:

- Conducting performance reviews
- Reporting the findings and recommendations of those reviews to Council
- Development of the performance agreement.

2. Membership

Membership of the Panel comprises:

- The Mayor
- Deputy Mayor
- A Councillor nominated by Council, and
- A Councillor nominated by the Chief Executive Officer.

3. Independent Facilitator

An independent person with relevant local government skills and experience will be invited to act as Facilitator on the Panel as a non-voting member. This person will be selected by the Mayor in consultation with the Panel.

4. Responsibilities

The Panel is responsible for the management of all matters associated with the Chief Executive Officer's performance including the conduct of performance reviews.

All Councillors on the Panel should receive training on the undertaking of Performance Reviews, establishment of the Performance Agreement, and Oversight of the Chief Executive Officer prior to the Panel convening.

The purpose of the Panel is to concentrate on constructive dialogue about the Chief Executive Officer's performance against all sections of the current Performance Agreement.

All Councillors not on the Panel can contribute to the process by providing feedback to the Mayor on the Chief Executive Officer's performance. All Councillors should be notified of relevant dates in the performance review cycle and be kept advised of the panel's findings and recommendations.

5. Meetings

Meetings will be held at least twice yearly to be arranged by the Mayor. Meeting outcomes and recommendations will be reported to Council in Closed Session.

6. Reference Resource

The Office of Local Government issued a S23A guideline to assist with the recruitment, oversight and performance management of general managers. Guidelines issued under S23A of the Act must be taken into consideration by Councils.

17 July 2025

(02) 6226 1477
council@yass.nsw.gov.au

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209 Comur Street Yass
PO Box 6 YASS NSW 2582

Doc ID: 836455

16 July 2025

Office of the Hon. Jihad Dib, MP
Shop 21. Broadway Plaza,
Punch bowl NSW 2196

CC: To The Honourable Jihad Dib, NSW Minister for Emergency Services, The Hon. Ron Hoenig, NSW Minister for Local Government, The Hon. Jenny Aitchison, Minister for Roads, and Minister for Regional Transport, The Hon. Wendy Tuckerman, NSW Member for Goulburn, The Hon. Kristy McBain, Federal Minister for Emergency Management, Minister for Local Government & Territories, Minister for Regional Development and The Hon. Michael McCormack, Federal Member for Riverina

Dear Jihad

Subject: Request for intervention for the retention of the CAFS CT511 in Yass fleet.

I am writing to urgently request your immediate intervention to retain the 4WD CAFS CT511 vehicle at Yass Fire & Rescue. I understand this vehicle, that was hard fought for by our community, has been operationally directed for removal to Cootamundra.
During a recent meeting with our local emergency services leadership, it was clear that there has been no consultation from FRNSW leadership regarding this decision with the Yass 511 Fire & Rescue team, the LEOCOM (Local Emergency Operation Controller), Yass Police Hume District, or the Yass Valley Council through the Local Emergency Management Committee. Additionally, I've been informed that no one at the Cootamundra station is currently qualified to operate the CAFS vehicle.

Removing this vehicle would leave our Yass Valley first responders dangerously under-resourced for Fire & Rescue operations across our vast Local Government Area (LGA) and in supporting neighbouring areas. Yass 511 is predominantly a rescue service, with 70% of its crew's rescue activities occurring on three federal highways (Hume, Barton, and Federal), two state roads, five regional roads, and numerous urban-rural interfaces on local unsealed roads. The Yass Valley is also a known fatigue zone along the Hume Highway's heavy freight corridor, which is earmarked for PBS 3 vehicles under the NSW Government's South-East Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan. This will only increase the potential for more serious crashes requiring specialised teams including the Compressed Air Foam System truck and the greater crew lift ability of the CT511.

The Yass 511 team's foresight in delaying the transfer proved crucial during a serious Motor Vehicle Accident on the Hume Highway from Sunday, July 6th, to Monday, July 7th, at Gunning. Without this vehicle, ready with gear, the team would have been unable to adequately respond or safely transport relieving crews and gear for an event that spanned the evening into the early hours. This vehicle has also already been pivotal in flood and farm rescues due to its superior clearance and specialised equipment.

(02) 6226 1477
council@yass.nsw.gov.au

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PO Box 6 YASS NSW 2582

The Yass Valley is projected to experience significant population growth, primarily due to its desirable rural amenity adjacent to the ACT. The Yass Valley Settlement Strategy forecasts a population of around 28,000 by 2036, potentially reaching 43,950 by 2056. This growth is expected to be concentrated in Yass and Murrumbateman in the short to medium term, along with the unprecedented fast-tracking of the cross-border Parkwood Development 11,500 homes with 5,000 homes in NSW. The first development application into Yass Valley Council expected within 18 months if the border is not moved. The NSW Government will need to fortify existing services and create a strategic plan for their expansion to service our growing regional community.

I have attached a photo of the CAFS vehicle dedicated to the Yass 511 team and a photo illustrating just one of the problems possible when non-4WD vehicles are deployed in local Fire & Rescue operations.





I look forward to discussing this in person with you, alongside the Member for Goulburn, the Hon. Wendy Tuckerman, on August 6th. I have every confidence that as Emergency Services Minister you will bring a regional rescue and cross-portfolio perspective to the value of the retention of this crucial vehicle in a strategic regional and heavy haulage transport corridor community.

Best regards,

Jasmin Jones
Mayor
Yass Valley Council



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Yass Valley Council
PO Box 6
209 Comur Street
YASS NSW 2582
Telephone: 02 6226 1477
Email: council@yass.nsw.gov.au

Important Notice!

This map is not a precise survey document. Accurate locations can only be determined by a survey on the ground.

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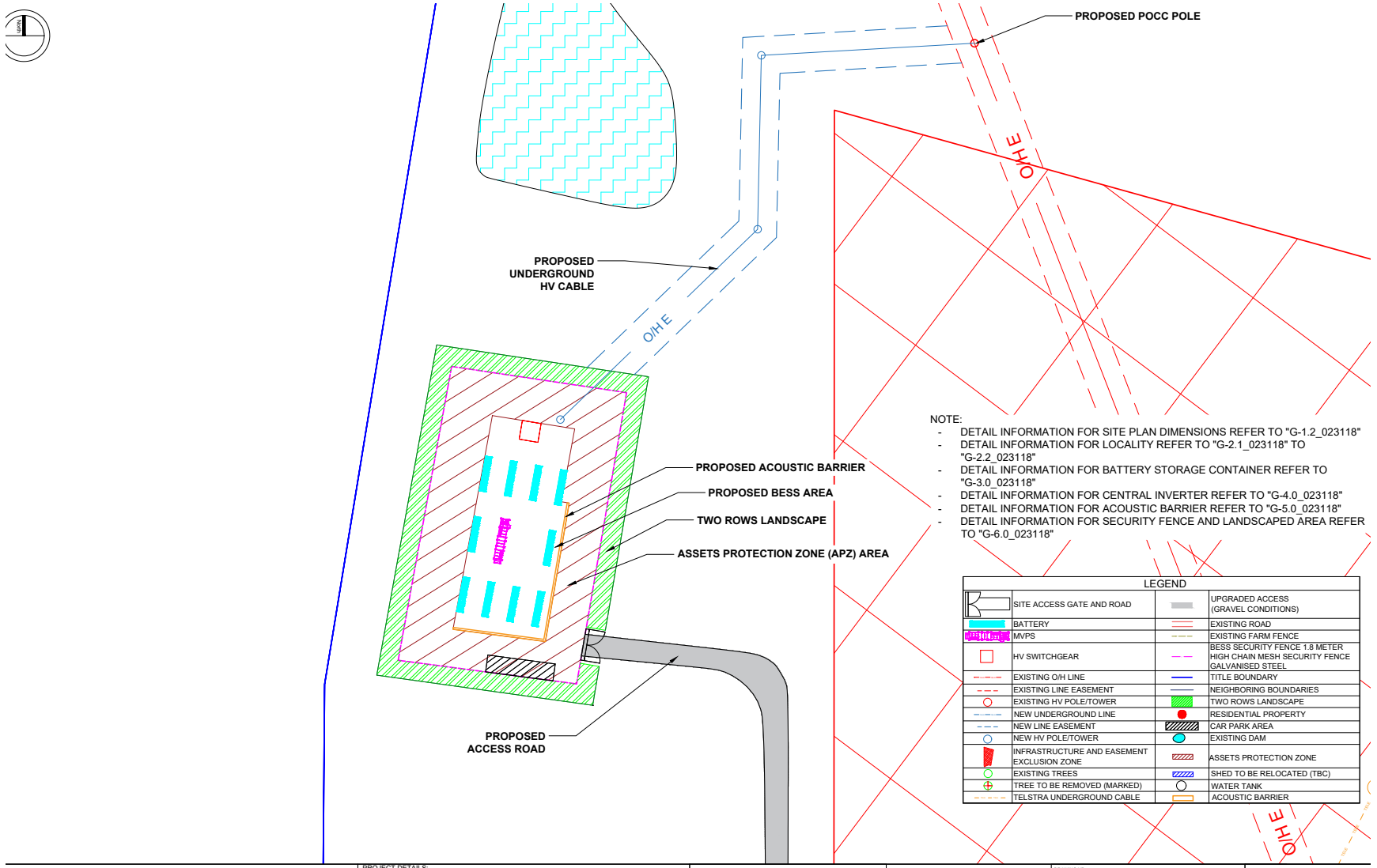
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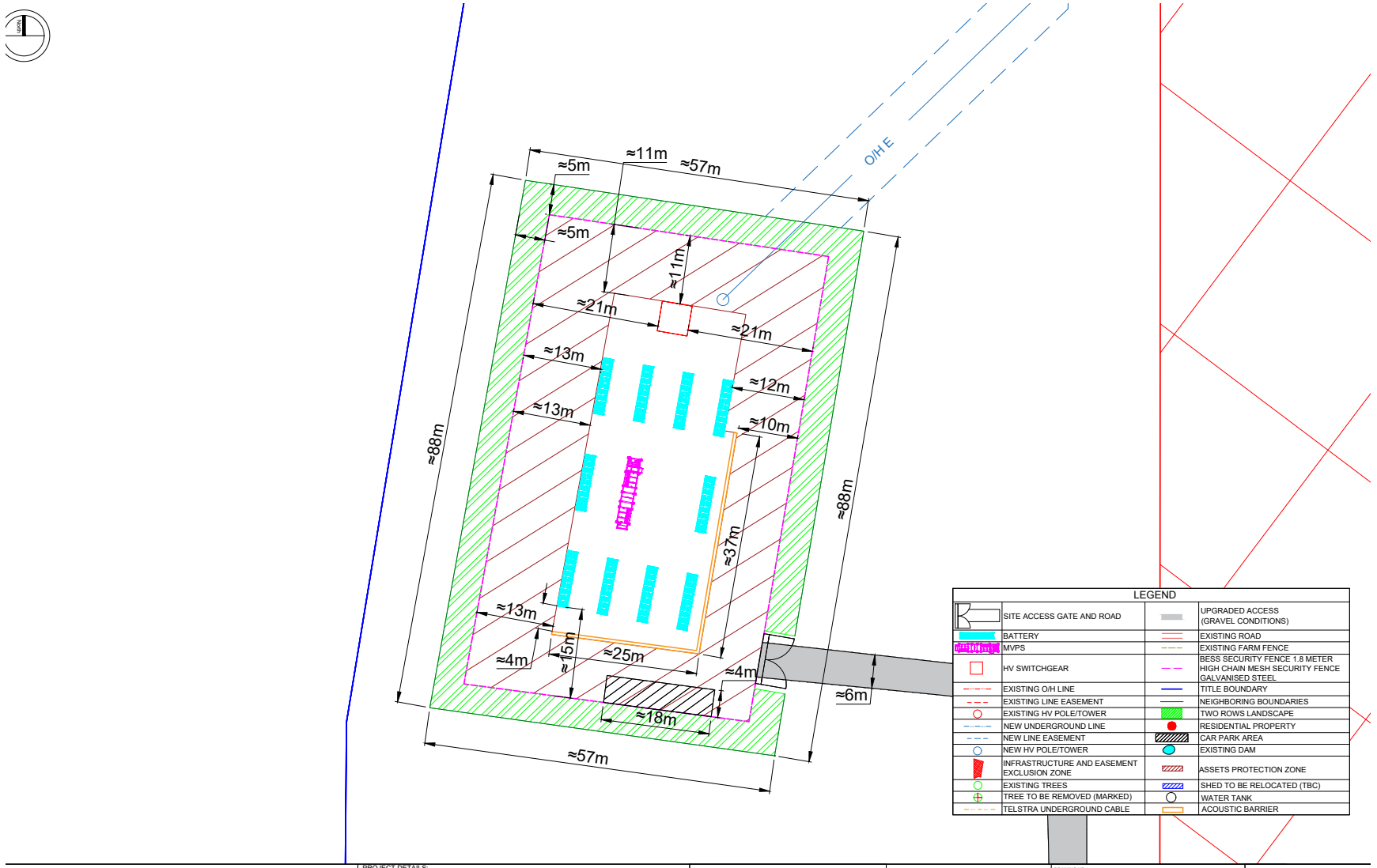
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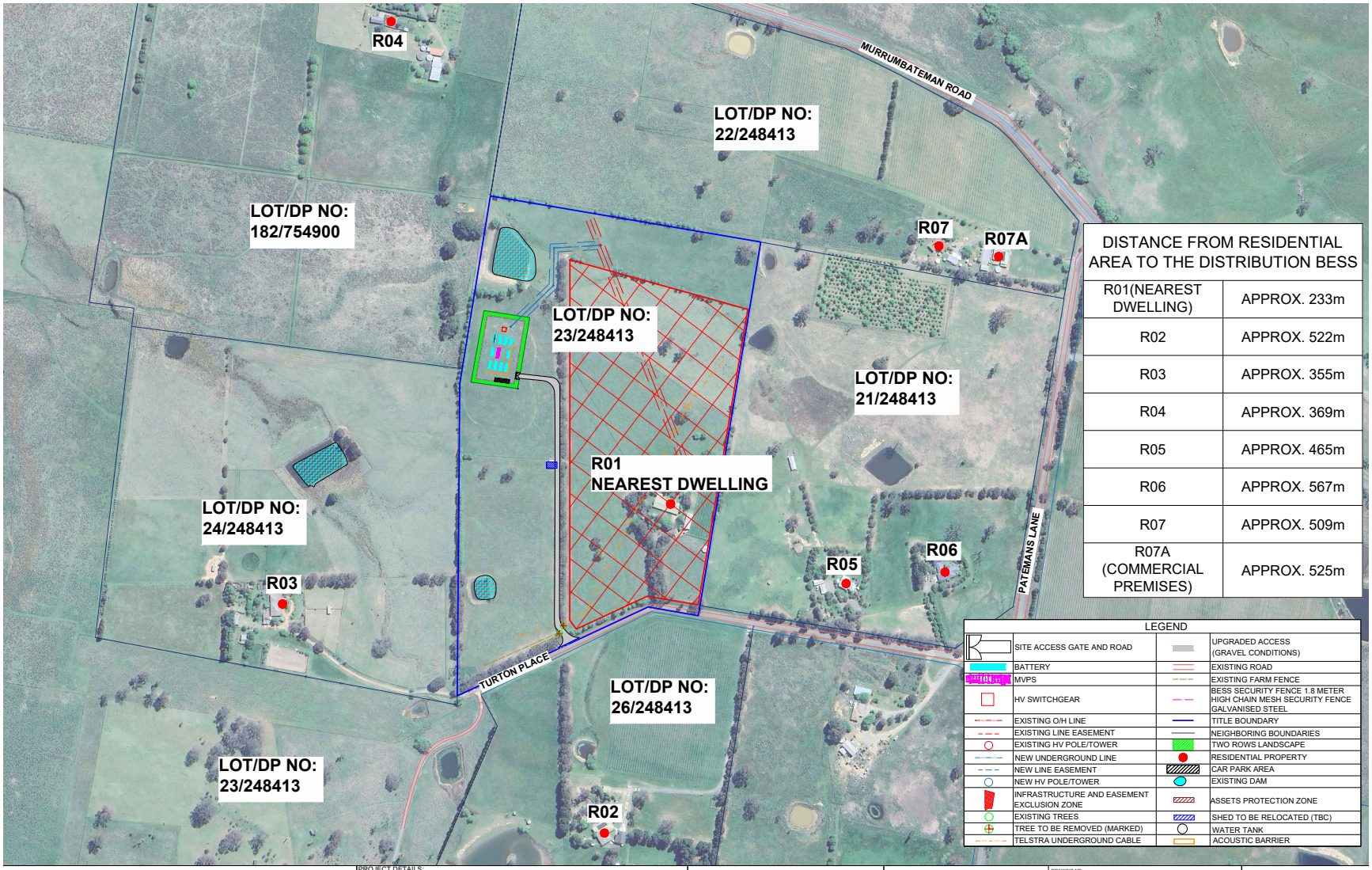
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Landowners notified

Map Scale: 1:9028 at A4


PROPOSED POCC POLE
O/H E
PROPOSED UNDERGROUND HV CABLE
O/H E
PROPOSED ACOUSTIC BARRIER
PROPOSED BESS AREA
TWO ROWS LANDSCAPE
ASSETS PROTECTION ZONE (APZ) AREA
PROPOSED ACCESS ROAD
O/H E
NOTE:
- DETAIL INFORMATION FOR SITE PLAN DIMENSIONS REFER TO "G-1.2_023118"
- DETAIL INFORMATION FOR LOCALITY REFER TO "G-2.1_023118" TO "G-2.2_023118"
- DETAIL INFORMATION FOR BATTERY STORAGE CONTAINER REFER TO "G-3.0_023118"
- DETAIL INFORMATION FOR CENTRAL INVERTER REFER TO "G-4.0_023118"
- DETAIL INFORMATION FOR ACOUSTIC BARRIER REFER TO "G-5.0_023118"
- DETAIL INFORMATION FOR SECURITY FENCE AND LANDSCAPED AREA REFER TO "G-6.0_023118"
LEGEND
SITE ACCESS GATE AND ROAD
UPGRADED ACCESS (GRAVEL CONDITIONS)
BATTERY
EXISTING ROAD
MVPS
EXISTING FARM FENCE
HV SWITCHGEAR
BESS SECURITY FENCE 1.8 METER HIGH CHAIN MESH SECURITY FENCE GALVANISED STEEL
EXISTING O/H LINE
TITLE BOUNDARY
EXISTING LINE EASEMENT
NEIGHBORING BOUNDARIES
EXISTING HV POLE/TOWER
TWO ROWS LANDSCAPE
NEW UNDERGROUND LINE
RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY
NEW LINE EASEMENT
CAR PARK AREA
NEW HV POLE/TOWER
EXISTING DAM
INFRASTRUCTURE AND EASEMENT EXCLUSION ZONE
ASSETS PROTECTION ZONE
EXISTING TREES
SHED TO BE RELOCATED (TBC)
TREE TO BE REMOVED (MARKED)
WATER TANK
TELSTRA UNDERGROUND CABLE
ACOUSTIC BARRIER
REVISIONS
REV | STATUS | DESCRIPTION | DATE | D.B. | C.B.
A | FA | INITIAL ISSUE | 30/04/2024 | XZ | AJ
B | FA | INITIAL ISSUE | 31/10/2024 | XZ | AJ
C | FA | DETAILS AMENDED | 20/11/2024 | XZ | AJ
D | FA | ACOUSTIC BARRIER DETAILS UPDATED | 11/04/2025 | FA | AJ
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MURRUMBATEMAN DISTRIBUTION BESS
3 TURTON PLACE MURRUMBATEMAN, NEW SOUTH WALES 2582
-34.9920, 149.04964
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O/H E
≈5m
≈11m
≈57m
≈5m
≈11m
≈21m
≈21m
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≈12m
≈13m
≈10m
≈88m
≈88m
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≈4m
≈15m
≈25m
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≈18m
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LEGEND
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UPGRADED ACCESS (GRAVEL CONDITIONS)
BATTERY
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MVPS
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DISTANCE FROM RESIDENTIAL AREA TO THE DISTRIBUTION BESS	
R01(NEAREST DWELLING)	APPROX. 233m
R02	APPROX. 522m
R03	APPROX. 355m
R04	APPROX. 369m
R05	APPROX. 465m
R06	APPROX. 567m
R07	APPROX. 509m
R07A (COMMERCIAL PREMISES)	APPROX. 525m

LEGEND

	SITE ACCESS GATE AND ROAD		UPGRADED ACCESS (GRAVEL CONDITIONS)
	BATTERY		EXISTING ROAD
	MVPS		EXISTING FARM FENCE
	HV SWITCHGEAR		BESS SECURITY FENCE 1.8 METER HIGH CHAIN MESH SECURITY FENCE GALVANISED STEEL
	EXISTING O/H LINE		TITLE BOUNDARY
	EXISTING LINE EASEMENT		NEIGHBORING BOUNDARIES
	EXISTING HV POLE/TOWER		TWO ROWS LANDSCAPE
	NEW UNDERGROUND LINE		RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY
	NEW LINE EASEMENT		CAR PARK AREA
	NEW HV POLE/TOWER		EXISTING DAM
	INFRASTRUCTURE AND EASEMENT EXCLUSION ZONE		ASSETS PROTECTION ZONE
	EXISTING TREES		SHED TO BE RELOCATED (TBC)
	TREE TO BE REMOVED (MARKED)		WATER TANK
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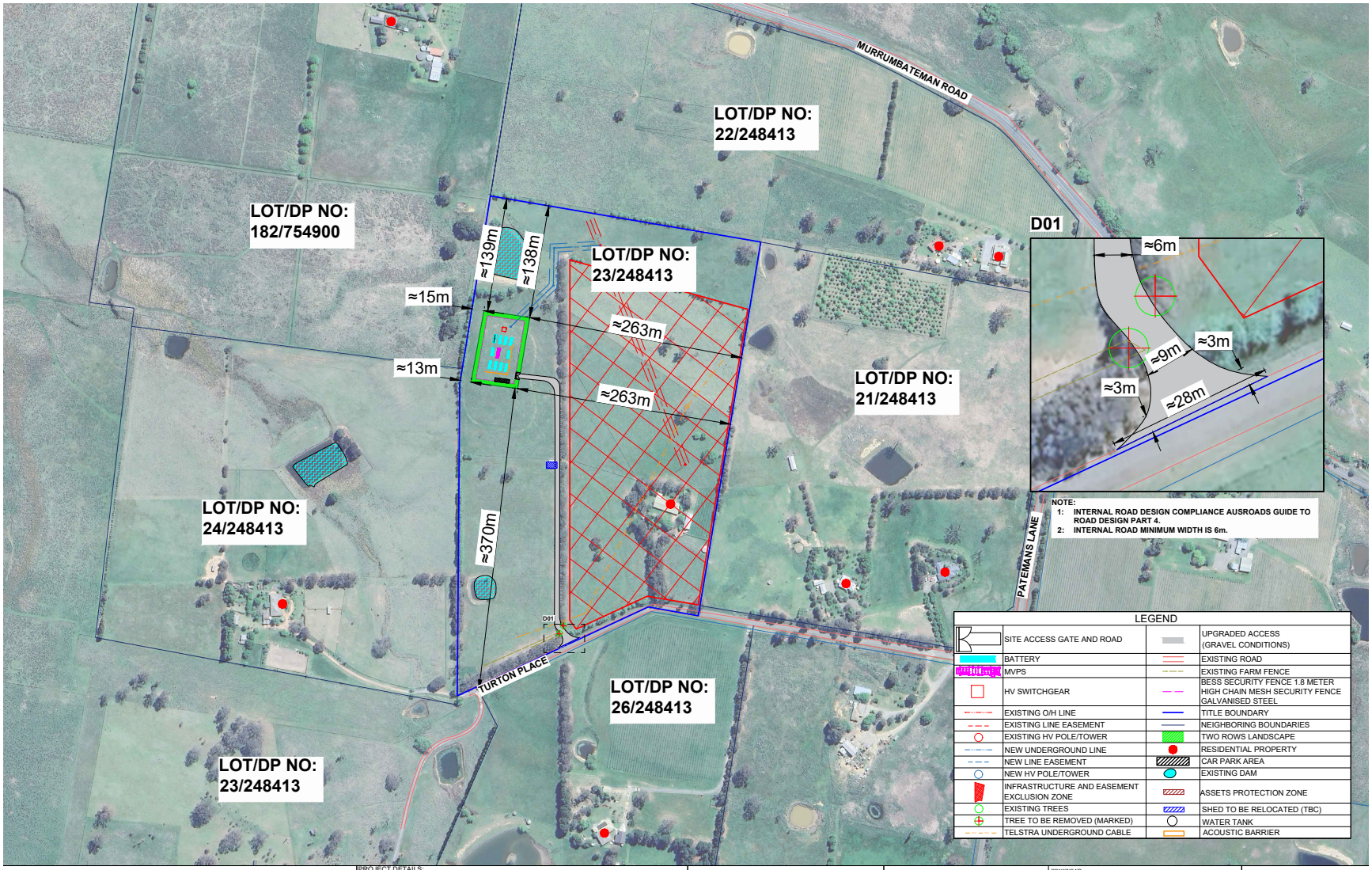
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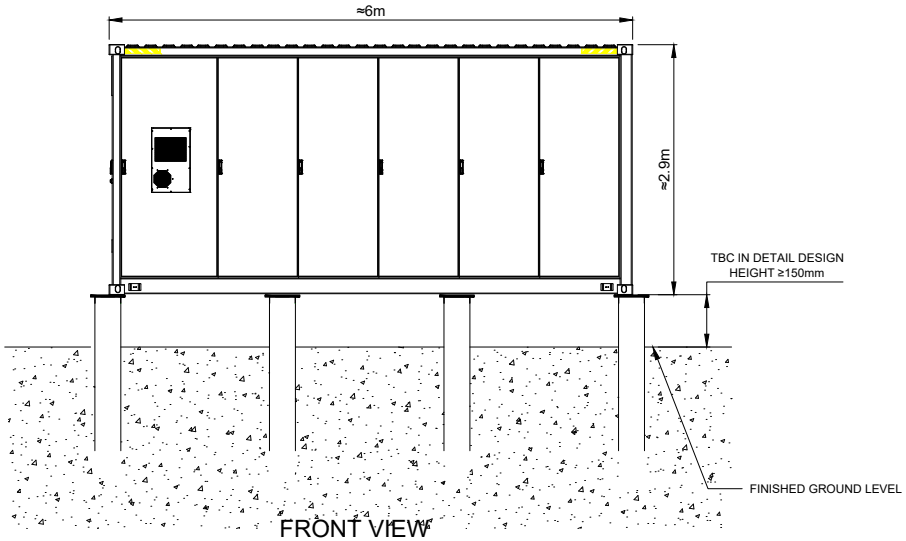
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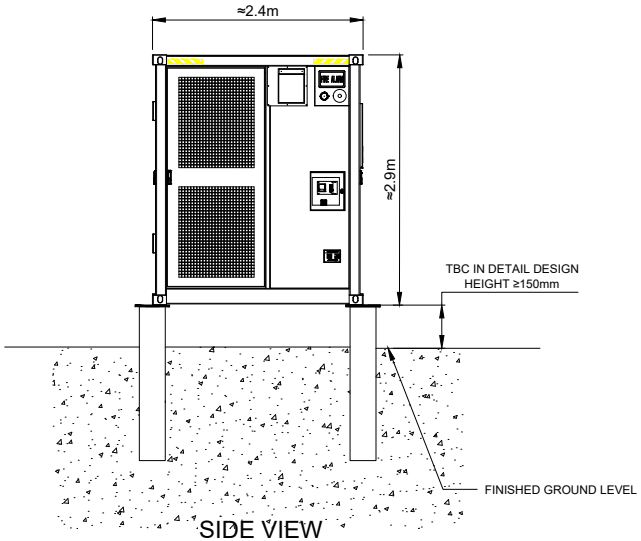
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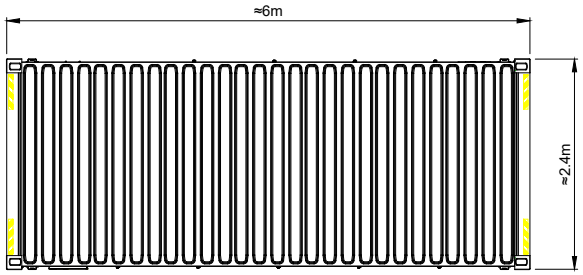

MURRUMBATEMAN ROAD
LOT/DP NO: 22/248413
LOT/DP NO: 182/754900
LOT/DP NO: 23/248413
LOT/DP NO: 21/248413
LOT/DP NO: 24/248413
LOT/DP NO: 26/248413
LOT/DP NO: 23/248413
≈139m
≈138m
≈15m
≈263m
≈13m
≈263m
≈370m
TURTON PLACE
PATEMANS LANE
D01
≈6m
≈3m
≈9m
≈3m
≈28m
NOTE:
1: INTERNAL ROAD DESIGN COMPLIANCE AUSROADS GUIDE TO ROAD DESIGN PART 4.
2: INTERNAL ROAD MINIMUM WIDTH IS 6m.
LEGEND
SITE ACCESS GATE AND ROAD
BATTERY
MVPS
HV SWITCHGEAR
EXISTING O/H LINE
EXISTING LINE EASEMENT
EXISTING HV POLE/TOWER
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FRONT VIEW



SIDE VIEW



TOP VIEW



TYPICAL ENERGY STORAGE CONTAINER

NOTE: MATERIAL FINISHES AND COLOUR PALLETE TBC IN DETAILED DESIGN ACCORDING TO MANUFACTURER SPECIFICATIONS.

REVISIONS

REV	STATUS	DESCRIPTION	DATE	D.B.	C.B.
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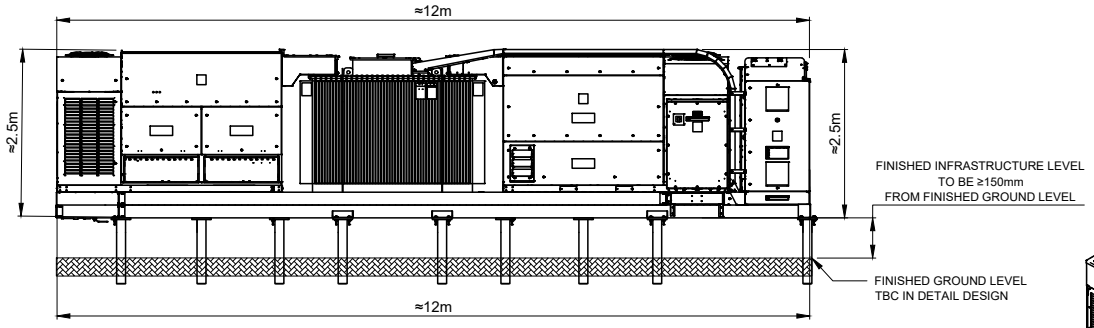
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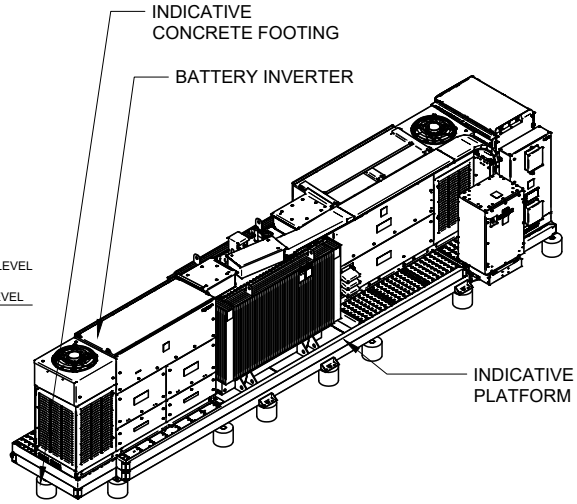
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SCALE : AS INDICATED	ISSUE : FOR APPROVAL	ISSUE DATE : 31/10/2024
SHEET SIZE: A3	PROJECT NO: 23118	REV. NO: B

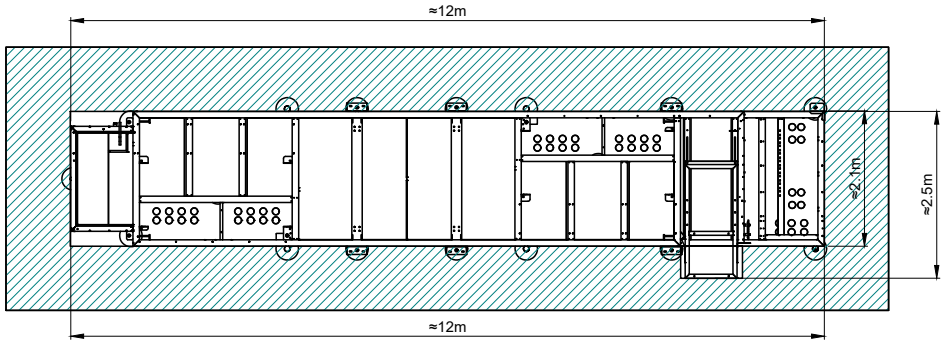
ACENERGY

MVPS FRONT VIEW

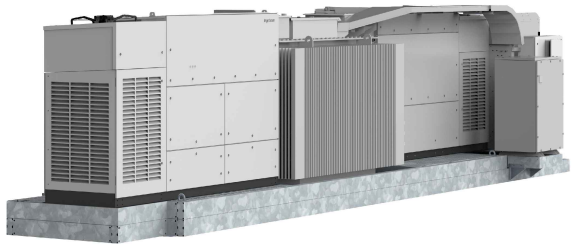




MVPS TOP VIEW



TYPICAL MVPS



NOTE: MATERIAL FINISHES AND COLOUR PALLETE TBC IN DETAILED DESIGN ACCORDING TO MANUFACTURER SPECIFICATIONS.

REVISIONS					
REV	STATUS	DESCRIPTION	DATE	D.B.	C.B.
A	FA	INITIAL ISSUE	13/12/23	XZ	AJ
B	FA	DETAILS AMENDED	31/10/24	XZ	AJ

PROJECT DETAILS: MURRUMBATEMAN DISTRIBUTION BESS
3 TURTON PLACE MURRUMBATEMAN, NEW SOUTH WALES 2582
-34.9920, 149.04964

CLIENT DETAILS: ACENERGY PTY LTD

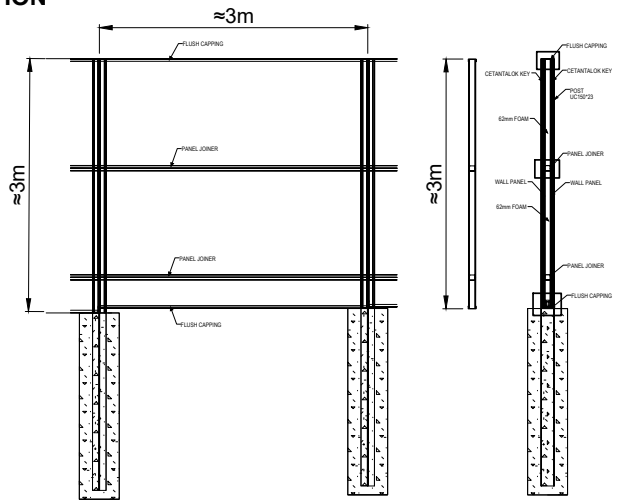
DRAWING TITLE: MVPS ELEVATIONS

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DRAWING NR: C-4.0_023118		
DRAWN BY : XZ	APPROVED BY : AJ	PROJECT MGR : LZ
SCALE : NO SCALE	ISSUE : FOR APPROVAL	ISSUE DATE : 31/10/2024
SHEET SIZE: A3	PROJECT NO: 23118	REV. NO: B

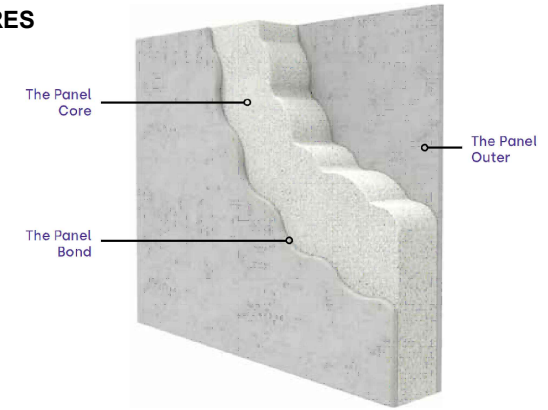
ACENERGY

SECTION



TYPICAL PANEL DETAIL AT 3000 MAX. HEIGHT

FEATURES



The Panel Core

- Termite resistant
- Superb compressive strength to weight ratio
- Absorbs minimal water - no mould or rotting
- Treated with Fire Retardant

The Panel Bond

- Full surface contact adhesion
- High grade Polyurethane glue

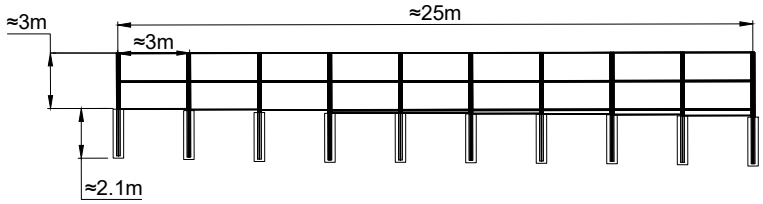
The Panel Outer

- Fire resistant & non-combustible
- Smooth finish - easy to apply paint or render
- Maintenance Free

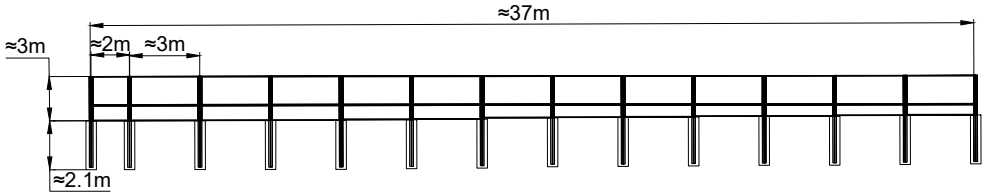
NOTE: MATERIAL FINISHES AND COLOUR PALLETE TBC IN DETAILED DESIGN ACCORDING TO MANUFACTURER SPECIFICATIONS.

ELEVATIONS

EAST TO WEST ALIGNMENT



NORTH SOUTH ALIGNMENT



REVISIONS

REV	STATUS	DESCRIPTION	DATE	D.B.	C.B.
A	FA	INITIAL ISSUE	11/04/25	FA	AJ

PROJECT DETAILS: MURRUMBATEMAN DISTRIBUTION BESS
3 TURTON PLACE MURRUMBATEMAN, NEW SOUTH WALES 2582
-34.9920, 149.04964

CLIENT DETAILS: ACENERGY PTY LTD

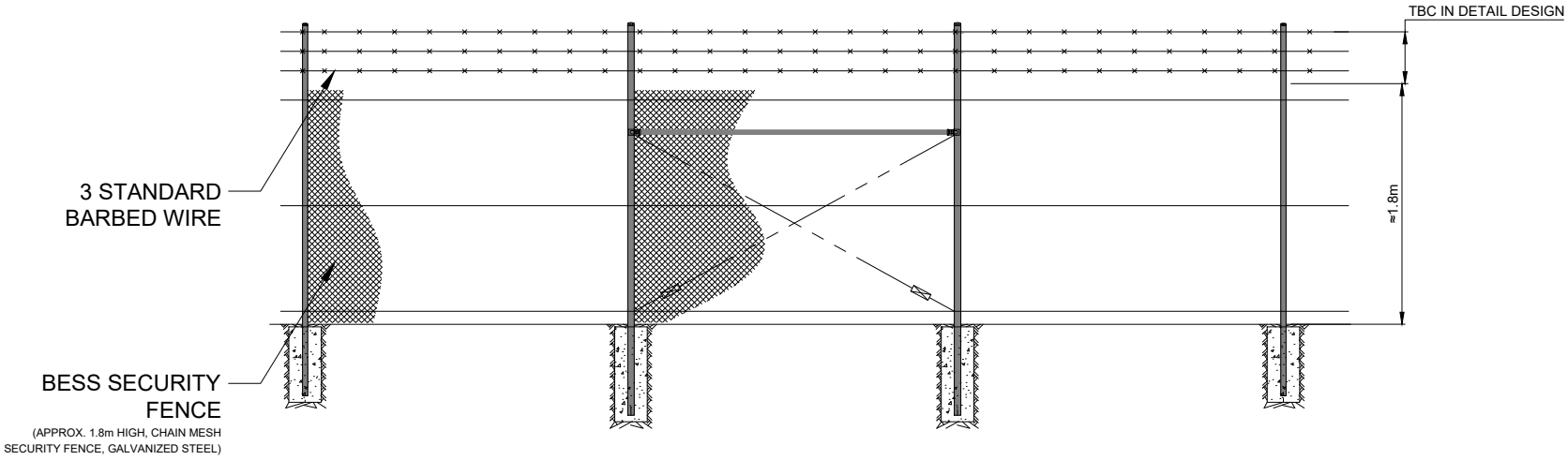
DRAWING TITLE: ACOUSTIC BARRIER GENERAL DETAILS (SECTION AND ELEVATIONS)

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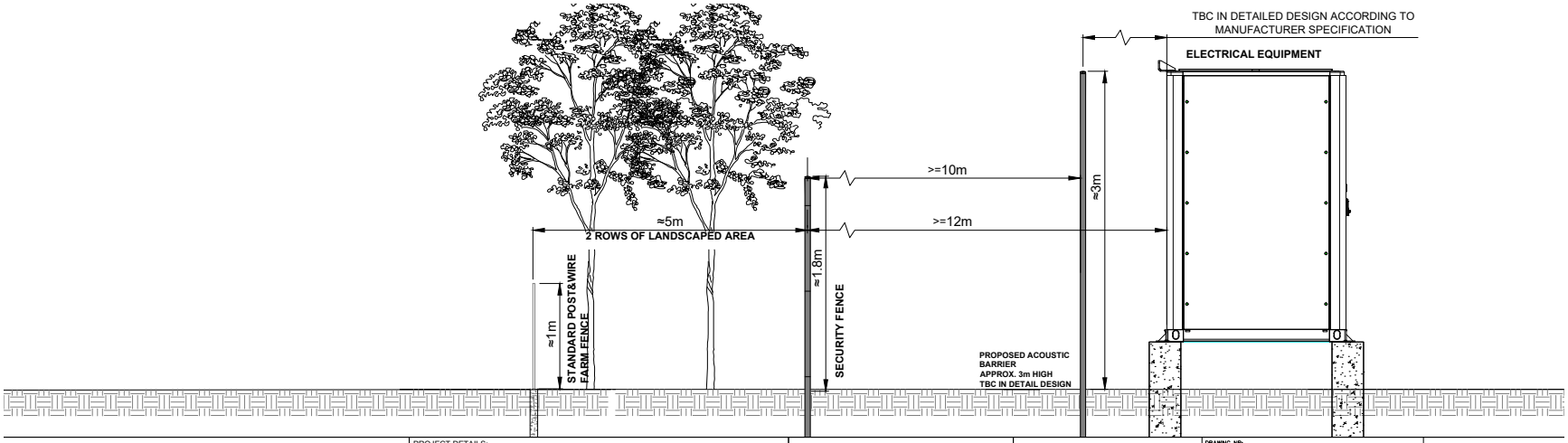
DRAWING NR: G-5.0_023118		
DRAWN BY : FA	APPROVED BY : AJ	PROJECT MGR : LZ
SCALE : NO SCALE	ISSUE : FOR APPROVAL	ISSUE DATE : 11/04/2025
SHEET SIZE: A3	PROJECT NO: 23118	REV. NO: A

ACENERGY

SECURITY FENCE FRONT VIEW



SECURITY FENCE AND TWO ROWS OF LANDSCAPE SIDE VIEW



REVISIONS					
REV	STATUS	DESCRIPTION	DATE	D.B.	C.B.
A	FA	INITIAL ISSUE	13/12/2023	XZ	AJ
B	FA	DETAILS AMENDED	20/11/2024	XZ	AJ

PROJECT DETAILS: MURRUMBATEMAN DISTRIBUTION BESS
3 TURTON PLACE MURRUMBATEMAN, NEW SOUTH WALES 2582
-34.8820, 149.04464

CLIENT DETAILS: ACENERGY PTY LTD

DRAWING TITLE: SECURITY FENCE & LANDSCAPE ELEVATIONS

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DRAWING NR:		
C-6.0_023118		
DRAWN BY : XZ	APPROVED BY : AJ	PROJECT MGR : LZ
SCALE : NOT SCALE	ISSUE : FOR APPROVAL	ISSUE DATE : 20/11/2024
SHEET SIZE: A3	PROJECT NO: 23118	REV. NO: B

ACENERGY

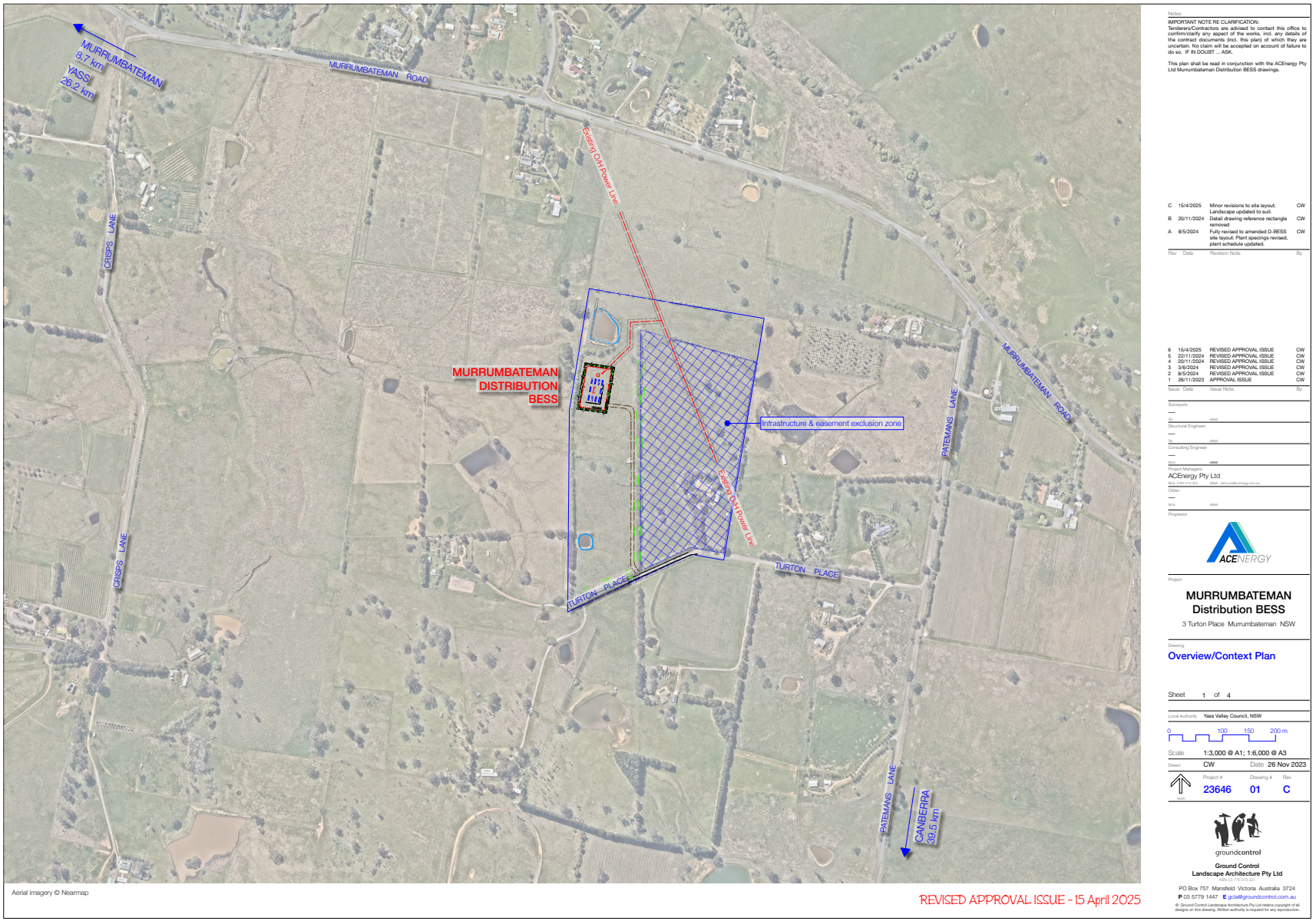
Premise

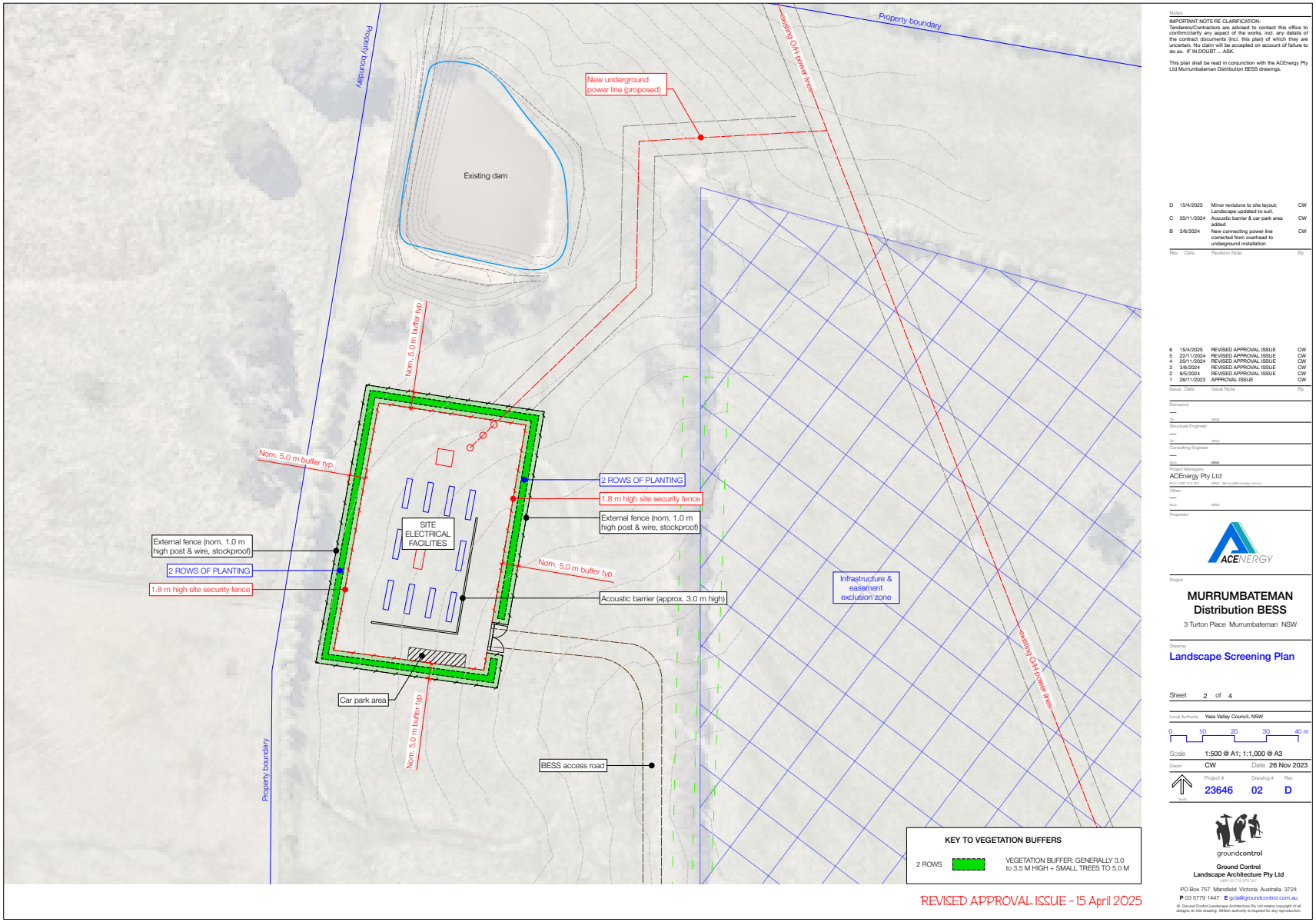
ATTACHMENT 6

REVISED LANDSCAPE PLAN

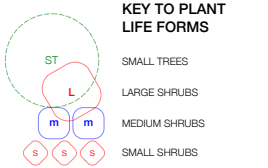


CREATING GREATER


MURRUMBATEMAN
8.7 km
YASS
26.2 km
MURRUMBATEMAN ROAD
CRISPS LANE
Existing OH Power Line
MURRUMBATEMAN DISTRIBUTION BESS
Infrastructure & easement exclusion zone
PATEMANS LANE
TURTON PLACE
CANBERRA
38.5 km
Aerial imagery © Nearmap
REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE - 15 April 2025
Notes
IMPORTANT NOTE RE CLARIFICATION:
Tenderers/Contractors are advised to contact this office to confirm/clarify any aspect of the works, incl. any details of the contract documents (incl. this plan) of which they are uncertain. No claim will be accepted on account of failure to do so. IF IN DOUBT ... ASK.
This plan shall be read in conjunction with the ACEnergy Pty Ltd Murrumbateman Distribution BESS drawings.
C 15/4/2025 Minor revisions to site layout; Landscape updated to suit. CW
B 20/11/2024 Detail drawing reference rectangle removed CW
A 8/5/2024 Fully revised to amended D-BESS site layout; Plant specings revised, plant schedule updated. CW
Rev Date Revision Note By
6 15/4/2025 REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE CW
5 22/11/2024 REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE CW
4 20/11/2024 REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE CW
3 3/6/2024 REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE CW
2 8/5/2024 REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE CW
1 26/11/2023 APPROVAL ISSUE CW
Issue Date Issue Note By
Surveyors
Structural Engineer
Consulting Engineer
Project Managers
ACEnergy Pty Ltd
Other
Proprietor
ACENERGY
Project
MURRUMBATEMAN
Distribution BESS
3 Turton Place Murrumbateman NSW
Drawing
Overview/Context Plan
Sheet 1 of 4
Local Authority Yass Valley Council, NSW
0 100 150 200 m
Scale 1:3,000 @ A1; 1:6,000 @ A3
Drawn CW Date 26 Nov 2023
North
Project # 23646
Drawing # 01
Rev C
groundcontrol
Ground Control
Landscape Architecture Pty Ltd
ABN 45 170 616 541
PO Box 757 Mansfield Victoria Australia 3724
P 03 5779 1447 E gcla@groundcontrol.com.au
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Property boundary
Property boundary
Existing OH power lines
Property boundary
New underground power line (proposed)
Existing dam
Nom. 5.0 m buffer typ.
Nom. 5.0 m buffer typ.
2 ROWS OF PLANTING
1.8 m high site security fence
External fence (nom. 1.0 m high post & wire, stockproof)
SITE ELECTRICAL FACILITIES
External fence (nom. 1.0 m high post & wire, stockproof)
2 ROWS OF PLANTING
1.8 m high site security fence
Nom. 5.0 m buffer typ.
Acoustic barrier (approx. 3.0 m high)
Infrastructure & easement exclusion zone
Existing OH power lines
Car park area
Nom. 5.0 m buffer typ.
BESS access road
Property boundary
KEY TO VEGETATION BUFFERS
2 ROWS
VEGETATION BUFFER: GENERALLY 3.0 to 3.5 M HIGH + SMALL TREES TO 5.0 M
REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE - 15 April 2025
Notes
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This plan shall be read in conjunction with the ACEnergy Pty Ltd Murrumbateman Distribution BESS drawings.
D 15/4/2025 Minor revisions to site layout; Landscape updated to suit. CW
C 20/11/2024 Acoustic barrier & car park area added CW
B 3/6/2024 New connecting power line corrected from overhead to underground installation CW
Rev Date Revision Note By
6 15/4/2025 REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE CW
5 22/11/2024 REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE CW
4 20/11/2024 REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE CW
3 3/6/2024 REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE CW
2 8/5/2024 REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE CW
1 26/11/2023 APPROVAL ISSUE CW
Issue Date Issue Note By
Surveyors
Structural Engineer
Consulting Engineer
Project Managers
ACEnergy Pty Ltd
Other
Proprietor
ACENERGY
Project
MURRUMBATEMAN
Distribution BESS
3 Turton Place Murrumbateman NSW
Drawing
Landscape Screening Plan
Sheet 2 of 4
Local Authority Yass Valley Council, NSW
0 10 20 30 40 m
Scale 1:500 @ A1; 1:1,000 @ A3
Drawn CW Date 26 Nov 2023
Project # 23646 Drawing # 02 Rev D
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Ground Control
Landscape Architecture Pty Ltd
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LIFE FORM	INDIGENOUS	SPECIES NAME	COMMON NAME	EST. MATURE HEIGHT	EST. MATURE SPREAD	POT SIZE	QUANTITY
		SMALL TREES					
ST	●	*Acacia dorytoxylon*	Spearwood	5.0	4.0	Hiko	10
ST	●	*Acacia pravissima*	Tumut Wattle	5.0	4.0	Hiko	10
ST	●	*Hakea decurrens*	Bushy Needlewood	5.0	4.0	Hiko	5
		LARGE SHRUBS					
L	●	*Acacia decora*	Western Silver Wattle	2.5	3.0	Hiko	30
L	●	*Acacia paradoxa*	Kangaroo Thorn	3.0	3.0	Hiko	16
L	●	*Acacia verniciflua*	Varnish Wattle	3.5	3.0	Hiko	30
L		*Callistemon citrinus 'Kings Park Special'*	Kings Park Bottlebrush	3.5	3.0	Hiko	30
L	●	*Kunzea ericoides*	Burgan	3.0	3.0	Hiko	16
L	●	*Leptospermum lanigerum*	Woolly Tea-tree	3.5	3.0	Hiko	30
		MEDIUM SHRUBS					
M	●	*Acacia buxifolia*	Box-leaf Wattle	2.5	2.0	Hiko	25
M	●	*Acacia siculiformis*	Dagger Wattle	2.0	2.0	Hiko	20
M	●	*Bursaria spinosa*	Sweet Bursaria	2.5	2.0	Hiko	20
M	●	*Callistemon sieberi*	River Bottlebrush	3.0	2.0	Hiko	20
M	●	*Indigofera australis*	Australian Indigo	2.0	2.0	Hiko	20
M	●	*Leptospermum continentale*	Prickly Tea-tree	2.5	2.0	Hiko	23
		SMALL SHRUBS					
S	●	*Acacia genistifolia*	Early Wattle	1.5	2.0	Hiko	20
S	●	*Grevillea lanigera (shrub form)*	Woolly Grevillea	1.5	2.0	Hiko	20
S	●	*Kunzea parvifolia*	Violet Kunzea	1.0	2.0	Hiko	11
		TOTAL PLANTS QUANTITY					**356**



KEY TO PLANT LIFE FORMS

SMALL TREES
LARGE SHRUBS
MEDIUM SHRUBS
SMALL SHRUBS

Unless otherwise noted, all plants to be planted with Arborgreen 'Greenguard POP' or similar approved tree guards and biodegradable jute weed mats

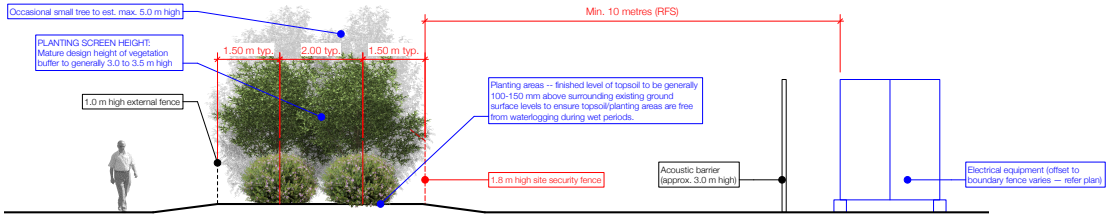
PLANT SET-OUT

Plant species shall be distributed in natural groupings to all planting areas, generally in accordance with plant life-form planting layouts as described in the Vegetation Buffer Detail Sheets as part of this drawing set.

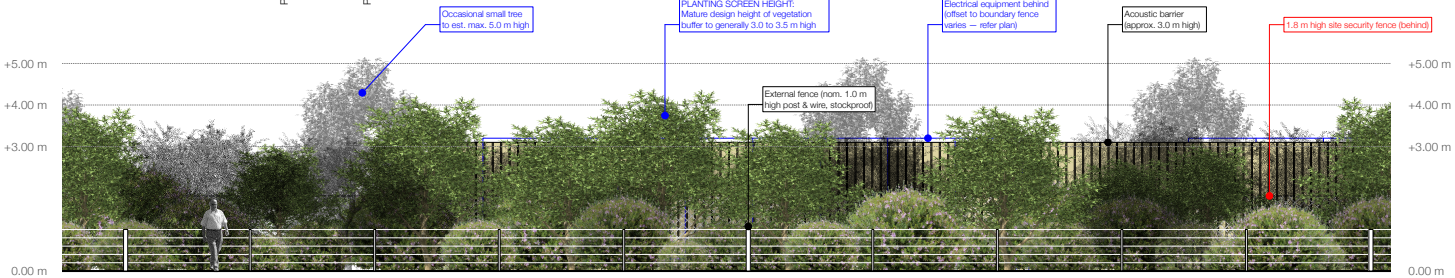
Avoid concentrations of one species in any one area.

Avoid planting more than 5 no. of the same species in any one 21 m long typical planting row.

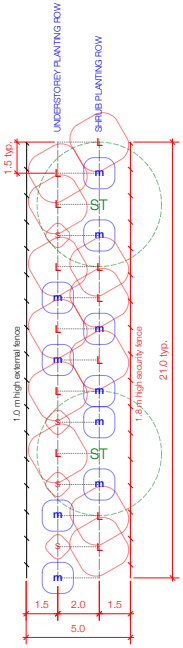
Maximise plant diversity at plant set-out.



2 TYPICAL VEGETATION BUFFER (SECTION)
Scale: 1:50



3 TYPICAL VEGETATION BUFFER (EXTERNAL ELEVATION)
Scale: 1:50



2 ROWS

1 TYP. VEGETATION BUFFER
Scale: 1:100

REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE - 15 April 2025

Notes
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This plan shall be read in conjunction with the ACEnergy Pty Ltd Murrumbateman Distribution BESS drawings.

Rev	Date	Revision Note	By
D	15/4/2025	Minor revisions to site layout; Landscape updated to suit.	CW
C	22/11/2024	Acoustic barrier height adjusted	CW
B	20/11/2024	Acoustic barrier added to typical section & elevation	CW

Issue	Date	Issue Note	By
6	15/4/2025	REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE	CW
5	22/11/2024	REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE	CW
4	20/11/2024	REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE	CW
3	3/6/2024	REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE	CW
2	8/5/2024	REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE	CW
1	26/11/2023	APPROVAL ISSUE	CW

Surveyors —
Structural Engineer —
Consulting Engineer —
Project Managers
ACEnergy Pty Ltd
Other —
Proprietor

Project
MURRUMBATEMAN Distribution BESS
3 Turton Place Murrumbateman NSW

Drawing
Landscape Screening

Sheet 3 of 4
Local Authority Yass Valley Council, NSW
Scale As shown @ A1
Drawn CW Date 26 Nov 2023
Project # 23646 Drawing # 03 Rev D

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ABN 45 170 616 547
PO Box 757 Mansfield Victoria Australia 3724
P 03 5779 1447 E gcla@groundcontrol.com.au
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LANDSCAPE WORKS CONSTRUCTION NOTES:

1 WORKS BY CIVIL/OTHERS
All construction & civil works incl. demolition, building works, bulk earthworks, drainage infrastructure, road pavements, site electrical & battery facilities & associated infrastructure, fencing and other related works.

The civil contractor will ensure the following minimum depths of site topsoil are provided for the landscape works:

- Planting areas -- min. 150 mm depth site topsoil.
- Finished level of topsoil to be generally 100-150 mm above surrounding existing ground surface levels to ensure topsoil/planting areas are free from waterlogging during wet periods.

2 INSURANCES
Provide certificates of currency for Public Liability Insurance (min. $20M) and Workcover insurance (min. $20M) to the Superintendent prior to commencing works. Each certificate of currency shall note the Proprietor as an interested party.

3 ROAD OPENING PERMIT
Apply to the responsible authority for a road opening permit (if required), incl. the payment of all fees and charges re same. An approved copy of the approved road opening permit shall also be provided to the Superintendent prior to works commencing on site.

4 LANDSCAPE PRE-COMMENCEMENT MEETING
The Contractor shall Initiate, coordinate and attend a pre-commencement meeting with Council, Proprietor & Superintendent, incl. achieving compliance with all Council & specified requirements, checklists, insurances, approvals, etc.

5 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT
If required, prepare and submit to the responsible authority a traffic management plan to their satisfaction, incl. the payment of all fees and charges re same. An approved copy of this plan shall also be provided to the Superintendent prior to works commencing on site. Implement approved traffic management plan during the duration of the Works on site.

6 LOCATE EXISTING SERVICES
Locate all existing services prior to commencing works, contacting Dial Before You Dig, the project civil engineers/contractor and/or the relevant authorities re same as required. Identify all overhead services prior to commencing works.

7 SET OUT THE WORKS
Accurately set the works out as per the documentation set.

8 SOIL TESTING
Undertake soil sampling & testing from an approved ag. soil testing laboratory, incl. seeking recommendations for fertilising planting zone to improve soil NPK balance, trace elements, etc. Any recommended adjustments must be made to improve the soil conditions for native tree & shrub planting.

9 PLANTING AREAS PREPARATION -- INITIAL
These works to be done ideally in LATE FEBRUARY/MARCH of the planting year:

- Eradicate broadleaf, woody and noxious weeds from all planting areas using selective, non-residual herbicides. Manual removal of larger woody weeds may be required -- inspect site to confirm extent.
- Rip along planting line to 2.0 m wide to min. 300 mm depth with a Yeomans/Keyline plough with tynes at max. 750 mm centres to break up/aerate natural subgrade and to relieve compaction, grade & level.
- Apply fertilisers and additives at rates recommended by soil test results.
- Cultivate planting lines to break up soil clods and provide an appropriate planting medium.
- DO NOT WORK WET SOIL. Remove any deleterious material brought to the surface, consolidate soil and grade surface to even grades, free of any depressions or undulations.

10 PLANTING AREAS PREPARATION -- SECONDARY
These works to be done ideally in APRIL/MAY of the planting year:

- Eradicate broadleaf, woody and noxious weeds from all planting areas using selective, non-residual herbicides. Manual removal of larger woody weeds may be required.
- Re-cultivate planting lines to break up soil clods and provide an appropriate planting medium.
- DO NOT WORK WET SOIL. Remove any deleterious material brought to the surface, consolidate soil and grade surface to even grades, free of any depressions or undulations.

11 PLANT SUPPLY
All plants shall be healthy, free from any pests or diseases, be attractive, well grown and well formed plant specimens and shall have a healthy, well formed root system commensurate in size with the foliage mass (root systems must not be pot bound). Plant container sizes shall be as listed in the detail planting schedule, but shall be min. hiko, ViroTube or 50 mm round/square pot size.

The planting contractor shall inspect all plants on delivery to site and shall certify in writing to the Superintendent that all plants supplied are as described above and are accepted by the planting contractor for planting in this project.

12 PLANTING
Set out plants as documented. Individual holes are to be dug (tree planter, mini-auger, etc.) in the prepared planting areas of sufficient size to easily accommodate the plant's root system and relieve any polishing. Create broad, shallow watering bowl to ALL plants to facilitate effective watering (min. 5 litre capacity). All plants shall be watered-in immediately after planting and at such times during the Contract period as is required to maintain growth free of water stress. Planting medium must be moist - do not plant into dry soil. Handle and plant all plants at all times in accordance with best horticultural practice.

13 FERTILISING
Refer maintenance section.

14 WEED MATS
Supply & install to each plant a 600 x 600 mm TreeMax or similar approved jute weed mat. Installation strictly to manufacturer's recommendations.

15 TREE/PLANT GUARDS
Supply & install to each plant Arborgreen 'Greenguard POP' 450 x 200 mm (sides): Code: 'GRGRDPOP-TRI' or similar approved 100% biodegradable tree guard, incl. 1 no. x 25 x 25 x 750 mm HWD stake per guard to all plants. Ensure stake extends min. 300 mm into ground. Installation strictly to manufacturer's recommendations.

16 GRASSING (IF REQUIRED)
Some areas of grass seeding may be required and will be directed and quantified by the Superintendent.

Do not sow seed in periods of extreme heat, cold or wet, or where wind velocities are excessive unless otherwise approved. Seed mix shall be as follows:

- TURF-TYPE REGENERATING PERENNIAL RYEGRASS 95% by count
- TURF-TYPE TALL FESCUE 3% by count
- SUB CLOVER 1% by count
- WHITE CLOVER 1% by count

Seeding rate shall be min. 30 gms per m2. Apply seed evenly – seed application shall be via direct drilling or by other approved methods. Seeding shall be programmed when there is a period of anticipated weather conditions (i.e. rain) that will provide the best chance for germination of grass seed. Any areas affected by heavy rain, wind removing seed or other cause shall be re-seeded as specified to achieve an even cover of grass.

Slash grass when growth height has reached 100 mm or otherwise as directed by Superintendent. Should all the areas not require cutting at one time, complete all further cuts as necessary until 100% of the area has achieved successful coverage and all areas have received at least first cut.

17 PRACTICAL COMPLETION COORDINATION
The Contractor shall Initiate, coordinate and attend a Practical Completion meeting with Council, Proprietor & Superintendent, incl. achieving compliance with all Council & specified requirements, checklists, insurances, approvals, etc.
NOTE: Min. 3 no. working days notice is required for a Practical Completion meeting.

18 LANDSCAPE ESTABLISHMENT MAINTENANCE PERIOD
Maintain the contract works from the Date of Practical Completion to the Date of Final Completion/hand-over.

Maintenance shall include care of the contract area by accepted horticultural practices, and rectification of any defects that become apparent during this period. Maintenance tasks to be carried out during the maintenance period shall include, but shall not be limited to, slashing, watering as required, weed control, pest & disease control & management, tree/plant guard adjustment/replacement as required, rubbish removal.

WEED CONTROL – PLANTED AREAS:
In planted areas, poison all broadleaf, noxious & woody weeds as they appear. Slashable grasses are to be retained generally between planting rows. Selective herbicides shall be nominated by the Contractor and approved by the Superintendent prior to use. Non-selective herbicide shall be Monsanto 'Roundup BIACTIVE' glyphosate-based herbicide -- standard 'Roundup' is NOT to be used. NO OTHER HERBICIDE SHALL BE USED WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL. All herbicide applications shall use NuFarm 'Spraymate or similar approved marker dye admixture and shall be handled and applied strictly according to manufacturer's recommendations, recommended rates and directions.

GRASS MANAGEMENT – PLANTED AREAS:
Slash all areas between plants in rows and min. 1.5 m along all outside edges of all planting zones on a regular basis to maintain grass height to max. 100 mm. Slashing shall comply with all local Council and RFS guidelines re grass heights.

JUTE MAT & TREE/PLANT GUARDS:
Maintain jute mat and tree/plant tree guards for first two summers minimum, repair and replace as required during this period.

PLANT REPLACEMENT:
Replace any failing, failed or dead plants during the maintenance period. The Superintendent and the Contractor will inspect the full planting areas at the end of each summer and will identify the number and species of plants that are failing, have failed/died. The Contractor shall replace all such plants identified.

WATERING:
The Contractor shall ensure all plants planted/maintained under this contract receive adequate (but not excessive) watering to maintain optimum growth and health. Watering shall be localised to each plant, not broad spraying across the entire planting area, to limit weed/grass growth between planting rows.

Watering shall be either manually via watercart/hose as required OR via a drip irrigation system, using Netafim 'UniRAM AS' inline dripline @ 1.6 LPH with emitter spacing of 400 mm -- one surface dripline per planting row. Drip irrigation system to be designed by an accredited irrigation designer and connect to an available clean water source, incl. filtration at source.

All plants shall be watered as required for at least the FIRST TWO SUMMERS to aid in establishment of healthy root systems and foliage growth, with further waterings if required during late spring and/or early autumn or at any other time of the year based on prevailing climatic conditions. Further waterings may be needed beyond this minimum establishment watering should prevailing climatic conditions deteriorate with potential to lead to deterioration of plant growth, health or plant deaths (e.g. severe drought, El Niño conditions, etc.).

FERTILISING:
All plants (excluding Proteacea family) shall be fertilised with Scotts 'Osmocote® Plus Trace Elements: Native Gardens' (NPK 21.8 : 0.7 : 7.2) or similar approved at the manufacturer's recommended rates. Fertiliser shall be locally spread on soil surface around plants during planting operations. If unsure which plants are in the Proteacea family – ASK.

Allow for one fertiliser application in Year 1 and second application in Year 2.

PESTS & DISEASES:
Regularly monitor all plants grasses planted/maintained under this contract for evidence of pest and/or disease attack -- identify and treat any/all problems arising.

RABBITS, HARES, KANGAROOS, ETC.:
Identify any predation by rabbits, hares and other pests with potential to damage or destroy the landscape works under this contract. Take all necessary steps, within local authority regulations and/or guidelines, to limit or eradicate predation. Maintain all tree guards in good condition to limit rabbit/hare/kangaroo/other damage to plants with installed guards.

Notes
IMPORTANT NOTE RE CLARIFICATION:
Tenderers/Contractors are advised to contact this office to confirm/clarify any aspect of the works, incl. any details of the contract documents (incl. this plan) of which they are uncertain. No claim will be accepted on account of failure to do so. IF IN DOUBT ... ASK.

This plan shall be read in conjunction with the ACEnergy Pty Ltd Murrumbateman Distribution BESS drawings.

Rev	Date	Revision Note	By
B	15/4/2025	Minor revisions to site layout; Landscape updated to suit.	CW
A	8/5/2024	Fully revised to amended D-BESS site layout; Plant specings revised, plant schedule updated.	CW

Issue	Date	Issue Note	By
6	15/4/2025	REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE	CW
5	22/11/2024	REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE	CW
4	29/11/2024	REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE	CW
3	3/6/2024	REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE	CW
2	8/5/2024	REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE	CW
1	26/11/2023	APPROVAL ISSUE	CW

Surveyors

Ph: email:

Structural Engineer

Ph: email:

Consulting Engineer

Ph: email:

Project Managers
ACEnergy Pty Ltd
Mob: 0487 370 303 email: benjyatkins@acenergy.com.au

Other

Ph: email:

Proprietor

Project
MURRUMBATEMAN
Distribution BESS
3 Turton Place Murrumbateman NSW

Drawing
Landscape Specification Notes

Sheet 4 of 4

Local Authority: Yass Valley Council, NSW

Scale: N.T.S.
Drawn: CW Date: 26 Nov 2023

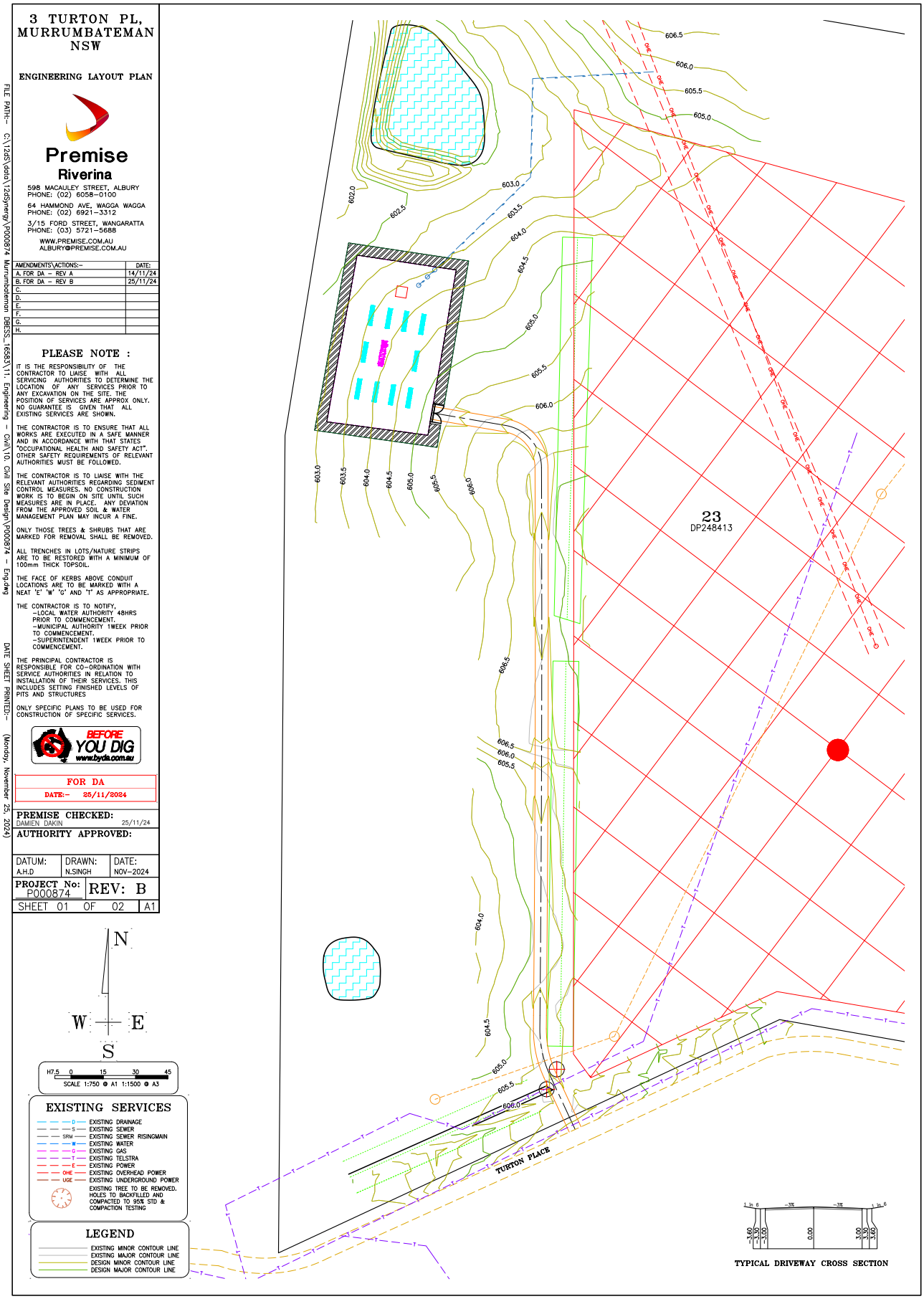
Project #	Drawing #	Rev
23646	04	B

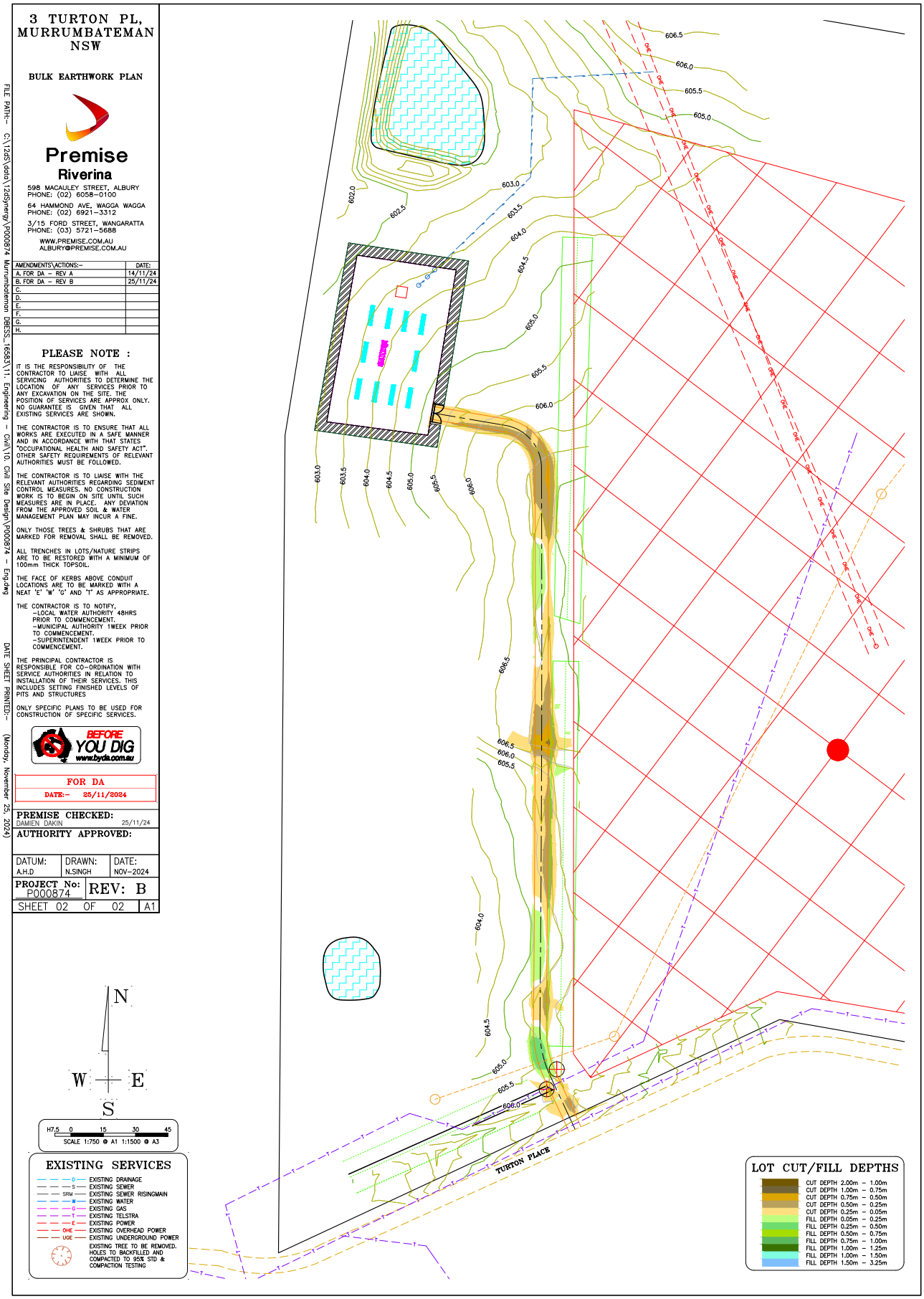
North

groundcontrol
Ground Control
Landscape Architecture Pty Ltd
ABN 43 170 616 547
PO Box 757 Mansfield Victoria Australia 3724
P 03 5779 1447 E gcla@groundcontrol.com.au

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REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE - 15 April 2025


3 TURTON PL, MURRUMBATEMAN NSW
ENGINEERING LAYOUT PLAN
Premise
Riverina
598 MACAULEY STREET, ALBURY
PHONE: (02) 6058-0100
64 HAMMOND AVE, WAGGA WAGGA
PHONE: (02) 6921-3312
3/15 FORD STREET, WANGARATTA
PHONE: (03) 5721-5688
WWW.PREMISE.COM.AU
ALBURY@PREMISE.COM.AU
AMENDMENTS\ACTIONS:- DATE:
A. FOR DA - REV A 14/11/24
B. FOR DA - REV B 25/11/24
PLEASE NOTE :
IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CONTRACTOR TO LIAISE WITH ALL SERVICING AUTHORITIES TO DETERMINE THE LOCATION OF ANY SERVICES PRIOR TO ANY EXCAVATION ON THE SITE. THE POSITION OF SERVICES ARE APPROX ONLY. NO GUARANTEE IS GIVEN THAT ALL EXISTING SERVICES ARE SHOWN.
THE CONTRACTOR IS TO ENSURE THAT ALL WORKS ARE EXECUTED IN A SAFE MANNER AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THAT STATES "OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY ACT". OTHER SAFETY REQUIREMENTS OF RELEVANT AUTHORITIES MUST BE FOLLOWED.
THE CONTRACTOR IS TO LIAISE WITH THE RELEVANT AUTHORITIES REGARDING SEDIMENT CONTROL MEASURES. NO CONSTRUCTION WORK IS TO BEGIN ON SITE UNTIL SUCH MEASURES ARE IN PLACE. ANY DEVIATION FROM THE APPROVED SOIL & WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN MAY INCUR A FINE.
ONLY THOSE TREES & SHRUBS THAT ARE MARKED FOR REMOVAL SHALL BE REMOVED.
ALL TRENCHES IN LOTS/NATURE STRIPS ARE TO BE RESTORED WITH A MINIMUM OF 100mm THICK TOPSOIL.
THE FACE OF KERBS ABOVE CONDUIT LOCATIONS ARE TO BE MARKED WITH A NEAT 'E' 'W' 'G' AND 'T' AS APPROPRIATE.
THE CONTRACTOR IS TO NOTIFY,
-LOCAL WATER AUTHORITY 48HRS PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT.
-MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY 1WEEK PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT.
-SUPERINTENDENT 1WEEK PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT.
THE PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CO-ORDINATION WITH SERVICE AUTHORITIES IN RELATION TO INSTALLATION OF THEIR SERVICES. THIS INCLUDES SETTING FINISHED LEVELS OF PITS AND STRUCTURES
ONLY SPECIFIC PLANS TO BE USED FOR CONSTRUCTION OF SPECIFIC SERVICES.
BEFORE YOU DIG www.byda.com.au
FOR DA
DATE:- 25/11/2024
PREMISE CHECKED:
DAMIEN DAKIN 25/11/24
AUTHORITY APPROVED:
DATUM: A.H.D
DRAWN: N.SINGH
DATE: NOV-2024
PROJECT No: P000874
REV: B
SHEET 01 OF 02 A1
FILE PATH:- C:\12dS\data\12dSynergy\P000874 Murrumbateman DBESS_16583\11. Engineering - Civil\10. Civil Site Design\P000874 - Eng.dwg
DATE SHEET PRINTED:- (Monday, November 25, 2024)
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EXISTING SERVICES
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EXISTING SEWER RISINGMAIN
EXISTING WATER
EXISTING GAS
EXISTING TELSTRA
EXISTING POWER
EXISTING OVERHEAD POWER
EXISTING UNDERGROUND POWER
EXISTING TREE TO BE REMOVED. HOLES TO BACKFILLED AND COMPACTED TO 95% STD & COMPACTION TESTING
LEGEND
EXISTING MINOR CONTOUR LINE
EXISTING MAJOR CONTOUR LINE
DESIGN MINOR CONTOUR LINE
DESIGN MAJOR CONTOUR LINE
23
DP248413
TURTON PLACE
TYPICAL DRIVEWAY CROSS SECTION


3 TURTON PL, MURRUMBATEMAN NSW
BULK EARTHWORK PLAN
Premise
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TURTON PLACE
LOT CUT/FILL DEPTHS
CUT DEPTH 2.00m - 1.00m
CUT DEPTH 1.00m - 0.75m
CUT DEPTH 0.75m - 0.50m
CUT DEPTH 0.50m - 0.25m
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FILL DEPTH 0.75m - 1.00m
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FILL DEPTH 1.00m - 1.50m
FILL DEPTH 1.50m - 3.25m

Premise

Response to Additional Information Request 2

Table 1 – Response to Additional Information Requested

	Additional Information Requested	Comments
1.	***Acoustic Report*** *A revised acoustic report was submitted as part of the additional information package. Following the Planning Panel preliminary briefing, Council engaged the services of another appropriate qualified acoustic expert to conduct a peer review. A copy of the peer review report is attached for your reference.*	A revised acoustic report has been prepared to address the comments provided in the peer review report and is provided as **Attachment 3**.
	• *A response to the acoustic report peer review is to be provided, specifically addressing the recommendations made.*	The revised acoustic report (**Attachment 3**) has been prepared to respond to matters raised within the peer review. The peer review prepared by Rob Bullen Consulting had specifically recommended that either: • *Measurements of existing ambient noise should be conducted before approval, both to confirm A-weighted background sound levels and to confirm the spectrum of the background noise. This may result in adjusted criteria and/or the presence of enough high-frequency ambient noise to mask the tone;* ***OR*** • *The proposed barrier should be constructed as part of the project.* Monitoring has been undertaken via a site investigation in response to the peer review to characterise the existing acoustic environment for the proposed development. It has been concluded in response to monitoring, that the existing noise environment at the site is not sufficiently elevated to 'mask' the potential tonal character of noise associated with the future site equipment. The construction of an acoustic barrier is therefore required as part of the project.
	• *The revised acoustic report has Receptor R07 as commercial premises only. The subject land also contains a dwelling house. The project trigger level for Receptor R07 is to be updated*	The revised acoustic report (**Attachment 3**) considers impacts to both: • R07 – Dwelling at 1 Patemans Lane, Murrumbateman; and, • R07A – 'Dionysus Winery and Woo Chocolate' premises located at 1 Patemans Lane, Murrumbateman

	Additional Information Requested	Comments
	to state the more conservative residential to avoid doubt.	The results of noise modelling details that noise levels at R07 and R07A would not exceed the project trigger noise levels (including tonal adjustment). No significant noise impacts to R07 and R07A are therefore anticipated to result from the operation of the development.
	• *A submission received indicates future intention to make a Development Application for a residential dwelling house at Lot 2 DP 787995, 4 Crisps Lane, Murrumbateman. Whilst there is no dwelling house currently on the site and a Development Application has not been made, to respond to these concerns it would be recommended that the noise model is re-run to consider a potential future receptor. Noting comments received in the peer review, this should also include consideration of reflect of sound from the acoustic barrier back towards the potential receptor.*	The revised acoustic report (**Attachment 3**) consider impacts to: • R08 – Potential future residential dwelling at Lot 2 DP 787995, 4 Crisps Lane, Murrumbateman. The results of noise modelling detailed that that noise levels at R08 would not exceed the project trigger noise levels (including tonal adjustment). No significant noise impacts to R08 are therefore anticipated to result from the operation of the development.
2.	***Acoustic Barrier*** *The response to additional information request indicates that the revised acoustic report provides an indication of the general specifications for the proposed acoustic barrier, including minimum height of 3000mm and the general surface density.* *It is considered that there remains insufficient clarity and detail of the acoustic barrier to enable full assessment of this in accordance with s4.15 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. In this regard, the following information is to be provided:*	The revised acoustic report (**Attachment 3**) has provided additional clarification on the construction of the barrier and specifications to ensure suitable materials are selected. The proposed acoustic barrier as specified by the acoustic assessment is to be constructed with: • A minimum height of 3000mm. Noting that minor increases to the final height may result according to the assembly of panels. • A surface minimum weight of 12 kg/m^2 • No gaps between panels and between the panels and the ground below. The acoustic barrier must be lined on the equipment side using sound absorbing materials, and WMG have recommended that: *"…the absorption coefficient performance of the sound absorbing lining achieve not less than 0.9 at the 3150Hz one third octave band frequency which has been identified as critical to the assessment. The overall NRC performance can be lower, and in the order of 0.7."*

	Additional Information Requested	Comments
		From experience WMG detail that a suitable material for external applications may include Megasorber faced with Soundmesh G8 facing The technical specification sheet for the Soundmesh G8 facing material and other soundproofing products are available via Megasorber's website. The final selection of soundproofing products is subject to the finalisation of design. Several options, however. are available and are capable of being designed to achieve the requirements of the project. The applicant has no objection to a condition of consent requiring the provision of this information to Council's satisfaction prior to issue of a construction certificate.
	• *Separate, dimensioned, elevation drawings of the acoustic barrier, including the maximum height and details of construction type, material, and colours/finishes are to be provided.*	A revised drawing set, including details of the proposed acoustic barrier, is provided as **Attachment 2**. This includes a typical section of the proposed barrier, features of the material proposed and elevations. As noted, final details on the construction type, material, colours and finishes of acoustic products are contingent on the selection of vendors during the detailed design stage. Megasorber's website, however, provides example specification sheets for suitable acoustic products which include dimensions of panels, acoustic properties and options for colours and finishes.
	• *Site plan with clear dimensions for lengths and relative setbacks,*	The revised drawing set (**Attachment 2**) includes an updated site plan to respond to council's request.
3.	***Materials & Colours*** *It is noted in the record of briefing that the Panel considered that visual impacts could be reduced through the use of appropriate materials and colours. In this regard, details of materials and colours are to be provided and should be:* • *Compatible and sympathetic to the surrounding development.* • *Non-reflective.*	The final selection of project infrastructure, including materials and colour for project infrastructure (e.g., batteries and acoustic products), is dependent on the options available during the finalisation of detailed design and the selection of vendor products for the construction of the project. Where possible, suitable materials and finishes would be implemented to minimise the potential for perceived visual effect, and the longevity of materials and durability of the same. A consent condition for the provision of a final schedule would be a practical measure. The applicant has no objection to a condition of consent requiring the provision of this information to Council's satisfaction prior to issue of a construction certificate.

Additional Information Requested		Comments
	• *Such that supports reducing the visual presence within the landscape.*	
4.	***Bushfire*** *Advice received from the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) generally supported the assessment and recommendations made in the Bushfire and Emergency Evacuation Plan submitted with the application, with the exception that a 12m wide asset protection zone (APZ) is to be maintained to the west. A revised or supplementary site plan demonstrating that this can be achieved within the boundaries of the subject land is to be provided. The revised site plan is to also show the location of landscaping in relation to the APZ.* *It is noted in the record of briefing with the Panel that Council needs to consider how the APZ and landscaping requirements can coexist. It is recommended that a statement from the accredited bushfire practitioner is provided which confirms that the proposed landscaping per the landscaping plan is consistent with the assessment and recommendations made in their Bushfire and Emergency Evacuation Plan.*	A revised drawing set (**Attachment 2**) includes an updated site plan to respond to council's request. The updated site plan details: • The provision of a minimum 12 m wide APZ to the west of the BESS; and, • The location of landscaping in relation to the proposed APZ. A revised Bushfire Assessment report has been prepared in consideration of the updated site plan and is provided as **Attachment 4**. As shown in the revised drawings the proposed landscaping area is situated outside of the APZ surrounding the BESS. The revised Bushfire Assessment details that the APZ is located wholly in grassland, with no trees within the development footprint and that grass within the APZ should be kept mown (<100mm in height). It should be noted that Section A1.10 of PBP outlines that certain types of vegetation are classified as low threat vegetation. This includes: *"grassland managed in a minimal fuel condition, mangroves and other saline wetlands, maintained lawns, golf courses such as playing areas and fairways, maintained public reserves and parklands, sporting fields, vineyards, orchards, banana plantations, market gardens and other non-curing crops, cultivated gardens, arboretums, commercial nurseries, nature strips and windbreaks.* *Note: 1. Minimal fuel condition means there is insufficient fuel available to significantly increase the severity of the bush fire attack (recognizable as short cropped grass for example, to a nominal height of 100 mm). 2. A windbreak is considered a single row of planted trees located on a boundary and used as a screen or to reduce the effect of wind on the leeward side of the trees."* Low threat vegetation is excluded from *Australian Standard- Construction of buildings in bushfire-prone areas (AS 3959 2009)* and is not required to be considered for the purposes of PBP. A statement from the bushfire consultant, nevertheless, has been prepared by the bushfire consultant to respond to Council's request and is provided as **Appendix 5**. The statement

Additional Information Requested		Comments
		confirms that the proposed landscape plan and planting is consistent with the APZ requirements, with all landscape planting located outside of the identified APZ.
5.	***Firefighting Water Contamination Risk and Mitigation Strategies*** *At the briefing the Applicant provided an outline that potential concerns in relation to firefighting water containment could be resolved through the use of a retention basin and infiltration system. Details of this forming part of the proposal are not considered to have been made sufficiently clear in the application to enable complete understanding or assessment. The following information is to be provided:* • Concept details of any retention basin and infiltration system. • Where appropriate, a revised site plan showing the location of any retention basin or other similar infrastructure. • Any other risk and mitigation strategies that are proposed or will be implemented to control firefighting water contamination.	The evaluation of contamination risks associated with firefighting water is dependent on the final sizing and layout of the facility, the implementation of site management plans and the procurement of battery equipment, including embedded safety devices and battery technology. The applicant has no objection to a condition of consent requiring the provision of the final detailed design of the project and associated management plans (i.e., Construction Environmental Management Plan, Emergency Management Plan, etc.) prior to issue of a construction certificate. The implementation of a basin to capture firefighting water was suggested during the briefing meeting as one potential option to manage the potential for contamination. No commitment to the installation of a basin has been provided. An examination of existing information provided in the development application and a review of measures implemented for similar projects, however, has been undertaken to provide an indication on suitable fire management strategies and measures to minimise contamination risks. It should be noted that the existing Groundwater Assessment prepared in support of the development application (Water Technology, 2024) provides the following statement with respect to groundwater contamination: *"Potential battery fires are expected to be contained within the individual units, as each unit has internal fire suppression systems, including flammable gas, smoke and thermal sensors, pressure release systems and aerosol fire extinguishing systems. Therefore, the risk from small individual fires is not considered significant. However, should a larger fire occur necessitating the use of large volumes of external water and fire-fighting chemicals, then there would be a low risk to groundwater from the infiltration of fire-fighting liquids to the shallow aquifer. However, as discussed, the thick clay layer beneath the Subject Site would reduce any downward migration to the underlying groundwater system and therefore, even in this scenario, the risk of contamination to groundwater is considered minimal."*

Additional Information Requested		Comments
		The groundwater assessment therefore establishes a low risk to groundwater associated with the infiltration of contaminated material during a fire event and details that the risk is further minimised by the impervious nature of a clay layer underlying the development site. Notwithstanding it is recommended by the groundwater assessment that groundwater bores are installed as a contingency measure in response to fire events to ensure contamination risks are appropriately managed. While risks to groundwater have been assessed it is acknowledged that surface water associated with firefighting activities may continue to pose a contamination risk if suitable measures are not implemented. The inherent risk of fire and risk of firefighting water contamination at the proposed facility is minimal due to the project's design, scale, and inherent safety features. Contamination risk primarily arises from combustion products, partially combusted materials, and any stored chemicals or oils. However, this project—limited to 5MW on a 0.5ha site—includes only battery containers, MVPS, and switches. No oils, chemicals, or hazardous substances will be stored on-site. The proposed BESS units utilize Lithium Iron Phosphate (LFP) batteries, which do not contain heavy metals like cobalt or nickel, and have no oil-based cooling systems. Additionally, anti-leakage connectors and self-contained designs significantly mitigate the risk of contamination. **Risk Mitigation and Control Measures** To further ensure safe operations, a range of proactive control measures has been proposed to address and manage any unlikely contamination risks: **1. Primary Control Measures: Prevention at the Source** • Automatic Fire Suppression Systems and Safety Devices: The BESS units adhere to stringent standards such as AS/NZS 5139:2019, UL9540, UL9540a, and NFPA-855. Internal fire detection and suppression systems, including aerosol extinguishing mechanisms and gas/thermal sensors, provide immediate containment of potential fire events • Self-Bunding BESS Containers: The BESS units are housed in self-bunded containers, ensuring that any potential electrolyte leakage remains contained within the system and does not reach the surrounding environment.

Additional Information Requested		Comments
		• LFP Chemistry Advantages: LFP batteries offer enhanced safety due to the absence of heavy metals and their lower thermal runaway nature. • Site Layout and Design: Strategic site planning incorporates safety measures, including asset protection zones, fuel-free zones, static water tanks, site access, battery separations, and setbacks, to minimize fire spread. **2. Secondary Control Measures: Managing Larger Incidents** • Firefighting Strategy: A defensive "controlled burn' approach is intended for fire management and would allow battery units affected by fire to consume themselves. This approach would restrict the application of firefighting water to surrounding areas cooling nearby exposures outside of affected battery containers. The application of water directly to affected battery units is considered to have minimal effect, is unlikely to extinguish a BESS fire and would likely only delay the eventual combustion of an affected unit. The defensive firefighting strategy of applying fire to surrounding areas seeks to prevent the propagation of fire and would avoid generating short circuits in adjacent equipment, minimise the amount of water needed for firefighting activities and reduce the volume of contaminated water produced. • Runoff Management: While permanent retention basins are impractical for a small-scale D-BESS due to space considerations, temporary containment measures such as impermeable surfaces, bunding, and portable spill barriers can effectively handle any potential runoff. • Operation and Maintenance: Well-defined Emergency Response Plans (ERP) and Fire Management Plans (FMP) will ensure that, in the unlikely event of substantial water usage, suitable containment, collection, remediation and off-site disposal measures are implemented effectively through an incident management process. Additional safeguards, including regular inspections, water quality testing, and the installation of monitoring bores, will further support efficient containment, cleanup, and safe disposal of firefighting water as necessary.

Premise Australia Pty Ltd
ABN: 62 075 657 359
Suite 3, 60-62 McNamara Street, Orange, NSW, 2800, Australia
(02) 6393 5000
orange@premise.com.au
Premise.com.au

Our Ref: P000874_LET_001B

Responses to Additional Information Request 1

04/12/2024

Jeremy Knox
Yass Valley Council
Via email: JKnox@yass.nsw.gov.au

Dear Jeremy,

RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION – DA 240159

Premise have prepared this letter on behalf of ACEnergy Pty Ltd to respond to a request for additional information (RFI) issued by Yass Valley Council (YVC) via the NSW planning portal on 25 October 2024. The request is made in respect of development application (DA) 240159 and relates to the proposed development of Murrumbateman Distribution Battery Energy Storage System (D-BESS) at 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman.

The table contained in this letter has been prepared to respond to YVC's request and seeks to assist YVC's evaluation of the proposed development. We trust that the information included provides a sufficient response to the questions raised.

Please contact the undersigned with any questions.

Yours sincerely,

Hugh Shackcloth-Bertinetti
Environmental Planner

No. of Attachments – 4

1. Tabular response to Council's RFI letter.
2. Conceptual Design Drawings, P000874-C01-2.
3. Photomontage from receiver with greatest potential for visual impact.
4. Revised Statement of Environmental Effects (including updated specialist assessments).

CREATING GREATER

Premise

Table 1 – Response to Additional Information Requested

Additional Information Requested		Comments
1.	***Acoustic report*** *A revised acoustic report is to be provided addressing:* • *The submitted acoustic report has been based on assumptions for background and ambient noise levels. A revised report which has been based on an actual measurement of background and ambient noise levels at the site in order to appropriately determine the acoustic environment, impacts, and the extent of necessary sound attenuation measures, such as acoustic barrier, is to be provided.* • *There is an additional sensitive receptor (dwelling) located on Lot 21 DP 248413, 1 Turton Place, which has been missed in the assessment and is in closer proximity than R02.* • *Clarification from the author of the acoustic report on how the location and design of the acoustic barrier has been determined, noting that there is a gap proposed in the acoustic barrier.* • *Consideration of any alternate sound attenuation measures that would reduce the scale and/or extent of the acoustic barrier which is necessary.* • *Consideration of whether the selection of alternate sites within the subject land may reduce noise impacts to nearby sensitive receivers.*	A revised Acoustic Report (AR) has been prepared to address the information requested by Council (**Appendix I** of revised SEE). The AR has been prepared in accordance with the Noise Policy for Industry (NPfI), which is considered appropriate for the type of development proposed. The AR has adopted a conservative approach in accordance with the methodology of the NPfI determining project intrusive noise criteria and project amenity noise criteria. In accordance with the NPfI, the project trigger levels for the development are conservative and have adopted the lower and more stringent of the determined intrusiveness and amenity noise levels. The AR has been revised to include the additional receiver located on Lot 21 DP248413. A total of 7 surrounding receivers have now been considered in the evaluation of potential noise impacts and include 1 associated receiver and 6 non-associated receivers. Requirements for acoustic barriers have been revised in response to updated specification from manufacturers and electrical components technology improvements which have significantly reduced the noise generated by BESS facilities. As detailed via the revised AR, a single acoustic barrier is now proposed as a conservative mitigation measure to minimise the potential for noise impacts to the southeast. The final specification of electrical components including their potential to generate noise impacts and the requirements for noise mitigation measures would be subject to the completion of detailed design and the final selection and commissioning of electrical equipment. The AR details that all non-associated receivers are compliant with adopted project trigger noise levels in the absence of noise control and without consideration of NPFI modifying factors.

Premise

Additional Information Requested		Comments
		Notwithstanding this, the AR has provided a conservative assessment and considers NPfI modifying factors with a 5 dB(A) tonal adjustment. The acoustic barrier has been recommended as a provisional control measure to respond to the consideration of the tonal modifying factors. The acoustic barrier would be implemented where required in the event that a 5 d(B) tonal adjustment was identified, ensuring that sufficient noise shielding is provided. The AR details the acoustic barrier as a practical solution for the project noting that its implementation is subject to project commissioning. The final design and specifications of the project have the potential to avoid or reduce the scale and extent of the acoustic barrier/. Several other measures to minimise the potential for noise impacts during the construction of the project are detailed within the AR including measures associated with general work practices, plant and equipment, community relations and construction activities. As detailed via the SEE, the suitability of the site and development has been considered in the context of various factors including physical constraints, topography and drainage, adjoining land uses, access arrangements, servicing, restrictions on land use and setbacks. Subject to the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures, the proposed location is suitable for the proposed development.
2.	***Acoustic barriers*** *The acoustic report prepared by Watson Moss Growcott dated 6 May 2024 details recommendations for the installation of an acoustic barrier to achieve acceptable noise levels. This is shown on Site Plan 1 of 2 (drawing G-1.1._023118), however not on all other relevant drawings and documents. The following information is required:*	The revised acoustic report provides an indication on the general specifications for the proposed acoustic barrier. To achieve the noise reduction qualities the AR details that the barrier must be designed and constructed to achieve: • A minimum height of 3000 mm to address predicted noise levels and the results of the noise model. • A surface minimum weight of 12 kg/m$^{2/}$ • No gaps between the panels and between the panel and ground

Additional Information Requested		Comments
	• *Separate, dimensioned, elevation drawings of the acoustic barrier, including details of construction type, material, and colours/finishes.* • *Security Fence & Landscape Elevation (drawing G-5.0_023118) is to be revised to also show acoustic barrier.* • *Landscape plans prepared by Ground Control Landscape Architects to be revised to show acoustic barrier.*	• Lining on the electrical infrastructure side of the barrier that implements 100 mm of thick absorbing materials which achieve a Noise Reduction Coefficient (NRC) of not less than 0.9. As noted above, the final specification of selected electrical equipment and determination if acoustic wall is deemed required or not will be finalised after completion of project detailed design. The final dimensions, elevations of noise wall including finishing materials and colour can be provided to Council once project detailed design is completed. The applicant has no objection to a condition of consent requiring the provision of this information to Council's satisfaction prior to issue of a construction certificate. Notwithstanding this, the revised DA Drawings including the Security Fence & Landscape Elevation (Refer to **Appendix A** of revised SEE) together with the revised Landscape Plan (Refer to **Appendix F** of revised SEE) have been amended to provide an indication of the proposed acoustic barrier.
3.	***Visual impact assessment*** *Whilst it is noted that topography and existing vegetation influence and reduce the extent of visual impacts, a site inspection has indicated that there remains a degree of visibility of the development within the landscape, especially with the extent of the proposed acoustic barriers. In this regard, a visual impact assessment, including photo montage where appropriate:* • *Consideration of visual impacts from public domains, including Murrumbateman Road and Patemans Lane.* • *Consideration of view lines from nearby surrounding development, including dwelling houses.* • *Consideration of existing deciduous vegetation*	A site visit was completed on 19 November to further review the potential for visual impacts and to respond to Council's request. Photographs were collected during completion of the site visit to provide an indication on perspectives of the development from six (6) surrounding non-associated receivers and two (2) roadways, Murrumbateman Road and Patemans Lane. Consultation with receivers was undertaken for the site visit to confirm access arrangements to properties. Where access to surrounding properties could not be secured, photographs were collected at the next best accessible location within the boundary of the proposed development site. It is noted that Council's RFI has requested the preparation of photomontages where appropriate to assist with evaluating potential visual impacts.

Additional Information Requested		Comments
		Panoramic photographs have been produced as a result of the site visit and are provided within **Appendix J** of the revised SEE. The photographs demonstrate that existing vegetation and topography already significantly obscure views of the proposed development site from surrounding receivers and roadways. The inclusion of a landscaping area as detailed within the SEE, as a conservative measure, will further minimise the potential for adverse visual impacts. Given the photograph evidence provided via the site visit and the conservative approach to include landscaping around the BESS, no significant visual impacts are anticipated. As the potential for visual impact is considered unlikely, it is considered that photomontages will not provide any meaningful additional value to the assessment. Notwithstanding this, a single photomontage has been prepared to address the receiver with the greatest potential for visual impact. The photomontage is provided as **Attachment 3** of this letter and has been prepared following the construction of a 3D visual model including an analysis of surrounding topography, vegetation and the conceptual design of the project. As demonstrated via the representative viewpoint provided via the photomontage, no significant visual impacts are anticipated at the receiver with the greatest potential for visual impact.
4.	***Landscaping*** *All plans are to show the two rows of landscaping as proposed, noting that some plans are incorrectly only showing one row.*	The legend on the landscaping plan has been amended to clarify that two rows are proposed for landscaping (refer to **Appendix F** of revised SEE).
5.	***Yass Valley Development Control Plan 2024*** *The Yass Valley Development Control Plan (YV DCP) 2024 came into effect on 1 August 2024, and had been adopted by Council in draft form for public exhibition at time of Development Application*	An assessment relevant provisions and controls of the DCP has been provided in **Appendix B** of the revised SEE.

Additional Information Requested		Comments
	lodgement. Legal advice now sought by Council has indicated that the YV DCP 2024 must be considered under s4.15(a)(iii) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 in relation to Development Applications which were lodged prior to it coming into effect. It is noted that the YV DCP 2024 does not contain a savings provision. *Whilst the response to submissions provided to date has noted s3.42 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 in that the provisions of DCP are not a statutory requirement. However, to enable consideration of areas of compliance and non-compliance, a consolidated assessment against the relevant provision of the YV DCP 2024 is to be provided. Where there are areas of non-compliance, the environmental planning grounds should be outlined in relation to the departure.*	The assessment details that the development is generally compliant with the provisions of the DCP and capable of implementing appropriate measures to achieve DCP objectives.
6.	***External lighting*** *Clarification on details of any external lighting that are proposed, including arrangements for nighttime usage (such as timer, sensor, etc.).*	No external lighting is currently proposed as part of the development. Requirements for security lighting are subject to the finalisation of detailed design. External lighting if proposed would be designed to achieve relevant Australian standards. The applicant has no objection to a condition of consent in this regard.
7.	***End of life*** *Clarification shall be provided on the anticipated life expectancy of the distribution battery energy storage system. Details of any potential measures that could be implemented to ensure appropriate rehabilitation and recycling at the end of the facility's operational life is to be provided.*	The proposed development is expected to have a life span of approximately 40 years, however, infrastructure may be upgraded to extend the operational life. The applicant has no objection to a condition of consent requiring that any extension of the life of the project be subject to further approvals Alternatively, the proposed development may be decommissioned sooner, subject to technology and project viability. Decommissioning of a BESS facility will likely involve: • Dismantling and removing the BESS facility infrastructure • Removing related infrastructure

Additional Information Requested		Comments
		• Rehabilitation of the site The BESS operator will be responsible for the decommissioning of the BESS. Requirements for decommissioning, such as reinstating the land, are set out in contracts with landowners and in planning approvals. Details of the decommissioning process are typically outlined by way of a Decommissioning Management Plan, that is prepared just prior to a BESS being decommissioned and identifies all infrastructure, equipment, buildings and structures to be removed and details of how these will be removed. Decommissioning of a BESS facility will be undertaken in accordance with the applicable regulations that govern the safe transport and disposition of used equipment or waste. Where possible, balance of plant material (such as steel and concrete) will be recycled. Whilst inverters, control systems and other electronic equipment may be more challenging to recycle, useful materials from these components can often be recovered. Whilst the research and opportunities for recycling BESS components is in its infancy, the industry continues to develop processes that are in line with circular economy principles including cradle to-cradle design and the achievement of 100% recyclability, The applicant has no objection to a condition of consent requiring the preparation of a decommissioning plan prepared prior to the cessation of the project.
8.	***Biodiversity Offset Scheme area threshold*** *The flora and fauna assessment prepared Waratah Ecology dated 7 May 2024 suggested that the area threshold for entry into the Biodiversity Offset Scheme is not triggered as the proposed development will not involve the clearing of 0.5ha or more of native vegetation.*	A revised flora and fauna assessment report (FFAR) has been prepared to respond to council's request and is provided within **Appendix D** of the revised SEE. Table 1 of the revised FFAR details the clearing required for the electrical equipment area, the bushfire asset protection zone, the access road and the connection & easement.

Additional Information Requested		Comments
	A revised flora and fauna assessment or addendum which includes the area calculation of the native vegetation to be cleared, including the numerical area and a plan showing the area. *The bushfire asset protection zone must be included for the purposes of determining the area threshold calculation*	The revised FFAR details that the proposed development will require the removal of approximately 0.72 ha of agricultural grasslands, which has been historically cleared for livestock grazing. This vegetation consists predominantly of exotic grass species and is considered to be of low ecological value. Section 3.2 of the FFAR details that the study area for the survey is predominantly mapped as Category 1 Exempt Land with pockets of Category 2 – Regulated Land under the NSW Draft Native Vegetation Regulatory Map. The FFAR estimates that the proportion of native groundcover is less than 30% of the development footprint. Applying the 30% estimate to the total area of 0.72 ha proposed for clearing across the development footprint provides a conservative calculation indicating that approximately 0.216 ha of native vegetation will require removal. The site has a mapped minimum lot size of 15 ha pursuant to the LEP such that the relevant clearing threshold for the development under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* is 0.5 ha. The proposed clearing of approximately 0.216 ha of native vegetation does not exceed this threshold. The FFAR has concluded that the Biodiversity Offset Scheme is not triggered by the proposed development and no BDAR is therefore required.
9.	***Finished levels*** *The flood and groundwater assessment report prepared by IGS and dated 26 April 2024 indicates that finished levels of infrastructure are to be at least +150mm above existing ground level. Finished RLs of the BESS compound are to be provided.*	A conceptual design has been prepared to review cut and fill arrangements for the proposed development and is provided as **Attachment 2** of this letter. Two options have been considered with respect to the design of the BESS compound including the establishment of a generally flat finished level across the BESS compound and an alternative option to arrange electrical components on pylons following the existing contours of the site.

Additional Information Requested		Comments
		To avoid excessive fill requirements and potential visual impacts resulting from providing a generally flat but elevated BESS compound, electrical components of the development including the MVPS and Battery units, are currently proposed to be situated on platforms with variable length pylons. The pylons would elevate the electrical components from the existing ground surface and result in electrical components stepping down the slope of the BESS compound. The elevation provided from the pylons would be designed to achieve the recommendation of the FGAR, elevating critical infrastructure to a minimum of 150 mm above the existing ground surface. Further consideration of cut and fill arrangements and construction finished levels would be provided at construction certificate stage as a result of the finalisation of detailed design.
10.	***Importation of fill material*** *The flood and groundwater assessment report prepared by IGS and dated 26 April 2024 suggests that importation of fill material to raise area where infrastructure is to be located may be a suitable option to achieve finished levels of at least +150mm above existing ground level.* *Clarification is to be provided on whether fill material is proposed to be imported for earthworks to achieve these levels, and if so, details of the volume to be imported and how this has been calculated.*	As detailed above a conceptual design has been prepared to review cut and arrangements (refer to **Attachment 2**). To avoid excessive fill requirements, electrical components of the development including the MVPS and battery units are currently proposed to be situated on platforms with variable length pylons. No fill (and very limited cut) within the extent of the BESS compound is therefore proposed. Calculations of cut and fill have been reviewed as part of the conceptual design. It has been estimated that approximately 580 m^3 of cut will be required to grade the internal access road. Further consideration of cut and fill arrangements and construction finished levels would be provided at construction certificate stage as a result of the finalisation of detailed design.
11.	***Internal access road*** *Clarification is to be provided on the design of the design standard of the proposed internal access road, including the design width.*	The project drawings have been amended to provided additional detail on the design of the internal access road (refer to **Appendix A** of the revised SEE).

Additional Information Requested		Comments
		As detailed via Sheet G-2.2_023118 of the revised DA drawings and within the TIA, the access arrangement for the development shall be constructed in accordance with figure 7.4 under Part 4 of the Austroads Guide to Road Design. The indicative width of the access arrangement and internal access roadway through to the proposed BESS compound is indicated on Drawing G-2.2_023118. A conceptual design has additionally been prepared to review cut and fill arrangements for the proposed development (refer to **Attachment 2**). The conceptual design provides a typical driveway cross section and outlines excavation works required to grade the internal access road. Further consideration of cut and fill arrangements and access requirements would be provided at construction certificate stage as a result of the finalisation of detailed design.
12.	***Revised Statement of Environmental Effects*** *A revised Statement of Environmental Effects which addresses:* • *That the proposed development is Regionally Significant Development for the purposes of State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021 due to the estimated development cost (EDC).* • *That the development is not Integrated Development for the purposes of Water Management Act 2000 following advice received from Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water.*	A revised Statement of Environmental Effects (SEE) has been prepared to respond to councils' request together with updated assessments of revised specialist assessments and a consideration of the DCP (refer to **Attachment 4** of this letter). The revised SEE addresses the following in relation to requirement 12 of councils RFI: • The updated estimated development cost and reclassification of the development as Regionally Significant Development (RSD). • Changes to consideration of the development as integrated development. As previously noted, consultation with DPIE Water has confirmed that the development is not considered integrated development for the purposes of the *Water Management Act 2000*. Section 4.46(3) of the EP&A Act however further provides that development is not integrated development in respect of the consent required under section 138 of the *Roads Act 1993* if, in order for the development to be carried out, it requires the

Additional Information Requested		Comments
		development consent of a council and the approval of the same council. The reclassification of the development as RSD has changed the consent authority from Council to a regional planning panel. As a result, the roads authority, being Yass Valley Council, is no longer the consent authority for the development application. A Section 138 approval is required for roadworks associated with the project including the proposed connection to Turton Place. The requirement for a Section 138 approval triggers reconsideration of the proposal as integrated development. The applicant has no objection to a condition of consent requiring the attainment of a Section 138 approval to Council's satisfaction prior to issue of a construction certificate. As noted above in response to requirement 12 of Council's RFI, the TIA details the design standard for the proposed access arrangement and a conceptual design includes a consideration of the typical driveway cross section and excavation works. Further consideration of cut and fill arrangements and access requirements would be provided at construction certificate stage as a result of the finalisation of detailed design.


Proposed BESS Location

Southeast Corner of Project Site facing Northwest (Indicative view from R05 and R06)



1 Patemans Lane facing Southwest (Indicative view from R07)



4 Turton Place facing North (Indicative view from R02)



5 Turton Place facing Northeast (Indicative view for R03)



Murrumbateman Road facing South

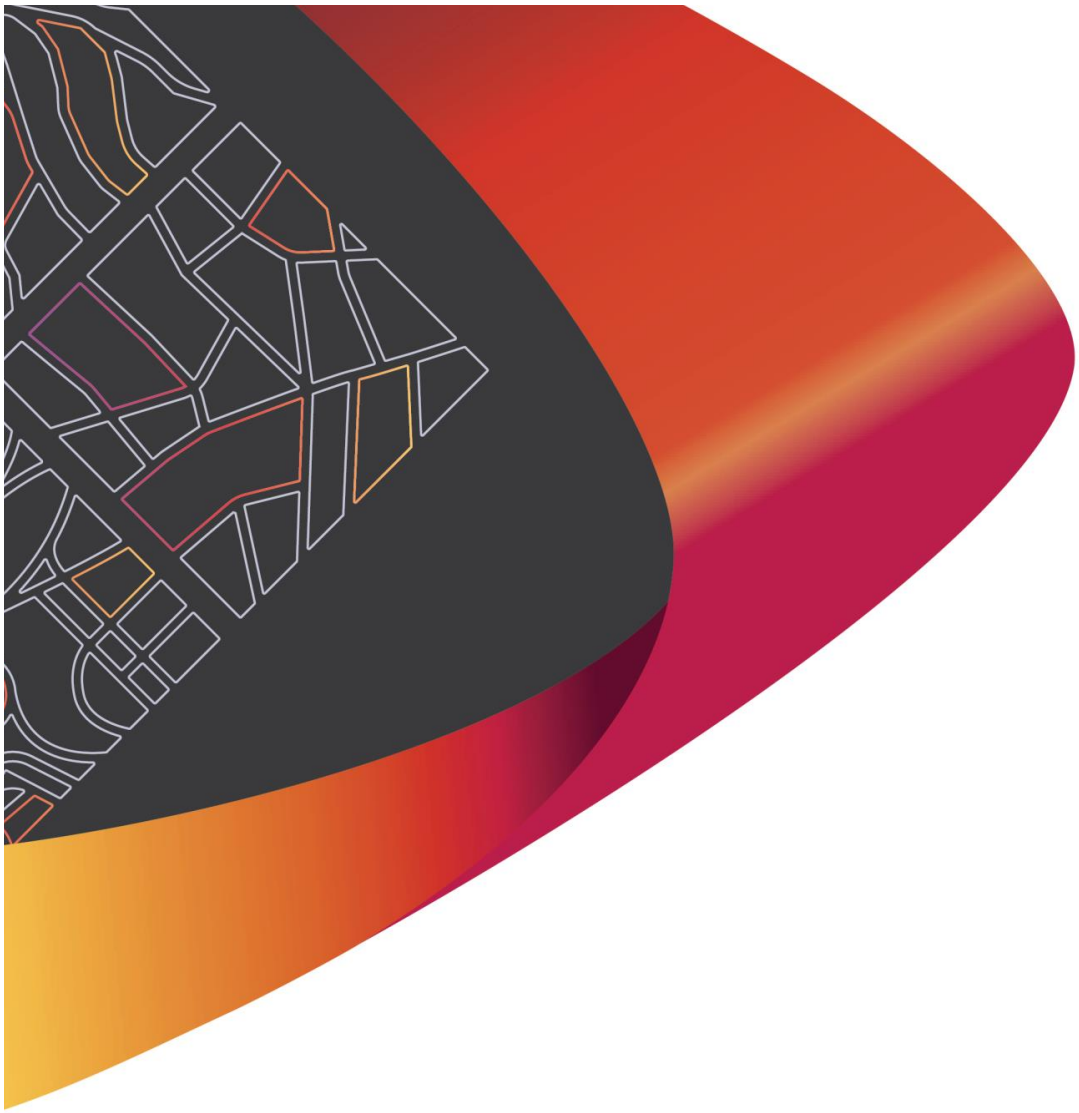


Northwestern Corner of Project Site facing South (Indicative view from R04)



Patemans Lane facing West





ACENERGY PTY LTD

P000874_SEE_001D

STATEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Report No: P000874_SEE
Rev: 001D
4 December 2024

Premise

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DOCUMENT AUTHORISATION					
Revision	**Revision Date**	**Proposal Details**			
A	25/04/24	Draft for Internal Review			
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Prepared By		**Reviewed By**		**Authorised By**	
Tamera Rudd		Hugh Shackcloth-Bertinetti		David Walker	
Hugh Shackcloth-Bertinetti					

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1. INTRODUCTION

Premise Australia Pty Ltd (Premise) has been commissioned by ACEnergy Pty Ltd to prepare a Statement of Environmental Effects (SEE) to accompany a Development Application (DA) for the development of a Distribution Battery Energy Storage System (DBESS) on land at 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman, NSW. The site of the proposed DBESS is located within a land parcel legally described as Lot 23 DP24841 (otherwise referred to as the 'the host lot').

The site is located in the Yass Valley Council (YVC) Local Government Area (LGA) and is situated within land zoned as RU4 – Primary Production Small Lots via the *Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013* (LEP). The proposed development is consistent with the definition of 'electricity generating works' pursuant to the LEP and is to be located in the northwestern extent of the host lot. The DBESS is to have an approximate capacity of 5 megawatts (MW).

This SEE has been prepared pursuant to the relevant provisions of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) and *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021* (EP&A Regulation).

The proposed development:

- Is not designated development as, by way of Schedule 3, clause 24 of the EP&A Regulation, it does not supply (nor is it capable of supplying) 30 MW of electrical power;
- Is not State significant development (SSD) as, by way of Schedule 1, Section 20 of State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021 (the Systems SEPP), it does not have an estimated development cost (EDC) of more than $30 million, nor is it located within an environmentally sensitive area of State significance; and
- Is regionally significant development (RSD) as, by way of Schedule 6, Section 5 of the Systems SEPP, it has an EDC of more than $5 million.

This SEE is provided in the following format:

- **Section 2** of this report provides a description of the subject site and its locality.
- **Section 3** outlines the proposed development.
- **Section 4** details the planning framework applicable to the subject site and proposed development.
- **Section 5** identifies the impacts of the proposed development.
- **Section 6** provides a conclusion to the SEE.

2. THE SITE & ITS LOCALITY

2.1 The Locality

The town of Murrumbateman is situated in the Southern Tablelands region of New South Wales, approximately 19 km southeast of Yass and 38 km north of Canberra.

The site of the proposed development is located approximately 2.62 km southeast of the centre of Murrumbateman (refer to **Figure 1**).

The site is located alongside and will be accessible via a new driveway connected to Turton Place to the south. Turton Street extends in a general east to west alignment to the south of the host lot, connecting to Patemans Lane in the east. Patemans Lane connects to Murrumbateman Road in the north and provides a connection with Euroka Road in the south prior to terminating approximately 2.7 km to the south of the host lot. Murrumbateman Road extends eastward connecting to the Sutton Road and westward connecting to the Barton Highway a state classified road, passing through the centre of Murrumbateman.

The entirety of the host lot and site is zoned RU4 - Primary Production Small Lots, pursuant to the LEP.

The town of Murrumbateman consists of a mixture of rural, residential, commercial and industrial land uses. The locality surrounding the project site is predominantly characterised by rural land uses and living, including several dwellings, scattered vegetation and a mixture of cropping and grazing activities.

While the locality is predominantly rural and land in the immediate proximity of the proposal is generally vacant, there are five (5) receivers within the immediate vicinity of the development site**.** As shown in the project drawings at **Appendix A**, the closest residential receiver is R01, which is an associated receiver located approximately 236 m southeast of the DBESS footprint. Other non-associated receivers in proximity are situated approximately 569 m to the southeast and 354 m to the southwest of the DBESS with access arrangements along the Turton Place.

Other remaining land uses in proximity to the site include Cavalier Performance Horse riding school approximately 1.6 km to the west, an Alpaca Farm situated at the southern extent of Patemans lane and several vineyards including but not limited to Four Wines Vineyard. Dionysus Winery and Woo Chocolate located approximately 650 m to the east, Caruluma Vineyard approximately 1.8 km to the south, Clonakilla Vineyard approximately 1.4 km to the west and the Vintner's Daughter Winery located approximately 1.6 km to the west. It is anticipated that the land surrounding the site will be developed over time in accordance with the adopted land use zoning.

As shown in **Figure 2** one overhead 22 kV Essential Energy distribution line traverses the site in a general northwest to southeast alignment. Separate overhead 22 kV essential energy transmission lines transects the land within the eastern extent of the site near the existing dwelling of the associated receiver and transect land to the south of Turon Road near the proposed access arrangement. Other electrical transmission infrastructure within the locality, including overhead and underground services, provide connections to properties located along Turton Street to the southwest of the development site.

No national parks and reserves are identified in the immediate vicinity of the site. Namima Hill, however, is situated approximately 2 km to the east of the site.

2021 Census data for the suburb and locality of Murrumbateman identifies an estimated population of approximately 3,607 people. Industries of employment are characterised by public and education services with major industries of employment recorded within Central Government Administration, Defence, Computer System Design, State Government Administration and Primary Education (ABS, 2021).

2.2 The Site

The site is situated at 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman within land legally described as Lot 23 DP248413. The lot containing the development has an approximate area of 16 hectares. The footprint of the proposed BESS is to occupy an area of approximately 0.5 ha in the northwestern extent of the host lot. The extent of the site is depicted in **Figure 2**.

The site is currently used for agricultural activities with the broader host lot consisting of several cleared paddocks. Several isolated paddock trees are located throughout the host lot with larger vegetation strand extending along the boundaries of paddocks and the southern boundary of the host lot. Every effort has been made to avoid clearing to the greatest extent possible. The development will require the removal of several trees from along the property's southern boundary, to facilitate the connection of a driveway to Turton Place.

The site currently features a single residential dwelling together with infrastructure ancillary to the existing agricultural landuse including paddock fencing, sheds, farm dams and internal access tracks. Access to the development site is to be provided to the southwestern extent of the host lot with an internal access road extending from a connection with Turton Place to the footprint of the DBESS.

Two (2) farm dams are located in proximity to the DBESS. The first is located in the northwestern corner of the host lot and has an approximate area of 2500 m^2 while the second is situated in the southwestern extent of the host lot and has an approximate area of 630 m^2. The adjacent properties also contain a number of farm dams and are utilised for agricultural purposes. An ephemeral unnamed drainage line connects farm dams across the northern portion of the site and extends into surrounding properties to the east and west.

As detailed above, an existing overhead power line runs in a general north to south alignment through the eastern portion of the site, with separate overhead transmission lines transecting land near the associated residential dwelling and the southern portion of the access arrangement.

Figure 1 – The Locality



Figure 2 – The Site



Figure 3 – Land Zoning

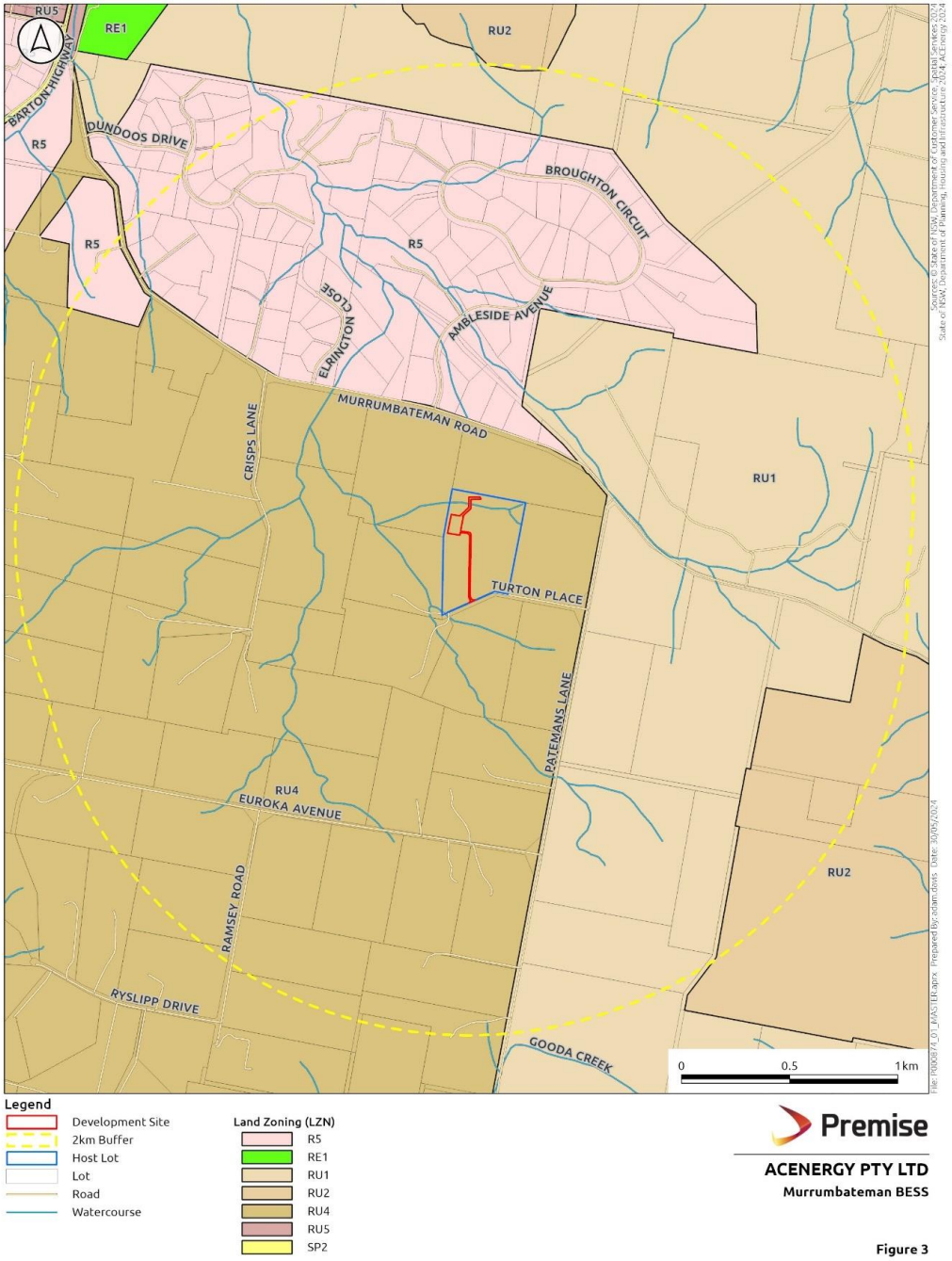


Figure 4 – Land Capability

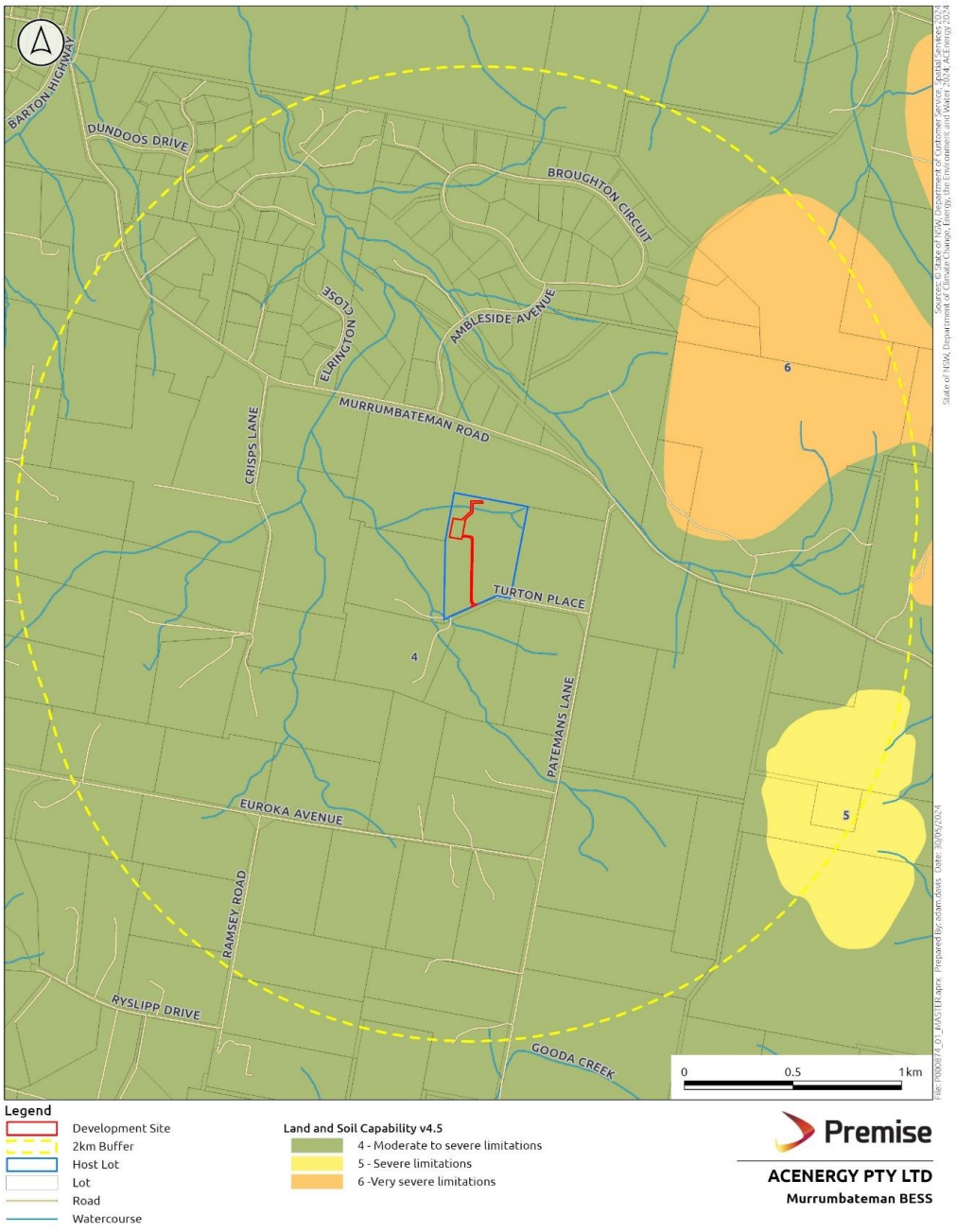


Figure 5

3. THE DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Development Description

The project comprises a DBESS that will occupy a footprint of approximately 0.5 hectares. The proposed DBESS is situated in the northwestern extent of the site and will have an approximate capacity of approximately 5 MW. The proposed DBESS, associated infrastructure and development footprint will largely align with, and be contained within, the development area shown in **Figure 2**.

The project will be designed to provide grid flexibility services. It will support the efficiency of the electrical network by charging from the grid during periods of low demand and discharging back to the grid during periods of higher demand. It would also have the capacity to charge or discharge when power system services are required, assisting to maintain the stability of the broader electricity grid by making stored energy available during high demand periods.

Power would transition to and from the DBESS switching station via a new 22 kV line connected to the existing 22 kV transmission lines to the east. The power conversion systems rectify the power into a form that is suitable for storage in the facility's batteries. The DBESS strengthens the power network by providing greater flexibility in grid management.

The key project infrastructure includes:

- The installation of a new access from Turton Place, connecting to an internal driveway extending northwards through the site to a gated entry to the DBESS. The proposed access arrangement includes the removal of two trees near the entrance to the site together with the relocation of an existing shed.
- Security fencing and landscaping around the DBESS.
- Electrical components of the DBESS, including 10 battery containers (separated into blocks); a medium voltage power station (MVPS) and high voltage switchgear in the northern corner of the site; and
- Ancillary electrical sub-transmission lines to connect the DBESS to the existing powerlines to the east.

The project would include the implementation of mitigation measures considered necessary to minimise risks posed by and to the proposed development.

4. STATUTORY PLANNING

4.1 Biodiversity

Section 1.7 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (the EP&A Act) provides that the EP&A Act has effect subject to the provisions of Part 7 of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (the BC Act) and Part 7A of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* (the Fisheries Act).

Subsection 7.2(1) in Part 7 of the BC Act provides the three triggers for development or activities to be considered as "likely to significantly affect threatened species". Under subsection 7.7(2) of the BC Act, the

development application is required to be accompanied by a development assessment report (BDAR) if it meets one or more of conditions for "likely to significantly affect threatened species".

The proposed development is considered against the three triggers in **Table 1.**

Table 1 – Section 7.2 of the BC Act

Test		Assessment
(a)	it is likely to significantly affect threatened species or ecological communities, or their habitats, according to the test in section 7.3, or	The site is disturbed as a result of previous land clearing and agricultural development. Accordingly, vegetation within the site is generally limited to non-native species planted in conjunction with the former land use. An assessment of potential impacts to biodiversity is provided in **Section 5.7**, together with a Flora and Fauna Assessment Report (FFAR) in **Appendix D**. No significant impacts to threatened species or ecological communities, or their habitats are anticipated.
(b)	the development exceeds the biodiversity offsets scheme threshold if the biodiversity offsets scheme applies to the impacts of the development on biodiversity values, or	As per Section 7.4 of the BC Act, development exceeds the biodiversity offsets scheme threshold if it is: (a) Of an area declared by clause 7.2 of the BC Regulation as exceeding the threshold, or (b) On land included on the Biodiversity Values Map published under clause 7.3. The site has a mapped minimum lot size of 15 hectares pursuant to the LEP such that the relevant clearing threshold for the site is 0.5 hectare. The development does not propose to clear more than 0.5 hectares of native vegetation. The site does not contain land mapped via the Biodiversity Values Map. A BDAR is not required.
(c)	it is carried out in a declared area of outstanding biodiversity value.	The site is not located within a declared area of outstanding biodiversity value under Part 3 of the BC Regulation.

4.2 Designated development

Section 4.10 of the EP&A Act and Schedule 3 of the EP&A Regulation outline that certain types of development are classified as designated development. Designated development requires the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment for an application for consent.

The proposed DBESS represents a 'battery storage facility' for the purposes of Section 7 of Schedule 3 of the EP&A Regulation.

The approximate capacity of the proposed DBESS of approximately 5 MW is below the threshold of 30 MW provided by the EP&A Regulation such that the development is not classified as designated development.

4.3 Bush fire prone land

Section 4.14 of the EP&A Act provides that development consent cannot be granted for any development for any propose if located on bush fire prone land unless the consent authority:

> *(a) is satisfied that the development conforms to the specifications and requirements of the version (as prescribed by the regulations) of the document entitled Planning for Bush Fire Protection prepared by the NSW Rural Fire Service in co-operation with the Department (or, if another document is prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this paragraph, that document) that are relevant to the development (the relevant specifications and requirements), or*
>
> *(b) has been provided with a certificate by a person who is recognised by the NSW Rural Fire Service as a qualified consultant in bush fire risk assessment stating that the development conforms to the relevant specifications and requirements.*

The project is not identified as a subdivision of land that could be used for residential purposes or rural residential purposes or development for a special fire protection purposes under 4.14(1) of the EP&A Act and it is not considered integrated development under Section 4.46 as no approval under section 100B of the *Rural Fires Act 1997* (RF Act) is required (refer to **Section 4.4**).

The site of the proposed development, however, contains land mapped as bushfire prone including Vegetation Category 3. A consideration of the proposed development with respect to the specifications and requirements of the document entitled *Planning for Bush Fire Protection,* pursuant to Section 4.14(1)(a), is therefore required.

An assessment of potential bush fire impacts associated with the proposed development is provided within **Section 5.14.2**.

4.4 Integrated development

Section 4.46 of the EP&A Act states that development requiring consent and another activity approval is defined as Integrated Development.

A review of whether the development is classified as integrated development has been undertaken following the revision of an EDC report and the reclassification of the project as RSD. The proposed development is now classified as Integrated Development as it requires the following approvals identified via Section 4.46 of the EP&A Act:

- A consent under section 138 of the *Roads Act 1993* to carry out work in, on or over a public road. The proposed development will connect to Turton Place, a local road managed by Yass Valley Council.

For the avoidance of doubt section 4.46(3) of the EP&A Act previously applied to the classification of the project as local development. The requirement for a section 138 approval did not previously trigger consideration of the project as integrated development as the consent authority, Yass Valley Council, was also the roads authority. The refinement of the EDC and reclassification of the project as RSD, however, has

changed the consent authority to the Southern Regional Planning Panel. Section 4.46(3) therefore no longer applies and the Section 138 approval triggers consideration of the project as integrated development.

The applicant has no objection to a condition of consent requiring the attainment of a Section 138 approval to Council's satisfaction prior to issue of a construction certificate. Further consideration of access requirements, including with respect to the Section 138 approval, would be provided at construction certificate stage and as a result of the finalisation of detailed design.

It is noted that the proposed development seeks to establish an underground electrical cable to connect the proposed DBESS to existing transmission lines located within the eastern extent of the host lot. The proposed route for the electrical connection transects a drainage line which extends through the northern extent of the host lot. From a review of aerial photography, the drainage line is considered to be ephemeral in nature with intermittent flows conveying water from infrequent spills from farm dams in the east in a westward direction, across the site, to farm dams in the west. It, however, is mapped as mapped as a 2nd order hydroline via state mapping.

Consultation with DPIE Water has occurred following the original lodgement of the development application to determine requirements to attain a controlled activity approval (CAA) under Section 91 of the *Water Management Act 2000* (WM Act). The response received from DPIE Water has been provided to YVC and has detailed that the proposed works are not situated on waterfront land. DPIE Water have confirmed that no CAA is therefore required for the proposed development.

4.5 Environmental Planning Instruments

The EP&A Act facilitates the preparation of Environmental Planning Instruments (EPIs), including State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPP) and Local Environmental Plans (LEP).

In relation to the site and proposed development, the relevant EPIs include:

- *Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013:* Refer to **Section 4.5.1**.
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021:* Refer to **Section 4.5.1.4**.
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021:* Refer to **Section 4.5.3**.
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021:* Refer to **Section 4.5.4**.

4.5.1 YASS VALLEY LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN 2013

The following relevant provisions of the *Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013* (LEP) are addressed in the following subsections:

- Clause 2.1 Land Use Zones: Refer to **Section 4.5.1.1**.
- Clause 6.1 Earthworks**:** Refer to **Section 4.5.1.2**.
- Clauses 6.3 Terrestrial Biodiversity: Refer to **Section 4.5.1.3**.
- Clause 6.8 Essential Services: Refer to **Section 4.5.1.4**.

4.5.1.1 Clause 2.1 Land Use Zones

The site is located on land zoned, RU4 - Primary Production Small Lots (refer to **Figure 3**). The proposed development consists of a DBESS, which is most appropriately defined as (emphasis added):

> ***electricity generating works*** *means a building or place used for the purpose of:*
>
> *a) making or generating electricity,*
>
> *b) or* ***electricity storage****.*

Development for the purposes of electricity generating works is prohibited within the RU4 Land use zone applying to the site under clause 2.3.

Notwithstanding this, Division 4 of *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021* (Infrastructure SEPP) provides that development for the purposes of electricity generating works including electricity storage, is permitted with consent in a prescribed non-residential zone (refer to **Section 4.5.4**). The Infrastructure SEPP prevails to the extent of any inconsistency with another planning instrument. The RU4 zone is a prescribed non-residential zone and therefore the development is permitted with consent.

The proposed DBESS is not antipathetic to the objectives of the RU4 land zone. The implementation of appropriate mitigation measures as part of the design of the project and during the construction and operational phases would seek to minimise significant impacts to the objectives of the land zone and surrounding land uses.

4.5.1.2 Clause 6.1 Earthworks

Section 6.1 of the LEP requires consideration of a range of factors prior to granting consent for earthworks. It provides that development involving earthworks must not have a detrimental impact on environmental functions and processes, neighbouring uses, cultural or heritage items or features of the surrounding landscape.

Subclause 6.1(2) of the LEP provides that development consent is required for earthworks unless they are exempt development under the LEP or another applicable EPI, or ancillary to other development for which consent has been given. Where consent is required, the consent authority is required to consider the matters in subclause 6.1(3) before granting development consent.

The proposed works are considered in the context of the matters in subclause 6.1 (3) in **Table 2**.

Table 2 – Earthworks Considerations

Matters for Consideration		**Comment**	
(a)	The likely disruption of, or any detrimental effect on, drainage patterns and soil stability in the locality of the development	The proposed earthworks are limited to minor volumes associated with the installation an approximate 5 MW DBESS and therefore is not anticipated to result in any impacts on drainage patterns and soil stability in the locality.	✓

Matters for Consideration		Comment	
		Ground would be remediated post work to ensure a stable environment, with no additional run-off.	
(b)	The effect of the development on the likely future use or redevelopment of the land	The proposed earthworks are associated with the installation and operation of an approximate 5 MW DBESS. Earthworks are minor and unlikely to result in any demonstrable changes in land levels.	✓
(c)	The quality of the fill or the soil to be excavated	Excavation works will be limited to establishing footings/slabs for the proposed development and trenching for cables, with only minor amounts of soil excavated. In the event that excavated soil requires removal from the site it will be transferred as required to an appropriately licenced facility. Standard checking and tracking requirements will be applied.	✓
(d)	The effect of the development on the existing and likely amenity of adjoining properties	Levels near the site boundaries would be maintained, ensuring that the earthworks would not impact on the amenity of adjoining properties.	✓
(e)	The source of the fill material and the destination of the excavated material	The source any fill material and destination of any excavated material is to comply with Council's requirements.	✓
(f)	The likelihood of disturbing relics	The likelihood of disturbing relics is low as the site is located within a disturbed rural setting. The development footprint is considered unlikely to contain any of the natural features typically associated with Aboriginal sites or places.	✓
(g)	The proximity to, and potential for adverse impacts on, a waterway, drinking water catchment or environmentally sensitive area	The site is not located within a mapped environmentally sensitive area. The closest watercourse to the DBESS consists of a farm dam situated approximately 45 m to the north. The proposed electrical connection route however transects land mapped as containing a second order stream. Due to the distance between the DBESS footprint and subject to the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures, no adverse impacts to watercourses are anticipated to result	✓

Matters for Consideration		Comment	
		from the proposed development. Trenching of the electrical connection route	
(h)	Any appropriate measures proposed to avoid, minimise or mitigate the impacts of the development	No additional measures are required to minimise or mitigate the impacts referred in paragraph (g).	N/A

4.5.1.3 Clauses 6.3 Terrestrial Biodiversity

Clause 6.3 of the LEP applies to land identified as biodiversity via the Terrestrial Biodiversity Map. The site of the DBESS consists of land mapped on the terrestrial biodiversity map.

Subclause 6.3(3) of the LEP prevents the consent authority from granting consent unless it has considered the matters under subclause 6.3(3) and is satisfied that potential impacts to biodiversity, with respect to subclause 6.3(4), are minimised.

An assessment of potential biodiversity impacts is provided within **Section 5.7.** Subject to the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures the proposed project is not anticipated to result in any significant adverse impacts to biodiversity.

4.5.1.4 Clause 6.8 Essential Services

Clause 6.8 of the LEP prevents the consent authority from granting consent unless it is satisfied that essential services are available or that adequate arrangements have been made to make them available when required. These include the supply of water and electricity, disposal and management of sewage, stormwater drainage or on-site conservation and suitable vehicular access.

The following is noted in the context of Clause 6.8:

a. No reticulated water network is available for the proposed development. It is anticipated that water for the construction activities would be sourced and transported to the site via water trucks. Water supply arrangements would be confirmed in consultation with Council, Regulatory Authorities, and the existing landowner prior to construction and during the refinement of detailed design, ensuring a sufficient supply of water is available for the operation of the project – refer to **Section 5.6**.
b. The development would include the installation of ancillary electrical infrastructure. The proposed electrical connection would extend eastward from the proposed DBESS, connecting to an existing overhead transmission line located in the eastern extent of the site.
c. No permanent connection to a reticulated sewer network is proposed. Portable ablution facilities would be temporarily installed on site during the construction phase of the project. It is anticipated that chemical port-a-loo's, as temporary portable ablution facilities, will be provided at strategic locations around the site for use by personnel during the construction and decommissioning phases of the project. Where possible these port-a-loo's will be located on a trailer to allow for easy redistribution. Waste from port-a-loo's will be disposed of offsite at a licensed treatment facility.

d. The proposed development is not anticipated to result in significant impacts to surrounding water courses. Stormwater management measures would be provided as appropriate to minimise the potential for adverse impacts - refer to **Section 5.6** and Drawings provided in **Appendix A.**

e. The development includes the installation a new driveway and access arrangement connected to Turton Place. The access arrangement would be designed to provide safe ingress and egress for vehicles associated with the project – refer to **Section 5.8** and Drawings provided in **Appendix A.**

On the basis of the above, the development is considered to be acceptable in the context of clause 6.2 of the LEP.

4.5.2 STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY (BIODIVERSITY AND CONSERVATION) 2021

4.5.2.1 Chapter 2 Vegetation in non-rural areas

Chapter 2 of the Biodiversity SEPP relates to vegetation in "non-rural areas of the State", defined in Section 2.3 as land with any non-rural zoning. The RU4 – Primary Production Small Lot land zone applying to the site is not listed as a non-rural area under Section 2.3(1)(b).

The entire site is within the RU4 land zone and therefore, Chapter 2 does not apply to the proposed development.

4.5.2.2 Chapter 3 Koala habitat protection 2020

Under Section 3.3(1) of the Biodiversity SEPP, this Chapter applies to land within the RU1 Primary Production, RU2 Rural Landscape and RU3 Forestry and equivalent zones in an LGA not marked with a '*' in Schedule 2 of the SEPP. A three-step process applies where the SEPP applies and the site (including adjoining land in the same ownership) has an area of more than one hectare.

The entire site is within the RU4 zone and the Yass Valley LGA is not marked a '*' in Schedule 2 of the SEPP. Chapter 3 of the SEPP therefore does not apply to the proposed development.

4.5.2.1 Chapter 4 Koala habitat protection 2021

Under Section 4.4(1) of the Biodiversity SEPP, this Chapter applies to LGAs listed in Schedule 2 of the SEPP. Section 4.4(3) of this chapter, however, provides that it does not apply to the land within the RU1 Primary Production, RU2 Rural Landscape or RU3 Forestry zone or an equivalent land use zone, unless the zone is in a LGA marked with an '*' in Schedule 2 of the SEPP.

The entire site is within the RU4 zone and the Yass Valley LGA is listed without a '*' in Schedule 2 of the SEPP. Chapter 4 therefore applies to the proposed development.

As detailed in **Section 5.7**, the proposed activity is on land disturbed by agricultural operations.

Given existing disturbance and the minimal extent of vegetation impacted no significant impacts to koalas or koala habitat are expected. This is further discussed in **Appendix D.**

4.5.3 STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY (RESILIENCE AND HAZARDS) 2021

4.5.3.1 Chapter 3 Hazardous and Offensive Development

Section 3.7 of the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021* (The Hazards SEPP) requires the consideration of current circulars or guidelines prepared by the Department of Planning in determining whether a development is:

- hazardous storage establishment, hazardous industry or other potentially hazardous industry; or
- offensive storage establishment, offensive industry or other potentially offensive industry.

The current and most recent guidelines prepared by the Department of Planning, the *Hazardous and Offensive Development Application Guidelines – Applying SEPP 33* (Applying SEPP 33 Guideline; Department of Planning 2011), includes the screening tests to be used to determine whether a development is potentially hazardous development. If the screening tests indicate that a development is potentially hazardous development, a preliminary hazard analysis (PHA) is required to be provided as part of the DA. The type of screening test to be used is dependent upon the class, as categorised under the Australian Dangerous Goods Code (the ADG code; National Transport Commission 2020) of dangerous goods proposed to be accommodated on-site.

The project includes delivery of a DBESS. The dangerous good associated with DBESS are lithium batteries which are a class 9 dangerous good under the ADG Code. Class 9 goods do not exceed the screening thresholds under the guidelines under the Applying SEPP 33 Guideline as they "pose little threat to people or property" (Department of Planning 2011, p. 33). The proposed development is therefore considered unlikely to pose a significant hazard or risk associated with the use of lithium batteries.

4.5.3.2 Chapter 4 Remediation of Land

Section 4.6(1) of the Hazards SEPP states that a consent authority must not consent to the carrying out of development unless it has considered whether the land is contaminated. If the land is contaminated, the consent authority must not consent to the carrying out of development unless it is suitable for the proposed use in its contaminated state or will be suitably remediated before the land is used for that purpose.

A search of the NSW EPA Contaminated land record was completed on 21 November 2024 for contaminated land within the Yass LGA. The search identified 15 notices related to two (2) contaminated sites within the LGA. The two sites included a former gasworks located along Dutton Street and a former Mobil depot located at 54-58 Laidlaw Street. No sites were identified within the town of Murrumbateman.

The EPA's list of notified sites dated 8 November 2024 was reviewed on 21 November 2024 for suburbs within the Yass Valley LGA. The search did not identify any sites at or within the vicinity of the project site.

Notwithstanding the above, the proposed activity is located on a site historically used for agricultural purposes and there is therefore the potential for contamination on site.

Through the discussions with the landowner, and a review of available historical aerial photography (refer **Section 5.1**), there are no indications of historic use of the land for a potentially contaminating purpose.

Whilst no known contamination risks have been identified, appropriate safeguards and mitigation measures, are recommended for implementation during the completion of site works and operation of the proposed activity to minimise the potential risks associated with encountering contamination (Refer to **Section 5.3**). The implementation of waste management measures (Refer to **Section 5.13**) together appropriate soil and water management measures (Refer to **Section 5.2** and **5.6**) would additionally assist to reduce the risk of site contamination occurring as a result of the proposed activity.

Accordingly, the development is considered to satisfy the requirements of Chapter 4 of the Hazards SEPP.

4.5.4 STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY (TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE) 2021

Division 4 of *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021* (The Infrastructure SEPP) provides that development for the purposes of electricity generating works is permitted with consent in a prescribed non-residential zone. The RU4 zone applying to the site is a prescribed zone under Section 2.35 of Division 4.

The Infrastructure SEPP prevails over the LEP to the extent of an inconsistency pursuant to Part 2.1 Section 2.7, permitting the proposed development of electricity generating works to be undertaken with development consent on land within the RU4 zone. The proposed activity therefore is permissible with development consent on the basis that it is development permitted with consent via an EPI, the Infrastructure SEPP.

Other provisions of the Infrastructure SEPP are discussed in **Table 3**.

Table 3 – Infrastructure SEPP

Relevant Infrastructure SEPP provisions		**Assessment**
Section 2.36	Development for the purpose of electricity generating works permitted with consent.	The project is for the purpose of electricity generating works. Development for the purpose of electricity generating works may be carried out by any person with consent on land in a prescribed non-residential zone via Section 2.36(1)(b). The subject site is zoned RU4 land, which is a prescribed non-residential zone. As such the project is permitted with consent.
Section 2.118 and Section 2.119	Development on a proposed classified road and development with a frontage to a classified road	The proposed project does not include development on a proposed classified road such that Section 2.119 does not apply. The site of the development is situated adjacent to the Turton Place which is a local road managed by Yass Valley Council. No frontage or direct connection from the site to the road reserve of a classified road is proposed and therefore Section 2.119 does not apply.

Relevant Infrastructure SEPP provisions		Assessment
		Notwithstanding the above an approval under Section 138 of the *Roads Act 1993* is required for road works associated with the project including the connection to Turton Place. An assessment of potential traffic related impacts is provided in **Section 5.9.**
Section 2.122	Traffic generating development	The project is not identified as traffic generating development under Schedule 3 of the Infrastructure SEPP. An assessment of potential traffic related impacts is provided in **Section 5.9.**

4.5.5 DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING INSTRUMENTS

A review of the NSW Government LEP planning proposal tracking website did not identify any draft planning instrument currently under assessment in the Yass Valley Council LGA relevant to the proposed development. The only current assessment is provided with respect to amendments to include 9 cabins located in Wee Jasper heritage items within Schedule 5 of the LEP (PP-2024-419).

4.5.6 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN

A previous review of the council's website, during the original lodgment of the development, did not identify a development control plan in effect which impacted the proposed development site. The plans in effect at the time of lodgement were restricted to *Yass Valley Council Development Control Plan, Fairley Commercial Centre, Murrumbateman* (YVC 2015) and the *Yass Shire Development Control Plan - Multi-unit Residential Development*. (YVC (2003).

The Yass Valley Council Development Control Plan 2024 (DCP) was adopted by Yass Valley Council on 25 July 2024 and came into operation on 1 August 2024. Whilst this was after the original lodgement of this development application, Council have identified that the draft DCP has been considered during councils' assessment of other development applications prior to its formal commencement. This section of the SEE has therefore been amended to provide a consideration of the current DCP.

The DCP, available via the YVC website, contains several development controls including specific parts applying to development applications for Subdivision, Residential, Rural, Large Lot and Environmental Zone Development Industrial and Commercial Development, Area specific Controls and development in hazard affected areas together with other generalised controls associated with the design of a development including with respect , area specific controls, development in hazard affected areas, carparking and access, heritage, natural resources and miscellaneous land uses.

Part A of the DCP notably provides a general outline on the purpose and aims of the plan and includes a Land Use Matrix to detail the applicability of each part to different types of development. Development applications for the purposes of electricity generating works as detailed in the DCP should be considered with respect to the following parts:

- Part A – Introduction
- Part B – Principles For All Development
- Part H – Development in Hazard Affected Areas (if necessary)
- Part I – Car Parking and Access
- Part K – Natural Resources (if necessary)
- Part L – Miscellaneous Land Uses (if necessary)

The land use matrix within the DCP does not assign electricity generating works for consideration under Part E – Rural, Large Lot and Environmental Zone Development. This part of the DCP however, states that it applies to development within land zoned R5 Large Lot Residential, RU1 Primary Production, RU2 Rural Landscape, RU4 Primary Production Small Lots, C3 Environmental Management, C4 Environmental Living. RU4 Primary Production Small Lots. The proposed development is situated within the RU4 land zone and a consideration of provisions under Part E of the DCP is therefore provided.

Compliance with the relevant requirements of the DCP is demonstrated via the detailed assessment provided in **Appendix B.**

One (1) non-compliance was identified and is associated with minimum setbacks to properties containing intensive plant agriculture The DCP provides a control to ensure that development is setback 250 m from the boundary of a property which is used for intensive plant agriculture. The footprint BESS is setback approximately 140 m from the northern boundary which adjoins a property that undertakes intensive plant agriculture. Notwithstanding this the non-compliance is considered capable of being addressed through mitigation measures to achieve the objective of this part of the DCP.

On the basis of the assessment in **Appendix B**, it is considered that the proposed development is consistent and capable of achieving the relevant objectives of the DCP.

4.5.7 DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS PLAN

The *Yass Valley Development Contributions Plan 2018* (YVC, 2019) applies to the project site. The contribution plan outlines the application of levies to applications for development consent and applications for complying development certificates under Part 4 of the EP&A Act.

Development that is exempt from paying a contribution under the plan includes:

- Development that has been the subject of a condition under a former section 94 plan under a previous development consent relating to the subdivision of the land on which the development is to be carried out,
- Development for the sole purpose of the adaptive reuse of an item of environmental heritage (listed in Schedule 5 of Yass Valley LEP),
- Places of public worship and centre based child care facilities by or on behalf of a charity or not-for-profit organisation,
- Emergency services facilities,
- Affordable housing or social housing by a social or a not-for-profit affordable housing provider,
- Development of facilities on behalf of a public authority,

- Development undertaken by or on behalf of Council,
- Community facilities or infrastructure,
- Any development excluded from paying a contribution by a Ministerial direction under Section 7.17 – 'Directions by Minister' of the EP&A Act.

The proposed development comprises the installation of a DBESS consistent with a battery storage facility and does not satisfy any of the exemption conditions listed above. Contributions will therefore apply to the proposed development (subject to confirmation from YVC). A cost summary report prepared by M/s Denary Quantity Surveying estimates costs associated with the project in accordance with Section 208 of the EP&A Regulations and has been provided with the application.

5. LIKELY IMPACTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

The impacts have been identified through an assessment of the proposed development against the provisions of section 4.15(1)(b). This section also addresses the consideration at Section 4.15(c) and Section 4.15(e) of the Act that relate to the suitability of the site for the development and the public interest.

The assessment is constrained to the proposed development, i.e. that which is described in Section 3 of this report. Impacts associated with the approved development are not required to be considered as part of this report.

5.1 Context and Setting

The site is located in an area zoned for the purpose of primary production and is characterised by agricultural land uses.

The proposed DBESS is permissible within the RU4 zone via the Infrastructure SEPP and has minimal ongoing impacts associated with its operation. The proposed electricity storage works would be generally low scale and are capable of being designed with minimal impact to the existing character of the locality.

A review of the site via the NSW Historical Imagery Viewer has been undertaken to assess the sites context and previous land uses. Historical imagery between 1985 and 1997, shows that the site and surrounding locality have historically been used for agricultural production including cropping. Tree plantings throughout the site have notably been introduced between 1985 and 1997, most noticeably in the row of trees surrounding the sites access road and surrounding the existing residential property within the same landholding to the east. Based on this review, and coupled with discussions with the landowner, no significant contamination is anticipated to have resulted from the previous agricultural land use of the site.

5.2 Soils

The development site impact area is mapped via the Land and Soil Capability Mapping for NSW (DPIE 2021) as having a land capability of Class 4 (moderate to severe Limitations) – Refer to **Figure 4.**

The site of the proposed activity is not mapped as containing Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land (BSAL) and does not include any land mapped on the draft State Significant Agricultural (SSA) Land Map.

The site is located within the Boorowa soil landscape area (SI5512bw) which is identified with several soil hazards including moderate topsoil erodibility, low to moderate subsoil erodibility a low to moderate erosion hazard, a moderate structural degradation hazards and low to moderate shrink-swell potential. As noted via the soil landscape sheet soil erosion is associated to minor gullying of drainage lines with sheet and wind erosion occurring during dry times and following cultivation. The existing use of the Boorowa soil landscape is characteristic of agricultural land uses including extensive cultivation of winter cereals (mainly wheat) as well as sheep and cattle grazing.

Minor excavation and trenching is required to prepare the site for installation of the DBESS, with the potential for minor changes to access treatments and internal roads/driveways.

Soil impacts are anticipated to be limited to the construction phase of the project with no significant impact anticipated to result from the DBESS operation. Potential impacts on soil resulting from the proposed development include:

- Soil erosion and sedimentation.
- Soil contamination via spills from vehicles and vehicles during the construction phase.
- Potential disturbance of unknown contaminated soil.
- Encountering rock units with the capacity to accommodate naturally occurring asbestos.

Subject to the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures, including standard erosion and sediment controls during construction, the proposed development is not expected to result in significant impacts.

5.3 Contamination

A review of contamination records on 21 November 2024 did not identify any contaminated land within or in vicinity of the project site (refer **Section 4.5.3.2**).

The site is substantially separated from recorded contaminated sites such that no significant impacts from previous contamination are anticipated. In the unlikely event that contaminated soils are located within the site, these are unlikely to be substantially disturbed due to the extent of works proposed. No substantial soil movement or sub-surface works are expected to form part of the proposed DBESS development.

A review of historical imagery has determined that the site has historically been used for agricultural land use (refer **Section 5.1**). No significant contamination is anticipated to have resulted from the previous agricultural use of the site.

5.4 Heritage

5.4.1 ABORIGINAL HERITAGE

A basic search of the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) online database was undertaken on 21 November 2024 to determine the potential for adverse impacts to aboriginal heritage. The search did not identify any known Aboriginal sites or places of heritage significance occurring at or near the project site (refer to **Appendix B**).

A review of Native Title Vision mapping was undertaken on 21 November 2024 and did not identify any Native Title Determination Areas located at or near the project site.

Given the existing use of the project site and the absence of known sites or places of Aboriginal heritage significance heritage, the proposed activity is considered unlikely to result in significant impacts to Aboriginal heritage.

Notwithstanding the above there is potential for unknown archaeological remains to be discovered and encountered during the construction of the proposed activity. While the potential to discover items of heritage significance is considered low, a precautionary principle applies. Appropriate mitigation measures would be implemented during the construction phase of the project to minimise the potential for adverse impacts.

5.4.2 NON-INDIGENOUS HERITAGE

A review of the State Heritage Inventory (SHI) online database for the LGA and Schedule 5 of the LEP was undertaken on 21 November 2024. No items of local or state heritage significance were identified at or within the immediate vicinity of the subject site. The closest listed heritage item, Winstonwood Church (I114) is of local heritage significance and is located approximately 4 km northeast of the site.

Given the separation distance the proposed development is considered unlikely to result in any adverse impact to these heritage items.

Notwithstanding the above there is potential for unknown archaeological remains to be discovered and encountered during the construction of the proposed activity. While the potential to discover items of heritage significance is considered low, a precautionary principle applies. Appropriate mitigation measures would be implemented during the construction phase of the project to minimise the potential for adverse impacts.

5.5 Other Land Resources

The construction of the proposed development may result in some temporary disturbance to the existing agricultural use of the site, including through impacts associated with traffic, air and microclimate, waste and noise and vibration during the construction phase.

As detailed in **Section 5.2**, the proposed development is to occur with land mapped as Class 4 on the Land and Soil Capability Mapping for NSW (DPIE 2021). Class 4 land is described by the Land and Soil Capability Assessment Scheme (OEH, 2012) as:

> ***Moderate capability land:*** *Land has moderate to high limitations for high-impact land uses. Will restrict land management options for regular high-impact land uses such as cropping, high-intensity grazing and horticulture. These limitations can only be managed by specialised management practices with a high level of knowledge, expertise, inputs, investment and technology.*

Accordingly, and noting the small disturbance area, the proposed development is considered unlikely to result in any significant impacts to agricultural land resources. Mitigation measures implemented

throughout the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the proposed development would be designed to minimise the potential for adverse impacts to the land and soil capability. During decommissioning the site would be returned (as far as reasonably practical) to its existing state, ensuring that the land remains suitable for future agricultural activities.

A review of the Minview mapping has identified that a mining exploration licence EL9120, owned by AURUM Metals Pty Ltd currently applies to the site. This exploration licence was granted on 30 March 2021 and has an expiry date of 30 March 2027.

The site is not located within a Mine Subsidence District and no mining or drilling approvals are known to have been granted in relation to the site. Given the proximity of the site to the town of Murrumbateman and limited extent of works it is considered unlikely that the footprint of the DBESS project would be utilised for future mining activities. It is also noted that the project is of a limited duration (approximately 40 years) and thus the future use of the land for mining purposes is not precluded.

Consultation between the applicant and AURUM Metals Pty Ltd would occur prior to commencement of construction to identify any potential conflicts and intentions to drill or explore in the area of the proposed DBESS. No disruption to other land resources is considered likely to result from the proposed development.

5.6 Water

5.6.1 SURFACE WATER

There are no surface water features located within the footprint of the DBESS.

Water sources in proximity to the DBESS are limited to two (2) farm dams located within the host lot and a 2nd order drainage line transecting the northern portion of the host lot. Several other farm dams and drainage lines are situated on surrounding land to the west and east of the host lot.

The closest water source to the DBESS is a farm dam situated approximately 45 m north of the DBESS, within the northwestern corner of the host lot. An additional farm dam is situated within the southwestern extent of the host lot, located approximately 215 m south of the DBESS and approximately 60 m west of the proposed access arrangement.

The drainage line within the northern extent of the host lot is located within the proposed electrical connection route, approximately 70 m north of the DBESS footprint at its closest point. The drainage line extends in a general east to west alignment, connecting the dam in the northwestern corner of the host lot to drainage features situated on adjacent land to the west and along the eastern boundary of the host lot. The drainage line is mapped via hydroline spatial data and consists of a second order stream draining in a westward direction, downstream of two (2) first order streams. The first order streams are connected to two (2) farm dams situated along the host lot's eastern boundary. It is likely that the stream flows only during times of heavy rain or when there is spill from the farm dams.

The proposed electrical connection route transects the second order stream to connect to existing transmission lines located within the eastern extent of the host lot. A Controlled Activity Approval is

anticipated as a requirement for the proposed development subject to confirmation from DPIE Water (refer to **Section 4.4**.

Notwithstanding the above, the proposed development is considered unlikely to result in any significant impact to surrounding watercourses. Subject to the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures the proposed project is not anticipated to result in any significant adverse impacts.

The implementation of a soil and erosion management plan and other standard construction measures would limit the potential for the proposed development to result in adverse impacts to the surrounding water environment during the construction phase. The following mitigation measures are recommended to minimise the potential for adverse impacts:

- Minimise the extent of ground disturbance and associated loss of groundcover as far as practical to reduce the potential sediment movement.
- Implement rehabilitation with a capacity to best utilise seasonally opportunities and needs;
- Activities with the potential for spills (refuelling) would not be undertaken within 50 m of any watercourse and a suitable spill response and containment kit available on site whenever and wherever these type of higher risk activities are undertaken.
- Ensure that the DBESS is appropriately designed and maintained during operation to minimise the potential for spills and soil contamination.

5.6.2 GROUNDWATER

The site is not mapped as containing groundwater vulnerability via the ePlanning spatial viewer or LEP.

A review of the WaterNSW All Groundwater Map did not identify any registered groundwater bores within the boundaries of the site. The closest registered bore GW047516 is situated approximately 200 m west of the DBESS footprint and is recorded with a total depth of 38.1 metres. The next closest groundwater bore, GW047293, is situated within the southwestern corner of the host lot, approximately 300 m south of the DBESS footprint. GW047293 is listed with a total drill depth of 45.7 m and a standing water level of 3 m below ground level.

A review of the Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems Atlas (BoM, 2024) and NSW SEED Portal (2024) did not identify any aquatic, terrestrial or subterranean Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDE) occurring within the site or host lot.

A Flood and Groundwater Assessment prepared by Water Technology forms part of this application and provides further assessment of groundwater impacts (refer to **Appendix G**). The groundwater assessment was prepared to consider the likelihood of groundwater contamination impacts on GDEs, cumulative impacts on the groundwater system including nearby extraction and appropriate measure to avoid, minimise and mitigate the potential impacts of the development. The assessment concludes the following with respect to groundwater impacts.

> *Based on the understanding of the local hydrogeological regime and site operations during construction and operation, it is considered that there is negligible risk to groundwater or GDEs*

This conclusion was supported and derived from the following:

- *No significant volumes of potential contaminants will be stored on the subject site during construction and operation phases and the small volumes that are shall be appropriately bunded and infrastructure maintained.*
- *The battery units are self-contained and will control any potential leaks. There is no opportunity for leaching of metals due to the battery make up and containment and lack of water in the battery units.*
- *Excavations will be shallow, <1 m deep and groundwater is unlikely to be encountered and no dewatering or abstraction will occur. Summer or Autumn Excavations will further reduce the potential for intersecting groundwater during excavations.*
- *Depth to groundwater, based on available data, is generally >3 m (at bores located within 400 m of the Subject Site) and is beneath a thick clay layer, reducing the risk of infiltration to groundwater. However, recent water level data is not available and may change the risk assessment if it were found to be shallower on the Subject Site or the expected clay layer was not present.*
- *Mapped GDEs are all >2 km or more away and are unlikely to be impacted in the unlikely occurrence of groundwater contamination. As there will be no groundwater abstraction at the Subject Site the GDEs will not be impacted by changes in groundwater levels due to onsite activities.*
- *Site management plans will provide details on the clean-up of small spills via spill kits and soil removal.*
- *A shallow bore on the Subject Site to confirm site conditions is recommended.*

The following recommendation is provided in the conclusion of the Flood and Groundwater assessment with respect to groundwater monitoring:

> *…groundwater monitoring is not considered necessary at the Subject Site unless there is a major fire where fire-fighting water or chemicals are used, or another unforeseen leak occurs outside the expected small volumes of stored fuel. Should a major fire or other event occur, then groundwater monitoring wells should be located up and down-gradient of the site and down-gradient to determine any impacts to groundwater.*

The proposed development is therefore considered unlikely to result in any significant impact to surrounding groundwater resources. The implementation of surface water management measures, as detailed in **Section 7.4.6.1**, including a soil and erosion management plan, would assist to further minimise the potential for adverse impacts to groundwater.

5.7 Flora and Fauna

The site of the development is mapped as containing terrestrial biodiversity via the LEP. The site, however, does not contain any land mapped with biodiversity value via the Biodiversity Values Map.

A Flora and Fauna Assessment Report (FFAR) prepared by Waratah Ecology (2024) forms part of this application and is provided in **Appendix D.**

The FFAR included a desktop assessment of existing flora and fauna together with the completion of a site visit to assess the condition and extent of vegetation in April 2024. The FFAR details that most of the vegetation present is consistent with non-native agricultural cropland with several large, grassed paddocks.

Native vegetation, however, has been identified by the FFAR as bordering the southern extent of the host lot near the proposed driveway and along the boundaries of several paddocks throughout the site. The following native Plant Community Type (PCT) has been identified within the Study Area of the FFAR:

- PCT 3376 - Southern Tableland Grassy Box Woodland

The FFAR concludes that direct impacts arising from the proposed development will include the clearing approximately 0.72 ha of vegetation for the electrical equipment area, asset protection zone, access road and electrical connection route & easement. Vegetation within this area is comprised of agricultural grasslands which have been historically cleared for livestock grazing and predominantly consists of exotic grass species considered to be of low ecological values

The proposal is also noted to likely require the removal of several smaller trees along the property's southern boundary to enable access via Turton Place. These trees, however, have been identified as eucalypt species, young and not hollow bearing, and are considered to be of low to moderate retention value. The FFAR details that the proposed native vegetation clearing is below the clearing threshold that triggers the Biodiversity Offset Scheme. No vegetation clearing is proposed in areas identified as containing high biodiversity and no significant impact to a species under the BC Act is anticipated.

With respect to fauna, it is determined in the FFAR that the site does not represent important habitat for locally occurring species and that the development is unlikely to result in any impact to habitat utilised by threatened fauna species. An assessment of significance, pursuant to Section 7.3 of the BC Act was considered unnecessary by the FFAR and no Test of Significance was therefore undertaken. The FFAR has determined that the site is unlikely to contain suitable habitat for threatened species, primarily due to historical clearing and a large area of the site being dominated by exotic grasses/pasture. No significant impacts to threatened biota are therefore anticipated to result from the proposed development.

The FFAR has concluded that the Biodiversity Offset Scheme is not triggered by the proposed development and no BDAR is therefore required.

Overall, the development is considered unlikely to cause a significant impact to any threatened species, populations, or ecological communities listed under the NSW BC Act or the EPBC Act.

Subject to compliance with mitigation measures, the proposed development is considered unlikely to generate any significant adverse impacts on the life cycle or habitat of any of threatened species or threatened ecological communities.

5.8 Visual Amenity

The visual landscape of the locality is characterised by a range of rural land uses, consisting of large agricultural lots with pastures and scattered rural residential dwellings.

Construction activities would involve the operation of plant and equipment in visible locations. These works, however, would be temporary and short lived, unlikely to result in any significant visual impacts.

The proposed development would represent a degree of change in the appearance of the land compared to the current visual landscapes. Given the limited extent of works no significant adverse impacts to visual amenity are anticipated.

A conceptual design has been prepared to review the extent of necessary earthworks required to facilitate the proposed development. Two options have been considered with respect to the design of the BESS compound including the establishment of a generally flat finished level across the BESS compound and an alternative option to arrange electrical components on pylons following the existing contours of the site.

To avoid excessive fill requirements and potential visual impacts resulting from providing a generally flat but elevated BESS compound, the adopted option is for electrical components of the development including the MVPS and Battery units to be situated on platforms with variable length pylons. The pylons would elevate the electrical components from the existing ground surface and result in electrical components stepping down the slope of the BESS compound.

A site visit was completed on 19 November to further review the potential for visual impacts and to respond to a request for additional information issued by Council on 25 October 2024. Photographs were collected during completion of the site visit to provide an indication on perspectives of the development from six (6) surrounding non associated receivers and two (2) roadways, Murrumbateman Road and Patemans Lane. Consultation with receivers was undertaken for the site visit to confirm access arrangements to surrounding properties. Where access to surrounding properties could not be secured, photographs were collected at the next best accessible location within the boundary of the proposed development site.

It is noted that Council's RFI has requested the preparation of photomontages where appropriate to assist with evaluating potential visual impacts. Panoramic photographs have been produced as a result of the site visit and are provided within **Appendix J**. The photographs demonstrate that existing vegetation and topography already significantly obscure views of the proposed development site from surrounding receivers and roadways.

Notwithstanding this, a landscaping plan is provided in **Appendix F** and details the inclusion of a landscaping area exterior to the fenced area of the DBESS. The provision of vegetation buffers surrounding the fenced area of the DBESS, consisting of a total 356 individual plant species will further minimise the potential for adverse visual impacts.

Given the views demonstrated by the panoramic photographs and the conservative approach to include landscaping around the BESS, no significant visual impacts are anticipated.

5.9 Access, Transport and Traffic

The proposed site is located within a rural agricultural setting with vehicular access to be provided to the site via a new driveway along Turton Place. Turton Place is a local road managed by Yass Valley Council.

The proposed access arrangement is situated approximately 610 m west of an existing connection between Turton Place and Patemans Lane. Patemans Lane extends southwards providing access to surrounding rural properties and Euroka Avenue, prior to terminating approximately 2.6 km to south of the connection with Turton Place. Patemans Lane extends approximately 530 m northwards of the connection with Turton Place

prior to providing a connection with Murrumbateman Road. Murrumbateman Road is a regional road (Regional Road No. 0007609) which extends in a general east to west alignment between Sutton Road another regional road situated approximately 19.8 km to the east (Regional Road No. 0000052) and the Barton Highway a state classified road situated approximately 3.3 km to the west (State Classified Road No. 0000015).

The access arrangement satisfies the minimum entering sight distance for the operating speed of 70 km/hr specified in AS/NZS 2890.1 and features a security gate setback greater than 300 m from the edge of Turton Place, capable of accommodating the storage of a 19 metre semi-trailer clear of the traffic lane.

The proposed development has the potential to generate minimal traffic impacts during the construction phase associated with staff and equipment coming to and from the site consisting of a mix of light and heavy vehicles, as well as construction waste being removed from site via heavy vehicles. Impacts of additional movements would be predominantly restricted to the construction phase, including:

- Short term delays for travelling public; and
- Reduced road safety.

Potential impacts associated with changes to existing traffic conditions would be managed through a construction management plan, to be provided prior to construction commencing. The construction management plan would minimise the potential for adverse traffic impacts and is expected to include the implementation of a traffic management plan during construction to control access to the site, provide appropriate traffic controls, and to ensure all construction vehicles and materials are contained within the site at all times.

Following the completion of construction works and installation of the DBESS, no significant traffic impacts are anticipated. No significant change to existing traffic conditions during operation, in comparison to what is already experienced in the locality, is expected to occur as a result of the proposed development. Traffic during the operational phase would be limited to occasional maintenance activities.

A Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) prepared by Traffic Works (2024) forms part of this application and is provided in **Appendix E.** The TIA concludes that there are no traffic engineering reasons that would prevent the development from proceeding. The following conclusions are provided in respect of potential traffic impacts associated with the proposed development:

- *the peak hour traffic generation will occur during the construction phase of the development, where the peak hour volumes are expected to be:*
  - *3 light vehicles*
  - *1 heavy vehicle.*
- *the construction phase is expected to take 4 weeks.*
- *the subject site will generate a peak car parking demand of 3 spaces during the construction period and 2 spaces post-opening.*
- *the development plan includes a designated parking area that will satisfy the parking demand.*
- *adequate sight distance is available at the intersection of Patemans Lane and Murrumbateman Road; no further treatment is required.*

- *the proposed site access driveway along Turton Place satisfies the minimum entering sight distance, as specified in AS/NZS 2890.1.*
- *the setback of the proposed security gate from the edge of Turton Place will accommodate the storage of a 19 m semi-trailer clear of the traffic lane.*
- *no additional turn lane treatments are required due to the traffic generated by the proposed development.*

The following recommendations are provided as a conclusion to the TIA:

- ***Recommendation 1:** trim or remove the tree restricting sightlines to the north (as shown in Figure 17)*
- ***Recommendation 2:** the subject site access driveway should be constructed according to Figure 7.4 in Austroads Guide to Road Design Part 4 requirements and to the council's satisfaction.*

Subject to compliance with mitigation measures provided in the TIA, the proposed development is considered unlikely to generate any significant adverse impacts to existing access and traffic conditions.

5.10 Noise and Vibration

As shown in project drawings provided in **Appendix A,** the closest dwelling to the subject site is the associated receiver, identified as RO1. The associated receiver is located within the same landholding approximately 233 metres southeast of the proposed DBESS. The closest non-associated receivers R03 and R04 are situated approximately 355 m to the southeast and 369 m to the northwest of the DBESS footprint.

The proposed development will generate minimal noise and vibration impacts during the construction and operational phase. Construction impacts are expected to be limited to site development works and traffic movements and will be managed through a construction management plan, to be provided following DA approval.

Following the completion of construction works, no significant noise and vibration impacts are anticipated. Noise during operation would be limited to that generated by the battery infrastructure and maintenance traffic movements. Surrounding receivers are substantially separated from the extent of the battery such that no significant noise and vibration impacts during the operation of the development are anticipated. Accordingly, the proposed development is considered unlikely to significantly affect surrounding receivers through noise and vibration impacts.

An Acoustic Report (AR) prepared by Watson Moss Growcott Acoustics (2024) forms part of this application and is provided in **Appendix I**. Acoustic modelling of the development has indicated that in the absence of noise control, and without consideration of any NPfI modifying factors, the predicted noise levels for the operation of the project at all non-associated receivers is compliant with the adopted project trigger noise levels.

Notwithstanding this, the acoustic report has provided a conservative assessment with consideration of modifying factors nominated in the NPfi related to tonal noise and low frequency noise. Updated modelling results with the inclusion of tonal adjustments has indicated that residual noise impacts at R01 and R03 have the potential to exceed the project trigger levels.

To reduce operational noise emissions from the subject site and ensure compliance with project trigger levels at surrounding receivers the AR provides a provisional measure to construct an acoustic barrier to the southeast of the BESS.

The following conclusions are provided in respect of noise generated by construction activities and road traffic associated with the proposed development:

- *Noise due to construction vehicle movements is predicted to be below noise level criteria nominated within the Road Noise Policy.*
- *Noise emissions due to some construction activities have been predicted to exceed NMLs at receptors. In these instances, WMG has provided noise mitigation strategies to minimise the potential for adverse impacts on the relevant sensitive receptors.*
- The project construction and operational phase will not include any vibration intense activities such as piling and ramming and hence, have not been considered further.

Subject to compliance with mitigation measures provided in the AR, the proposed development is considered unlikely to generate any significant adverse noise and vibration impacts.

5.11 Air and Microclimate

The proposed development would result in minimal impacts to the air and/or microclimate during the construction of the DBESS. These impacts would be managed through a construction environmental management plan (CEMP), to be provided following DA approval. The CEMP is expected to include the following measures to minimise the potential for adverse impacts to air quality:

- Stockpiled topsoil and other materials that exhibit significant dust lift off would be wet down routinely and as appropriate.
- Stabilising techniques and/or environmentally acceptable dust palliatives will be utilised if the wetting down of surfaces prove to be ineffective.
- All equipment is maintained accordance with the manufacturers specifications.

Once the DBESS is operational, no adverse impacts to the air or microclimate is anticipated.

5.12 Servicing

All in-ground and above-ground services that are to be retained on site would be identified prior to works commencing. Subject to the identification of all in-ground and above-ground services for retention prior to works commencing and carrying out works in accordance with relevant standards and safe work practices, the proposed DBESS is not anticipated to generate any significant risks to existing services.

Servicing arrangements for the proposed DBESS would be refined during detailed design and confirmed in consultation with Council and relevant regulatory authorities prior to construction. The following is noted with respect to servicing requirements:

- Electrical services associated with installing the DBESS would be limited to the augmentation and provision of sufficient electrical connections to connect the development with the local electrical network.
- Water use for the construction of the DBESS would be minimal and likely limited to that required for dust suppression during the construction phase. Water for construction activities is expected to be sourced and transported to the site via water trucks.
- It is anticipated that chemical port-a-loo's, as temporary portable ablution facilities, will be provided at strategic locations around the site for use by personnel during the construction and decommissioning phases of the project. Where possible these port-a-loo's will be located on a trailer to allow for easy redistribution. Waste from port-a-loo's will be disposed of offsite at an appropriately licensed treatment facility. No ablution facilities are proposed for the operational phase of the project. During Operation visitors to the site would be limited to occasional maintenance staff.

5.13 Waste

The proposed development will generate waste during the construction phase. The following waste types are likely to be generated by construction activities.

- Packaging materials
- Excess building materials
- Cabling
- Metal off-cuts
- Plastic and masonry products
- General refuse and other non-putrescible general solid wastes.

Waste generated through the construction phase would be stored temporarily on-site in skips prior to removal and delivery to an approved waste facility in accordance with a construction management plan, to be provided following DA approval. Following the completion of construction works, no significant waste impacts are anticipated.

During the operational phase of the DBESS, waste generation would be limited to maintenance activities. This has the potential to include the replacement of site infrastructure and components of the DBESS. Waste if generated during the operational phase of the development, would be removed from the site and either recycled or disposed of at an appropriate waste disposal facility.

5.14 Hazards

5.14.1 FLOODING

The proposed development is not considered likely to be significantly impacted by flooding hazards.

A Flood and Groundwater Assessment Report prepared by Water Technology (2024) forms part of this application and is provided in **Appendix G .** The assessment concludes that there are no significant overland flow paths across the site. Modelling for the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) flood event identified that the maximum flood depth within the footprint of the DBESS is approximately 0.02-0.05 m. The flood

modelling identified peak flood depths below 80 mm with maximum flood velocities between 0.05- 0.55 m/s. On this basis the site of the BESS is classified as flood hazard H1, generally safe for people, vehicles and buildings.

The following recommendation is provided in the conclusion of the Flood and Groundwater assessment with respect to surface water and flooding hazards:

> *Based on the findings of the flood modelling it is recommended to set critical infrastructure to be a minimum of 150 mm above the existing ground level to reduce the risk associated with stormwater runoff impacting infrastructure. Importing fill to raise the areas where infrastructure is to be located is not likely to increase flood levels on neighbouring properties, however, should be tested within the hydraulic model at a further design stage once the final layout is available.*

As previously detailed, electrical components of the development including the MVPS and Battery units are currently proposed to be situated on elevated platforms with variable length pylons. The pylons would elevate the electrical components from the existing ground surface and result in electrical components stepping down the slope of the BESS compound. The elevation provided from the pylons would be designed to achieve the recommendation of the FGAR, elevating critical infrastructure to a minimum of 150 mm above the existing ground surface.

The design of the project nevertheless remains subject to the finalisation of detailed design following the assessment of the development application.

Subject to the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures, including standard erosion and sediment controls during construction and compliance with the recommendations of the flood and groundwater assessment report, the proposed project is considered unlikely to result in any significant adverse impacts to surrounding watercourses or flooding behaviour.

5.14.2 BUSHFIRE

A review of bushfire mapping provided via the ePlanning Spatial Viewer and SEED Portal has identified that the entire site is mapped as containing Vegetation Category 3 bush fire prone land (BFPL).

A Bush Fire Management & Emergency Response Plan (BFMERP) prepared by Harris Environmental Consulting (2024) forms part of this application and is provided in **Appendix H.**

The BFMERP has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of *Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019* (PBP 2019). To determine the planning and construction requirements for the development the BFMERP has undertaken a review of vegetation, slope and other relevant bushfire characteristics within and surrounding the development site. To ensure compliance with the requirements of PBP 2019 the BFMERP includes mitigation measures to ensure bushfire risks are appropriately managed. The proposed development will be managed in accordance with recommendations and measures identified in the BFMERP including measures to:

- Prevent or mitigate fire ignition, including maintenance of the DBESS and an Asset Protection Zone to create a buffer from bush fire prone vegetation and a defendable space for firefighting operations.

- Ensure that landscaping of the DBESS is implemented and managed in a manner that minimises bushfire risks.
- Ensure that the DBESS is designed and built in accordance with relevant construction standards including the implementation of non-combustible materials and requirements for support equipment.
- Ensure that appropriate access is provided for the DBESS including within the 10 m internal APZ to accommodate bushfire fighting activities.
- Ensure the availability of fire-suppression equipment, access and water, including the provision of a static water supply with a minimum capacity of 20,000-litres. The water supply should be constructed of suitable materials and to appropriate standards, ensuring water is accessible for firefighting activities as per the requirements of the BFMERP.
- Prioritise the placement of electrical connections underground where practical and ensure compliance with appropriate vegetation management standards where overhead power supply is implemented.
- Ensure the appropriate storage and maintenance of fuels and other flammable materials.
- Ensure notification is provided to the local NSW RFS Fire Control Centre for any works that have the potential to ignite surrounding vegetation or that are proposed to be carried out during a bush-fire fire danger period in order to ensure weather conditions are appropriate.
- Ensure appropriate bush fire emergency management planning and responses.

It should be noted that development for the purposes of electricity generating works (BESS) is not categorised as "special fire protection purposes" and therefore the development does not require a 100B Certificate under the Rural Fires Act 1997 (refer to **Section 4.3**).

Subject to implementation of recommended mitigation measures, the proposed development is considered unlikely to generate any significant adverse impacts associated with bush fire risks.

5.14.3 TECHNOLOGICAL HAZARDS

The proposed development is not anticipated to generate any technological hazards, subject to:

- The identification of all in-ground and above-ground services for retention prior to works commencing,
- The completion of any removal, relocation and or replacement of existing services where required within impacted areas,
- The capping of any adjacent services, where required and
- The carrying out of works in accordance with relevant standards and safe work practices.

The portion of the site on which the DBESS is proposed to be installed is considered unlikely to be contaminated (refer to **Section 5.3**).

Electric and magnetic fields (EMF) are produced naturally as well as by human activity. The earth has both a magnetic field, produced in the earth's core, and an electric field, produced by electrical activity like storms in the atmosphere. Electrical equipment of all sizes and voltages produces EMF. Both fields drop away rapidly with distance from the source, or due to shielding by insulation or earth (in the case of buried installations).

The International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) has issued Guidelines for Limiting Exposure to Time-Varying Electric and Magnetic Fields. The relevant authority in Australia is the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPNSA) and they refer to the ICNIRP guidelines. These supersede earlier guidelines published by National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

The ICNIRP EMF guidelines provide relevant limits for the general public for 50 Hz sources as follows:

- Electrical Field Strength (E): 5 kilo Volts per metre (kV/m)
- Magnetic Flux Density (B): 200 micro Teslas (μT)

EMF increases with voltage and proximity to the apparatus producing, transmitting or consuming electricity. EMF varies according to specific design and construction parameters such as conductor height, electrical load and phasing, and most importantly, whether the conductors are overhead or buried.

The DBESS is located within a secure site and will not be open to the general public. The closest dwelling is located in excess of 150 metres from the DBESS, and at that distance EMF emission levels are not anticipated to be any higher than what currently exists. No significant impacts associated with technological hazards are therefore anticipated.

5.15 Safety, Security and Crime Prevention

The guidelines prepared by the NSW Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (DUAP 2001) identify four (4) Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to be considered in a Development Application to ensure developments do not create or exacerbate crime risk. The four key principles of the guidelines include surveillance, access control, territorial reinforcement, and space management.

The proposed development has been designed with consideration of safety, security and crime prevention. Fencing of the DBESS site and periodic maintenance activities are anticipated to have a positive impact on surveillance, access control, territorial reinforcement and space management, enabling the continued use of the site for electrical storage alongside surrounding agricultural activities.

5.16 Public Domain

The proposed development will generate minimal impacts on the public domain during the construction phase predominately associated with the increased of traffic to the site (refer to **Section 7.4.8**).

Any necessary approvals for works within the public domain would be secured following DA approval. The impacts of these activities would be managed through a construction management plan, also to be provided following DA approval.

Following the completion of construction works, no significant impacts to the public domain are anticipated.

5.17 Social Impact

As defined by the NSW Government Office on Social Policy, social impacts are significant events experienced by people as changes in one or more of the following are experienced:

- peoples' way of life (how they live, work or play and interact with one another on a day-to-day basis);
- their culture (shared beliefs, customs and values); or
- their community (its cohesion, stability, character, services and facilities).

The proposed development will have a minimal social impact predominantly through minor increases in traffic, air and microclimate impacts, waste generation and an increase in noise and vibration during the construction phase. These impacts are capable of being managed through a construction management plan, to be provided following DA approval. The impacts are also overcome by the benefits of the works, providing greater flexibility for the electrical network.

5.18 Economic Impact

The proposed development would have minimal economic impact associated with impacts to surrounding businesses during the construction phase. These impacts are capable of being managed through a construction management plan, to be provided following DA approval.

The potential for adverse impacts is offset by the creation of economic benefits as a result of the development. Short term economic benefits are expected during the construction phase of the project with expenditure on local goods accommodation and materials together with the generation of employment opportunities for local contractors. The operation of the project will continue to enable ongoing employment opportunities for operation and maintenance activities together with follow on economic benefits associated with improving the reliability and flexibility of the electrical network.

5.19 Construction Impacts

Construction impacts would be short-lived and manageable. The following standard construction management measures would be implemented to ensure impacts to the locality are minimised:

- Standard construction hours (7 am to 6 pm Monday to Friday and 8 am to 1 pm Saturday and at no times on Public holidays) would be implemented;
- Avoiding dust generating activities during windy and dry conditions; and
- Maintaining all equipment in good working condition such that the construction contractor and site manager ensure the prevention of the release of smoke by construction equipment, which would be in contravention of Section 124 of the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* and Clause 16 of the *Protection of the Environment Operations (Clean Air) Regulation 2010*.

5.20 Cumulative Impacts

It is not anticipated that the development would result in any cumulative impacts including:

- individual impacts so close in time that the effects of one are not dissipated before the next (time crowded effects);
- individual impacts so close in space that the effects overlap (space crowded effects);
- repetitive, often minor impacts eroding environmental conditions (nibbling effects); or

- different types of disturbances interacting to produce an effect which is greater or different than the sum of the separate effects (synergistic effects).

5.21 Suitability of the Site for Development

The site is considered suitable for the proposed development based on the following:

- It is generally level and located within an environment historically disturbed by agricultural activities.
- It is unlikely to be contaminated given existing records from the NSW EPA list of Notified Sites and the EPA Contaminated Land Record.
- It is unlikely to contain Aboriginal sites or places and is not mapped as being within a heritage conservation area under the LEP.
- It is considered unlikely to significantly impact surface and groundwater resources subject to the implementation of appropriate measures.
- A FFAR has determined that the proposed development is unlikely to result in any to threatened biota including any significant impacts on the life cycle or habitat of any of threatened species or threatened ecological communities.
- The development is capable of implementing appropriate measures to minimise potential risks associated with bushfire and flood hazards, surface and ground water, soil and traffic impacts.
- It is not anticipated to significantly increase the demand for essential services and is located in close proximity to existing electrical transmission infrastructure minimising the disturbance for providing appropriate electrical connections.

5.22 The Public Interest

The proposed development is in the public interest on the following grounds:

- It is permitted with consent via the Infrastructure SEPP and is not inconsistent with the objectives of the RU4 zone as per the LEP.
- Will have minimal impacts limited to short term traffic, public domain, air and microclimate, waste and noise and vibration impacts during the construction phase. These impacts are capable of being managed through the implementation of standard management measures as outlined throughout this report and summarise in **Section 5.19.**
- Is within a suitable site for the proposed works, which is generally level, located within a rural environment and unconstrained in terms of significant soils, heritage, watercourses, vegetation or hazards such as bushfires or flood events.

6. CONCLUSION

This SEE has been prepared by Premise to describe the proposed development of electricity generating works (DBESS) in a site located near Turton Place, Murrumbateman and considers the development in the context of Section 4.15(1) of the EP&A Act. This includes a consideration of the relevant environmental

planning instruments, the likely impacts of the development, the suitability of the site and the public interest.

In terms of environmental planning instruments, the proposed development is permitted with consent on the RU4 land use zone via Section 2.36 of the Transport and Infrastructure SEPP and is compliant with all other relevant provisions under the LEP. While the no DCP currently applies to the proposed development, the development has been assessed against the provisions under the LEP and is anticipated to be consistent with future controls issued under the planned updated Yass Valley Council DCP.

With respect to impacts, the assessment in this SEE and supporting documentation has determined that the proposed development will have minimal or acceptable impacts on the environment and public. This includes the local context, soils, heritage, other land resources (i.e. agriculture and mining), water, flora and fauna, visual amenity, access, transport and traffic, noise and vibration, air and microclimate, servicing, wastes, hazards, social and economic impacts.

The site is suitable for the development as it is unlikely to be contaminated or contain Aboriginal sites or places in the vicinity of the proposed development. It is not mapped under the LEP as being or adjoining an item of heritage significance, within a heritage conservation area or within an area identified with wetlands. The site is mapped as having moderate to severe limitations for agricultural uses, is considered unlikely to contain significant native vegetation and is capable of implementing appropriate controls to address existing flood and bush fire hazards. Finally, the site is considered suitable for the proposed development by facilitating an opportunity for electrical storage in close proximity to existing electrical distribution and generating infrastructure, with accessible transportation routes supporting the transport of staff and equipment and local population centres for sourcing labour.

The proposed development will provide a benefit to the public, improving the reliability and flexibility of the electrical network by facilitating the storage of electricity. For the reasons set out above, the proposed development is considered to be within the public interest and is recommended for approval.

Table 4 – Development Control Plan Matters and Assessment

Objective/ principle /requirement	Standard / Control	Assessment	Compliance?
PART A – PLAN INTRODUCTION			
Part A.3 – Aims and Objectives			
This Plan aims to: • *provide guidance on acceptable and appropriate development control standards for new development within the Yass Valley Local Government Area;* • *increase public awareness of hazards and to ensure that essential services and land uses are planned in recognition of the potential hazards;* • *ensure that only appropriate development occurs in areas affected currently impacted by, and likely to be impacted by future, hazards to ensure that risk to life and property is minimised by providing early, safe evacuation routes, buildings that are designed to withstand the hazard impacts*	N/A	The development is not antipathetic to the aims of the DCP. The assessment of the proposed development contained in this SEE has identified that it is unlikely to have any significant detrimental impact.	✓
The Objectives of this Plan are to: • *ensure that development occurs in a manner that is consistent and sustainable;* • *encourage sustainable development that is designed for a changing climate including extreme weather events;* • *support development that minimise waste and resource consumption;* • *provide for a variety of adaptable housing types to meet the changing demographics of Yass Valley;* • *promote high standards of development that provide positive planning outcomes on individual sites to the benefit of the wider community by encouraging new development that is responsive to the site characteristics, streetscape and neighbourhood character in which it is located;* • *encourage innovative design that achieves a high level of sustainability and is adaptable to changing climate conditions*	N/A	The development is not antipathetic to the objectives of the DCP. The assessment of the proposed development contained in this SEE has identified that it is unlikely to have any significant detrimental impact.	✓
Part A.4 – Where does this Plan apply?			
The plan applies to all land in the Yass Valley Local Government Area, except to that land to which the Parkwood Local Environmental Plan 2020 applies.	N/A	The site is within the Yass Valley Local Government Area such that the DCP applies.	Refer below.
Part A.12 – Land Use Matrix			

Objective/ principle /requirement	Standard / Control	Assessment	Compliance?
The land use matrix identifies the parts of the DCP to be considered according to the type of land use and development proposed.	N/A	The following Parts have been considered with respect to the land use matrix provided in Part A of the DCP and the proposed development of electricity generating works. Part E of the DCP has been considered in the context that the development is situated within the RU4 Land Use Zone.	Refer below.
PART B – PRINCIPLES FOR ALL DEVELOPMENT			
Part B1 – Sustainability			
In designing for sustainability the following principles, as outlined in Council's Sustainability Policy, are to be considered: *a. The precautionary principle, wherein if there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation. In the application of the precautionary principle, public and private decisions should be guided by:* *i. Careful evaluation to avoid, wherever practicable, serious or irreversible damage to the environment* *ii. An assessment of the risk-weighted consequences of various options* *b. Intergenerational equity, – namely, that the present generation should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment is maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations.* *c. Conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity, where conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity should be a fundamental consideration.* *d. Improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms, environmental factors should be included in the valuation of assets and services, such as:* *i. Polluter pays – that is, those who generate pollution and waste should bear the cost of containment, avoidance or abatement,* *ii. The users of goods and services should pay prices based on the full life cycle of costs of providing goods and services, including the use of natural resources and assets and the ultimate disposal of any waste.* *iii. Environmental goals, having been established, should be pursued in the most cost effective way, by establishing incentive structures, including market mechanisms, that enable those best placed to maximise benefits or minimise costs to develop their*	N/A	The assessment of the proposed development contained in this SEE has evaluated the potential impacts of the proposed development and detailed that it is unlikely to have any significant detrimental impact. The proposed development through providing grid flexibility services will support the efficiency of the electrical network, charging during periods of low demand and discharging during periods of higher demand. The ability of the BESS to support the efficiency of the electrical network aligns with the principles of sustainability, minimising the waste of generated energy. Through providing firming capacity the proposed development additionally supports the NSW electricity strategy including the transition to renewable forms of energy generation and associated benefits for sustainability.	✓

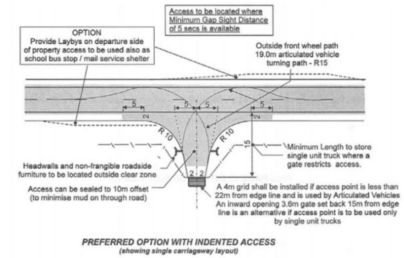
Objective/ principle /requirement	Standard / Control	Assessment	Compliance?
own solutions and responses to environmental problems			
To this end, this Plan aims to: a. Increase tree retention and provision at development stage to increase and enhance tree cover, for visual, social, environmental, economic and ecological values, b. Discourage the use of heat producing surfaces in prefer of natural materials, surfaces and finishes; c. Encourage the use of sustainable building materials; d. Avoid excessive resource consumption and minimise waste.	N/A	The retention and provision of trees has been considered in the design of the proposed development and through the assessment of impacts. Trees removal is limited to facilitating access to the development site and has been assessed by the Flora and Fauna Assessment in **Appendix D**. Landscaping for the proposed development will increase tree cover within the development site while further assisting to minimise visual impacts. The remaining aims of this Section of the DCP to discourage the use of heat producing surfaces, encourage the use of sustainable building materials and to avoid excessive resource consumption and minimise waste, are considered capable of being achieved through the finalisation of detailed design.	✓
Part B2 Site Suitability			
In determining whether a site is suitable for the proposed development the following need to be considered: *a. Physical constraints such as topography, flooding, heritage, bushfire and biodiversity;* *b. Adjoining land uses, this is particularly important for intensive agricultural and industrial uses which may require physical separation from residential areas and existing dwellings;* *c. The availability and location of all-weather access, electricity, reticulated water and sewer or other means of obtaining water and disposing of sewage;* *d. Zoning restrictions, easements and covenants;* *e. Site aspect, lot configuration to enable setbacks and restrict overshadowing.*	N/A	The suitability of the site and development has been considered in the context of physical constraints, topography and drainage, adjoining land uses, access arrangements, servicing, restrictions on land use and setbacks. As detailed within **Section 5.21** and the assessment of impacts provided throughout **Section 5** the site, subject to the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures, is suitable for the proposed development.	✓
Part B3 Site Analysis Plan			
All applications must be accompanied by a site analysis plan. A site analysis plan shall display, where relevant: *a. Site topography;* *b. Bushfire hazard of the site, including across roads, waterways, etc;* *c. Existing vegetation and mature trees, including hollow bearing trees;* *d. Heritage items in the vicinity;* *e. Views to and from the site;*	N/A	Figures of the development site and relevant constraints are provided within **Section 2.2** of this SEE and throughout the various appended specialist assessments. The figures provided via the SEE and appended specialist assessments are considered suitable for addressing the objective of this section.	✓

Objective/ principle /requirement	Standard / Control	Assessment	Compliance?
f. Impact of vegetation and buildings on adjoining land including privacy, shading, lighting and visual amenity; *g. Location of access points relative to pedestrian facilities and roadway structures;* *h. Solar access and predominant breeze;* *i. Flooding, including overland, riverine and on-site drainage;* *j. Proximity to community and social facilities.*			
Part B4 Crime Prevention and Safety			
Objective: *To ensure that development considers the principles of crime prevention and safety in the design phase and opportunities for crime occurrences are not increased by the development but opportunities for passive surveillance are improved*	**Controls:** All development shall consider the crime prevention measures contained in this part in the design phase of development	A consideration of CPTED principles is provided within **Section 5.15** of the SEE. The proposed development has been designed with consideration of safety, security and crime prevention. Fencing and periodic maintenance are anticipated to produce positive impacts with respect to crime prevention and safety.	✓
B4.1 Passive surveillance			
N/A	*a. Windows should be located to allow surveillance of internal driveway and carparking areas for commercial, industrial and multi dwelling development;* *b. Sensor or solar lighting should be provided adjacent to entries for commercial, industrial and multi dwelling development;* *c. Windows, balconies, fencing and the like should be designed and constructed to allow views and passive surveillance of any adjacent public reserve; or recreational area. Where necessary, fencing may be required to be transparent, rather than of solid construction;* *d. Security fittings, shutters and doors, where fitted should be at least 50% transparent at street level to allow passive surveillance in commercial, industrial and multi dwelling development;* *e. Mature heights and widths of vegetation plantings should be considered so as not to visually obscure entries/exits signage, lighting or present a security risk;* *f. Pedestrian areas should be visible from nearby dwellings, buildings, parking areas or the street, and sufficiently lit to facilitate safe pedestrian movement if used after dark;* *g. For commercial and industrial development toilets should be integrated into a development with their entries highly visible and well lit, and not be in an isolated location;* *h. Landscaping should minimise spaces where intruders can hide;* *i. Security lighting is to be provided to public accessways and parking areas and conform to AS1158.1 'Vehicular Traffic Lighting' in commercial and industrial developments,*	As above. The project has been designed in consideration of crime prevention and safety.	✓
B4.2 Access and space management			
N/A	*a. Buildings should provide clear and direct lines of sight between the street and building entrances;*	As above.	✓

Objective/ principle /requirement	Standard / Control	Assessment	Compliance?
	b. Pedestrian laneways should have more than one entrance to avoid "dead-ends" and entrapment spots; *c. The main entry and building number should be clearly visible from the street for pedestrians, motorists and emergency services;* *d. In commercial and industrial development staff and customer entries should be identified appropriately by signage and lighting;* *e. The building and site layout should ensure there are no entrapment spots - small, confined areas that may be used for hiding or to trap potential victims;* *f. Where buildings are set back from the street, the area should be designed to minimise hiding and entrapment spots;* *g. For uses which will operate after dark, clear sightlines should be provided from the building entrance to parking areas and/or public streets;* *h. Sharp corners or deep recesses in the length of walls or fences that reduce visibility should be avoided;* *i. Machinery and plant, down pipes, bin storage, balconies and fences should be located in such a way that they prevent access to windows;* *j. Landscaping (e.g. creepers, low hedges) should be incorporated to limit the opportunity for graffiti on solid fences and walls which face parks, streets or laneways;* *k. Building materials and finishes which have abuttal to parks, streets or laneways, should reduce opportunities for graffiti and vandalism and allow for ease of cleaning.*	The project has been designed in consideration of crime prevention and safety.	
Part B5 Neighbourhood Character			
Objective: *To encourage development which responds to and contributes positively to the character and topography of the existing streetscape.* *Ensure that new subdivisions establish a high quality of neighbourhood character and amenity*	**Controls:** a. Development should respect the scale, patterns and predominant building characteristics within a streetscape. b. The design should consider how the building/s will respond to the predominant characteristics of the neighbourhood such as dominant land uses, construction types and materials, roof pitch, setbacks, location and proportion of windows and doors, verandahs, vehicle parking/garaging, landscaping of public and private areas. c. New development should not dominate the streetscape. d. Building materials and finishes should reinforce or complement the dominant pattern within the streetscape. e. Buildings, driveways, fencing and landscaping should be designed to respond to the topography of the site by following contours or stepping down steeper sites f. Trees should be retained, both in the road reserve and private allotments. g. Facades should incorporate building elements that assist with thermal comfort controls and the use of sustainable building materials.	As detailed via the assessment of impacts provided throughout **Section 5** the proposed development, subject to the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures, is unlikely to have any significant detrimental impact, including with respect to considerations of context, scale, patterns and built form. The proposed BESS is not anticipated to dominate the streetscape or to result in significant visual impacts. Potential visual impacts of the BESS would be further considered during detailed design including measures to implement sustainable building materials and finishes that minimise impacts to the existing character of the landscape.	✓
PART E - RURAL, LARGE LOT AND ENVIRONMENTAL ZONE DEVELOPMENT			

Objective/ principle /requirement	Standard / Control	Assessment	Compliance?
This part applies to development within the R5 Large Lot Residential, RU1 Primary Production, RU2 Rural Landscape, RU4 Primary Production Small Lots, C3 Environmental Management, C4 Environmental Living.	N/A	The development is within the RU4 Primary Production Small Lots zone such that this part of the DCP applies.	Refer below.
This part seeks to ensure that: *• the siting of new development in the following zones maintain the low density, dispersed character, rural amenity and vistas of the Yass Valley;* *• ridgelines and scenic vistas are protected where buildings respect topography, use neutral non reflective materials and do not dominate the landscape;* *• separation distances are to be provided to ensure rural amenity and right to farm is maintained by limiting the potential for land use conflict. The right to farm, as described by NSW Department of Primary Industries, means a desire by farmers to undertake lawful agricultural practices without conflict or interference arising from complaints from neighbours and other land users.*	N/A	The development has been considered in the context of physical constraints, topography and drainage, adjoining land uses, access arrangements, servicing, restrictions on land use and setbacks. The proposed development is not considered likely to result in any significant impacts to rural amenity or to the right to farm.	✓
Part E.1 Siting of Buildings			
Objective: *To ensure that developments are sited in a manner to not dominant the rural landscape and minimise landuse conflict potential*	**Controls:** a. All buildings shall be located at least 40metres from the bank of any water course; b. All buildings must be located at clear of electricity transmission lines, structures or supporting ropes, wires, etc in accordance with the provisions of the energy provider such as the document "Developments near Essential Energy's infrastructure" or successive documents; c. All buildings shall have a setback of no less than 250 metres from the boundary of a property where the following activities exist: • forestry; • intensive plant agriculture (including vineyards and orchards); • mines and extractive industries; • railway lines. • A reduced setback will be permitted where measures are implemented to mitigate noise, light intrusion, dust and spray drift. d. The highest point of a building must be at least 5 metres below the highest ridgeline of any hill within 100 metres; e. Development on sloping sites should be designed to minimize cut and fill, allowing the building to respond to the slope of the land via use of split levels, or detached portions stepped down the slope.	As detailed in **Section 4.4** of the SEE, consultation with DPIE Water has confirmed that the development is not situated within 40 m of waterfront land. No Controlled activity approval is therefore required. The development has been situated in proximity to existing transmission lines to facilitate an electrical connection. Ongoing consultation is to be provided throughout project approval and construction to ensure the design of the project meets the requirements of service operators, including essential energy. Reviews of surrounding land uses have identified intensive plant agriculture on adjacent lots to the north and east of the proposed development. The footprint of the BESS is situated approximately 140 m south of the northern boundary and 260 m from the eastern boundary. The setback to the east achieves the setback provision of the DCP. The northern setback, however, is the below the threshold of the DCP provision and is therefore non-compliant. Notwithstanding it should be recognised that: • The location of the BESS has been considered in the context of physical constraints, topography and drainage, adjoining land uses, access arrangements, servicing, restrictions on land use and setbacks. The proposed location therefore is not solely	Non-compliant. The non-compliance is considered capable of being addressed through the implementation of mitigation measures to achieve the DCP's objective.

Objective/ principle /requirement	Standard / Control	Assessment	Compliance?
		informed by the setbacks of the DCP and represents a broader set of constraints to minimise the potential for adverse impacts. • Section 4.15 (3A) of the EP&A Act provides that if a development application does not comply with the standard of a DCP, the consent authority is to be flexible in applying provisions and allow reasonable alternative solutions that achieve the objects of those standards for dealing with that aspect of the development. • A review of satellite imagery for the adjacent intensive agricultural activities to the north indicates that these activities are predominantly contained within the northeastern extent of Lot 22 DP248413. The extent of vineyards is situated approximately 270 m further northwest from the northern boundary of the host lot where it is closest to the BESS footprint. • The proposed development is accompanied by a suite of mitigation measures, including landscaping maintained for the duration of the project lifespan and noise walls. The implementation of mitigation measures responds to the objective of the DCP control, ensuring the development does not dominant the rural landscape while further minimising the potential for land use conflicts. A conceptual design has been prepared to review cut and fill arrangements for the proposed development. To avoid excessive fill requirements and potential visual impacts the electrical components of the development including the MVPS and Battery units are currently proposed to be situated on elevated platforms with variable length pylons. The pylons would elevate the electrical components from the existing ground surface and result in electrical components stepping down the slope of the BESS compound. The final design of the project is subject to DA approval and the subsequent finalisation of detailed design.	
E.2 Access			

Objective/ principle /requirement	Standard / Control	Assessment	Compliance?
Objective: *To ensure that all developments are provided with safe and legal access that does not impede traffic movement*	**Controls:** a. Lots created upon which a dwelling is able to be situated must have legal direct frontage or right of carriageway to a public road; b. All property access shall be constructed to a rural property access as in figure 8 below; c. Where access is from a sealed road, the entrance shall be constructed of two coat bitumen seal from the edge of the road formation to the gate; d. Where access if from an unsealed road, the entrance shall be constructed of a minimum thickness 100mm approved compacted gravel from the edge of the road formation to the gate;  *Figure 18 - Access Treatment* e. Reinforced minimum diameter 300mm concrete pipes and headwalls are to be installed in table drains and setback a minimum of 2 metres from the edge of the road formation and provided with permanent erosion protection; f. Where topography does not permit the installation of pipes, a reinforced concrete dish drain may be constructed in the table drain; g. The finished surface of any earthworks required for driveway construction shall be graded to a maximum 1:4 cut and 1:2 fill; h. Entrances are to be located so that a Safe Intersection Sight Distance is achieved relative to the prevailing speed conditions as follows: *Table 12 - Safe Intersection Sight Distance* Road Type/Location | Sight Distance Category | Normal Posted Speed | Sight Distance Required Rural - Residential | ASD* | 70km/h | 92 metres Local Rural Roads | ASD* | 100km/h | 165 metres Regional Roads | SISD# | 100km/h | 262 metres State Roads/ Highways | SISD# | 100/110km/h | 262/300 metres or as specified by Transport for NSW * *Approach Site Distance* # *Safe Intersection Sight Distance* i. Consideration may be given to Approach Site Distance on difficult sites, subject to the provision of additional treatment to ensure traffic safety. j. Accesses onto Regional Roads and State Highways may require additional treatment, subject to the requirements of Transport for NSW as specified in their concurrence documents;	A Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) forms part of this application and is provided in **Appendix E.** The TIA assesses impacts of the proposed development on traffic movements and details the provision of a suitably designed, safe and legal access arrangement. Subject to compliance with the measures within the TIA no significant traffic impacts are anticipated. As detailed via the recommendations of the TIA "the subject site access driveway should be constructed according to figure 7.4 in Austroads Guide to Road Design Part 4 requirements and to the council's satisfaction." The final design of the access arrangement is subject to DA approval and the subsequent finalisation of detailed design. Further consideration of the controls of the DCP associated with the access arrangement would therefore be provided during the detailed design stage.	✓

Objective/ principle /requirement	Standard / Control	Assessment	Compliance?
	k. All property accesses must ensure the roadside water can continue to flow downstream without ponding or forcing water onto the road or into adjacent lands		
E1 Dwellings			
This section applies to new dwellings, ancillary development, as well as alterations and additions to existing dwellings.	N/A	The development does not consist of a rural building for the purpose of Part E1 of the DCP.	N/A
E2 Farm Buildings and Outbuildings			
Farm buildings may be undertaken as exempt development in land zoned RU1 Primary Production, RU2 Rural Landscape, RU3 Forestry, RU$ Primary Production Small Lots	N/A	The development does not consist of a farm building or outbuilding for the purpose of Part E2 of the DCP.	N/A
E3 Rural Based Activities			
This section applies to common rural based activities likely to occur in the applicable zones and provides on acceptable development design, siting and operation.	N/A	The development does not consist of a rural based land-use activity for the purpose of Part E3 of the DCP.	N/A
PART H – DEVELOPMENT IN HAZARD AFFECTED AREAS			
The objectives of this Part are to: *a. Require developments with high sensitivity to flood risk to be designed so that they are subject to minimal risk;* *b. Allow development with a lower sensitivity to the flood hazard to be located within the floodplain, provided the risk of harm and damage to property is minimized;* *c. Minimise the intensification of the high flood risk areas, and if possible, allow for their conversion to natural waterway corridors;* *d. Ensure design and siting controls required to address the flood hazard do not result in unreasonable social, economic or environmental impacts;* *e. Minimise the risk to life by ensuring the provision of reliable access from areas affected by flooding;* *f. Ensure that the subdivision of land on which a dwelling is able to be erected is suitable for such development;* *g. Minimise the damage to property arising from flooding;* *h. Ensure the proposed development does not expose existing development to increased risks associated with flooding;* *i. Ensure that fencing does not result in the undesirable obstruction of free flow of floodwater;* *j. Ensure that fencing does not become unsafe during floods so as to threaten the integrity of structures or the safety of people;* *k. Ensure that fencing is constructed in a manner which does not significantly increase flood damage or risk on surrounding land;*	N/A	A Flood and Groundwater Assessment Report (FGAR) forms part of this application and is provided in **Appendix G.** The FGAR included modelling to evaluate flooding impacts and classifies the development site as flood hazard H1 which is generally safe for people vehicles and buildings. The FGAR recommends that critical infrastructure is set to be a minimum of 150mm above the existing ground level to reduce the risk associated with stormwater runoff impacting infrastructure. As previously detailed, electrical components of the development including the MVPS and Battery units are currently proposed to be situated on elevated platforms with variable length pylons. The pylons would elevate the electrical components from the existing ground surface and result in electrical components stepping down the slope of the BESS compound. The elevation provided from the pylons would be designed to achieved the recommendation of the FGAR elevating critical infrastructure to a minimum of 150mm above the existing ground surface. The FGAR, nevertheless concludes that importing fill to raise the areas where infrastructure is to be located is not likely to increase flood levels on neighbouring properties, however, should be tested within hydraulic models once the final layout is available.	✓

Objective/ principle /requirement	Standard / Control	Assessment	Compliance?
l. Protect life and property in the event of an emergency; *m. Ensure that buildings are suitable designed and located for the hazard applicable to the site;* *n. Ensure that any potentially contaminated land is suitably remediated for its intended purpose.*		The requirements of the DCP are considered capable of being achieved through the finalisation of detailed design.	
H1 Flooding			
Objective: *To ensure that development is appropriately located and constructed having account of the risk of flood impact*	**Controls** are contained within Tables 21-24.	As above. Refer to FGAR provided in **Appendix G**. The requirements of the DCP are considered capable of being achieved through the finalisation of detailed design.	✓
H1.1 Specific fencing controls			
Objective: *To provide specific guidance for fencing on flood impacted land*	**Controls:** a. An applicant will need to demonstrate that the fence (new or replacement fence) would create no impediment to the flow of floodwater. Appropriate fences must satisfy the following: • An open collapsible hinged fence structure or pool type fence, or louvre fencing; • Must be constructed of non-permeable materials; or • Must allow floodwaters to equalized on both sides and minimum entrapment of flood debris.	As above. Refer to FGAR provided in **Appendix G**. The requirements of the DCP are considered capable of being achieved through the finalisation of detailed design.	✓
H2 Bushfire Prone			
The objectives of this part are to *a. Prevent the loss of life and property by providing development that is compatible with the identified bushfire hazard;* *b. Ensure that the risks associated with bushfire are appropriately and effectively managed;* *c. Ensure that bushfire risk is managed in conjunction with the ecological values of the site and neighbouring lands.*	N/A	A Bush Fire Management & Emergency Response Plan (BFMERP) forms part of this application and is provided in **Appendix H**. The BFMERP has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019 (PBP 2019) and identifies appropriate measures to address bushfire risks and the objective of this part of the DCP. The Flora and Fauna Assessment Report (FFAR) provided in **Appendix D** further concludes that, the proposed development is unlikely to generate any significant adverse impacts on the life cycle or habitat of any of threatened species or threatened ecological communities.	✓
H2.1 Water storage facilities			
Objective: *To ensure that adequate firefighting water is available in an accessible manner to emergency services*	**Controls:** a. In addition to any water requirements of BASIX a minimum 15,000 litre tanked water storage, or an amount required in accordance with the NSW Rural Fire Service document 'Planning for Bushfire Protection, 2019', whichever is the greater, should be dedicated for firefighting purposes;	The BFMERP details that a static water supply with a minimum capacity of 20,000L will be provided for the proposed development and designed in accordance with the requirements of Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019.	✓

Objective/ principle /requirement	Standard / Control	Assessment	Compliance?
	b. The water storage for bushfire fighting purposes shall be i. Easily identifiable from the street frontage appropriately directing emergency services to the storage facility; and ii. Located with a hard stand area which allow easy access for fighting vehicles. To this end consideration must be given to turning areas, building locations and storz fitting access. NOTE: Where the storage facility is underground it should have a 200mm access hole. Where the facility is via above ground tanks, they should be metal or concrete and have any stands protected. Bores and creeks should not be used for substitute firefighting water storage facilities.	The requirements of the DCP are considered capable of being achieved through the finalisation of detailed design.	
H2.2 Location of buildings			
Objective: *To ensure that buildings are located in areas on site less susceptible to a running bushfire*	**Controls:** a. Buildings on Bushfire Prone Land should be located away from ridge tops and steep slopes- particularly up slopes, avoiding saddles and narrow ridge crests; b. Outbuildings are to be located at least 6 metres away from the existing dwelling. Where outbuildings are within 6 metres of an existing building the must comply with the provisions of the National Construction Code for bushfire prone areas.	As above. Refer to BFMERP provided in **Appendix H.** The requirements of the DCP are considered capable of being achieved through the finalisation of detailed design.	✓
H2.3 Landscaping for Bushfire			
Objective: *To guidance on residential vegetation to assist in bushfire management*	**Controls:** a. Creepers over structures adjacent to a house add fuel and should be avoided; b. Low fuel areas, such as lawn, should be provided between the dwelling and the bushfire hazard. c. Trees with loose, stringy or ribbon bark should not be located near houses.	As above. Refer to BFMERP provided in **Appendix H.** The requirements of the DCP are considered capable of being achieved through the finalisation of detailed design.	✓
H2.4 Bushfire report			
Objective: *To ensure that development on bushfire prone land is designed and supported by the appropriate reports having regard to the hazard posed*	**Controls:** A Bushfire Risk Assessment Report is to be lodged with the Statement of Environmental Effects in support of the Development Application. The Bushfire Risk Assessment Report is to address the proposed development's consistency with Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019.	As above. Refer to BFMERP provided in **Appendix H.**	✓
H2.5 Asset protection areas			
Objective: *To ensure that development on bushfire prone land has adequate asset protection areas provided and measures in place to manage these areas*	**Controls:** a. Measures to control the placement of combustible materials in Inner Protection Areas are to be included as part of the development application; b. Asset Protection Areas are to be contained wholly within the property boundary and must not rely on adjacent land as part of the APZ, apart from roadways and road reserves.	The BFMERP provided in **Appendix H** details the provision of bushfire protection measures. This includes an APZ that is wholly within the property boundary and surrounds the electrical components of the proposed development. The requirements of the DCP with respect to the placement of combustible materials in the IPA of the APZ are considered capable of being achieved through the finalisation of detailed design. This would include a consideration on the requirement	✓

<table>
<tr><th>Objective/ principle /requirement</th><th>Standard / Control</th><th>Assessment</th><th>Compliance?</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>and materials utilised for acoustic barriers and any other components of the development within the provided APZ.</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>H3 Contaminated Land</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Objective: To ensure that potentially contaminated land is suitable for the proposed development</td><td>Controls:
a. A landowner should undertake a search of the existing property file held by Council to assist in determining whether a potentially contaminating use has ever been approved or undertaken on the subject land;
b. Applicants should refer to Council's adopted Contaminated Land Management Policy;
c. Land which was formerly used or suspected of being used for any of the following uses shown in Table 27 below, should be investigated for potential contamination. It may require remediation in accordance with State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021 and the Contaminated Land Management Act 1997.
Table 26 - Potentially Contaminating Activities<table><tr><td>acid/alkali plant and formulation</td><td>metal treatment</td></tr><tr><td>agricultural/horticultural activities</td><td>mining and extractive industries</td></tr><tr><td>airports</td><td>oil production and storage</td></tr><tr><td>asbestos production and disposal</td><td>paint formulation and manufacture</td></tr><tr><td>chemicals manufacture and formulation</td><td>pesticide manufacture and formulation</td></tr><tr><td>defence works</td><td>power stations</td></tr><tr><td>drum re-conditioning works</td><td>railway yards</td></tr><tr><td>dry cleaning establishments</td><td>scrap yards</td></tr><tr><td>electrical manufacturing (transformers)</td><td>service stations</td></tr><tr><td>electroplating and heat treatment premises</td><td>sheep and cattle dips</td></tr><tr><td>engine works</td><td>smelting and refining</td></tr><tr><td>explosives industry</td><td>tanning and associated trades</td></tr><tr><td>gas works</td><td>waste storage and treatment</td></tr><tr><td>iron and steel works</td><td>wood preservation</td></tr><tr><td>landfill sites</td><td></td></tr></table></td><td>A consideration of contamination risks is provided within the body of the SEE. This has included a review of the NSW EPA Contaminated Land Record and the EPA's list of notified sites on the 21 November 2024.
Whilst the site is located on a site historically used for agricultural production, discussions with the landowner and reviews of historical aerial photography have not identified any significant contamination risks.
Whilst no known contamination risks have been identified, appropriate safeguards and mitigation measures, are recommended for implementation during the completion of site works and operation of the proposed activity to minimise the potential risks associated with encountering contamination.</td><td>✓</td></tr>
<tr><td>PART I -CAR PARKING AND ACCESS.</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>This part ensures that development provides carparking that is consistent with the demands of that development. It provides guidance to ensure that carparking requirements are considered in a consistent and transparent manner. This part also provides guidance on all types of vehicular access to ensure that access construction, placement and design are adequate for the development and the vehicles likely to visit and service that development. It ensures that accesses are safe and accessible for all users.
The objectives of the part are to:
a. provide off street parking that is consistent with the demands of the development;</td><td>N/A</td><td>A Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) forms part of this application and is provided in Appendix E.
The TIA details the inclusion of a designated and accessible parking area suitable for the proposed development.</td><td>✓</td></tr>
</table>

Objective/ principle /requirement	Standard / Control	Assessment	Compliance?
b. provide landscaping and quality materials in the construction of parking areas to improve amenity; *c. ensure that parking and accessways for all modes of transport are safe, convenient and functional to meet anticipated needs;* *d. ensure access for people with disabilities is equitable, functional and safe;* *e. protect the occupational health and safety of employees and visitors to the site;* *f. ensure areas are set aside for onsite loading and maneuvering service vehicles;* *g. provide accesses are designed, placed and constructed safely to meet the needs of the public and the development*			
I1 Carpark Design			
Objective: *To ensure that carpark design facilitates the safe and efficient movement of pedestrian and vehicles*	**Controls:** a. Off street parking should be provided on the same site as the development, parking on adjoining land may be considered where there are legal mechanisms in place to ensure the use for carparking associated with the development; b. All parking areas must be designed to avoid concentration of water run off; c. Carpark design shall be in accordance with AS/NZS 2890.1 Parking facilities – Off Street Carparking and consider the location of pedestrian and vehicle entry points, load areas and the like, to minimise conflict between users; d. Pedestrians should be physically separated from vehicle traffic, through the use of pathways and landscaping e. Heavy vehicles should not conflict with passenger vehicle maneuvering in carparks, where heavy vehicles need to access loading docks and the like via carparks additional aisle width of carparks may be required; f. Carpark design should take account of the size, type and frequency of vehicles (including service and delivery vehicles) likely to enter and use the site; g. Tandem car parking arrangements should be avoided except in very low turnover uses, such as vehicle sales or repairs; h. Vehicle turning areas must be provided in carparks to allow vehicles to enter and leave the site safely in a forward direction; i. Loading docks are not to be used for parking, nor relied upon for vehicle turning or maneuvering; j. For every twenty (20) car parking spaces, one bicycle parking rack should be provided located next closest the access point of the development, after the required disabled parking space(s); k. Parking for disabled persons must maintain a clear height of 2.5 metres and shall be the closest parking space to the access point of the development;	As above. Refer to TIA provided in **Appendix E.**	✓

<table>
<tr><th>Objective/ principle /requirement</th><th>Standard / Control</th><th>Assessment</th><th>Compliance?</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>l. Off street carparking is to be provided for staff and customers;
m. Security lighting is to be provided to public accessways and parking areas and conform to AS1158.1 'Vehicular Traffic Lighting' in commercial and industrial developments;
n. Where developments incorporate night time operations illumination must be in accordance with Australian Standard 4282, control of obtrusive effects of outdoor lighting;
o. Any lighting provided must be directional internal the site and not cause nuisance to road users or nearby dwellings;
p. Shade trees are to be provided in carparks at a rate of 1 per 6 spaces or part thereof;
q. Carparking spaces are to have the flowing dimensions (AS2890.1 Off Street Parking):</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>I2 Loading Docks</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Objective: To ensure that loading docks are located and designed in a manner that facilities ease of truck usage and does not increase crime opportunities</td><td>Controls:
a. All vehicles shall enter and leave the site in a forward direction;
b. Loading dock area should be located toward the rear of the development and provided with surveillance equipment for safety;
c. Loading docks shall not be used for parking or as part of vehicle turning/maneuvering areas, nor for the storage of waste;
d. The maximum grade for a loading ramp is 1 in 12.5 to allow for truck reversing.</td><td>As above.
Refer to TIA provided in Appendix E.</td><td>✓</td></tr>
<tr><td>I3 Carpark Construction</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Objective: To ensure that carpark construction is suitable for the type and number of vehicles likely to visit the site</td><td>Controls:
a. Carparking for commercial and industrial developments is to be constructed in accordance with AusSpec specifications and the design as approved by Council;
b. All commercial and industrial carparking areas are to be graded and drained to Council's stormwater system or alternative as approved by Council;
c. Pavements are required to be designed and constructed in accordance with the Austroads Pavement Design Guide to the following standards:
Table 28 - Carparking Construction Details
<table>
<tr><th>Use</th><th>Minimum Gravel Thickness</th><th>Surface Treatment</th></tr>
<tr><td>Urban/Village – Commercial
Recreation – Tourist and Visitor Accommodation - Light passenger vehicles only</td><td>150mm</td><td>Two coat bitumen seal</td></tr>
<tr><td>Commercial Premises
Light vehicle use
Heavy vehicle Use</td><td>150mm</td><td>Two coat bitumen seal
or
Asphalt or concrete</td></tr>
<tr><td>Industry</td><td>150mm</td><td>Asphalt or concrete</td></tr>
<tr><td>All other areas (e.g. Rural)</td><td>100mm</td><td>Gravel</td></tr>
</table>
d. Commercial carparks or other uses which are limited to light vehicle traffic areas and internal driveways should be sealed with a minimum of a 2 coat 14mm/7mm bitumen seal;</td><td>As above.
Refer to TIA provided in Appendix E.</td><td>✓</td></tr>
</table>

Objective/ principle /requirement	Standard / Control	Assessment	Compliance?
	e. Large developments where significant heavy vehicle and/or passenger vehicle movements are expected, may be required to provide a higher standard of wearing surface such as concrete or asphalt as determined by Council; f. Temporary 'overflow' parking areas will only be considered to address parking demands for a nominated event or only expected to occur rarely, where such parking can be provided without compromising public safety or amenity, site functionality and accessibility. g. Parking areas shall be sign posted and linemarked with directional, informative and regulatory or warning signs in accordance with Transport for NSW and Australian Standards AS2890.1. h. Exits and entries and direction for vehicular traffic shall be clearly sign posted. i. Individual parking spaces, including those for specific uses (disabled, visitors, employees etc) should be clearly delineated with line marking and sign posting as required.		
I7 Property Access Crossings			
Objective: *To ensure that access to site is provided in a location and manner that facilitates safety, efficient traffic movement and minimise negative environmental impact*	**Controls:** a. Accesses shall be located clear of power poles, any existing services, the dripline of existing street trees, and maximise the available area for on street footpaths and parking; b. Accesses must be located to provide safe site distances in both directions for the prevailing speed limit of the area; c. Accesses shall be cross the footpath at right angles to the centerline of the road; d. Industrial development shall not be granted direct vehicle access to lots from Yass Valley Way or Black Range Road; e. Where an access is located over Council's water, sewer or stormwater infrastructure a minimum of 450mm cover is required; f. Accesses should be designed to avoid headlight glare into habitable rooms of adjacent dwellings; g. No more than one third of the width of the frontage of a property should be used for access; h. Accesses should be located at least 6 metres from the kerb tangent point of any intersection; i. Access to a development should be limited to a single driveway; j. The grade of the driveway from the kerb or edge of seal to the lot boundary shall be +2.5% (i.e. 2.5% sloping upwards from the kerb to the property boundary); k. The maximum allowable longitudinal change in grade is 12%.; l. Cut and fill batters within the road verge shall be graded to a maximum of 1 in 8; m. All areas of common vehicle access, parking and associated landscaping should be well defined to facilitate easy maintenance;	As above. Refer to TIA provided in **Appendix E.**	✓

Objective/ principle /requirement	Standard / Control	Assessment	Compliance?
	n. Driveways should comprise an all-weather pavement, such as a minimum 50mm thick gravel base with 100mm thick concrete layer (25 MPA with SL72 mesh), or similar.		
PART K - NATURAL RESOURCES (if necessary)			
This Part applies to development on land that is mapped as being subject to 'Dryland Salinity', 'High Soil Erodibility', 'Biodiversity', 'Watercourse' and 'Groundwater Vulnerability' on the Natural Resource Maps of the Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013. It may also apply if, after a site inspection, land is identified as having any of these attributes. If works are proposed within an affected area, justification will be required to demonstrate that there is no other areas on the property that are more suitable for the proposed development. The proposal must detail all measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate likely impacts on the land. *The objectives of this part are to:* *a. Minimise acceleration or exacerbation on salinity, sedimentation and erosion;* *b. Avoid salt damage to buildings, infrastructure, vegetation and land capability;* *c. Minimize the disturbance of natural landforms to reduce erosion and runoff;* *d. Maintain and improve the biological diversity within the landscape;* *e. Encourage the conservation and recovery of threatened species, communities and their habitats;* *f. Prescribe the vegetation to which Section 9, Chapter 2, Vegetation in Non Rural Areas of State Environmental Planning (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021 applies;* *g. Maintain and improve the vegetation and urban canopy cover;* *h. Protect and conserve vegetation and minimize unnecessary removal of trees or vegetation;* *i. Minimize potential for the contamination and depletion of vulnerable aquifers;* *j. Protect groundwater sources which supply towns or villages;* *k. Protect the quality and supply of water for downstream users;* *l. Protect waterways that have habitat values for fish, waterbirds, aquatic fauna and flora and encourage the recovery of any threatened species.*	N/A	The development is mapped as containing 'Biodiversity' via the LEP and this part therefore applies. For the avoidance of doubt, the site does not contain any land mapped as 'Dryland Salinity', 'High Soil Erodibility', 'Watercourse' or 'Groundwater Vulnerability' or via the LEP. As detailed via the assessment provided in **Section 5** of the SEE and the appended specialist assessments the development has been considered with respects to potential impacts associated with soils, water and biodiversity. Subject to the implementation of mitigation measures no significant impacts to natural resources are anticipated.	✓
K2.1 Mapped biodiversity			

Objective/ principle /requirement	Standard / Control	Assessment	Compliance?
Objective: *To ensure that any development does not negatively impact upon the biodiversity of the site or the regional overall*	**Controls:** a. Development should avoid impacting on the biodiversity attributes of the site, including those attributes that contribute to local and regional connectivity; b. If the removal of native vegetation (or other impacts to biodiversity) cannot be avoided, the amount of vegetation removal is to be minimised through careful consideration in planning processes and expert input to project design or management; c. Applications must include evidence that their proposed development does not trigger the Biodiversity Offset Scheme.	A Flora and Fauna Assessment Report (FFAR) forms part of this application and is provided in **Appendix D.** The FFAR concludes that the development is unlikely to cause a significant impact to any threatened species, populations, or ecological communities listed under the NSW BC Act or the EPBC Act. No significant impacts to biodiversity are anticipated to result from the proposed development. For the avoidance of doubt the FFAR details that the proposed native vegetation clearing is below the clearing threshold that triggers the Biodiversity Offset Scheme.	✓
PART L – MISCELLANEOUS LAND USES (IF NECESSARY)			
This part applies to development not covered elsewhere in this document that has the potential, if not provided with adequate guidelines and controls, to negatively impact upon the scenic, environmental and/or social values of the Yass Valley Local Government Area. *The objectives of this part are to:* *a. Ensure that development does not detract from the visual amenity of the surrounding environment;* *b. To ensure that the reuse of items and structures do not present any safety risk or structural hazard;* *c. Minimize landuse conflicts.*	N/A	As detailed via the assessment provided throughout **Section 5** the proposed development has been designed with consideration of potential visual impacts, hazards and safety risks and the potential for land use conflicts. Subject to the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures, the proposed development is considered unlikely to result in any significant adverse impacts.	✓
L4 Security Lighting			
Objective: *To ensure that security lighting does not result in negative offsite impacts*	**Controls:** a. Wherever possible security lighting should be sensor active with a limited time that the light is on; b. For pedestrian areas, lighting should be directed downward to the footpath area and adequately spaced to prevent dark areas on the path and immediate surrounds; c. Bollard lighting should be used at the front of commercial and industrial buildings for night time illumination; d. Flashing lights or illuminated signage should not be used in residential areas; e. Lighting should not spill outside of the property boundary and cause nuisance to neighbours and drivers	Requirements for security lighting are subject to the finalisation of detailed design. The requirements of the DCP associated with security lighting are considered capable of being achieved through the finalisation of detailed design.	✓
L6 Renewable Energy Development Projects			
Objective*: To provide guidance to developers of renewable energy projects on the local matters to be taken into consideration in addition to those in any state or national guidelines*	**Controls:** a. The location of any renewable energy development project shall be consistent with the Yass Valley Settlement Strategy (or subsequent document);	For the avoidance of doubt the project is not considered to represent a renewable energy development project as no generation of electricity	N/A

Objective/ principle /requirement	Standard / Control	Assessment	Compliance?
	b. The 5km buffer area along the NSW/ACT border identified in the Yass Valley Settlement Strategy is designed to protect and retain the existing environmental values and rural character of the area and is not suitable for renewable energy infrastructure; c. The infrastructure (e.g. turbines, panels, substations) not being within view lines of villages and towns or clusters of rural dwellings; d. The infrastructure not having an adverse impact on the amenity of any dwellings; e. The impact of infrastructure (e.g. turbines, panels) on the rural landscape and tourism values of the Yass Valley is to be minimized; f. A sharing the benefits scheme(s) with the host landowners, immediate neighbours and a Community Enhancement Fund (as per Council policy) shall be identified in any development application; g. Noise impacts at adjoining dwellings is to not exceed with the applicable standards; h. The project to commence within 5 years of a Consent being issued and completed within 5 years of commencement; i. The proposal and associated infrastructure (e.g. panels, turbines) shall not have a negative impact on the heritage values of the site and Yass Valley; j. The economic and social impacts on local communities and Yass Valley shall be clearly articulated in the proposal; k. Any community and Rural Fire Service concerns in relation to the bushfire risks and any impediments to firefighting operations shall be examined, minimized and achievable mitigation measures clearly explained; l. An assessment is to be included of any impacts in regards to potential land contamination as a consequence of a grass or bushfire and appropriate mitigation and rehabilitation measures outlines; m. The project to include the development of housing solutions for their workforce.	from renewable sources (solar wind tide etc.) is proposed. The battery components of the development are capable of storing energy, irrespective of the method of electrical generation.	

Flood and Groundwater Assessment Report

ACEnergy BESS – 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman, NSW

ACEnergy Pty Ltd

26 April 2024



Document Status

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Project Name	ACEnergy BESS – 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman, NSW
Client	ACEnergy Pty Ltd
Client Project Manager	Ahmed Adel
Water Technology Project Manager	Jorja Strack
Water Technology Project Director	Ben Hughes
Authors	Jorja Strack, Daniel Wohling
Document Number	23010129_Murrumbateman_R01V01

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15 Business Park Drive
Notting Hill VIC 3168
Telephone (03) 8526 0800
Fax (03) 9558 9365
ACN 093 377 283
ABN 60 093 377 283

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

ACEnergy Pty Ltd are proposing to construct a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman, NSW (the Subject Site). The study objective is to better understand the flooding mechanisms, groundwater conditions and potential development risks within and surrounding the proposed BESS, particularly across the location where the BESS infrastructure is proposed to be constructed. This site is referred to as 'the Subject Site' within this report. The report presents the flood modelling assumptions and results together with a groundwater investigation of the Subject Site.

1.2 Objectives

To provide ACEnergy Pty Ltd with a better understanding of the Subject Site's inundation risk and the developments potential to impact groundwater availability and quality, the following tasks were completed:

- Review of existing flood and groundwater information.
- Development of a 2D (Two-Dimensional) hydraulic flood model (using TUFLOW) Rain-on-Grid (RoG) methodology to assess flood risk from stormwater runoff.
- Preliminary hydrogeological assessment to determine groundwater level and any potential groundwater and surface water interactions at the Subject Site.
- Provision of high-level recommendations for any mitigation or design alterations which may be required to reduce potential risks associated with flooding, drainage and groundwater.

Existing groundwater studies applied to the broader region and specific no studies were available for the Subject Site. An existing flood study is available for the study area and is discussed in Section 2.1.

1.3 Site

The Subject Site is located approximately 3 km east of the Murrumbateman Township in Eastern NSW, located at 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman, NSW (Figure 1-1).

The site facility is proposed to be installed on gradually sloping terrain. The topography varies from 605.2 m AHD in the southeast to 602.1 m AHD in the northwest of the Subject Site (Figure 1-3). The terrain slopes towards the northwest with a slope of approximately 1.5%. The site is bounded by surrounding farmland and agricultural properties.

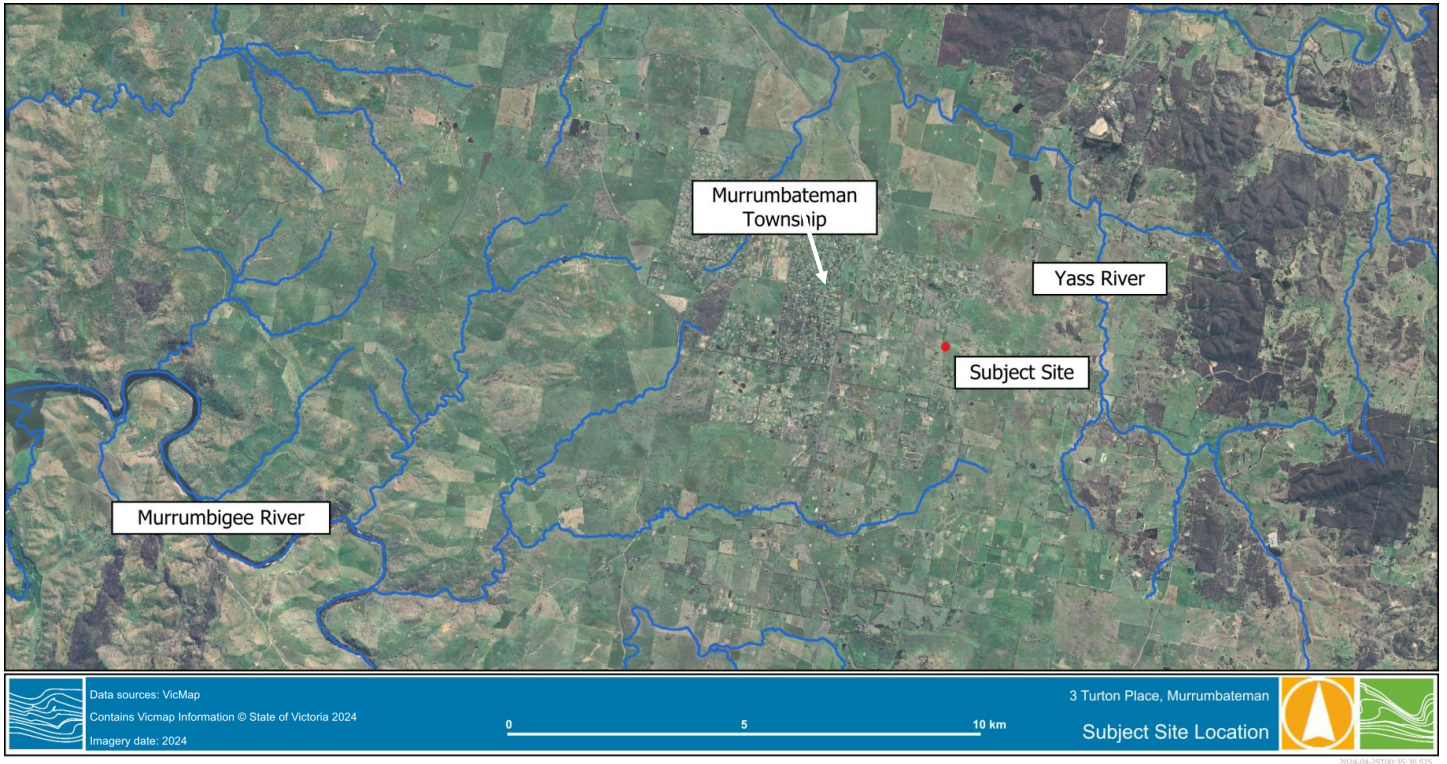


FIGURE 1-1 SUBJECT SITE LOCATION



FIGURE 1-2 SUBJECT SITE – ZOOMED IN

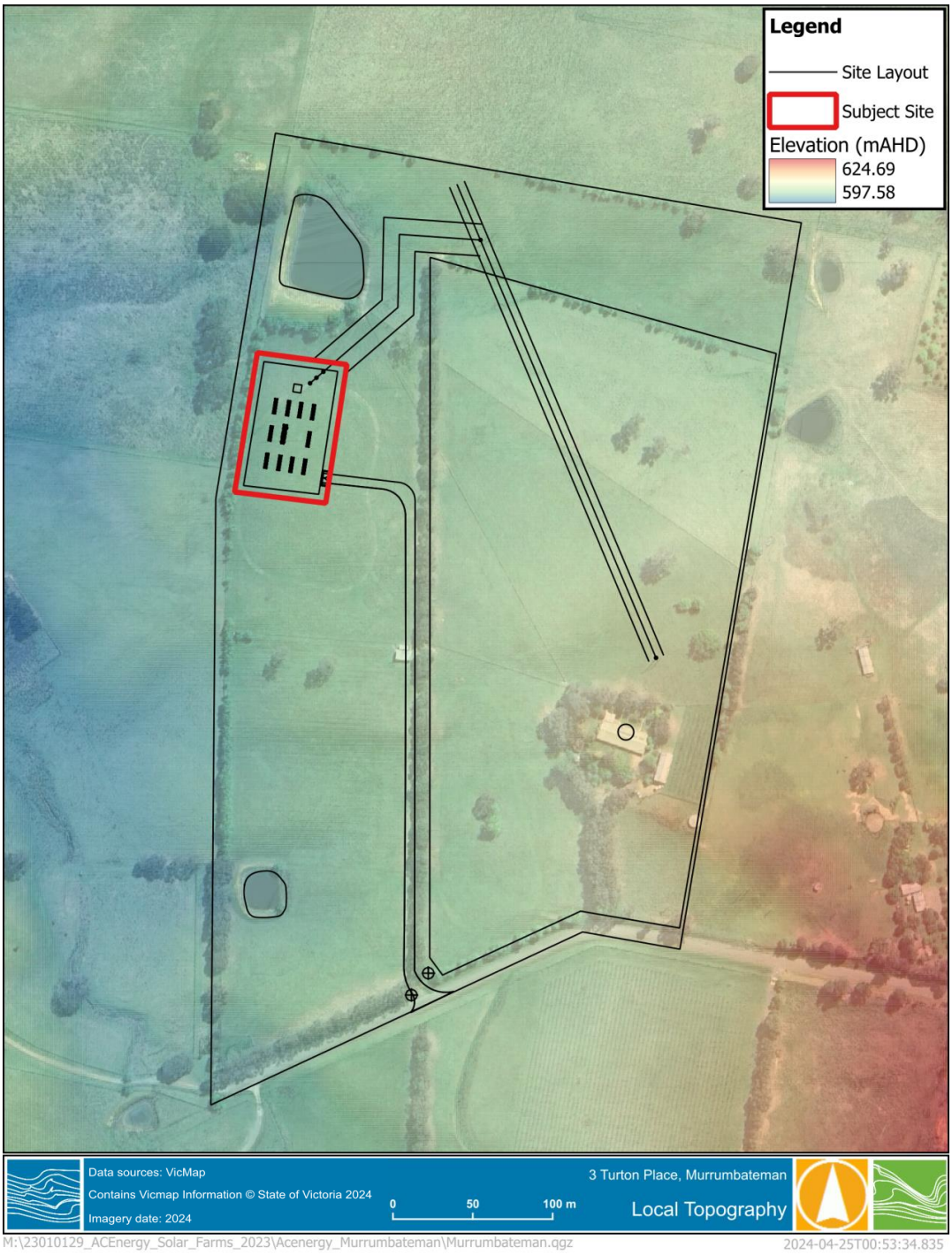


FIGURE 1-3 SUBJECT SITE TOPOGRAPHY

2 FLOODING

2.1 Previous Flood Study

The Murrumbateman, Bowning, Bookham and Binalong Flood Study – Addendum Report[1] was conducted for Yass Valley Council in 2020. The 1% AEP flood depth mapping which covers the Subject Site is presented in Figure 2-1. Based on the Addendum Report, the site is located adjacent to overland flow during a 1% AEP event from the Unnamed Tributary catchment which flows through the existing dam in the north of the site. This flow path is consistent with the flood mapping discussed in Section 2.

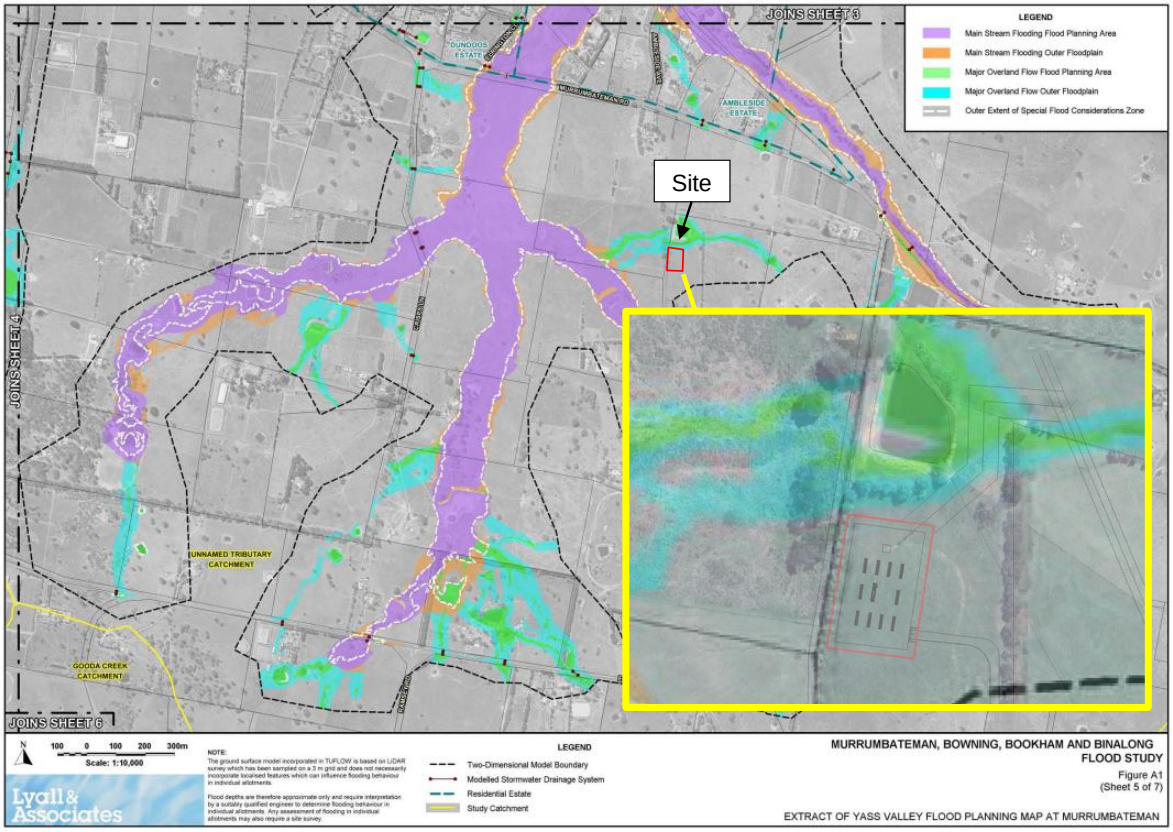


FIGURE 2-1 MURRUMBATEMAN, BOWNING, BOOKHAM AND BINALONG FLOOD STUDY 1% DEPTH (SOURCE: YASS VALLEY COUNCIL)

[1] Retrieved from https://flooddata.ses.nsw.gov.au/flood-projects/murrumbateman-bowning-bookham-and-binalong-flood-study-addendum-report

2.2 Methodology

A two-dimensional Rain on Grid (RoG) hydraulic modelling approach was employed for the hydraulic modelling component of this investigation. The model has generally been developed inline with Australian Rainfall and Runoff (ARR) 2019 guidelines[2] and simulated using TUFLOW hydraulic flood modelling software. Simulations were completed using TUFLOW Build 2023-03-AB Single Precision with HPC (Highly Parallelised Computations) solution scheme on a GPU solver.

The RoG methodology is extensively used for flood mapping of urban and rural areas. It allows for a comprehensive flood risk assessment by identifying overland flow paths based on the topography dataset as illustrated in the flow chart in Figure 2-2.

- The rainfall layer, which consists of one single rainfall polygon over the model extent was produced in a GIS package.
- Hyetographs (rainfall depth timeseries) were created for a range of design rainfall AEP (Annual Exceedance Probability) events and durations using QGIS TUFLOW plugin and the 2016 Bureau of Meteorology Intensity Frequency Duration (IFD) at the centroid of the catchment. These were applied to the TUFLOW model to represent catchment rainfall under various durations for the 1% AEP design storm.

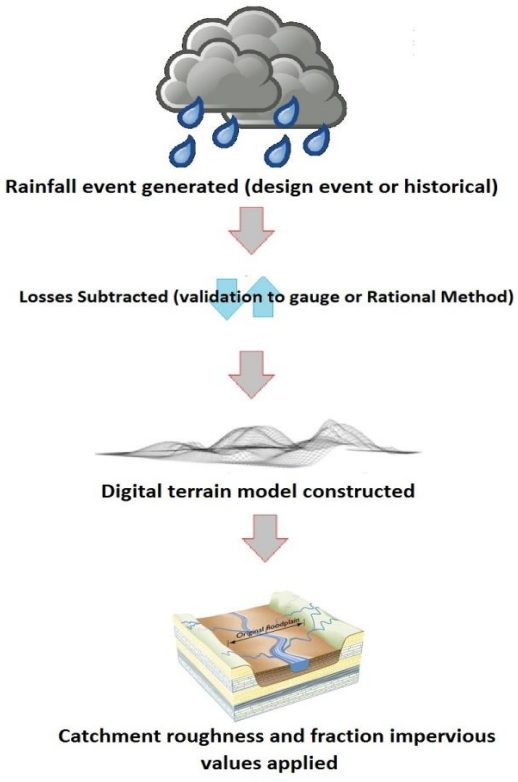


FIGURE 2-2 RAINFALL ON GRID MODELLING APPROACH

[2] Retrieved from http://book.arr.org.au.s3-website-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/

A new hydraulic model was constructed using land use, cadastral, topography and aerial photography datasets to identify different land uses which are represented from a hydrologic and hydraulic perspective as surface roughness and initial and continuing loss values.

The upstream catchment and wider area were modelled to ensure all runoff from the upstream catchment was captured. The TUFLOW model set-up and model extent is presented in Figure 2-3.



FIGURE 2-3 TUFLOW MODEL SETUP

2.2.1 Rainfall

Understanding historical rainfall seasonality and long-term trends is critical to surface water and groundwater investigations. Historical rainfall data was taken from the SILO database[4] for the grid point nearest to the study area (latitude -35.00 and longitude 149.05). The dataset covers a 67-year period from 1957 to 2024, which is adequate to identify longer-term rainfall trends.

The mean annual rainfall is 702.1 mm/yr, with monthly average rainfall ranging between 47.0 mm in April and 71.3 mm in October (Figure 2-4). Annual rainfall is highly variable and Figure 2-5 shows periods of both above and below-average rainfall over the nearly 67-year period. The above-average rainfall is interpreted from the cumulative deviation from the mean monthly rainfall (CDMMR) (Figure 2-3), which identifies when rainfall has trended above average (inclining line) or below average (declining line). Above-average rainfall periods were noted between approximately 1958-1965, 1970-1980, 1985-2000 and from 2020-2024. Several below-average rainfall periods are noted between approximately 1965-1970, 1980-1985 and 2000-2010.

[4] https://www.longpaddock.qld.gov.au/silo/

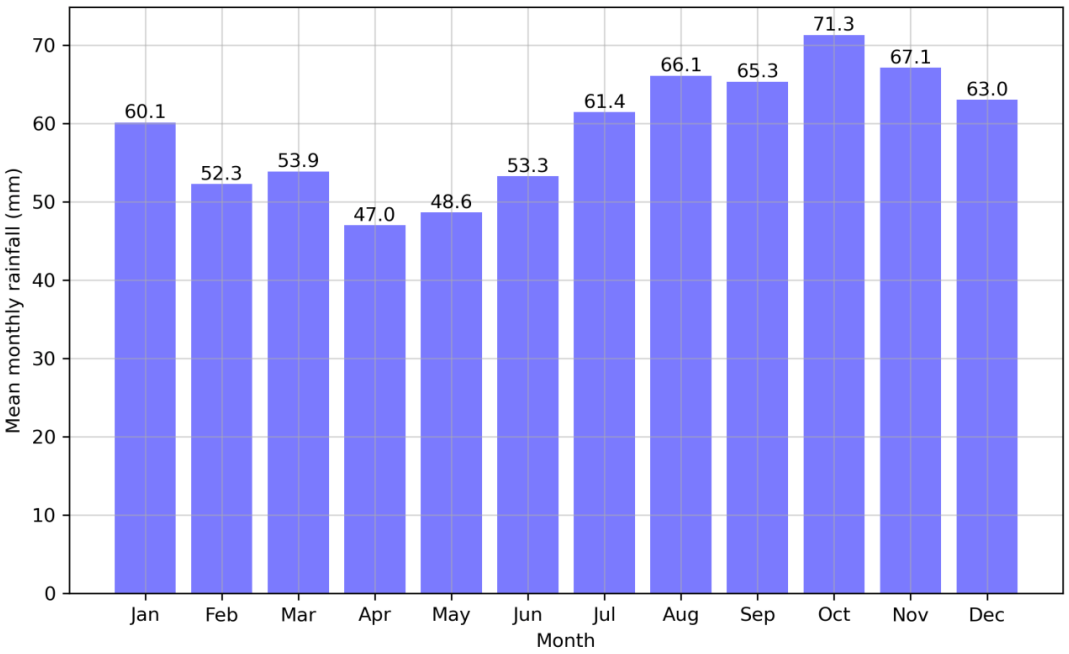


FIGURE 2-4 MONTHLY AVERAGE RAINFALL FROM 1957-2024

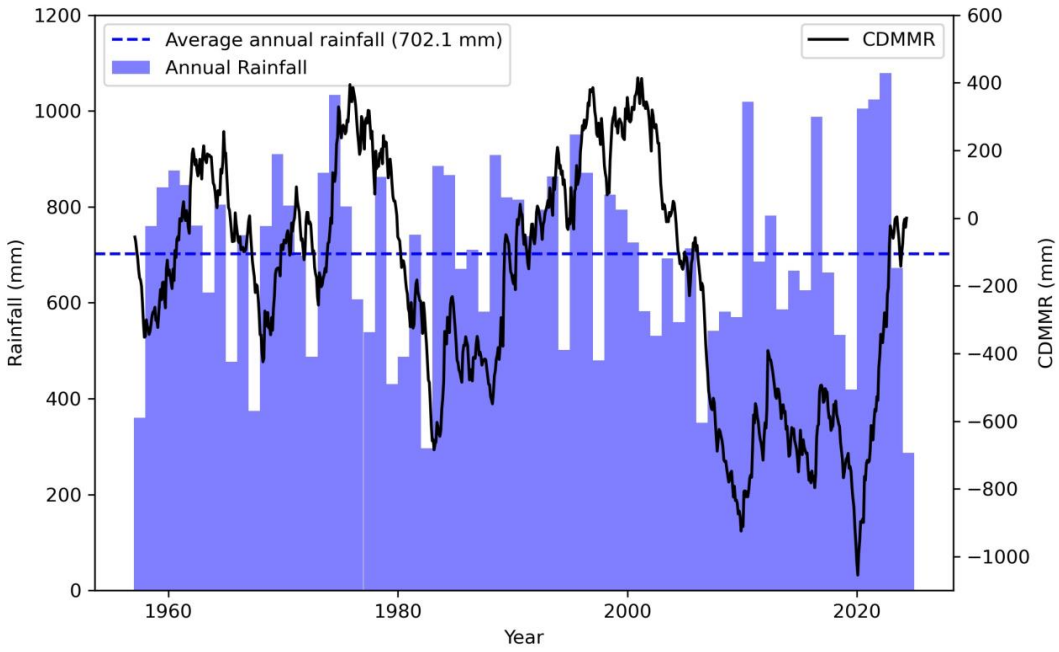


FIGURE 2-5 AVERAGE ANNUAL RAINFALL AND THE CUMULATIVE DEVIATION FROM MEAN MONTHLY RAINFALL (CDMMR) BASED ON DATA AVAILABLE FROM 1957-2024

2.2.2 Digital Elevation Model, Losses and Hydraulic Roughness

A Digital Elevation Model (DEM) was generated from 1 m resolution LiDAR, supplied by NSW Spatial Services via Geoscience Australia's Elevation Information System (ELVIS)[5].

Table 2-1 summarises the rainfall losses and hydraulic roughness used for the hydraulic modelling as per the land use types within the model. These values were adopted based on Water Technology's experience with RoG models in the surrounding area. Figure 2-6 shows the TUFLOW materials layer.

A check was also undertaken to test the sensitivity of continuing loss values adopted. It was found that reducing the losses by 50% for the critical duration (1% AEP, 360 minutes, TP06) had negligible impacts on the flood extent and maximum flood depths (<2cm) around the Subject Site.

TABLE 2-1 MODEL PARAMETERS

Land use types	Material Code	Manning's 'n' (roughness)	Initial loss (mm)	Continuing loss (mm/hr)
Residential – Rural	102	0.150	14	2
Open Pervious Area	108	0.040	14	2
Paved Roads/Carparks	114	0.025	1	0.5

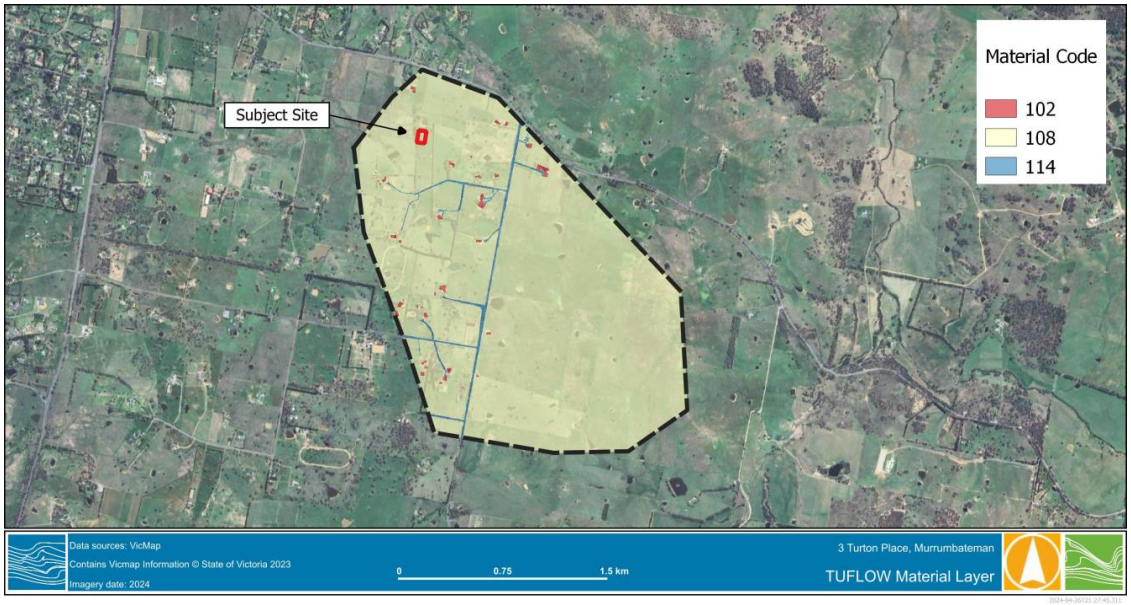


FIGURE 2-6 TUFLOW MODEL MATERIALS LAYER

2.2.3 Boundaries

A tailwater (2D TUFLOW 'HQ') boundary was set and extended around the downstream model extent to allow overland flow to freely drain out of the model, with a constant slope of 0.5%.

[5] https://elevation.fsdf.org.au/

2.2.4 TUFLOW Model Checks

- The following checks were undertaken on the TUFLOW model parameters and outputs:
  - 2D timestep: The adaptive 2D timestep drops to a minimum of 0.5 seconds. A 'Classic' TUFLOW model would be expected to have a timestep no less than ¼ of the grid size (3 m), i.e. 1.25 seconds, with a healthy HPC model no lower than a tenth of this figure. Hence, the adopted timestep is within the recommended range.
  - Model mass errors: The mass errors for all models were less than 1% and within the recommended range.
  - Errors and warning messages: No errors were found within the model and all warnings were reviewed and either acceptable or fixed, if required.

2.2.5 Critical Duration and Temporal Pattern Assessment

The model was simulated for the following 1% AEP design storm durations; 3, 6, 12, & 24 hours, using three ARR 2019 temporal patterns representative of front, mid and back loaded storm events.

Results were processed to select the combination of durations and temporal patterns resulting in the maximum flood depths throughout the catchment and covering the site. This is a conservative method of identifying areas prone to flooding in a 1% AEP event. The modelled durations and temporal patterns are shown in Table 2-2.

TABLE 2-2 MODELLED DURATION AND TEMPORAL PATTERN

AEP Event	1%
Durations	3, 6, 12, & 24 hours
Temporal Pattern	TP02, TP04, TP06

2.3 Flood Hazard Classification

Floods can be hazardous, producing harm to people, damage to infrastructure and potentially loss of life. In examining potential flood hazard there are several factors to be considered, as outlined in ARR 2019 (Book 6 Chapter 7)[6]. An assessment of flood hazard should consider:

- Velocity of floodwater.
- Depth of floodwater.
- Combination of velocity and depth of floodwater.
- Isolation during a flood.
- Effective warning time.
- Rate of rise of floodwater.

The flood hazard at the site was assessed in accordance with ARR2019, which defines six hazard categories. The combined flood hazard curves are presented in and vulnerability thresholds classifications are tabulated in Table 2-3.

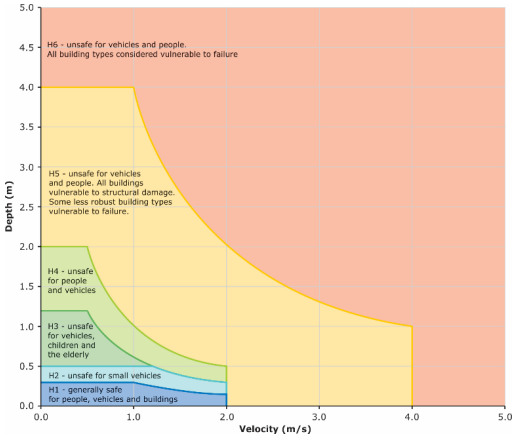


FIGURE 2-7 FLOOD HAZARD CURVES

[6] http://book.arr.org.au.s3-website-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/

TABLE 2-3 HAZARD CLASSIFICATION (ARR, 2016)

Hazard Vulnerability Classification	Classification Limit (D and V in combination)	Limiting Still Water Depth (D)	Limiting Velocity (V)	Description
H1	D*V ≤ 0.3	0.3	2.0	Generally safe for vehicles, people and buildings.
H2	D*V ≤ 0.6	0.5	2.0	Unsafe for small vehicles.
H3	D*V ≤ 0.6	1.2	2.0	Unsafe for vehicles. Children and the elderly.
H4	D*V ≤ 1.0	2.0	2.0	Unsafe for vehicles and people.
H5	D*V ≤ 4.0	4.0	4.0	Unsafe for vehicles and people. All buildings vulnerable to structural damage. Some less robust buildings subject to failure.
H6	D*V > 4.0	-	-	Unsafe for vehicles and people. All building types considered vulnerable to failure.

2.4 Results

The existing conditions 1% AEP depth, velocity and flood hazard results are shown from Figure 2-8 to Figure 2-10. The flood depth map was filtered for small depths (below 0.02 m) and puddles less than 100m^2 removed.

The following observations can be made for the 1% AEP storm event:

- The maximum depth within the Subject site is approximately 80 mm. The main flow path is shallow sheet flow, from the east of the site. Water ponds around the dam to the north of the Subject Site with a small flow path through the northeast corner of the site.
- Modelled peak velocities within the proposed facilities extent are generally less than 0.2 m/s with some small areas between 0.50 – 0.55 m/s in the northeast corner of the site.
- A flood hazard map was created from the product of both depth and velocity as described in the previous section. The Subject Site and proposed location of the facilities is all classified as H1 ‘Generally safe for vehicles, people, and buildings’. This is to be expected of shallow water, ponding across the site rather than traversing it. To the north of the site, the dam has flood hazard up to H3 due to the greater depths within the dam.

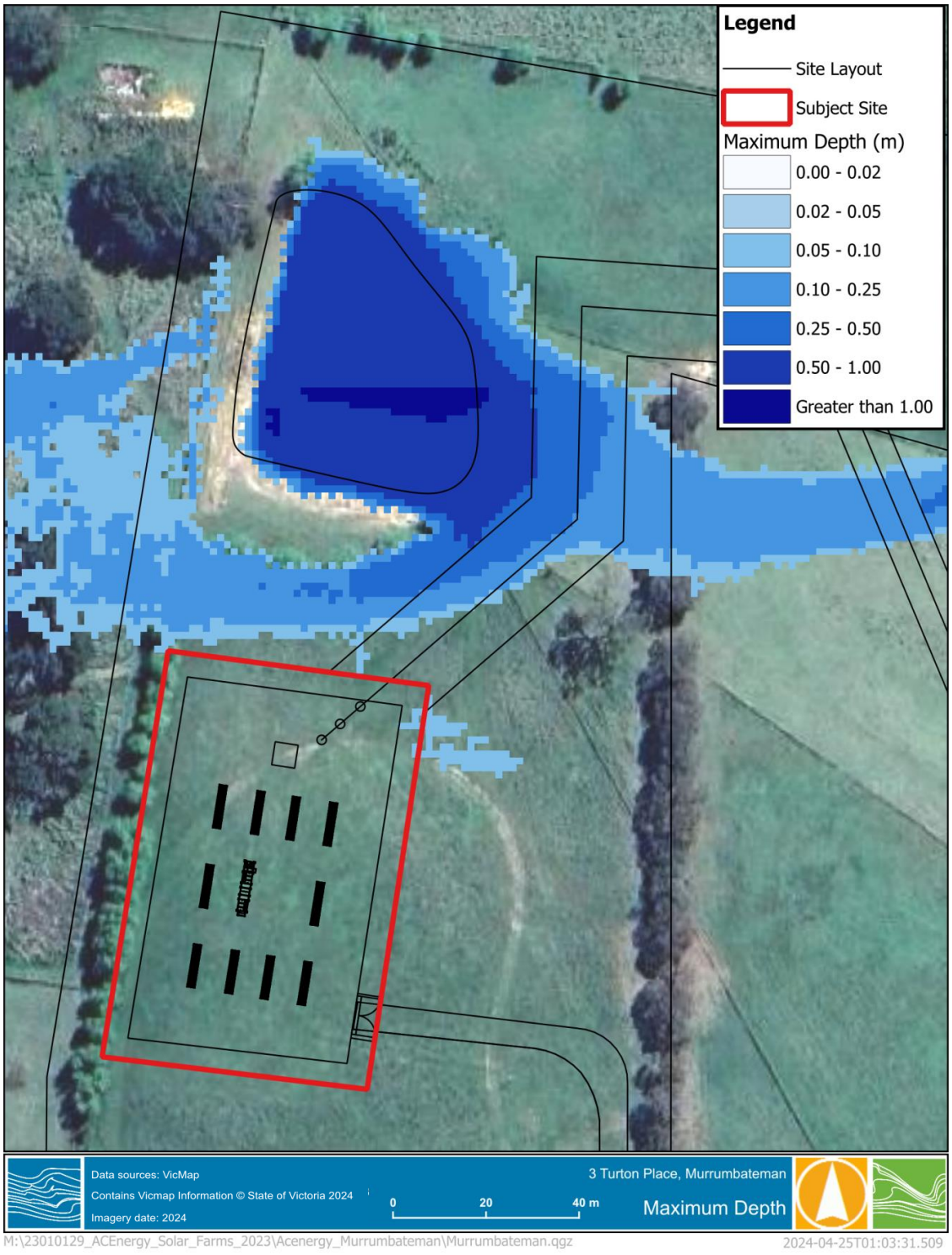


FIGURE 2-8 1% AEP MAXIMUM FLOOD DEPTH (DEPTHS BELOW 0.02M NOT SHOWN)

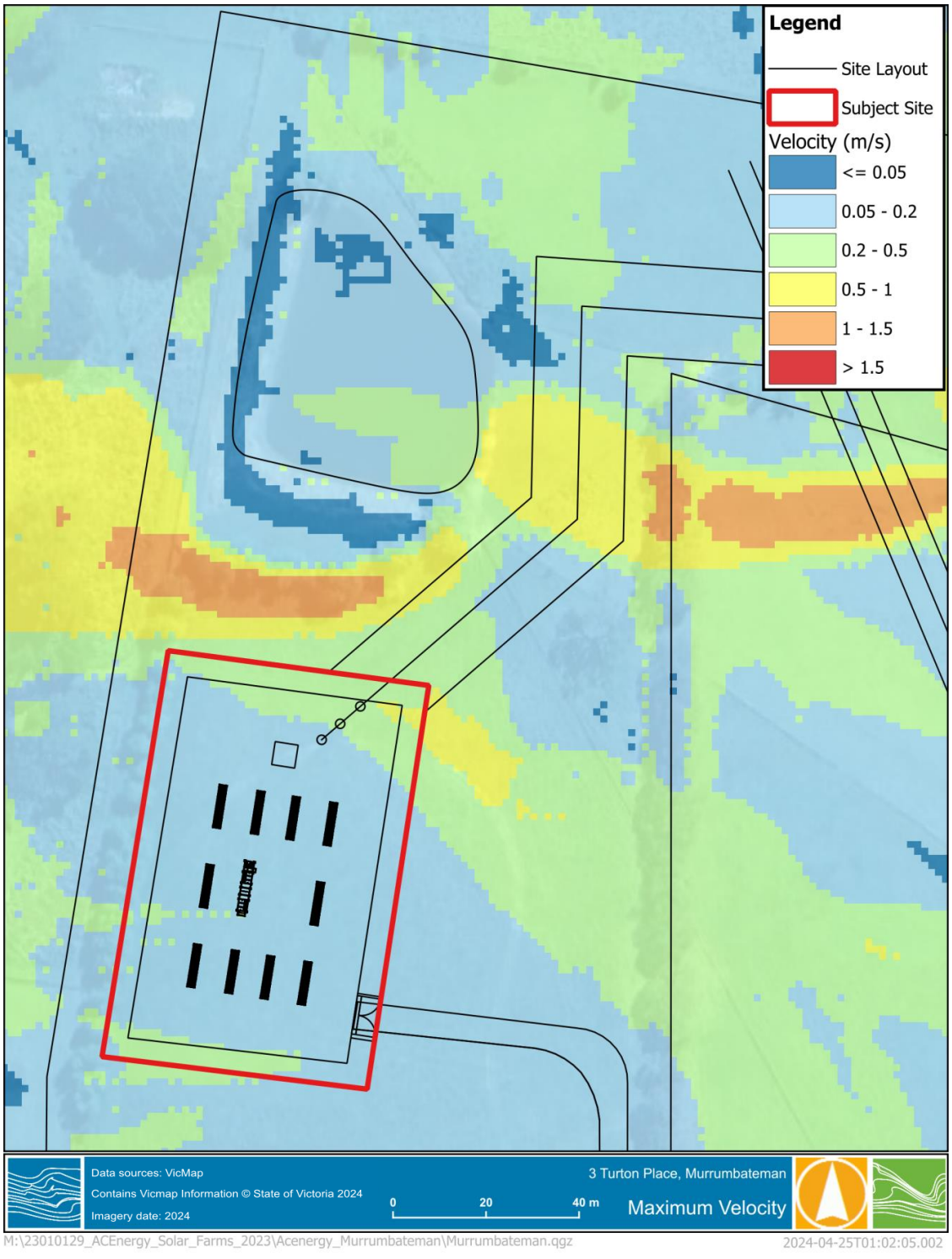


FIGURE 2-9 1% AEP MAXIMUM FLOOD VELOCITY

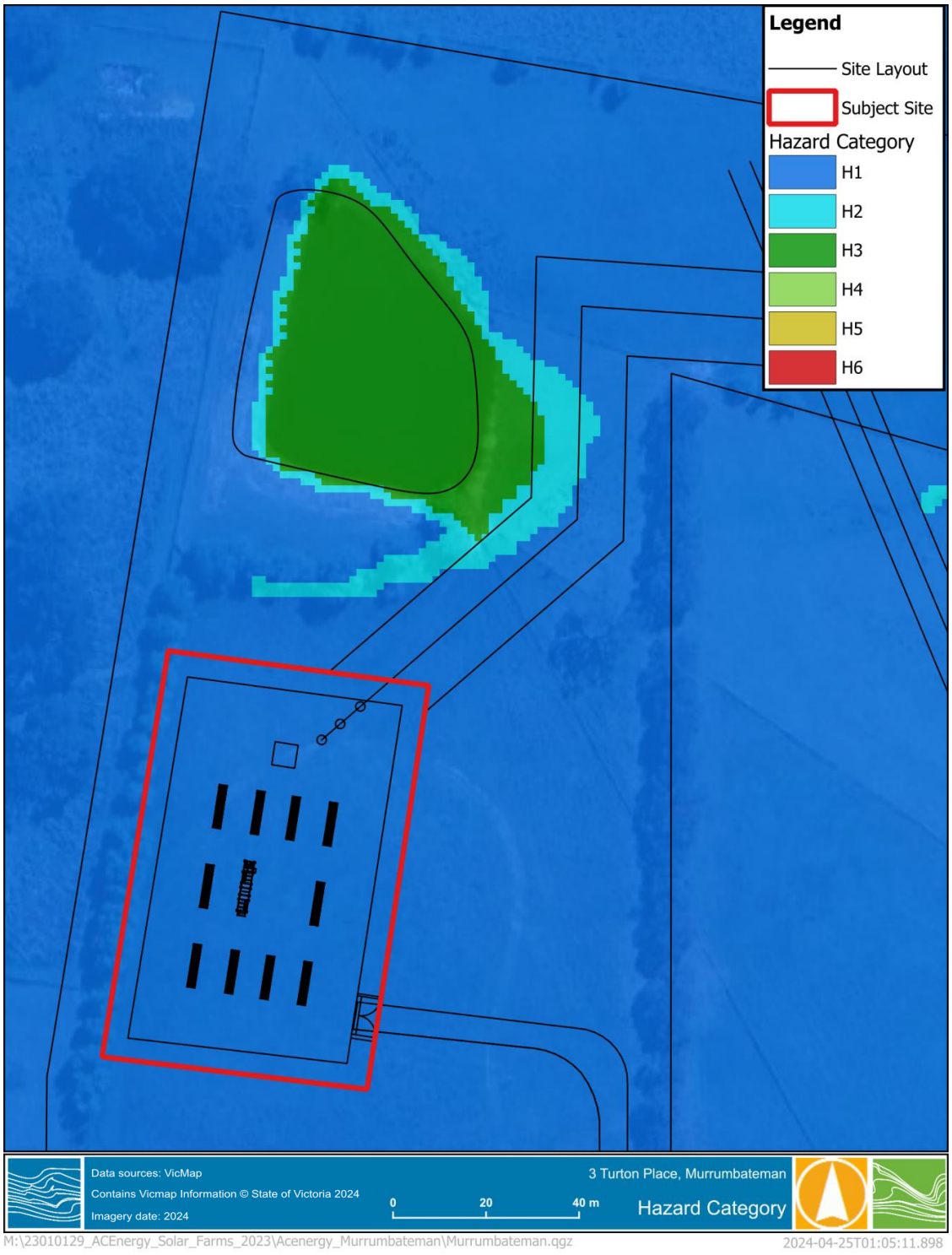


FIGURE 2-10 1% AEP MAXIMUM FLOOD HAZARD

3 GROUNDWATER

The Subject Site is not located within a "groundwater vulnerable" area according to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment's (DPEs) Groundwater Vulnerability mapping[7]. The Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013 requires an assessment of groundwater vulnerability to maintain hydrological function of key groundwater systems and protect vulnerable resources from depletion and/or contamination due to the proposed development. Although the Subject Site is not located within a groundwater vulnerable area, a groundwater vulnerable area is mapped approximately 2 km south of the Subject Site, and therefore this assessment will assess potential impacts to that identified area. This preliminary hydrogeological assessment considers key components of the groundwater system to develop a hydrogeological conceptual model (Section 3.1) that was used to inform a groundwater vulnerability assessment (Section 3.2).

The following factors were considered as part of this groundwater vulnerability assessment:

- The likelihood of groundwater contamination.
- Impacts on groundwater-dependent ecosystems.
- The cumulative impact on the groundwater system (including impacts on nearby groundwater extraction for a potable water supply or stock water supply.
- Any appropriate measures proposed to avoid, minimise or mitigate the impacts of the development.
- Groundwater abstraction

3.1 Hydrogeological Conceptualisation

Geology of the Subject Site was determined from the NSW Geoscience website MinView[8], with the whole site underlain by quaternary age alluvial and residual deposits, including saprolite, developed by the weathering of older underlying formations. The deeper geology of the area is associated with the Douro Group within the Lachlan Fold Belt. Immediately underlying the Subject Site are the Hawkins Volcanics, which may comprise porphyritic, limestone, mudstone and breccia units[6]. While to the east and north of the Subject Site are Mount Ainslie Volcanics, which comprise porphyry and shale units.

Groundwater information (i.e. bore information, geology, water levels, yields and salinity) were collated from the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) Groundwater Explorer[9] and from the WaterNSW Realtime Data web portal[10] within a 1 km radius of the Subject Site (Table 3-1 and Figure 3-2). The geological log from the bore GW047516, which is the closest bore to the Subject Site at approximately 200 m west-southwest (Figure 3-2), indicates a thin (0.3 m) layer of topsoil over 6.4 m of clay, over 31.4 m of granite to the termination depth of 38.1 m below ground level (mbgl). Bores GW047293 (300m south) and GW417023 (350m north) also reported over 6m of clay at the surface, suggesting that the Subject Site is underlain by a thick layer of clay.

The remainder of the identified bores within 1 km of the Subject Site all indicate a similar geology of a thin topsoil over several metres of clay over bedrock. The local geological descriptions conform with the broader geological descriptions of superficial deposits and clay derived from weathering over granites of the Douro Group.

[7] https://datasets.seed.nsw.gov.au/dataset/epi-groundwater-vulnerability
[8] MinView | Regional NSW | Mining, Exploration and Geoscience
[9] http://www.bom.gov.au/water/groundwater/explorer/map.shtml
[10] https://realtimedata.waternsw.com.au/water.stm

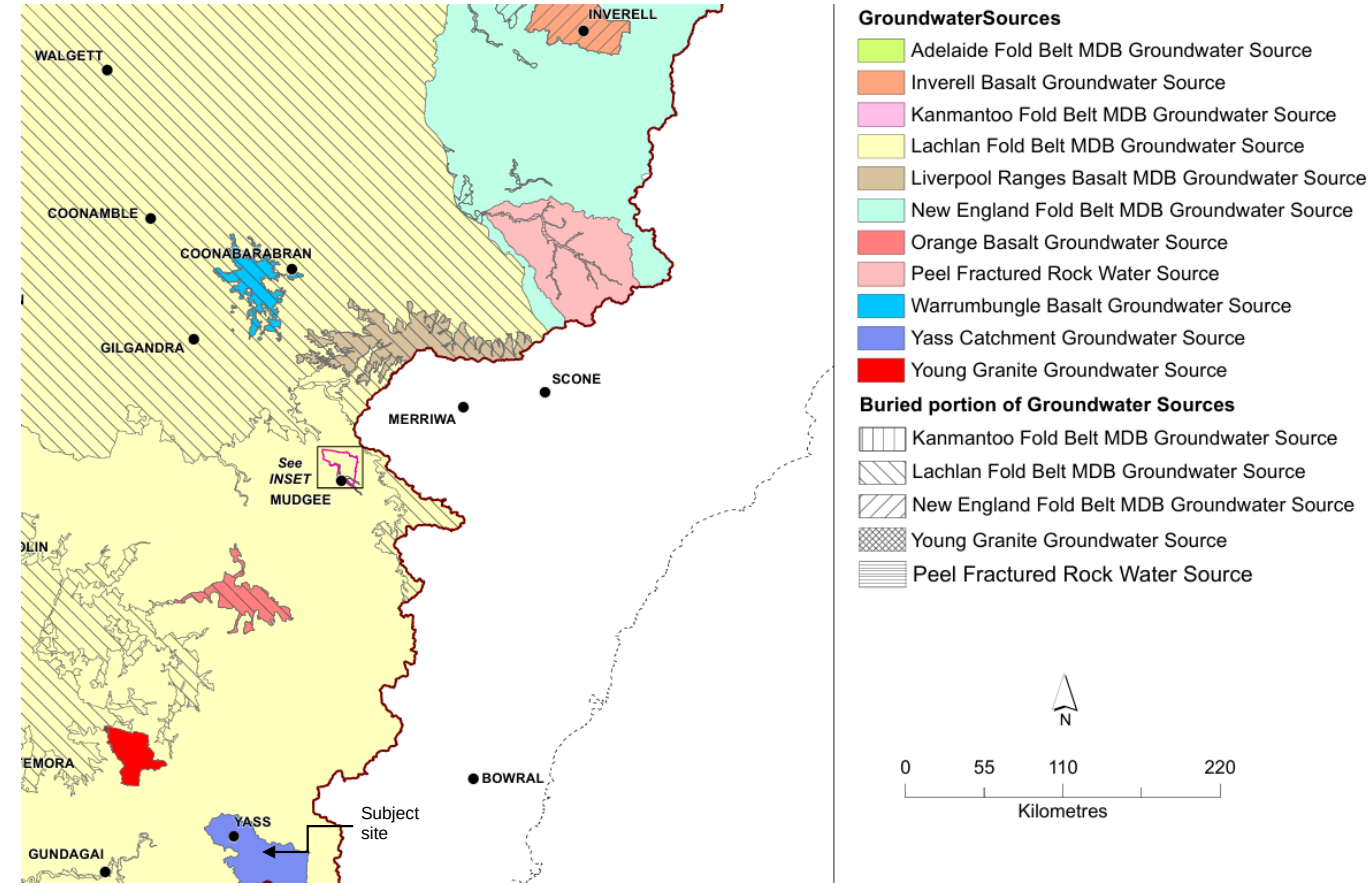


FIGURE 3-1 MURRAY-DARLING BASIN FRACTURED ROCK WATER RESOURCE PLAN GROUNDWATER RESOURCE UNITS (2022)

TABLE 3-1 COLLATED BORE INFORMATION FOR BORES IN CLOSE PROXIMITY (APPROXIMATELY 1 KM) OF THE SUBJECT SITE.

Bore ID Use Location (Purpose)	Total depth (m)	Screen interval(s) (m)	Lithology description	Standing water level (mBGL)	Yield (L/s)	TDS (mg/L)
GW047516 Irrigation 200m west	38.1	NA	0.0-0.3m Topsoil 0.3-6.7m Clay 6.7-38.1m Granite	NA	NA	NA
GW047293 Irrigation 300m south	45.7	9.1-19.8 26.8-28.9	0.0-0.3m Topsoil 0.6-6.9m Clay 6.9-19.8m Granite decomposed water supply 19.8-45.7m Granite porphyry water supply	3.0	0.91 3.64	Good
GW046695 Domestic/stock 600m east	79.90	36.6-37.2 68.0-69.2	0.0-1.5m Topsoil/subsoil 1.5-7.9m Clay sandy 7.9-10.3m Porphyry decomposed 19.8-45.7m Porphyry water supply	36.6 13.7	0.01 0.05	1,001-3,000
GW020873 Stock 800m northwest	28.7	9.4-9.4 23.8-23.8 28.7-28.7	0..0-7.92m Clay some sand 7.92-28.65m Granite water supply	NA NA 7.9	NA 0.42 0.48	
GW417023 Domestic/stock 350m north	120	90.0-91.0	0.0-9.0m Clay 9.0-120.0m Shale	24.0	0.44	NA
GW400709 Domestic/stock 750m northwest	36.0	18.00-2.0 32.0-34.0	0.0-3.0m Topsoil, clay 3.0-1.0m Soft decomposed granite 10.0-36.0m Granite, highly fractured	6.0	0.51 7.6	NA
GW401759 Test bore 750m northwest	60.0	14.0-18.0 20.0-24.0 24.0-30.0 46.0-48.0 56.0-59.0	0.0-3.0m Clay 3.0-60.0m Weathered dense, volcanic	0.85	0.5 1.6 0.7 1.5 2.5	1,000

Bore ID Use Location (Purpose)	Total depth (m)	Screen interval(s) (m)	Lithology description	Standing water level (mBGL)	Yield (L/s)	TDS (mg/L)
GW058339 Test bore 750m northwest	61.0	19.8-25.9	NA	NA	NA	NA
GW400773 Domestic/stock 900m northwest	30.0	17.0-19.0 23.0-23.2	0.0-1.0m Topsoil 1.0-6.0m Clay 6.0-19.0m Decomposed granite 19.0-30.0m Granite	1.0	1.01 0.25	NA
GW009136 NA 750m west	39.0	NA	0.0-4.88m Clay 4.88-39.0m Porphyry	NA	NA	NA
GW416988 Domestic/stock 650m west	25.0	NA	NA	20.0	20.0	NA
GW417529 400m east	No records					
GW401258 400m east	No records					
GW402406 Domestic/stock 400m east	NA	NA	NA	NA	2.1	NA
GW067430 Domestic/stock /irrigation 650m east	No records					
GW056823 Domestic/stock /irrigation 750m east	23.0	20.0-23.0	0.0-23.0m Granite decomposed water supply	1.0	1.0	NA
GW400739 Domestic/stock /irrigation 800m east	76.0	14.0-14.5 59.0-59.3 67.0-67.2	0.0-3.0m Clay 3.0-16.0m Sandy clay 16.0-23.0m decomposed basalt 23.0-76.0m Hard basalt	3.0	0.44 2.27 0.07	Good

Bore ID Use Location (Purpose)	Total depth (m)	Screen interval(s) (m)	Lithology description	Standing water level (mBGL)	Yield (L/s)	TDS (mg/L)
GW064561 Domestic/stock 900m east	24.0	18.0-18.5	0.0-1.0m Topsoil 1.0-3.0m Decomposed granite 3.0-24.0m Granite	NA	4.4	NA

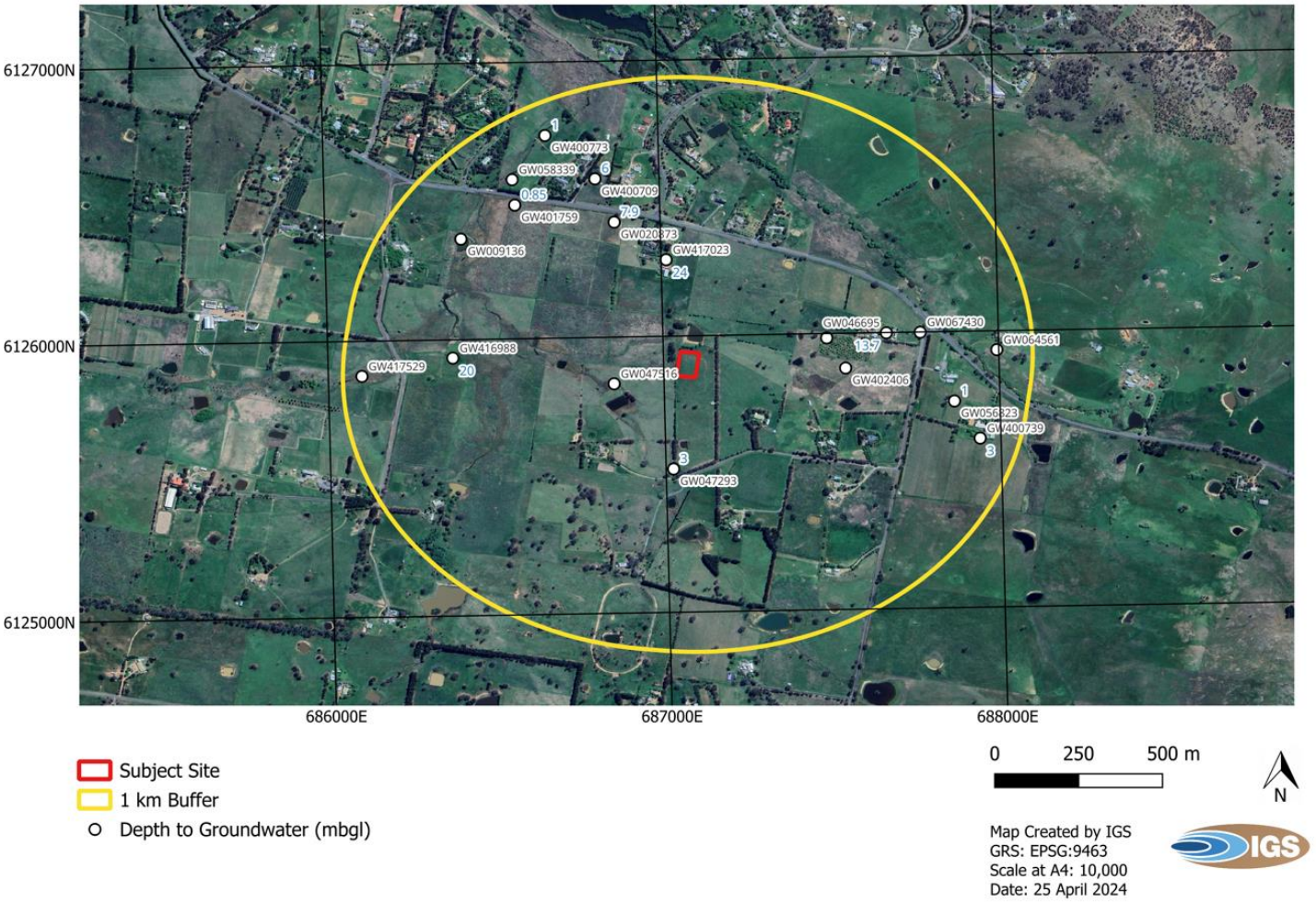


FIGURE 3-2 AVAILABLE GROUNDWATER BORES WITH GROUNDWATER LEVELS IN BLUE

3.1.1 Groundwater Quality and Use

There are limited water quality datasets available in the area around the Subject Site with only two reported qualitative salinity results and two quantitative salinity results. Bores GW046695 and GW401759 reported salinities of 1,000 mg/L to 3,000 mg/L, indicating water is suitable for stock and irrigation uses. Bores GW047293 and GW400739 reported salinity of 'good'; however, it was not reported if the 'good' definition related to stock water use or potable water use.

Based on the available data it is considered that the local groundwater quality at the site is brackish and only suitable for irrigation or stock water uses.

3.1.2 Groundwater levels

As shown in Table 3-1, water levels have been recorded from <1.0-36.0 mBGL within 1 km of the Subject Site, however, the closest (300m south) bore location generally reported water levels of 3 mbgl. The shallowest water levels were reported in bores a minimum of 750m from the Subject Site. Most of the bores identified within 1 km of the Subject Site have screened sections at depths greater than 9 mbgl, indicating that groundwater generally occurs in the Douro Group volcanics beneath the shallow clay layers that are present. There are no telemetered monitoring bores within 10 km of the site which does not allow for any groundwater levels timeseries to be investigated. However, it is expected that groundwater levels will fluctuate over the course of a year with the highest groundwater levels expected in late spring and the lowest in late autumn.

3.1.3 Acid Sulfate Soils

The Subject Site is not located in an area identified as having acid sulfate soils according to the NSW Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) webapp, eSpade[11].

3.1.4 Groundwater Management

Groundwater use at the Subject Site is managed under the Water Sharing Plan for the NSW Murray Darling Basin (MDB) Fractured Rock Groundwater Sources 2020 (reference)[12], and specifically provisions for Yass Catchment Groundwater Source (Figure 3-1). It is understood that there will be no groundwater abstraction or dewatering occurring at the Subject Site during any phase and therefore no groundwater licence will be required.

3.1.5 Groundwater-Surface water interactions and Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems

Groundwater-surface water interactions are expected to be limited, given that few natural surface water bodies are near the Subject Site and reported water levels close to the site i.e. within 750m, were reported at a minimum depth of 3 mbgl and are beneath a thick layer of clay. It is noted, however, that tree's may have root systems that would extend deeper than 3 mbgl and draw water from beneath the clay layer. The GDE atlas[13] was queried to locate terrestrial, aquatic or subterranean GDEs near the Subject Site (Figure 3-3). The closest terrestrial GDEs are located 2 km to the west and 3 km to the east with both described as having a 'Low potential for groundwater interaction' and therefore due to the distance and low interaction potential they are not considered a risk.The GDE Atlas identified that the closest aquatic GDEs are located approximately between 2.5 km south and 3.5 km eastand are associated with Gooda Creek,Murrumbateman Creek and Broken Dam. The aquatic GDEs are reported as having a "High or moderate potential for groundwater interaction", with Broken Dam identified as the GDE with the Moderate ranking.

[11] eSPADE v2.2 (nsw.gov.au)
[12] sl-2020-0348 (nsw.gov.au)
[13] http://www.bom.gov.au/water/groundwater/gde/

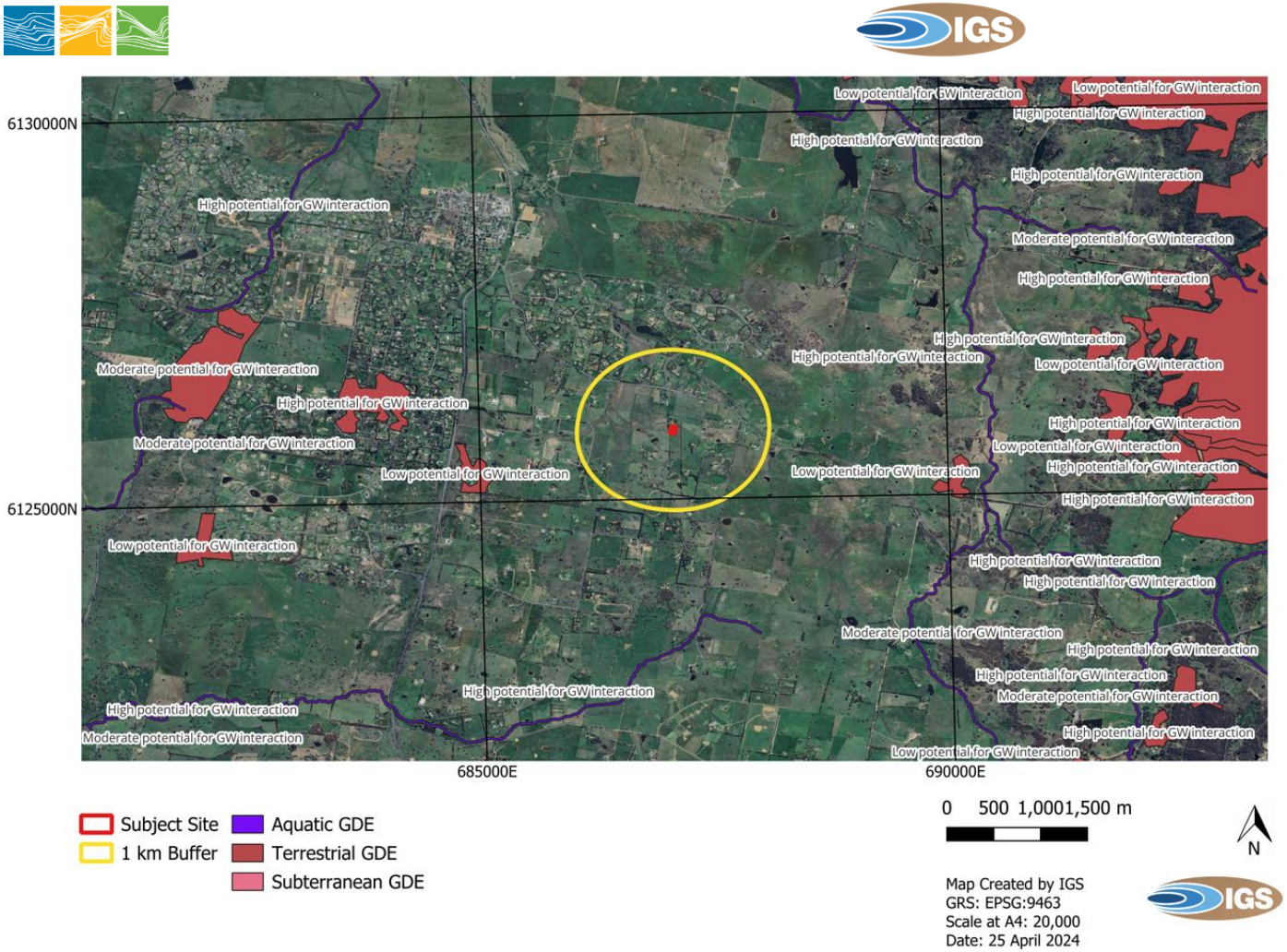


FIGURE 3-3 GROUNDWATER-DEPENDENT ECOSYSTEMS NEAR THE SUBJECT SITE FROM THE GDE ATLAS LABELLED WITH THE POTENTIAL FOR GROUNDWATER INTERACTION

3.2 Groundwater Vulnerability Assessment

3.2.1 Likelihood of contamination

It is understood that during construction, there will be no significant stored volumes of chemicals or fuels and no refuelling or washing of vehicles. Therefore, the potential risks of contamination would be from minor fuel or hydraulic hose leaks, which are expected to be less than 100 L. These leaks would be managed via spill kits and mechanical removal of impacted soils until clean/non-odorous soils are observed. Therefore, due to the small volumes of potential sources and the reported thickness (>5 m) of clay in the bores logs located within 300 m of the Subject Site which is assumed to be consistent with the Subject Site, acting as a barrier to vertical migration of contaminants, the Subject Site is considered to have a negligible risk of contaminating and reducing groundwater quality for any local users or GDEs associated with the local groundwater.

Once operational, potential contaminant sources include leakage of chemicals from batteries; however, the batteries will be lithium-ion phosphate, which does not contain heavy metals and is considered to be the safest batteries in the industry. In the unlikely event of battery failure, the units are self-contained, with anti-leak connections, limiting any potential for contamination release. Further, as the batteries are in IP54 rated self-contained units, the opportunity for external water to interact with the internal battery and therefore the batteries are not considered a significant source of contamination. This is also demonstrated in Section 2.4, with limited surface water flow paths determined by the surface water modelling.

Potential battery fires are expected to be contained within the individual units, as each unit has internal fire-suppression systems, including flammable gas, smoke and thermal sensors, pressure release systems and aerosol fire extinguishing systems. Therefore, the risk from small individual fires is not considered significant. However, should a larger fire occur necessitating the use of large volumes of external water and fire-fighting chemicals, then there would be a low risk to groundwater from the infiltration of fire-fighting liquids to the shallow aquifer. However, as discussed, the thick clay layer beneath the Subject Site would reduce any downward migration to the underlying groundwater system and therefore, even in this scenario, the risk of contamination to groundwater is considered minimal.

Up to 100 L of fuel will be stored onsite, which is a potential source of contamination. However, standard management practices are in place to ensure that the fuel is stored in a bunded enclosure with a minimum of 110% of the stored volume to ensure the bund can contain the entire volume of the stored fuel. Therefore, it is expected that the risk of fuel leak will be minimal.

A 900 mm deep oil bund will be constructed, which could be a source of contamination. However, with the bund constructed to the current standards with regular inspection and maintenance, it is not considered to be a significant source of contamination.

IGS have been informed that no chemicals, other than what has been discussed above, will be stored on the Subject Site that would be considered a source of contamination. No dangerous goods will be stored onsite.

The risk of aquifer contamination associated with the proposed development during construction and operation is considered low due to the Subject Site only storing a small volume of bunded fuel and no other sources of contamination during operation and no stored materials or refuelling/maintenance or washdowns etc. occurring during construction and therefore having no sources onsite. Further, the locally thick clay layer will retard vertical migration through the unsaturated zone allowing time for removal of any spills to occur and be made good before contact with the groundwater at approximately 3 mbgl.

The water table/aquifer is unlikely to be encountered, based on the water levels from the closest bores to the Subject Site. Shallow groundwater < 1mbgl has been reported in bore over 700 m from the site, and therefore, there is a potential for groundwater in the local area to be shallower. It is anticipated that during construction, due to the thick clay layer and shallow trench depths of <1 m, groundwater is unlikely to be

encountered, eliminating the potential for the creation of a pathway for contamination through the thick clay layer.

It is recommended, however, that a shallow bore be sunk on the Subject Site to approximately 5 mbgl to determine the exact geology and water level at the site and water level measurements be taken at the end of winter to determine the highest water levels likely to be encountered.

3.2.2 Potential adverse impacts on groundwater dependent ecosystems and groundwater abstraction

The development is not expected to have any adverse impacts on GDEs. No mapped GDEs are within the Subject Site, therefore no GDEs will be directly damaged during construction. Terrestrial GDEs are located 2 km west and 3 km east of the development and are described as having “Low potential for groundwater interaction”. Therefore, due to the distance from Subject Site and low potential for groundwater interaction the terrestrial GDEs are not considered to be at risk from the development, as there is negligible risk to groundwater quality and no risk to groundwater levels, due to no groundwater abstraction, from the development.

The identified aquatic GDEs are located between 2.5 km south and 3.5 km east from the Subject Site and are described as having either “high or moderate potential for groundwater interaction”. However, The GDE Atlas describes aquatic GDEs as “ecosystems that rely on surface expression of groundwater”. As there will be no groundwater abstraction at the Subject Site during any phase, there will be no change to groundwater levels related to the Subject Site. Therefore, groundwater-surface expression will not be impacted and therefore no risk is expected to the aquatic GDEs.

As discussed, the local trees, which are not explicitly identified as GDEs may have root systems that will penetrate the thick clays to the water table. Therefore, there is a potential for local tress to be impacted should groundwater contamination occur. However, as discussed it is considered unlikely that groundwater contamination would occur due to the low volumes of source chemicals and the expected thick layer of clay at the Subject Site.

There are no subterranean GDEs reported within 10 km of the Subject Site and, therefore, no risk.

Locations of groundwater abstraction points are not released for public access in NSW, and therefore, no comment can be made on potential impacts to groundwater quality in local abstraction bores. However, as there is considered negligible risk of contamination to groundwater during construction and general operation of the BESS, and there will be no groundwater abstraction during any point of construction or operation, the risk to groundwater abstraction bores near the Subject Site is considered negligible.

3.2.3 Cumulative impact on the development on groundwater

The development is not extracting water from groundwater systems during operations and is therefore will not impact the quantity of water in the local groundwater system.

3.2.4 Mitigation measures

Mitigation measures are focused primarily on preventing chemical spills from reaching the groundwater system in the unlikely event of leakage. Mitigation measures include:

- Drilling of a soil bore to 5 mbgl on the Subject Site to understand the exact geology and water levels during winter at the.
- Self-bunded battery storage units.
- Self-bunded fuel storage areas.

- Regular maintenance and inspection of fuel bund, oil bund and battery storage units.
- Development of site management plans detail responses to leaks such as spill kits, removal and appropriate testing and disposal of impacted soils and options for installing groundwater monitoring bores in the case of a significant fire or unexpected leak.
- If possible, excavating during summer or autumn will further reduce the already low likelihood of intersecting groundwater during the shallow excavations.

An onsite soil bore should be drilled to ensure that the information available during this desktop study is accurate and to confirm or otherwise that the site is underlain by thick clays and to further understand the local water table and if there is any fluctuation of the water table after winter rains.

Currently, based on the understanding that groundwater near the site is at least 3 mbgl and the clays extend over the site, then groundwater monitoring is not required during the construction and operation of the facility as groundwater is unlikely to be encountered; however, should the onsite soil bore identify shallow groundwater or an absence of clay at the Subject Site then groundwater monitoring bores may be required.

In the future if a significant release or major fire occurred, then bores should be installed to determine the local groundwater flow direction and then up- and downgradient bores of the Subject Site should be constructed to determine if any impacts have migrated to the locally groundwater.

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Surface Water

The flood investigation provided within this report provides flood mapping for the proposed BESS facility at 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman, NSW. A 2D hydraulic flood model was developed in line with the latest flood modelling software; industry standards (i.e. BoM IFD and ARR 2019 guidelines) and the latest available 1 metre LiDAR dataset (NSW Spatial Services) for the 1% AEP design storm event.

The flood modelling and mapping undertaken as part of this investigation confirmed that there are no significant overland flow paths across the site with peak flood depths below 80 mm across the area of interest. Maximum flood velocities are all low, between 0.05 – 0.55 m/s, resulting in the site being classified as flood hazard H1 (generally safe for people, vehicles and buildings).

The Murrumbateman, Bowning, Bookham and Binalong Flood Study – Addendum Report was conducted for Yass Valley Council in 2020. The 1% AEP flood depth mapping covers the Subject Site. Based on the Addendum Report, the site is located adjacent to overland flow during a 1% AEP event from the Unnamed Tributary catchment which flows through the existing dam in the north of the site. This flow path is consistent with the flood mapping discussed in Section 2.

Based on the findings of the flood modelling it is recommended to set critical infrastructure to be a minimum of 150 mm above the existing ground level to reduce the risk associated with stormwater runoff impacting infrastructure. Importing fill to raise the areas where infrastructure is to be located is not likely to increase flood levels on neighbouring properties, however, should be tested within the hydraulic model at a further design stage once the final layout is available.

4.2 Groundwater

Based on the understanding of the local hydrogeological regime and site operations during construction and operation, it is considered that there is negligible risk to groundwater or GDEs. This conclusion is derived from:

- No significant volumes of potential contaminants will be stored on the Subject Site during construction and operation phases and the small volumes that will be stored shall be appropriately bunded and infrastructure maintained.
- The battery units are self-contained and will control any potential leaks. There is no opportunity for leaching of metals due to the containment and lack of water in the battery units.
- Excavations will be shallow, <1 m deep and groundwater is unlikely to be encountered and no dewatering or abstraction will occur. Summer or autumn excavations will further reduce the potential for intersecting groundwater during excavations.
- Depth to groundwater, based on available data, is generally >3 m (at bores located within 400 m of the Subject Site) and is beneath a thick clay layer, reducing the risk of infiltration to groundwater. However, recent water level data is not available and may change the risk assessment if it were found to be shallower on the Subject Site or the expected clay layer was not present.
- Mapped GDEs are all >2 km or more away and are unlikely to be impacted in the unlikely occurrence of groundwater contamination. As there will be no groundwater abstraction at the Subject Site the GDEs will not be impacted by changes in groundwater levels due to onsite activities.
- Site management plans will provide details on the clean-up of small spills via spill kits and soil removal.
- A shallow bore on the Subject Site to confirm site conditions is recommended.

Therefore, groundwater monitoring is not considered necessary at the Subject Site unless there is a major fire where fire-fighting water or chemicals are used, or another unforeseen leak occurs outside the expected small volumes of stored fuel. Should a major fire or other event occur, then groundwater monitoring wells should be located up and down-gradient of the site and down-gradient to determine any impacts to groundwater.

REFERENCES

New South Wales Department of Planning and Environment (2020). Water Sharing Plan for the NSW Murray-Darling Basin Fractured Rock Groundwater Sources (report sl-2020-0348)

New South Wales Government (2013). Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan.

Melbourne

15 Business Park Drive
Notting Hill VIC 3168
Telephone (03) 8526 0800
Fax (03) 9558 9365

Brisbane

Level 3, 43 Peel Street
South Brisbane QLD 4101
Telephone (07) 3105 1460
Fax (07) 3846 5144

Adelaide

1/198 Greenhill Road
Eastwood SA 5063
Telephone (08) 8378 8000
Fax (08) 8357 8988

Perth

Level 1, 21 Adelaide Street,
Freemantle WA 6160
Telephone 08 6555 0105

Geelong

PO Box 436
Geelong VIC 3220
Telephone 0458 015 664

Wimmera

PO Box 584
Stawell VIC 3380
Telephone 0438 510 240

Wangaratta

First Floor, 40 Rowan Street
Wangaratta VIC 3677
Telephone (03) 5721 2650

www.watertech.com.au

info@watertech.com.au

WatsonMossGrowcott Acoustics

Watson Moss Growcott Acoustics Pty Ltd
ACN 005 446 579
ABN 44 445 257 249
Suite 7, 696 High St,
Kew East 3102

Murrumbateman Distribution BESS

3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman, NSW

Acoustic Report – Environmental Noise Emission Assessment

WMGAcoustics.com.au | reception@wmgacoustics.com.au

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Project	Proposed Distribution BESS – 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman, NSW
Project No.	13137
Document Reference	13137-1.5jg
Document Status	Revision 5
Date	Wednesday, April 16, 2025
Author	Jordan Growcott
Client Details	**ACENERGY Pty Ltd** 502, 689 Burke Road Camberwell, VIC 3124

Disclaimer

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The findings of any assessment and/or recommendations provided within this document are based on noise and vibration factors only. Any proposal/recommendation nominated within this document must be reviewed and approved by Relevant Authorities, and third-party consultants, as necessary. This may include but is not limited to structural engineers, mechanical services engineers etc.

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Summary of Responses to Rob Bullen Consulting Peer Review

A response to the requirements of the Rob Bullen Consulting Peer Review report is included below.

Noise Criteria

WMG notes the comments made in relation to the assessment criteria, and confirms that the opinions will not impact on the criteria adopted as the basis for the assessment.

WMG has reviewed the commentary provided and has introduced **R07** as a sensitive residential receptor within the updated noise assessment contained within this report.

Calculation Procedures

No additional comment.

Additional Residence

WMG has reviewed the commentary provided and has introduced **R08** as a sensitive residential receptor within the updated noise assessment contained within this report.

Assessment and Proposed Mitigation

Noise monitoring has been conducted at the subject site confirming low levels of ambient background 'masking' noise, and hence a tonal adjustment has been applied at receptors where predicted values indicate it may be present.

In consideration of the above, and in accordance with the recommendations within the peer review report, the WMG report has recommended that an acoustic barrier form part of the proposal.

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1. Introduction

The proposal includes the construction and operation of a new 4.95MW battery energy storage system (BESS) facility at the site described as 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman, New South Wales.

The subject site is currently occupied by farmland, a residential dwelling and rural infrastructure including fencing, roadways and outbuildings. The area designated for the proposed BESS is currently used for agricultural activities.

The new facility will include electrical infrastructure which will generate noise emissions with the potential to impact on the acoustic amenity of the surrounding environment including at residential receptors.

In consideration of the above, Watson Moss Growcott Acoustics (WMG) was previously engaged to undertake a review of the proposal, and assess potential noise emissions to consider the following:

- Noise and vibration associated with electrical infrastructure and vehicle activity at the subject site during general operations associated with the proposed facility.
- Noise and vibration emissions associated with the construction phase of the proposal.

WMG prepared acoustic report *13137-1.3jg*, dated Monday 18th November 2024 which provided an assessment of the above potential noise emissions from the proposed site operations.

The findings of the assessment identified the potential for operational noise emissions from the subject site to exceed relevant noise criteria at off-site sensitive receptors and hence provided recommendations to reduce noise emissions.

The recommendations included the construction of a 3.0m acoustic barrier to the south and east of the equipment.

The assessed exceedances were determined to be substantially due to the tonal character of the noise expected to be emitted by the electrical equipment forming part of the proposal. In the absence of the tonal character adjustment, it was determined that compliance could be achieved at all receptors except for the dwelling which is located within the subject site boundaries and is associated with the proposal.

In consideration of the above, WMG suggested that it may be appropriate for the subject site to be commissioned and for a 'real world' assessment to be undertaken at the nearby sensitive receptors to determine whether an adjustment is necessary to address tonal noise emissions from the new equipment.

This would allow the client to determine the specific noise control requirements, if necessary.

The Yass Valley Council has since reviewed the proposal, and the WMG report, and has issued a request for Additional Information under Development Application No. DA240159. The Council request makes mention of an acoustic peer review report that was prepared by Rob Bullen Consulting, and includes item 1 and item 2 which relate to preparation of an amended acoustic report, and additional commentary in relation to the proposed acoustic barrier.

This report is therefore generally consistent with *13137-1.3jg* previously prepared by WMG but has been amended to reflect the specific requirements of the Council request.

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2. Noise Assessment Terminology

Noise assessment terminology used within this report is defined within Table 1 below.

Table 1: Noise Assessment Terminology

Terminology	Definition
dB(A)	Decibels recorded on a sound level meter, which has had its frequency response modified electronically to an international standard, to quantify the average human loudness response to sounds of different character
L_{eq} / L_{Aeq}	The equivalent continuous level that would have the same total acoustic energy over the measurement period as the actual varying noise level under consideration. It is the noise measure defined by the EPA as the measure of the noise to use in assessing compliance with noise limits.
L_{90} / L_{A90}	The level exceeded for 90% of the measurement period, which is representative of the typical lower levels in a varying noise environment. It is the noise measure defined by the EPA as the measure of the background noise level to use in determining noise limits.
Sound Power Level (Lw)	The sound power level of a source is a measure of the amount of energy in the form of sound emitted from the source. The sound power level of a source is an inherent characteristic of that source and does not vary with distance from the source or with a different acoustic environment. The sound power level equals the sound pressure level at a distance from the source plus 10 times the logarithm (to base 10) of the measurement surface area (m^2), and is relative to a reference sound power of 1pW, (10-12 Watts).
Sound Pressure Level (Lp)	Sound that we can hear with our ears or measure with a sound level meter is actually small variations in the pressure of the air around us. The magnitude of the pressure fluctuations vary over a very wide range from the very lowest levels we can just hear to the very high levels we need to be protected from, and for that reason sound is measured on a logarithmic scale. The sound pressure level equals 10 times the logarithm (to base 10) of the sound pressure divided by a reference pressure, which is 20 µPa. The sound pressure level reduces with increasing distance from a source and is influenced by the surroundings.

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3. Yass Valley Council Additional Information Request

The acoustic items included within the Council Additional Information Request are included below.

(1) Acoustic Report

A revised acoustic report was submitted as part of the additional information package. Following the Planning Panel preliminary briefing, Council engaged the services of another appropriately qualified acoustic expert to conduct a peer review. A copy of the peer review report is attached for your reference.

- *A response to the acoustic report peer review is to be provided, specifically addressing the recommendations made.*
- *The revised acoustic report has Receptor R07 as commercial premises only. The subject land also contains a dwelling house. The project trigger level for Receptor R07 is to be updated to state the more conservative residential to avoid doubt.*
- *A submission received indicates future intention to make a Development Application for a residential dwelling house at Lot 2 DP 787995, 4 Crisps Lane, Murrumbateman. Whilst there is no dwelling house currently on the site and a Development Application has not been made, to respond to these concerns it would be recommended that the noise model is re-run to consider a potential future receptor. Noting comments received in the peer review, this should also include consideration of reflect of sound from the acoustic consideration of reflect of sound from the acoustic barrier back towards the potential receptor.*

(2) Acoustic Barrier

The response to additional information request indicates that the revised acoustic report provides an indication of the general specifications for the proposed acoustic barrier, including minimum height of 3000mm and the general surface density.

It is considered that there remains insufficient clarity and detail of the acoustic barrier to enable full assessment of this in accordance with s4.15 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. In this regard, the following information is to be provided:

- *Separate, dimensioned, elevation drawings of the acoustic barrier, including the maximum height and details of construction type, material, and colours/finishes are to be provided.*
- *Site plan with clear dimensions for lengths and relative setbacks.*

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4. Site and Surrounding Environment

The land under consideration is located at 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman, New South Wales.

The subject site boundary adjoins Turton Place to the south and is adjacent to RU4 zoned land to the east, west and north. The area of land under consideration is located in the northwest corner of the subject site and is rectangular in shape.

The land in immediate proximity of the proposal is generally vacant and would not be expected to be noise sensitive in accordance with legislative or guideline criteria.

The closest and therefore most critical sensitive uses located within proximity of the site will include:

- **R01** – 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman.
- **R02** – 4 Turton Place, Murrumbateman.
- **R03** – 5 Turton Place, Murrumbateman.
- **R04** – 270 Murrumbateman Road, Murrumbateman.
- **R05** – 1A Turton Place, Murrumbateman.
- **R06** – 1 Turton Place, Murrumbateman.
- **R07** – Dwelling at 1 Patemans Lane, Murrumbateman.
- **R07A –** 'Dionysus Winery and Woo Chocolate' premises located at 1 Patemans Lane, Murrumbateman
- **R08 –** Potential future residential dwelling at Lot 2 DP 787995, 4 Crisps Lane, Murrumbateman.

Information regarding the location and the use at the sensitive receptors has been provided by the client.

Figure 1 below provides an aerial photo of the subject site and surrounds including the sensitive receptors which have been considered as part of the noise emission assessment.

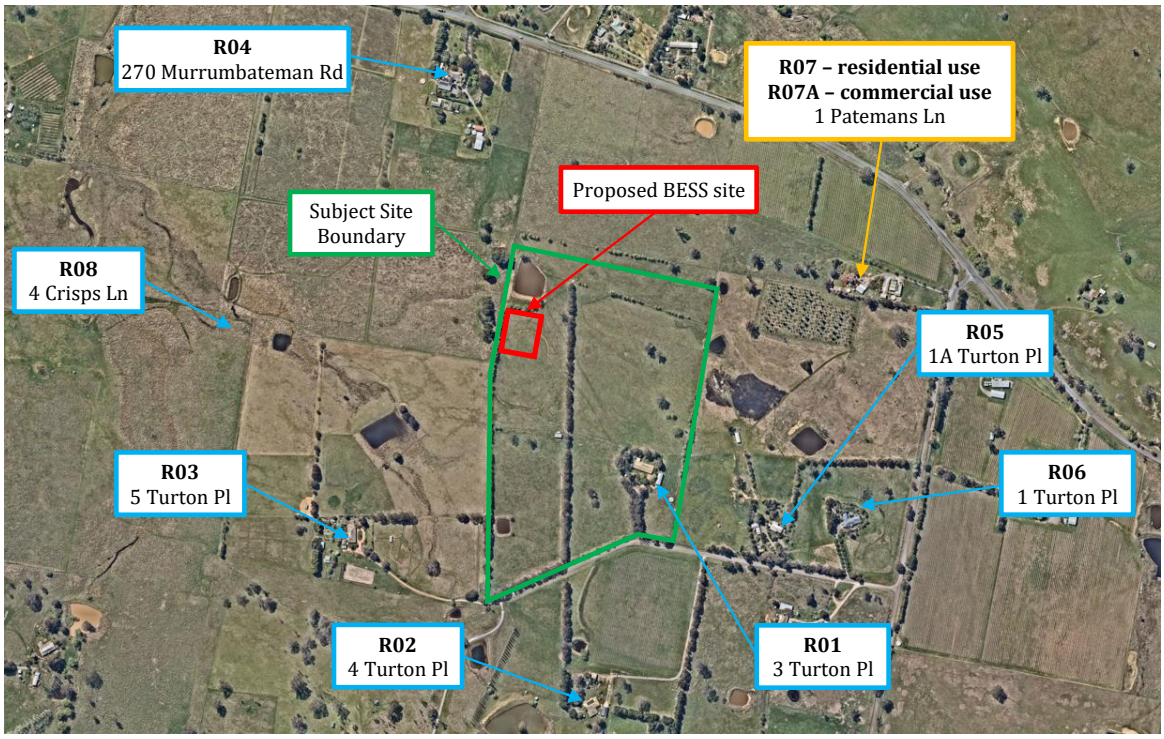


Figure 1: Proposed subject site and surrounding environment

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5. Operational Phase Noise Assessment

5.1. Operational Noise Criteria

5.1.1. Overview

The NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Noise Policy for Industry (NPfI) provides criterion for addressing operational noise emissions associated with the proposed use at sensitive receptors. The Policy was released in 2017 and includes relevant methodologies for assessment and management of typical operational noise emissions from industrial premises within NSW.

Within the NPfI, commercial noise emissions are considered during various assessment periods defined as the day, evening, and night to reflect the sensitivity associated within the impacts of noise. The assessment periods defined by the EPA are included within Table 2 below.

Table 2: EPA Defined Assessment Periods

EPA Assessment Period	Relevant Days	Relevant Time Periods
Day	Monday to Saturday	7:00am to 6:00pm
	Sunday	8:00am to 6:00pm
Evening	All Days	6:00pm to 10:00pm
Night	Monday to Saturday	10:00pm to 7:00am
	Sunday	10:00pm to 8:00am

When addressing noise emissions associated with commercial/industrial uses, the NPfi defines project trigger levels which are used to consider potential impacts at sensitive receptors. The levels are determined based on consideration of what the NPfI refers to as the 'Project Intrusiveness Noise Level', and the 'Project Amenity Noise Levels'.

In accordance with the NPfI methodologies, project trigger levels are adopted based on the lower and more stringent of the determined intrusiveness and amenity noise levels.

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5.1.2. Project Intrusiveness Noise Criteria

The intent of the project intrusiveness noise level is to minimise the potential for change in the acoustic environment at relevant sensitive receptors by ensuring that impacts associated with a new source are controlled to values 5 dB above a minimum threshold noise level.

The attributable noise levels are defined as L_{Aeq} values assessed over a 15 minute period.

The proposed development is situated in a rural residential environment characterised by RU4 zoned land consisting of agricultural production with scattered dwellings. The site is additionally located in proximity to two major arterial roadways, Murrumbateman Road and the Barton Highway.

In response to commentary provided within the Rob Bullen Consulting report, and in the interest of understanding the existing acoustic environment in proximity to the nearby sensitive receptors, WMG has attended the subject site and has undertaken unattended noise monitoring.

The monitoring was undertaken during the period Friday 14th March to Saturday 22nd March 2025.

The monitoring device was placed at the location identified below and was considered representative of the acoustic environment at the critical residential receptors in proximity to the proposed BESS site.

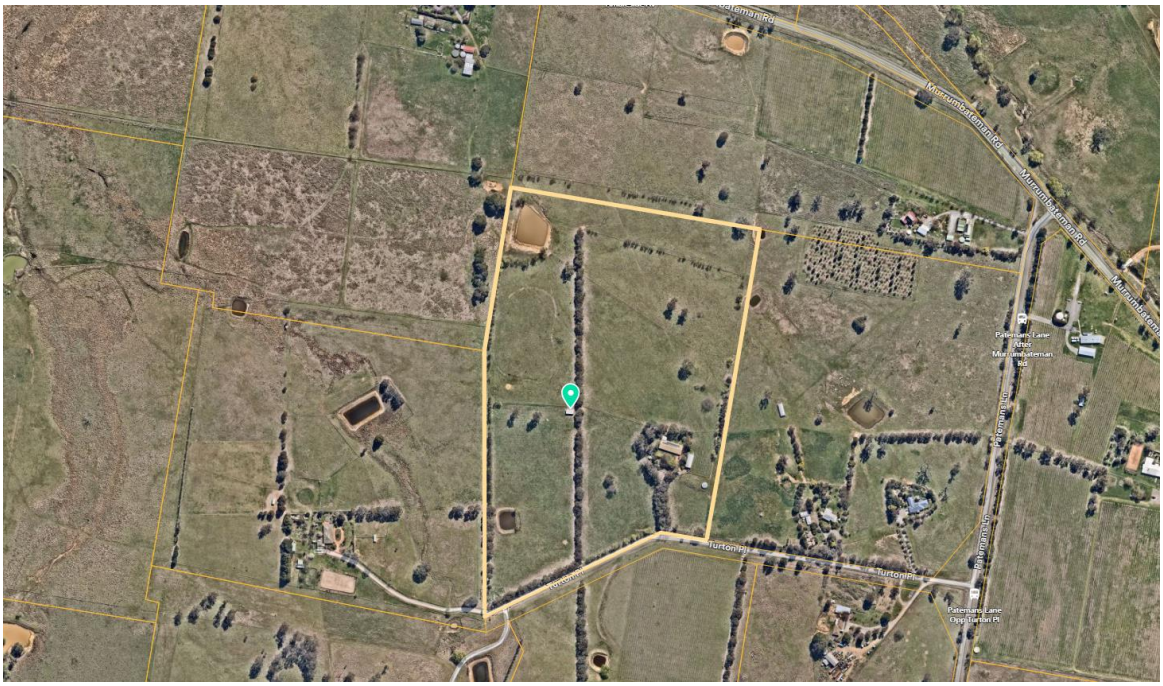


Figure 2: Aerial image including unattended noise monitoring location

Based on observations during deployment and collection of the unattended monitoring device, and through analysis of the data obtained by the device, WMG has concluded that the ambient background noise levels in the surrounding area are low.

During the night period (10:00pm to 7:00am), which is most critical for the assessment, WMG has measured ambient background noise levels in the order of 20-25 dB(A) L_{90}. During the less sensitive day and evening periods, measured values were in the order of 30-31 dB(A) L_{90}.

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In consideration of the above, WMG is of the opinion that the NPfI minimum 'rating background levels' (RBLs) will be applicable to the assessment and hence, has adopted these levels as the basis for determining the project intrusiveness noise levels. The minimum RBLs adopted are nominated within the NPFI and are reproduced in Table 3.

Table 3: Minimum RBLs

Descriptor	NPfi Defined Assessment Period		
	Day	Evening	Night
Minimum RBLs	35 L_{A90}	30 L_{A90}	30 L_{A90}

The project intrusiveness noise levels have been determined based on the minimum RBLs in accordance with the methods provided in the NPFI. The adopted project intrusiveness noise levels are detailed in Table 4 and reflect the adopted minimum RBLs plus 5 dB.

Table 4: Project Intrusiveness Noise Levels

Descriptor	NPfi Defined Assessment Period		
	Day	Evening	Night
Project Intrusiveness Noise Levels	40 $L_{Aeq\ 15min}$	35 $L_{Aeq\ 15min}$	35 $L_{Aeq\ 15min}$

5.1.3. Project Amenity Noise Criteria

Project Amenity Noise levels, as detailed by the NPfI, are provided to address the ambient noise levels within an area from all industrial noise sources combined.

The intent of amenity noise levels is to allow for a consideration of noise impacts accumulated from the addition of surrounding commercial/industrial operations. Project amenity noise levels therefore limit the sole independent consideration of intrusiveness levels and the potential for continual increases to noise levels through the addition of separate commercial/industrial operations.

Derivation of the project amenity noise levels is based on the 'recommended amenity noise levels' contained within **Table 2.2: Amenity noise levels** of the NPfI. The values presented in the Table represent the total industrial noise which may impact on a receptor location over an assessment period.

In order to compare the amenity values with the **project intrusiveness level**, the values are adjusted from a $L_{Aeq\ period}$ to $L_{Aeq\ 15min}$, by adding a 3dB correction to the amenity noise level.

When determining the relevant amenity noise levels, WMG has considered the site as 'rural' as the surrounding land is generally comprised of agricultural land uses on RU4 land with scattered residential receptors. The amenity noise levels for 'rural' areas are summarised below.

Table 5: NPfI Amenity Noise Levels

Receiver	Noise Amenity Area	Time of Day	Recommended Amenity Noise Level	
			Raw NPfI Values	Adjusted for 15min*
Residential	Rural	Day	50 $L_{Aeq\ period}$	53 $L_{Aeq\ 15min}$
		Evening	45 $L_{Aeq\ period}$	48 $L_{Aeq\ 15min}$
		Night	40 $L_{Aeq\ period}$	43 $L_{Aeq\ 15min}$

** WMG notes that the Rob Bullen Consulting report does not adopt the same 3dB adjustment but accepts that it will not influence the assessment as the project trigger levels are based on the project intrusiveness criteria.*

New industrial noise sources are then subject to the **project amenity noise level** which is determined to represent an objective for any single commercial/industrial noise source at a receptor location.

Where the surrounds include other commercial/industrial uses which may impact on receptors, the project amenity noise level implements a negative adjustment to account for cumulative contributions.

It is noted that there are two existing wineries located to the northeast of the site identified as 'Dionysus Winery & Woo Chocolate', and 'Found Winds Vineyard'. Based on a review of each of the venue websites, the premises are open 11:00am-4:00pm which will align with the NPfI 'day' period and will avoid the night period which is critical for the proposed BESS site operations.

In consideration of the above, WMG has allowed for potential cumulative contributions due to the wineries during the day period, but not during the more critical evening and night periods at the sensitive receptor locations. The adopted values are therefore as shown below in Table 6.

Table 6: Project Amenity Noise Levels

Descriptor	NPfi Defined Assessment Period		
	Day	Evening	Night
Recommended Amenity Noise Level	50 $L_{Aeq\ period}$	45 $L_{Aeq\ period}$	40 $L_{Aeq\ period}$
Adjustment to allow for additional contributions	minus 5 dB	-	-
Adjustment to reflect 15min assessment period	plus 3 dB	plus 3 dB	plus 3 dB
Project Amenity Noise Levels	48 $L_{Aeq\ 15min}$	48 $L_{Aeq\ 15min}$	43 $L_{Aeq\ 15min}$

5.1.4. Adopted Project Trigger Noise Criteria

5.1.4.1. Residential Receptors

In accordance with the assessment methodologies contained within the NPfI, the project noise trigger levels will be determined based on whichever of the project intrusiveness level and the project amenity level is the lower or more stringent. In consideration of the above, the project trigger noise levels will be as shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Project Trigger Noise Levels

Descriptor	NPfi Defined Assessment Period		
	Day	Evening	Night
Project Intrusiveness Noise Levels	40 $L_{Aeq\ 15min}$	35 $L_{Aeq\ 15min}$	35 $L_{Aeq\ 15min}$
Project Amenity Noise Levels	48 $L_{Aeq\ 15min}$	48 $L_{Aeq\ 15min}$	43 $L_{Aeq\ 15min}$
Project Trigger Noise Levels	**40 $L_{Aeq\ 15min}$**	**35 $L_{Aeq\ 15min}$**	**35 $L_{Aeq\ 15min}$**

For sensitive residential receptors, and in accordance with the NPfI, the project noise trigger levels are to be assessed at the reasonably most-affected point on or within the residential property boundary or, if that is more than 30 metres from the residence, at the reasonably most affected point within 30 metres of the residence, but not closer than 3 metres to a reflective surface and at a height of between 1.2–1.5 metres above ground level.

For multi-storey residential buildings (greater than two storeys) where a ground floor assessment location is deemed to be unrepresentative of the exposure of upper stories, the assessment may be undertaken at a representative elevation and closer than 3 metres to a reflective surface, as agreed with the regulator.

However, the assessed/measured noise level is to be suitably adjusted to reflect a 'free field' (that is, nominally no reflective signals) assessment/measurement location.

Due to the continuous operation of the subject site and new equipment, the critical criteria will be based on the night period when the lowest criteria will be applicable.

5.1.4.2. Commercial Premises

Due to the proximity of the 'Dionysus Winery & Woo Chocolate' commercial premises to the subject site, it would also be considered reasonable to assess potential noise impacts at this receptor.

When considering potential noise impacts on independent commercial premises, the NPfI nominates amenity levels of 65 $L_{Aeq\ period}$ during times when the premises are in use.

When converted to a 15-minute assessment period, this objective will be 68 $L_{Aeq\ 15min}$.

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5.1.5. Modifying Factor Corrections

When considering noise impacts on sensitive receptors, NPfI methodology includes relevant adjustment factors which account for the potential for the noise source under consideration to impact on the acoustic amenity of the noise sensitive receptor.

The relevant factors are included within Fact Sheet C of the NPfI and include:

- Tonal noise.
- Low frequency noise.
- Intermittent noise.

Clarification regarding each of the adjustments is shown below in Table 8.

Table 8: NPfI Modifying Factor Corrections

Relevant Factor	Assessment / Measurement	When to Apply	Correction
Tonal Noise	One-third octave band analysis.	Level of one-third octave band exceeds the level of the adjacent bands level on both sides by in the order of 5dB – 15dB as defined in the NPfI.	5 dB
Low-Frequency Noise	Measurement of source contribution C-weighted and A-weighted level and one third octave measurements.	Measure / assess source contribution C and A weighted Leq,t levels over same time period. Correction to be applied where the C minus A level is 15 dB or more and the level defined in Table C2 of the NPfI is exceeded.	2 or 5 dB
Intermittent Noise	Subjectively assessed but should be assisted with measurement to gauge the extent of change in noise level.	The source noise heard at the receiver varies by more than 5 dB(A) and the intermittent nature of the noise is clearly audible.	5 dB

The adjustments are applied to the measured/predicted values at sensitive receptors for consideration relative to the project noise trigger levels. A maximum of 10dB correction will be applied to the measured/predicted noise levels at the sensitive receptor, with a maximum of 5dB applicable when the tonal character is in the low frequency range below 160Hz.

5.2. Noise Modelling Results

5.2.1. Noise Prediction Methodology

Modelling of operational noise emissions from the site has been conducted using DataKustik CadnaA environmental noise modelling software.

Relevant information regarding site elevations, site buildings and the surrounding environment has been provided by the client and sourced from online databases including Nearmaps, NSW Planning Portal, and topography from the ANZLIC Committee on Surveying and Mapping.

With the utilisation of the above, the model has been developed and configured with sufficient detail for appropriate noise emission calculations to be undertaken.

For this assessment, the modelling software has implemented the calculation procedures defined within International Standard ISO 9613-2: 1996 Acoustics – Attenuation of sound during propagation outdoors – Part 2: General method of calculation (ISO 9613).

The described standard has been considered and approved as part of many previous projects requiring noise emission assessment works. Through implementation of the Standard using CadnaA, the noise emission modelling considers the following attenuation measures:

- Geometrical spreading.
- Atmospheric absorption.
- Ground attenuation.
- Meteorological effects.
- Source / Receiver height effects.
- Attenuation due to the surrounding environment including existing buildings / structures.

In addition to the above, and in accordance with the methodologies contained within the NPfI, noise predictions must account for noise enhancing weather conditions in the direction of sensitive receptors.

This can be addressed via two options:

- **Option 1**
  Adopt the **noise-enhancing meteorological conditions** for all assessment periods for noise impact assessment purposes without an assessment of how often these conditions occur – a conservative approach that considers source-to-receiver wind vectors for all receivers and F class temperature inversions with wind speeds up to 2 m/s at night.

- **Option 2**
  Determine the **significance** of noise-enhancing conditions.

Option 1 has been adopted as the basis for predicting noise emissions from the proposed use and is often considered conservative as it represents a worst case operation scenario.

The critical receptors located in proximity of the subject site are understood to be single level dwellings, therefore an assessment height of 1.5m has been adopted as the basis for the noise model.

Predicted values at receptor locations have been calculated in the 'free-field', which do not include reflections from localised surfaces other than the ground.

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5.2.2. Source Sound Power Levels

When considering noise emissions associated with the proposal, the client has advised that the relevant noise sources will include the following:

- 1no. MVPS including 2no. inverters and 1no. 5MVA transformer.
- 10no. liquid cooling battery containers.

Figure 2 below provides a site plan for the proposal including the relevant equipment locations.

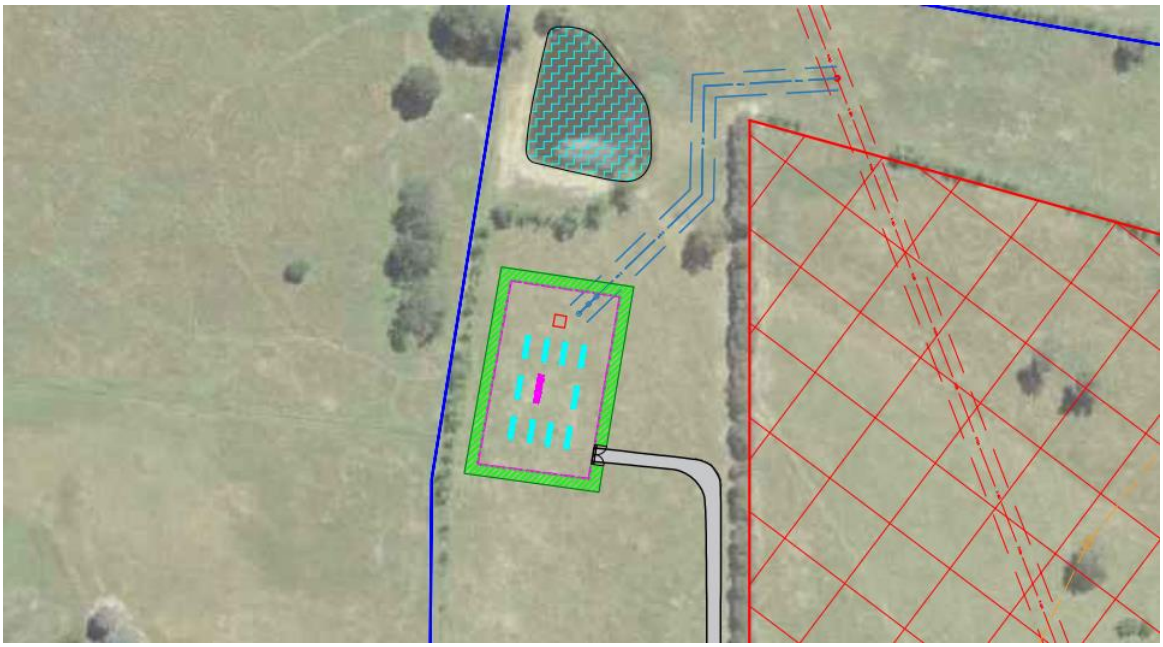


Figure 3: Site plan including relevant noise sources

For the purposes of this assessment, WMG has considered source noise data provided by the inverter and battery unit manufacturers in combination with input from the client. A summary of the sound power/pressure levels adopted for each item of equipment is included within Table 9.

Table 9: Adopted source sound power levels

Noise Source	Adopted Noise Level
MVPS inverter – per unit	88 dB(A) – sound power
MVPS Transformer – 5MVA unit	65 dB(A) – sound power
Battery cabinet liquid cooling – per unit	81 dB(A) – sound power

Once commissioned, the electrical infrastructure which forms part of the facility will operate continuously 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. The assessment will therefore consider potential noise emissions during the day, evening, and night assessment periods.

5.2.3. Predicted Noise Levels

The noise sources forming part of the proposal have been modelled based on the following assumptions:

- The MVPS unit inverters and transformers have been assessed as omnidirectional noise sources. There may be the potential for the MVPS to include directivity which may reduce noise emissions in some directions pending their orientation.
- The battery units have been assessed with their noise source directivity facing north away from the nearest noise sensitive residential receptors.

The results of the noise model are presented below in Table 10.

Table 10: Noise modelling results compared with Project Trigger Noise Levels

Assessment Location	Predicted Noise Level (15_{min})	Project Trigger Noise Levels L_{Aeq}		
		Day	Evening	Night
R01	36 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35
R02	26 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35
R03	32 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35
R04	30 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35
R05	23 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35
R06	<20 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35
R07	22 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35
R07A - commercial	22 dB(A) L_{eq}	68		
R08	28 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35

The outcomes of the noise model indicate that in the absence of noise control, and without consideration of any NPfI modifying factors, predicted noise levels at the R02-R08 receptors are compliant with the project trigger noise levels.

When considered at R01 however, the predicted values indicate the potential for marginal exceedances of the project trigger levels by 1 dB(A) during the evening and night periods.

As part of previous assessments, WMG has identified that electrical infrastructure has the potential to include a tonal character which may be audible at nearby receptors and warrant an adjustment in accordance with the NPfI.

Due to the distance separation between the electrical infrastructure and nearby sensitive receptors however, there is potential that residual tonal noise may not be present and therefore not require an adjustment for this project.

In order to consider the potential for tonality at the sensitive receptors, WMG has reviewed the following:

- The one-third octave bands associated with the existing ambient background noise levels measured at the site.
- The results of the noise modelling which includes predicted one-third octave band noise levels at the receptors.

For the purposes of this assessment, WMG has focused on the 3150Hz one-third octave band frequency as this is the frequency where noise emissions from the subject site are predicted to be most prominent.

Based on a review of the ambient background noise levels measured at the site, the noise levels at the relevant 3150Hz during the critical night period are regularly below 15dB, and on occasion below 10dB.

The measured values are very low, and generally much lower than the values predicted using the noise model.

In consideration of the above, and in order to provide some basis for understanding the presence of modifying factors, WMG has compared the predicted one-third octave band values with the criteria nominated within the NPfI relating to tonal noise and low frequency noise.

The predicted one-third octave band noise levels at each of the sensitive receptors are summarised below.

Table 11: Predicted one-third octave band noise levels - dB

Rec	25Hz	31.5Hz	40Hz	50Hz	63Hz	80Hz	100Hz	125Hz	160Hz	200Hz	250Hz	315Hz	400Hz	500Hz	630Hz	800Hz	1kHz	1.25kHz	1.6kHz	2kHz	2.5kHz	3.15kHz	4kHz	5kHz	6.3kHz	8kHz	10kHz
R01	24	21	25	23	23	23	29	33	26	25	32	25	22	25	24	26	25	26	25	22	23	29	14	<10	<10	<10	<10
R02	19	17	21	19	18	19	21	24	20	16	22	15	15	17	16	18	16	17	16	12	11	16	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
R03	23	21	25	23	23	23	27	31	24	22	29	21	20	22	21	22	22	22	21	18	18	24	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
R04	18	16	20	18	17	19	20	24	21	16	22	15	14	16	17	19	17	17	16	13	11	16	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
R05	17	15	19	17	16	17	19	23	17	14	20	13	12	14	13	14	13	14	12	<10	<10	14	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
R06	16	13	17	15	14	15	16	20	15	11	17	10	9	11	10	11	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
R07 R07A	17	15	18	17	16	18	18	21	19	14	19	12	12	13	14	15	13	12	11	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
R08	21	19	22	20	20	21	23	26	21	17	24	17	16	18	17	18	18	18	17	13	14	19	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10

Based on the predicted one-third octave band values, WMG provides the following commentary:

Tonal noise
When considered at R02, R04, R06 and R07, the predicted values do not exceed the level of the adjacent one-third octave bands on both sides by the 5dB, 8dB and 15dB thresholds nominated in the NPfI. A tonal adjustment will not be applicable for the assessment at these receptors. For the R01, R03, R05 and R08 receptors, the acoustic energy at 3150Hz is sufficiently elevated that a tonal adjustment of +5dB(A) will be applicable.

Low frequency noise
The predicted values do not exceed the low-frequency noise threshold values, and hence an adjustment will not be applicable for the assessment.

The results of the updated assessment including the +5dB(A) tonal adjustment at the R01, R03, R05 and R08 receptors is summarised below.

Table 12: Noise modelling results compared with Project Trigger Noise Levels (including tonal adjustment)

Assessment Location	Predicted Noise Level (15_{min})	Project Trigger Noise Levels L_{Aeq}		
		Day	Evening	Night
R01	41 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35
R02	26 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35
R03	37 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35
R04	30 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35
R05	28 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35
R06	<20 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35
R07	22 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35
R07A - Commercial	22 dB(A) L_{eq}	68		
R08	33 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35

As shown above, with the inclusion of the +5dB(A) tonal adjustment, WMG has determined that residual noise impacts at the R01 and R03 receptors have the potential to exceed the project trigger levels, and hence additional noise control should be considered at the subject site.

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5.2.4. Noise Control and Response to Peer Review Report Recommendations

The findings of the assessment identify potential exceedances of the project trigger levels by up to 6 dB(A) at the R01 receptor and 2 dB(A) at the R02 receptor.

Due to the predicted non-compliances, WMG has amended the noise model to include a 3.0m high acoustic barrier to the east and south of the electrical infrastructure which will provide noise shielding in the direction of these receptors.

The barrier will effectively block line of sight between the receptors and the electrical infrastructure forming part of the site operations, and hence will reduce the noise impacts. The barrier construction requirements are discussed in Section 5.2.5.

The proposed barrier alignment is included below.

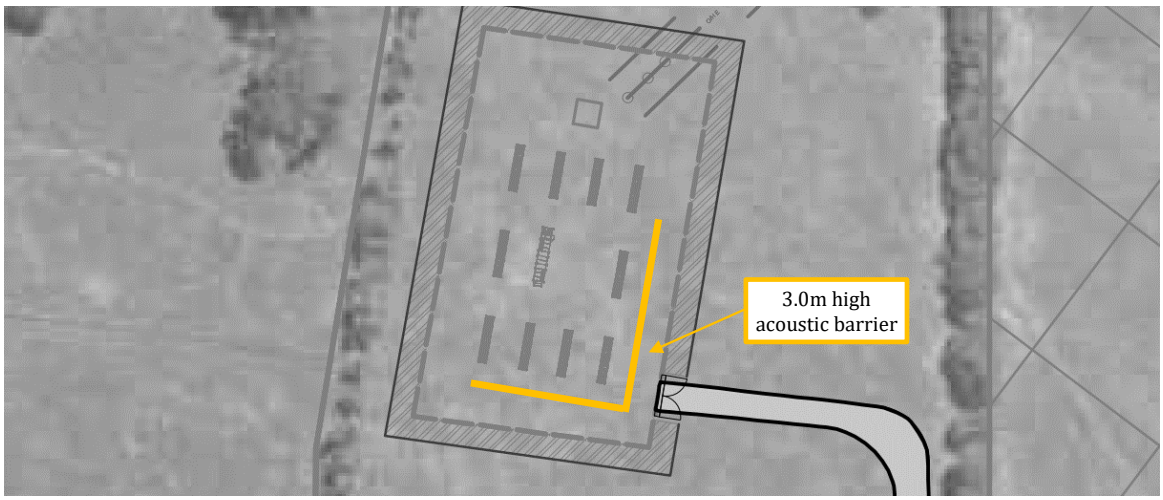


Figure 4: Proposed acoustic barrier arrangement

With the inclusion of the acoustic barrier, and the relevant tonal adjustment, WMG has determined that the predicted noise levels at each of the surrounding sensitive receptors will be compliant with the project trigger levels.

The results of the updated noise model are summarised below.

Table 13: Noise modelling results compared with Project Trigger Noise Levels (including tonal adjustment)

Assessment Location	Predicted Noise Level (15_{min})	Project Trigger Noise Levels L_{Aeq}		
		Day	Evening	Night
R01	35 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35
R02	20 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35
R03	34 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35
R04	30 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35
R05	28 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35
R06	<20 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35
R07	22 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35
R07A - Commercial	22 dB(A) L_{eq}	68		
R08	33 dB(A) L_{eq}	40	35	35

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The peer review report prepared by Rob Bullen Consulting recommended that EITHER:

- Measurements of existing ambient noise should be conducted before approval, both to confirm A-weighted background sound levels and to confirm the spectrum of the background noise. This may result in adjusted criteria and/or the presence of enough high-frequency ambient noise to mask the tone; OR
- The proposed barrier should be constructed as part of the project.

The findings of the site investigations have concluded that the existing noise environment at the site is not sufficiently elevated to 'mask' the potential tonal character of noise associated with the future site equipment.

In consideration of the above, and in accordance with the recommendation provided within the peer review report, it is expected that the client will be required to construct the acoustic barrier as part of the project, and not as part of a post commissioning compliance assessment.

5.2.5. Acoustic Barrier Construction

Based on the results of the noise model the acoustic barrier will need to be constructed to be 3000mm high and located to the south and east of the equipment to provide sufficient noise shielding in the direction of the nearby receptors.

To provide noise reduction qualities, the barrier must be constructed of materials with a surface minimum weight of 12 kg/m^2 and be constructed with no gaps between panels and between the panels and the ground below.

Where practical, the acoustic barrier location should be selected to maximise its height on the land topography, hence maximising the noise shielding in the direction of the sensitive receptors.

In addition to the above, the acoustic barrier must be lined on the equipment side using sound absorbing materials.

WMG recommends that the absorption coefficient performance of the sound absorbing lining achieve not less than 0.9 at the 3150Hz one third octave band frequency which has been identified as critical to the assessment. The overall NRC performance can be lower, and in the order of 0.7.

Suitability of the materials for external applications, and for installation within proximity of the proposed equipment must be considered and approved by others. From previous experience, a suitable material may include Megasorber faced with Soundmesh G8 facing. Fibrous insulation faced with perforated metal may also be a suitable alternative, however, will require a specific detail to ensure it was suitable for outdoor applications and could prevent rain ingress.

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6. Construction Noise Assessment

6.1. Duration of Construction Works and Construction Program

The construction program for the proposed BESS facility is expected to have a duration of four weeks, during which various activities will be undertaken at the subject site.

The client has advised that the construction hours will be limited in accordance with the 'recommended standard hours' nominated by the EPA which include:

- Monday to Friday, 7:00am to 6:00pm.
- Saturday, 8:00am to 1:00pm.
- Sunday and Public Holidays, no construction works.

In consideration of the above, assessment of noise emissions due to construction activities at the site has been limited to the above 'recommended standard hours', as the client has advised that there is no need for works to be completed during other times.

For the purposes of this assessment, the client has provided a breakdown of the proposed construction program to assist with calculating residual noise levels at the critical sensitive receptors within proximity of the subject site.

The construction program is included below in Table 14 and indicates that the potentially 'noisy' activities including excavation, crane usage and heavy delivery vehicles will generally be limited to week 1 and week 2 of the program.

Table 14: Proposed construction program

Period	Site Works	No. of Vehicle Access per week
Week 1	• Drainage, road, and fencing works • Installation of concrete footings	Light – 10 (2 per day) Heavy – 2
Week 2	• Cable installation • Delivery of battery shipping containers and inverter station • Installation of battery shipping containers and inverter station	Light – 15 (3 per day) Heavy – 12
Week 3	• Electrical installation and cable termination • Electrical testing	Light – 15 (3 per day)
Week 4	• commissioning / demobilisation	Light – 10 (2 per day) Heavy – 1

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6.2. Interim Construction Noise Guideline

6.2.1. General Assessment Methodologies

Construction noise and vibration associated with demolition, remediation, renewal, maintenance, and general building works has been identified as a major environmental issue within NSW. Construction activities can generate high levels of noise which can adversely impact on the surrounding acoustic environment including affecting sleep, concentration, mental and physical health.

In consideration of the above, several agencies including the Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC), NSW Department of Planning, Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA), WorkCover NSW, NSW Health together with the Local Government and Shires Association of NSW prepared the *Interim Construction Noise Guideline* (INCG) to assist with addressing construction noise and vibration impacts.

The guideline was released in 2009 and provides methodologies for assessing and managing the potential impacts of construction noise on residences and other sensitive land uses.

The INCG document is currently under review by the EPA with a new draft guideline having been issued for *public consultation purposes only*, however had not been superseded at this stage.

In consideration of the above, WMG has adopted the currently applicable INCG document as the basis for providing an assessment of construction noise and vibration emissions associated with the project.

The main objectives of the ICNG are to:

- Promote a clear understanding of ways to identify and minimise noise from construction works.
- Focus on applying all 'feasible' and 'reasonable' work practices to minimise construction noise.
- Encourage construction activities to be undertaken only during the 'recommended standard hours' unless approval is given for works that cannot be undertaken during these hours.
- Streamline the assessment and approval stages and reduce time spent dealing with complaints at the project implementation stage.
- Provide flexibility in selecting site-specific feasible and reasonable work practices to minimise noise impacts.

When addressing construction noise and vibration, the guideline presents two alternative assessment methodologies expressed as either quantitative or qualitative and which vary based on the proposed construction project duration.

For shorter duration projects which are nominally defined as less than three weeks in total, the qualitative assessment procedures are commonly adopted which require the proponent to consider the guideline's checklist of work practices to minimise noise and implement appropriate strategies.

Where projects have a duration of greater than three weeks, the quantitative assessment procedure is recommended which includes derivation of 'noise management levels' (NML) and noise predictions to consider the potential noise impacts at sensitive receptor locations.

This BESS project will be undertaken for a period of four weeks and will therefore marginally exceed the timeframe which is nominated for a qualitative assessment. Furthermore, due to the proximity of the site to the nearest sensitive receptors, it is considered appropriate that a detailed investigation consistent with the quantitative assessment approach is undertaken for the proposal.

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6.2.2. Determination of Project Noise Management Levels

The NMLs are determined based on an emergence of the construction noise impacts above the RBLs defined within the NPfI for the 'recommended standard hours' as shown within Table 15.

Table 15: Hours Nominated within ICNG

Period Designation	Relevant Hours
Recommended Standard Hours	Monday to Friday – 7:00am to 6:00pm Saturday – 8:00am to 1:00pm
Outside Recommended Standard Hours	All Days – 6:00pm to 7:00am Saturday – 1:00pm to 6:00pm Sunday / Public Holidays – All Day

A summary of the methodologies associated with determining the NMLs and the methods of application are included within Table 16 below.

Table 16: Noise impacts at residences using quantitative assessment procedure.

Time of Day	NML L_{Aeq} (15 min)	How to Apply
Recommended standard hours.	Noise affected RBL + 10 dB	The noise affected level represents the point above which there may be some community reaction to noise. ▪ Where the predicted or measured LAeq (15 min) is greater than the noise affected level, the proponent should apply all feasible and reasonable work practices to meet the noise affected level. ▪ The proponent should also inform all potentially impacted residents of the nature of works to be carried out, the expected noise levels and duration, as well as contact details.
	Highly noise affected 75 dB(A)	The highly noise affected level represents the point above which there may be strong community reaction to noise. ▪ Where noise is above this level, the relevant authority (consent, determining or regulatory) may require respite periods by restricting the hours that the very noisy activities can occur, taking into account: 1. Times identified by the community when they are less sensitive to noise (such as before and after school for works near schools, or mid-morning or mid-afternoon for works near residences. 2. If the community is prepared to accept a longer period of construction in exchange for restrictions on construction times.
Outside recommended standard hours	Noise affected RBL + 5 dB	▪ A strong justification would typically be required for works outside the recommended standard hours. ▪ The proponent should apply all feasible and reasonable work practices to meet the noise affected level. ▪ Where all feasible and reasonable practices have been applied and noise is more than 5 dB(A) above the noise affected level, the proponent should negotiate with the community.

The NMLs are not mandatory limits, however where construction noise levels are predicted to exceed the NMLs, it is considered appropriate that the proponent implement feasible and reasonable work practices to minimise the potential impacts on noise sensitive receptors.

Guidance in relation to what is considered feasible and reasonable is included in the ICNG and generally relates to practical implementation and ongoing maintenance associated with the proposed treatment.

It also considers whether the overall noise benefits associated with the noise control approach outweigh the overall adverse social, economic, and environmental effects, including the cost of the measure.

When determining the noise management levels for the construction phase of the project, and in the absence of site measured data, WMG has adopted the minimum RBLs which form part of the NPfI.

The adopted NMLs for the project are therefore as shown below in Table 17.

Table 17: Residential Receptor Noise Management Levels for Construction

Descriptor	NPfi Defined Assessment Period		
	Day	Evening	Night
Recommended Standard Hours – Noise Affected	45 L_{Aeq}	N/A	N/A
Recommended Standard Hours – Highly Affected	75 L_{Aeq}	N/A	N/A

Where appropriate, the ICNG also requires consideration of ground borne noise impacts at residential receptors as well as the potential for noise emissions to cause sleep disturbance at residential receptors during the night periods.

Given the distance setback of the closest sensitive receptor to the site and the proposed construction hours which are limited to the day period, potential ground borne noise emissions, and the potential for sleep disturbance has not been considered further.

6.3. Proposed Construction Activities and Noise Assessment

Based on information provided by the client, equipment which will form part of the construction works associated with preparation and commissioning of the subject site will include:

- Excavator.
- Grader.
- Drum roller.
- Water dust suppression truck.
- Truck mounted crane (60 tonne) – lifting and positioning works expected to be completed in 1 day.
- Concrete truck and associated agitator.
- Power hand tools.

In addition to the above, a total of fifteen (15) heavy vehicles will attend the subject site throughout the four week construction program, with fourteen (14) expected within the first two weeks. The heavy vehicles will deliver the battery containers and inverter station. The final truck will likely be for waste collection.

An indicative breakdown of the construction stages during which each type of equipment will be utilised is included below within Table 18.

Table 18: Summary of Construction Activities.

Construction Stage	Equipment and Activity
Access road construction.	▪ Excavator. ▪ 10t smooth drum roller. ▪ Grader for gravel road construction. ▪ Water trucks for dust suppression.
Drainage and fencing works.	▪ Excavator for landscaping. ▪ Water trucks for dust suppression. ▪ Concrete truck and associated agitator for fence construction. ▪ Private vehicles.
Installation of concrete footings	▪ Concrete truck and associated agitator. ▪ Private vehicles.
Delivery of battery shipping containers and inverter station unit.	▪ Semi-trucks for good deliveries. ▪ Crane truck to move containers and place in position. ▪ Private vehicles.
Cable installation	▪ Excavator for cable trenching. ▪ Water trucks for dust suppression. ▪ Powered hand tools for connection. ▪ Private vehicles.
Electrical installation, cable termination and electrical testing.	▪ Powered hand tools for connection. ▪ Private vehicles.
Commissioning and demobilisation	▪ Private vehicles. ▪ Waste truck.

Private vehicles, although relevant, will have source sound power levels significantly lower than other potential noise sources forming part of the proposed construction activities and will not contribute to the calculated value at the sensitive receptors. In consideration of the above, WMG has not considered noise associated with private vehicles further within the construction noise assessment.

Transient sources such as trucks may travel within the site boundaries, however, for the purposes of this assessment, WMG has considered that the construction activities will generally occur where the electrical infrastructure will be located.

The exception to this will be that trucks will need to travel along the access road to enter the site, and hence will be in closer proximity to R01 at various times throughout the construction period. Furthermore, specific road preparation and construction works will also need to occur in proximity to R01, and hence have been considered at this location as part of the assessment.

When addressing source noise levels associated with the construction activities, WMG has considered the following:

- Maximum noise levels from plant and equipment nominated within Appendix C of the Construction Noise and Vibration Strategy document issued by Transport for NSW 2019.
- Noise level data provided by the manufacturer/equipment suppliers.
- Noise level data obtained by WMG as part of previous independent investigations.

Based on the above, and with input from the client, the equipment types and adopted sound power levels are included within Table 19 below.

Table 19: Summary of Equipment and Associated Sound Power Levels

Construction Stage	Equipment Type	No. of Units	Adopted Sound Power Level	Operating Time in 15min period	Adopted Lw_A per Stage
Access road construction.	Excavator	1	95 dB(A)	100 %	111 dB(A)
	Roller	1	107 dB(A)	50 %	
	Grader	1	113 dB(A)	50 %	
	Water Cart	1	102 dB(A)	50 %	
Drainage and fencing works.	Excavator	1	95 dB(A)	100 %	111 dB(A)
	Water Cart	1	102 dB(A)	50 %	
	Concrete Truck	1	104 dB(A)	25 %	
	Concrete pouring	1	110 dB(A)	100 %	
Concrete footings install	Concrete Truck	1	104 dB(A)	25 %	110 dB(A)
	Concrete pouring	1	110 dB(A)	100 %	
Delivery of battery shipping containers and inverter station unit	Truck movements	1	101 dB(A)	25 %	102 dB(A)
	Crane truck	1	104 dB(A)	50 %	
Cable installation.	Excavator	1	95 dB(A)	100 %	102 dB(A)
	Water Cart	1	102 dB(A)	50 %	
	Hand Tools	3	96 dB(A)	50 %	
Electrical installation, cable termination and electrical testing	Hand Tools	3	96 dB(A)	50 %	98 dB(A)
Commissioning and demobilisation.	Waste Truck	1	101 dB(A)	50 %	98 dB(A)

The client has advised that each phase of the construction program will be undertaken progressively which will result in cumulative noise levels during each stage rather than due to multiple construction stages.

Using the adopted sound power levels and usage rates described in Table 19, the calculated resultant noise levels at the critical receptors are summarised within Table 20 below.

Table 20: Predicted Construction Noise Levels

Construction Phase	Predicted Noise Levels $L_{Aeq\ (15\ minute)}$								Predicted Noise Levels relative to Derived NMLs $L_{Aeq\ (15\ minute)}$							
	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8
Access road construction.	59	49	49	42	45	42	40	43	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45
Drainage and fencing works.	53	44	49	48	46	39	40	46	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45
Concrete footings install	52	44	48	47	45	38	39	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45
Battery containers and inverter station unit delivery and placement	45	37	40	39	37	30	32	37	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45
Cable installation.	45	37	40	39	37	30	32	37	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45
Electrical installation, cable termination and electrical testing	40	31	36	35	33	26	28	34	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45
Commissioning and demobilisation.	40	31	36	35	33	26	27	34	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45

The results of the noise model indicate that during the initial stages of the construction program, noise emissions associated with the construction of the access road, concrete truck use, and more particularly, the concrete pouring process have the potential to be higher than the 'Noise Affected' NMLs during the recommended standard hours.

The calculated values will continue to be well below the 'highly affected' NML of 75 dB(A).

Given the calculated NML exceedances, construction noise mitigation strategies have been included in Section 6.4.

It must be noted that the R01 receptor who is predicted to receive exposure to the higher levels of construction noise, is associated with the proposal, and hence has open communication with the client regarding the proposed works and construction methodology.

In consideration of the above, it is expected that this receptor will be more tolerant of the potential construction noise impacts that other nearby receptors.

6.4. Construction Noise Mitigation and Management

The NSW ICNG requires that noise emissions associated with construction are assessed against NMLs.

The NMLs are not mandatory noise limits, however where construction activity noise levels are predicted to exceed the NMLs, it is considered appropriate that the proponent implement feasible and reasonable work practices to minimise the potential impacts on noise sensitive receptors.

Guidance regarding minimisation of disturbance due to construction is included within *AS2436-2010 Guide to noise and vibration control on construction, demolition and maintenance sites'* as well as the ICNG and includes the reference to the following:

- Implementation of universal work practices relating to minimising noise.
- Selection of low noise plant and equipment.
- Consultation and transparency with the surrounding community.

In addition, due to the calculated exceedances of NMLs at the R01, R03 and R04 receptors, specific noise control for some activities should be considered by the client.

6.4.1. General Work Practices

Universal work practices which should form part of a construction management plan will include:

- Regular enforcement (ie toolbox talks) of the need to minimise noise and vibration. This will include educating heavy vehicle drivers regarding expectations of their vehicle use (eg. avoid engine brakes, sudden acceleration, minimising reversing etc).
- Regular identification of noisy activities and adoption of improvement techniques.
- Avoiding the use of portable radios, public address systems or other methods of site communication that may unnecessarily impact upon nearby residents.
- Developing routes for the delivery of materials and parking of vehicles to minimise noise.
- Where possible avoiding the use of equipment that generates impulsive noise.
- Minimising the need for vehicles reversing at the site and within proximity of receptors.
- Use of broadband audible alarms on vehicles and elevating work platforms used on site.
- Minimising the movement of materials and plant and unnecessary metal-on-metal contact.
- Minimising truck movements.
- Scheduling respite periods (eg. noisy periods limited to 3 hours).
- Prioritise ensuring that construction works, and heavy vehicle movements occur during standard work hours between 7am and 6pm Monday to Friday, and 7am to 1pm Saturday.

6.4.2. Plant and Equipment

General work practices which will minimise the potential for noise emissions to cause disturbance at sensitive receptors will include:

- Where possible, implementing quieter techniques for high noise activities.
- Choosing quieter mobile and fixed equipment based on the site requirements.
- Operating equipment in the quietest and most efficient manner.
- Regular inspection and maintenance of equipment to ensure it is in good working order.

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6.4.3. Community Relations

Communication and transparency with the surrounding community will be critical in minimising the potential for adverse impacts on the acoustic amenity at sensitive receptors. In order to orchestrate the above, it is advised that the client implement the following:

- Appoint a relevant community relations manager prior to project commencement.
- The manager must approach and communicate with sensitive receptors information regarding the project timeline, construction methodologies, potentially noisy periods.
- Maintain contact with receptors throughout duration of project to ensure that they are up to date on when certain events will commence and finish.
- Provide a construction noise management plan to the sensitive receptors which includes site contact information for residents to call regarding complaints and other queries.

Where complaints are received, they must be recorded on a centralised system and handled in a prompt and responsive manner. This may involve noise monitoring or a review or processes.

6.4.4. Specific Construction Activity Noise Control

6.4.4.1. Concrete Truck Pouring

The noise emission assessment has identified the potential for exceedances of NMLs at the critical R01, R03, R04 and R08 receptors due to the concrete pouring works which will occur during fencing and concrete footing installation.

Predicted values at all other identified receptor locations will be < 45 L_{Aeq} during the described works which is below the NML for the recommended standard hours at these locations.

Due to the calculated exceedances, it would be recommended that the client engage in consultation with the receptors and ensure that they are aware of the works proposed and the duration of the works.

It would be expected that the main source of noise associated with the pouring activity will be the truck engine revs, therefore the contractor should minimise this where possible to minimise noise emissions.

Furthermore, in accordance with information provided in AS2436-2010, where feasible, the contractor should:

- Locate static mixing activities as far as possible from sensitive receptors.
- Ensure that workers do not hammer the drum as part of cleaning.
- Fit more efficient silencers to diesel or petrol engines.

6.4.4.2. Reversing and Warning Alarms

Community concerns in relation to construction noise have often resulted from the use of tonal reversing beepers associated with mobile equipment at construction sites. In consideration of the above, WMG provide the following recommendations:

- Equipment which is based at site should be fitted with 'new generation' broadband reverse alarms which vary their noise output according to the ambient noise level in the surrounding environment.
- Encourage operators of commercial vehicles making deliveries / collection at site to replace any tonal revering beepers with the described 'new generation' broadband reverse alarms.
- Configure the site to minimise the requirement for non-site based vehicles to reverse.

Where possible, non-audible warning systems (eg. flashing lights, reversing cameras) should be used to reduce noise and must be approved by relevant safety authorities.

7. Vibration Assessment

The project construction and operational phase will not include any vibration intense activities such as piling and ramming and hence, have not been considered further.

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8. Road Traffic Noise Assessment

During the operational phase of the BESS project, it is understood that there will be no permanent staff based at the site, and therefore no regular traffic movements.

Site inspections and maintenance works will be undertaken intermittently as required.

Given the infrequency of the operational vehicle movements, noise impacts during these times will be negligible and are not expected to impact adversely on the acoustic environment at sensitive receptors.

The focus of any vehicle movements will therefore be based on the project construction phase during which there will be weekly vehicle movements. It is understood that during this phase, vehicles will access the site via the internal access road from Turton Place.

When addressing the potential noise impacts associated with vehicle movements along public roads, commonly adopted criterion is provided within the NSW Department of Environment Climate Change and Water (DECCW) Road Noise Policy, March 2011.

The Policy includes assessment criteria to consider the potential noise impacts at residences affected by traffic on existing roadways generated by land use developments as shown in Table 21.

Table 21: Road Traffic Noise Assessment Criteria for Residential Land Uses

Road Category	Type of Project / Land Use	Assessment Criteria L_{Aeq}	
		Day (7am to 10pm)	Night (10pm to 7am)
Freeway	Existing residences affected by additional traffic on described roadway generated by land use developments	60 (15 HOUR)	55 (9 HOUR)
Local Roads	Existing residences affected by additional traffic on described roadway generated by land use developments	55 (1 HOUR)	50 (1 HOUR)

Based on guidance provided by the client, it is understood that the following light and heavy vehicle movements will form part of the four week project construction program:

- **Week 1** – two light vehicles accessing the site per day, and a total of two heavy vehicles accessing the site across the week period. No more than one heavy vehicle in a one hour period.
- **Week 2** – three light vehicles accessing the site per day, and a total of twelve heavy vehicles accessing the site across the week period. No more than one heavy vehicle in a one hour period.
- **Week 3** – three light vehicles accessing the site per day, and no heavy vehicles.
- **Week 4** – two light vehicles accessing the site per day, and a total of one heavy vehicle accessing the site across the week period.

The heavy vehicles will be delivering materials to the site including the new battery storage containers and the MVPS containers. Light vehicles will be associated with construction staff and their personal vehicles.

Based on a review of aerial photography of the surrounding area, it is understood that dwellings will be setback from access roads which may carry site vehicles by 40-50m.

Based on calculations, the proposed construction program traffic movements will be below the assessment criteria values nominated in Table 20 above.

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9. Conclusion

WMG has undertaken an acoustic assessment to address potential operational and construction noise and vibration impacts associated with the BESS facility proposed at the site described as 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman, New South Wales.

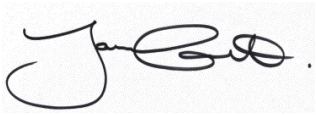
Assessment of noise emissions from the proposed site operations, and construction activities have been based on the methodologies described within the following documentation:

- NSW EPA Noise Policy for Industry.
- NSW Interim Construction Noise Guideline 2009.
- Department of Environment and Conservation's 'Assessing Vibration: a technical guideline'.
- NSW Department of Environment Climate Change and Water Road Noise Policy 2011.

The findings of the assessment have concluded that noise control, including the construction of a 3.0m acoustic barrier will be required to reduce operational noise emissions from the subject site to comply with the adopted project trigger levels at sensitive receptors.

When addressing general construction noise and vibration as well as road traffic noise, the findings of the assessment concluded the following:

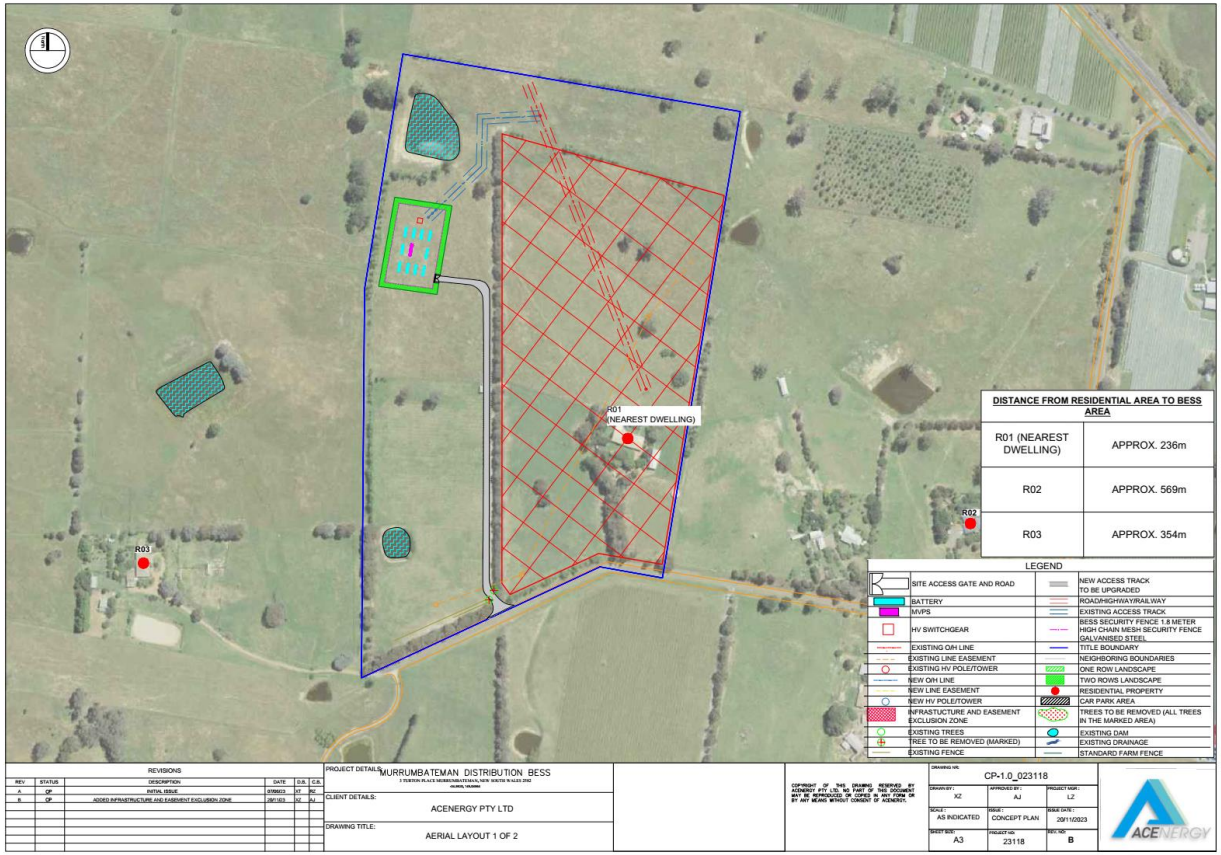
- Noise due to construction vehicle movements is predicted to be below noise level criteria nominated within the Road Noise Policy.
- Noise emissions due to some construction activities have been predicted to exceed NMLs at receptors. In these instances, WMG has provided suitable noise mitigation strategies to minimise the potential for adverse impacts on the relevant sensitive receptors.
- The project construction and operational phase will not include any vibration intense activities such as piling and ramming and hence, have not been considered further.



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Appendix 1 – Aerial Site Plan Layout



REF: 6559BF

Date: 17/4/25

BUSH FIRE MANAGEMENT & EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM

LOT 23 DP 248413

3 TURTON PLACE

MURRUMBATEMAN

LGA: Yass Valley

Client: ACEnergy Pty Ltd

HARRIS ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING
KATE@HEC.ECO

HARRIS ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING

Version Control

Date Created				
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1.2	LJ & KH	FINAL BFMERP	7/3/25	LJ & KH
1.3	CRH 7 LJ	Updated Plans	17/4/25	LJ & KH

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ASSESSOR & QUALIFICATIONS

Kate Harris

BPAD Bushfire Planning & Design Accredited Practitioner Level 3

BPAD L3 26947
MASTERS BUSH FIRE PROTECTION, WSU
GRAD DIP BUSH FIRE PROTECTION, UWS
GRAD DIP ENVIRO MANG HERTS, UK
GRAD DIP NAT RES UNE
BSC APP SC, AGRICULTURE HAC

ABN 541 287 40 549
Phone: (02) 42 360 954
Mobile: 0403 237 072
Email: kate@hec.eco

DISCLAIMER

The recommendations provided in the summary of this report are a result of the analysis of the proposal in relation to the requirements of Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019. Utmost care has been taken in the preparation of this report; however, there is no guarantee of human error. The intention of this report is to address the submission requirements for Development Applications on bushfire prone land. There is no implied assurance or guarantee the summary conditions will be accepted in the final consent, and there is no way Harris Environmental Consulting is liable for any financial losses incurred should the recommendations in this report not be accepted in the final conditions of consent. This bushfire assessment provides a risk assessment of the bushfire hazard as outlined in the PBP 2019 and AS3959 2018. It does not provide protection against any damages or losses resulting from a bushfire event.

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1 INTRODUCTION

ACEnergy Pty Ltd engaged Harris Environmental Consulting to prepare a Desktop Bush Fire Management and Emergency Response Plan (the plan) for the proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) development at 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman.

The subject site is classified Bush Fire Prone Land (BFPL) under the Yass Valley BFPL Map.

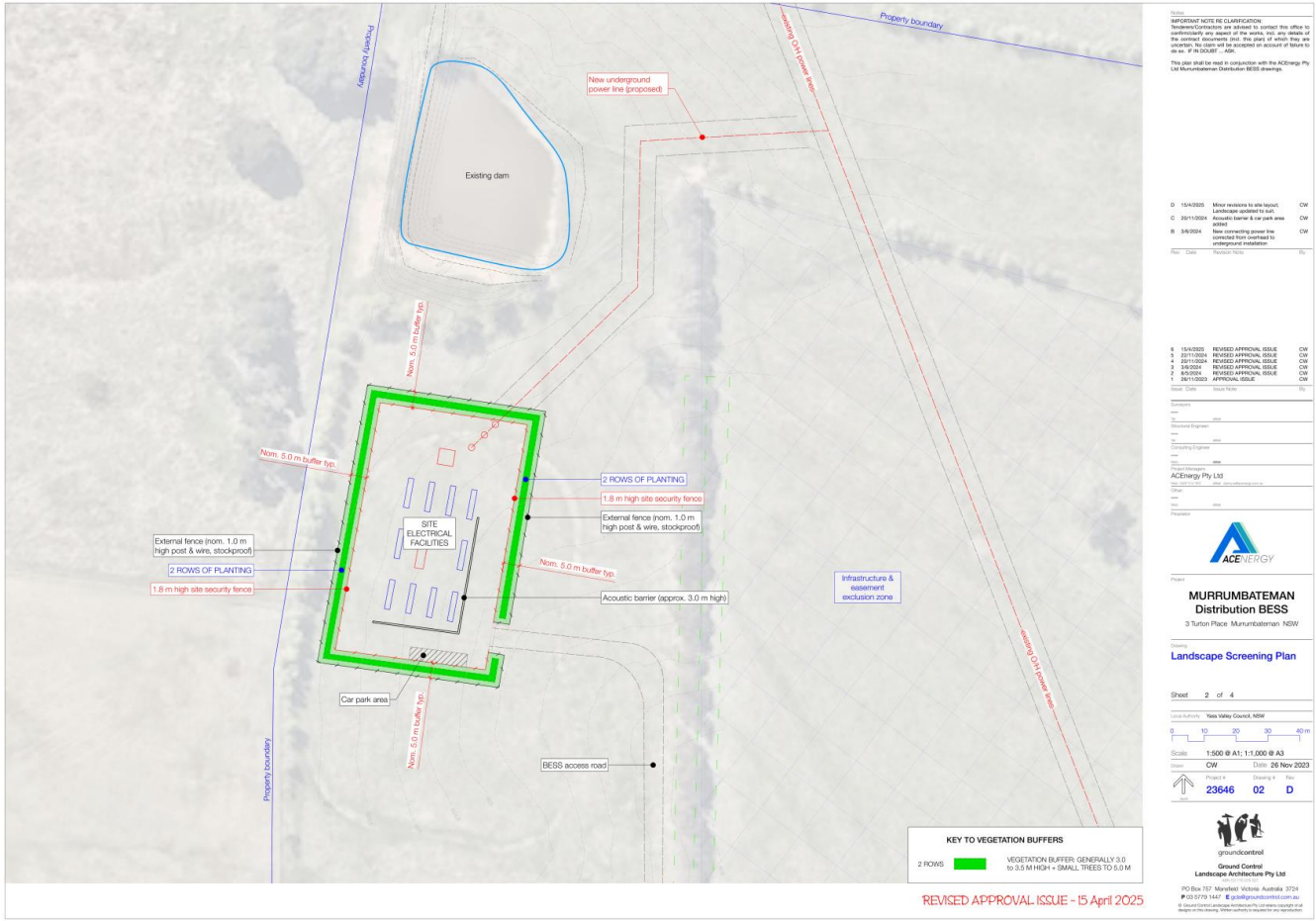
The plan has been prepared per the requirements of *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019* (PBP), the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) document: *A guide to developing a bush fire emergency management and evacuation plan,* and Australian Standard AS 3745:2010 *Planning for emergencies in facilities.*

The purpose of the plan is to evaluate the bushfire risk profile of the site and identify a package of bushfire management measures and emergency response actions that can be taken to protect human life and minimise impacts on assets from the threat of a bush fire.

2 FACILITY DETAILS

The proposed development will involve the construction and operation of a Battery Energy Storage System on the northwestern corner of the subject site. The proposed development includes 10 batteries, one MVPS and associated facilities within a 0.5 ha fenaced site with proposed internal property access from Turton Place on the south.

Figure 1 - Proposed Development



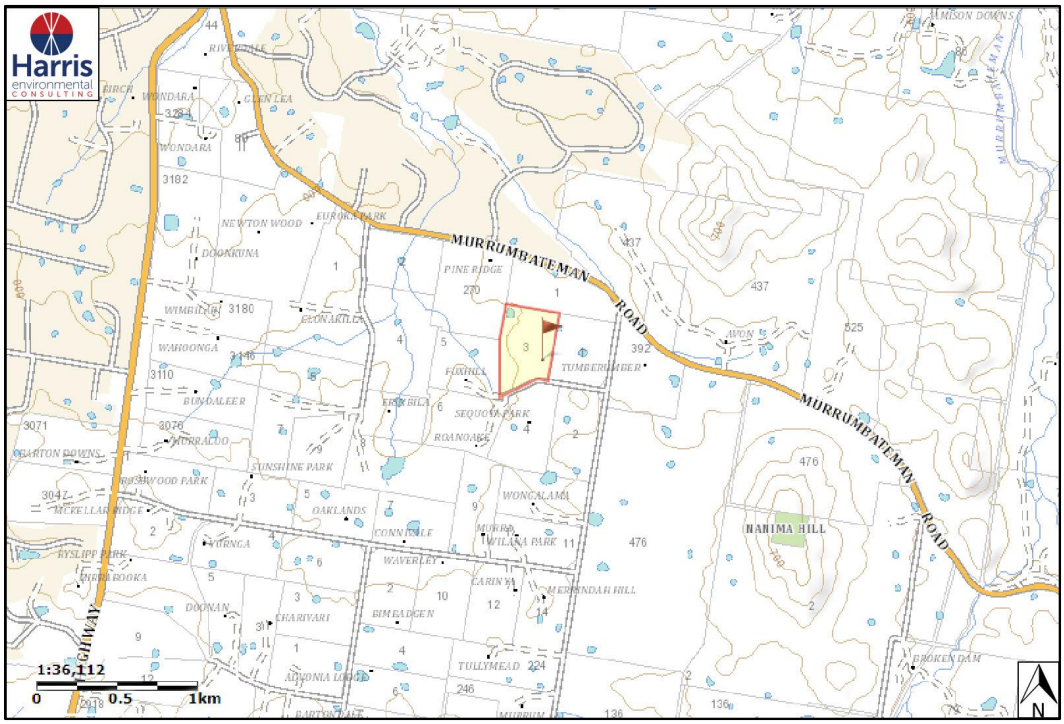
3 SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is located 7km east of the main township of Murrumbateman in the Southern Tablelands of NSW and 40 km north of Canberra (ACT).

The legal title of the property is Lot 23 in DP 248413, 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman NSW 2582.

The site is located within the Yass Valley Local Government Area (LGA) and is zoned RU4 - Primary Production Small Lots under the *Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013.*

Figure 2 - Site Location



4 LANDSCAPE BUSHFIRE RISK PROFILE

4.1 Southern Tablelands

The site is located in the Southern Tablelands of NSW. The Southern Tablelands Bush Fire Management Committee (BFMC) coordinates all bushfire risk management.

The BFMC area covers roughly 1,455,100ha of land from the lower Blue Mountains and Wyangla Dam in the north, Burrinjuck Dam in the south-west to the Shoalhaven River in the east and borders onto the north east of the Australian Capital Territory.

The BFMC area generally experiences temperate to cool climate with warm to hot summers and cool winters. The average annual rainfall across the region is 800-1000mm which occurs during winter and spring, with minimal rainfall in the summer months. The fire season typically commences in October and continues in late March/April.

The BFMC area has an average of 265 bushfires per year, 5 of which are considered major fires. Yass Valley has a history of major fires occurring in a cycle of 2.5 years.

The majority of bushfires in the BFMC area are from lightning strikes associated with spring and summer storm activity as well as burns escaping from legal and illegal burns and use of farm machinery.

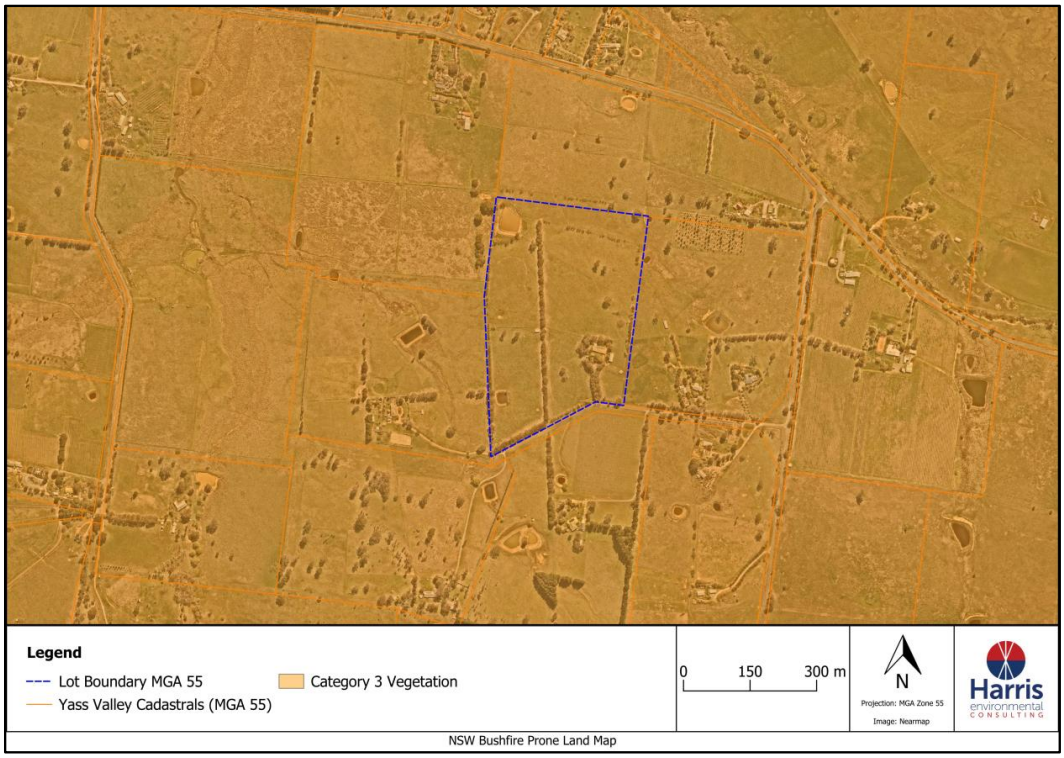
4.2 Bushfire Hazard Assessment

The site contains and is surrounded by rural residential land, vineyards and agricultural farming.

Yass Valley Council maps the BFPL within and surrounding the subject site as Category 3 bushfire-prone vegetation.

Vegetation Category 3 is considered to be medium bushfire-risk vegetation. It is higher in bushfire risk than Category 2 (and the excluded areas) but lower than Category 1. It is represented as dark orange on a BFPL map and consists of Grasslands, freshwater wetlands, semi-arid woodlands, alpine complexes, and arid shrublands.

Figure 3 – Bushfire Prone Land Map



4.2.1 Classified Vegetation

The majority of the land surrounding the development is not classified on the State Vegetation Type Map, with only minimal remnant trees mapped as 'Southern Tableland Grassy Woodland' (NSW DPIE, 2022). This vegetation has <5% tree cover and has been classified as Grassland in accordance with PBP 2019.

The proposed Landscaping (Appendix IV) is located wholly outside the 1.8 m high security fence.

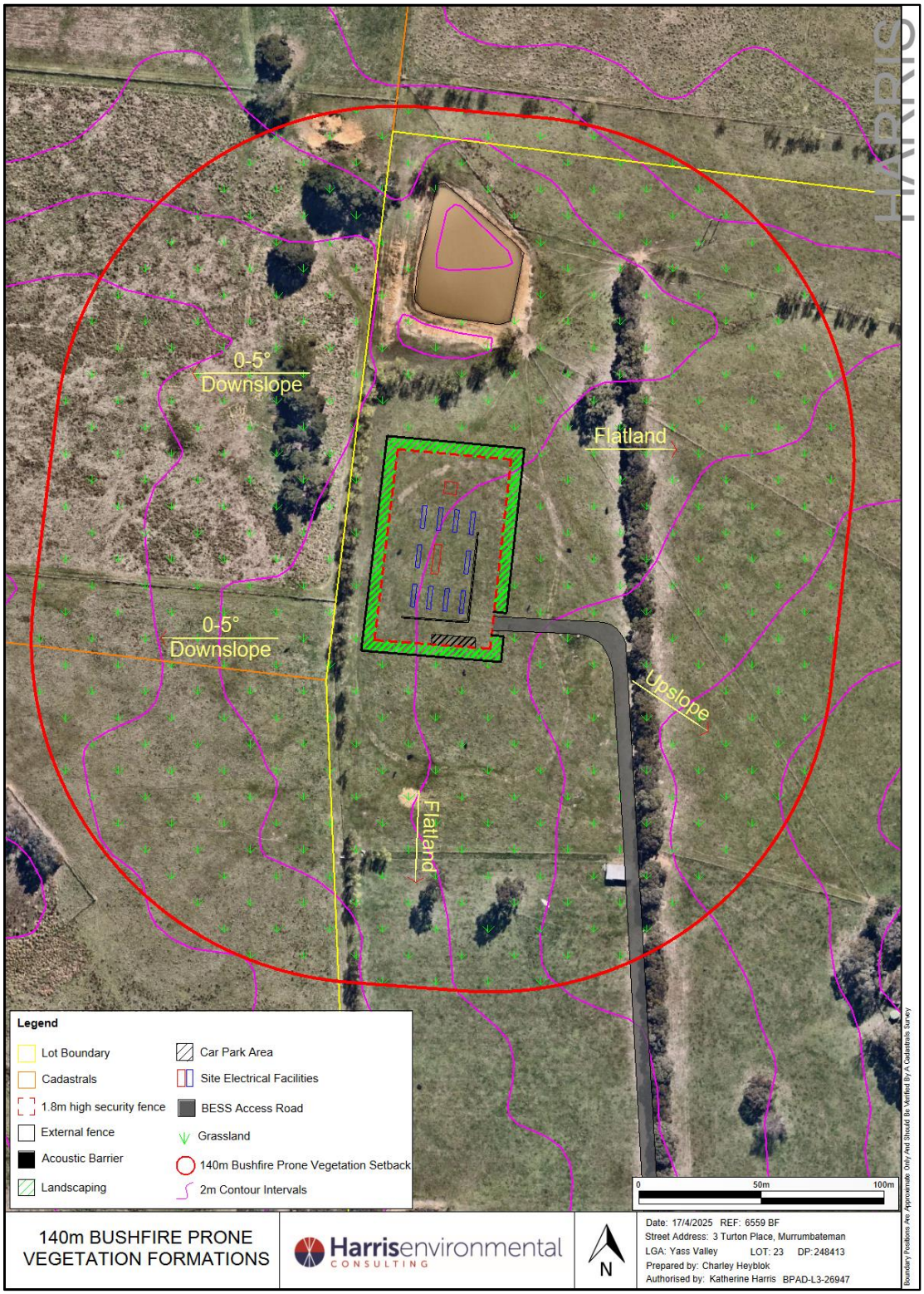
4.2.2 Effective Slope

Australian Standard AS3959-2018 *Construction of buildings in bushfire-prone areas* and PBP 2019 identify that the slope of the land under the classified vegetation is much more important than the slope between the proposed development and the edge of the classified vegetation.

The effective slopes influencing bushfire behaviour towards the proposed development were assessed using elevation data from Spatial Services NSW, April 2023.

The development area is located on a gentle slope that falls west. Slopes to the west are considered 0-5 degrees downslope, with land in all other directions considered flatland/upslope.

Figure 4 – Classified vegetation and effective slopes influencing bushfire behaviour



4.2.3 Potential Bush Fire Behaviour

Based on the desktop assessment of land use, classified vegetation and effective slopes within 140 metres of the subject site, the predominate risk to the proposed development is likely to be from grassland fires impacting the site or spreading from the site.

The bushfire risk posed by a grassland hazard differs from fires in other vegetation communities. Fires burning through a grassland hazard generally spread rapidly at higher intensities and have shorter residence time. Ember production is limited, smaller and fewer in number than those produced from forest fires but can still propagate spot fires ahead of the main fire front.

5 BUSHFIRE RISK ANALYSIS

The bushfire risk to people, property, and the environment has been assessed in relation to the likelihood and consequence per the Australian Standard AS ISO 310000 *Risk Management Guidelines*.

The plan identifies assets within the site, protection measures and management zones.

5.1 Asset Identification

Assets are defined as anything valued by the community, which includes agricultural land, forests, livestock, heritage buildings and places, infrastructure, the environment, commercial and industrial buildings and equipment that may be at risk from bushfires.

Assets within the site have been divided into four asset types.

5.1.1 Human Settlements:

- Residential areas, including urban bushland interface areas and rural properties, and
- Other human settlement areas, including commercial and industrial areas.

5.1.2 Economic:

- Built assets within the subject site, e.g. the battery energy storage systems, MVPS, compound, access roads, landscaping and all associated facilities
- Commercial operation of the facility.

5.1.3 Environmental:

- Threatened species, populations and ecological communities within the site; and
- Locally important species and ecological communities that are susceptible to fire.

5.2 Risk Register and Risk Management Matrix

Refer to Appendix I.

6 BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION MEASURES

The Bushfire Management Plan has been prepared in accordance with the NSW Rural Fire Service *Model Bushfire Risk Management Plan*. The plan identifies a package of bushfire management and protection measures that can be taken to protect life and minimise impacts on assets from bushfires.

6.1 Asset Protection Zones

The intent of an Asset Protection Zone (APZ) is to minimise the risk of bushfire attacks and maintain reduced fuel loads to ensure radiant heat levels at buildings and assets are below critical limits. The APZ provides a safe operational environment for emergency service personnel undertaking operations.

Assets are defined as anything valued by the community, which includes agricultural land, forests, livestock, heritage buildings and places, infrastructure, the environment, commercial and industrial buildings and equipment that may be at risk from bushfires.

The APZ is located wholly in grassland, with no trees within the development footprint. This grass that should be kept mown (<100mm in height). A 11-14-metre-wide APZ around the electrical facilities provides a defendable space and safe operational access to all assets and infrastructure. This APZ is located within surrounding security fence.

The proposed Landscaping (Appendix IV) is located wholly outside the proposed APZ area.

6.2 Bushfire Management Zones

Bushfire Management Zones have been assessed in consideration of the Southern Tablelands BFRMP. Management zones are based on the overall and long term management of the site in consideration of bushfire impacting the site as well as protection of the surrounding landscape from a fire escaping the site.

The Precinct map for west of Murrumbateman is shown in Appendix II and shows no Strategic Fire Advantage Zone or Land Management Zones within the surrounding area. An APZ has been identified within the site based on the bushfire risk profile and risk analysis detailed in section 4.3. The APZ is illustrated in Figure 5 and detailed in Table 1.

Based on the layout of the facility this assessment also recommends a fuel free zone directly surrounding the MVPS, batteries and HV switchgear for the purposes of minimising the likelihood of fires within the site and reducing their potential severity or extent.

Figure 5 - Land Management Zones

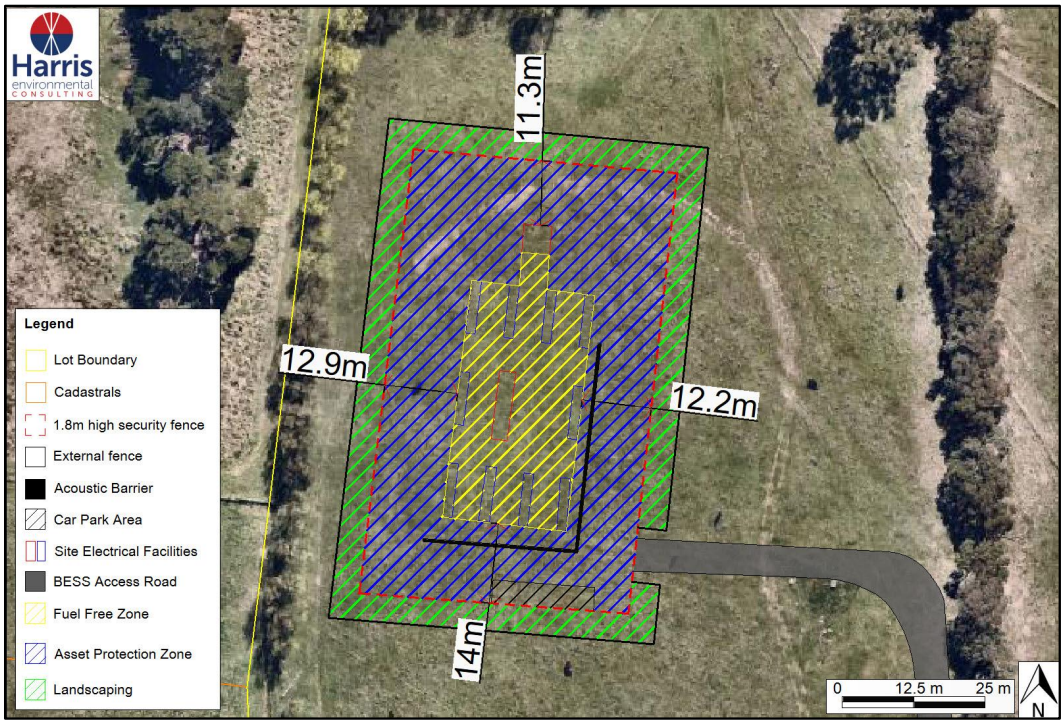


Table 1: Bushfire management zones.

Fuel Free Zone	
Description	A fuel-free area under and surrounding critical assets.
Purpose	The primary purpose of a fuel-free area is to prevent the spread of fire and inhibit fire propagation from spot fires.
Location	Immediately adjacent critical assets at risk of bushfire. 1-5m
Tactics	• Gravel or concrete. • Herbicide application.
Management Intensity	Managed at a high intensity to minimise available fuel loads.
Asset Protection Zones(APZ):	
Description	A fuel-reduced area surrounding an asset that creates a buffer from the bushfire-prone vegetation and provides a defendable space for firefighting operations.
Physical Description	**Trees:** • tree canopy cover should be less than 15% at maturity; • trees at maturity should not touch or overhang the building; • lower limbs should be removed up to a height of 2m above the ground; tree canopies should be separated by 2 to 5m; and • preference should be given to smooth barked and evergreen trees. **Shrubs:** • shrubs create large discontinuities or gaps in the vegetation to slow down or break the progress of fire towards buildings should be provided; • shrubs should not be located under trees; • shrubs should not form more than 10% ground cover; and • clumps of shrubs should be separated from exposed windows and doors by a distance of at least twice the height of the vegetation. **Grass:** • grass should be kept mown (as a guide grass should be kept to no more than 100mm in height); and • leaves and vegetation debris should be removed.
Purpose	The primary purpose of an APZ is to protect human life (including residents, community members and firefighters), property and highly valued public assets (such as human settlement, economic, environmental and cultural items) from the direct impacts of bushfires.
Location	APZs are generally implemented within the development site and immediately adjacent assets at risk of bushfire to provide separation from bushfire-prone vegetation.
Tactics	• Slashing and mowing. • Herbicide application. • Grazing. • Implement frequent prescribed burning. • Carry out selective hand clearing.

	• Grassland within the APZ should be kept mown (as a guide, grass should be kept to no more than 100mm in height). • The APZ should be established before the commencement of works and maintained for the life of the development.
Management Intensity	Vegetation within the APZ is managed at a high intensity to minimise available fuel loads. As a minimum, APZs are to be treated as required to maintain the specifications of the APZ. APZs should be audited bi-annually

6.3 Construction Standards

To ensure the proposed development is afforded a suitable package of bushfire protection measures, all critical assets should be constructed from non-combustible materials designed to mitigate the risk of flame damage, ember attack and radiant heat. The APZ within the fenced site can achieve a BAL 40 setback, based on the remoteness of the development, the external services should be shielded or designed to withstand 40kWm2 of radiant heat (BAL 40). Where applicable, all critical assets should include ember protection.

Ember protection can be achieved by enclosing all openings or covering openings with a non-corrosive metal screen mesh with a maximum aperture of 2mm. This includes subfloor areas, open windows, vents, weep holes and eaves. External doors should be fitted with draft excluders.

6.4 Safe Operational Access

The subject site has direct access to Turton Place to the south. The site access gate is located on Turton Place. The access is approximately 390 m in length to the 8 m wide access gate.

Based on the length of the internal access road within the property it is recommended the access comply with the PBP- Property Access Table 7.4a. This includes:

- A minimum carriageway width of four metres;
- provide enough turning room for a fire tanker that requires an inner minimum turning radius of 6 m and outer minimum radius of 12 m;
- Curves a minimum inner radius of six metres;
- The minimum distance between inner and outer curves is six metres;
- The cross fall is not more than 10 degrees;
- Maximum grades for sealed roads do not exceed 15 degrees (28 per cent) and not more than 10 degrees (18 percent) for unsealed roads; and
- There is suitable access for a Category 1 fire appliance to within 4m of the static water supply.

6.5 Provision of Services

The proposed development will not be connected to reticulated water. A minimum of 20,000L of static water should be located within the development site to ensure adequate water is provided to protect assets during and after the passage of a bushfire.

Above-ground tanks must be manufactured of concrete or metal and raised tanks have protected stands. A suitable connection for firefighting purposes, such as a 65mm Storz outlet and a gate or ball valve, should be provided where required.

All above-ground electrical transmission lines should be managed under specifications issued by the managing authority.

6.6 Site Management

All land management must be undertaken according to license conditions and legislation, whether inside or outside the site.

Under the *Rural Fires Act 1997*, the RFS can direct landholders to undertake hazard reduction activities on their property.

6.7 Total Fire Bans

During the construction and operation phase of the facility, the safe work procedures and restrictions associated with a total fire ban, as outlined by the NSW RFS, should be followed. A total fire ban means no fires out in the open. A total fire ban helps limit the potential for fires to develop.

During a total fire ban, you cannot light, maintain or use a fire in the open or carry out any activity in the open that causes or is likely to cause a fire.

Call the local NSW RFS Fire Control Centre or local Council for further advice.

6.8 Fire Safety

Based on the nature of the development, there is potential for fires to initiate from the components within the site.

The proposed development includes hardware for the purposes of fire safety. Each battery container is built with fire suppression system and have multiple built-in fire protection devices that work collaboratively, including flammable gas, smoke and thermal sensors, pressure relief system and aerosol fire extinguishing system. Therefore, a container will automatically suppress an internal fire in the first instance.

The battery type is a lithium-Ion phosphate (LFB) which are considered to be one of the safest battery chemistries within the industry. LFP does not contain heavy metals. Battery cell and BESS containers provide double layers. LFP does not include any oil colling but has anti-leaking connectors within the self-contained design. The development includes a surrounding fence, gate and landscaped area for security purposes limiting trespassing.

7. EMERGENCY RESPONSE

7.1 Emergency Planning Committee

This section outlines standard requirements and protocols developed based on similar projects. Detailed protocol and measures are subject to reasonable changes and confirmed by the appointed EPC contractor.

The persons responsible for managing the site should form an Emergency Planning Committee (EPC). The EPC shall consist of at least two people.

The EPC is responsible for implementing and maintaining the emergency plan, emergency response procedures, and related training. The duties of the EPC include the following:

- Ensuring that resources are provided to enable the development and implementation of the emergency plan;
- Ensuring that the emergency plan is readily identifiable and available to the appropriate persons;
- Ensuring those with control of emergencies operate per the emergency plan, that this person/persons are current and readily available, and continue to operate at all times;
- Authorise and implement the emergency plan. The following shall apply to the implementation:
    - awareness of the emergency response procedures,
    - training,
    - testing emergency procedures, and
    - reviewing emergency procedures;
- Ensuring the emergency procedures remain viable and effective by testing and reviewing policies as required;
- Establishing strategies to ensure all onsite personnel are made aware of emergency response procedures;
- Ensuring a permanent record of events for emergencies is compiled and retained;
- Identifying opportunities for improvement in the emergency plan;
- Obtain professional advice on the level of indemnity provided to EPC members and be aware of the level of the indemnity supplied; and
- Shall meet before the inception of the Plan and as required to ensure the Plan is relevant and up to date.

7.2 Emergency Control Organisation

The Emergency Control Organisation (ECO) is responsible for organising and supervising the safe movement of onsite personnel in an emergency. During emergencies, instructions given by the ECO personnel shall take precedence over the normal management structure.

This Plan documents the pre-emergency, emergency and post-emergency duties and responsibilities during a bushfire emergency.

The following roles are recommended to the appropriate staff: Chief Warden, Deputy Chief Warden, Communications Officer, Building Wardens, Safety Officers, and First Aid Officers. A Chief Warden is required as a minimum.

Selection criteria for ECO personnel:

- Be capable of performing their duties;
- Have leadership qualities and the ability to command authority;
- Display practical decision-making skills;
- Demonstrate the capability to remain calm under pressure;
- Be available onsite to undertake their appointed duties
- Possess practical communication skills; and
- Be able to undertake relevant training.

7.3 Roles and Responsibilities

Construction Stage

Chief Warden	
Position:	
Contact Details:	
The Chief Fire Warden shall be identifiable by wearing white (white helmet, cap, hat or vest) with the words "Chief Fire Warden" prominently displayed.	

Deputy Warden	
Position:	
Contact Details:	
The Deputy Warden shall be identifiable by wearing white (white helmet, cap, hat or vest) with the words "Deputy Warden" prominently displayed.	

Operational & Maintenance Stage

For the Operational Stage, emergency personnel's roles and responsibilities and fire emergency protocol are to be in accordance with Appendix I.

Chief Warden/ HSE Manager	
Position:	
Contact Details:	
The Chief Fire Warden shall be identifiable and if applicable, by wearing white (white helmet, cap, hat or vest) with the words "Chief Fire Warden" prominently displayed.	

Deputy Warden/ O&M Manager	
Position:	
Contact Details:	
The Deputy Warden shall be identifiable and if applicable, by wearing white (white helmet, cap, hat or vest) with the words "Deputy Warden" prominently displayed.	

7.3.1 Pre-emergency Task

Chief Warden

- Maintain a current register of ECO members;
- Replace ECO members when a position becomes vacant;
- Conduct regular exercises;
- Ensure the emergency response procedures are kept up to date;
- Attend meetings of the EPC as appropriate;
- Attend training and emergency exercises as required by EPC; and
- Ensure personal ECO identification is available.

Deputy Warden

- Ensure personal proficiency in the operation of communication equipment;
- Maintained records and logbooks and make them available for emergency response;
- Ensure that ECO members are proficient in the use of the communication equipment;
- Ensure that emergency communication contact details are up to date;
- Attend training and emergency exercises as required by EPC;
- Confirm sufficient wardens for the area of responsibility;
- Coordinate the completion of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP) documentation;
- Report on the deficiencies of the emergency equipment;
- Ensure that wardens have communicated the emergency response procedures to all occupants within their nominated areas;
- Ensure that occupants are aware of the identity of their wardens;
- Coordinate safety practices by wardens throughout their area of responsibility;
- Ensure that all occupants are aware of the emergency response procedures; and
- Carry our safety practices (e.g. Clear access to emergency equipment).

7.3.2 Emergency Task

Refer to the Bushfire Emergency Response Plan for actions.

7.3.3 Post-Emergency Task

Chief Warden:

- When the emergency incident is rendered safe, or the Emergency Service returns control, notify the ECO members to have occupants return to the site, as appropriate;
- Organise a debrief with ECO members and, where applicable, with any attending Emergency Service; and
- Compile a report for the EPC and management.

Deputy Warden:

- Records events and actions during the emergency for debriefing;
- Clean and service used specialised equipment; and
- Replace specialised equipment when necessary.

7.4 Evacuation Considerations

To the north a Neighbourhood Safer Place have been identified if the site is occupied during a bushfire event and local emergency services have issued evacuation orders.

- North West (5.4 kms) – Open Space –- Murrumbateman Recreation Grounds– 19 East Street, Murrumbateman NSW.

No Neighbour Safer Places exist south towards the Australian Capital Territory, however this assessment has identified an area to the south to evacuate towards. It should be noted emergency services are likely to provide an area to the south if evacuation is to occur in this direction.

- South (29 kms) – Playing Fields –- Perce Douglas Memorial Playing Fields, Nicholls ACT 2913.

As illustrated in Figure 6, the entire road network associated with access and egress from the site traverses agricultural and rural land.

During an emergency, the anticipated times have been calculated for evacuation to the designated safer places north and south, as shown below in Table 2.

Table 2: Travel times rounded up to the nearest minute.

Average Speed Km/h	Travel time to Murrumbateman Recreation Grounds – 5.4 km North West	Travel time to Perce Douglas Memorial Playing Fields – 29 km South
50 km/h	7 minutes	35 minutes
40 km/h	9 minutes	44 minutes
30 km/h	11 minutes	58 minutes
25 km/h	13 minutes	1 hour 10 minutes
10 km/h	33 minutes	2 hour 54 minutes

7.4.1 Evacuation Centres

In a major bushfire event, evacuation centres will likely be established to meet the needs of those affected by the bushfires. Evacuation centres are generally existing facilities that can often open with little notice to provide immediate assistance. It is advised that the Site Manager monitors evacuation centres established in the area and follows the advice of the emergency service when directed to evacuate. The location of evacuation centres is likely to impact on-road use and expected travel times in the event of an evacuation.

Figure 6 - Evacuation routes to safer places: North

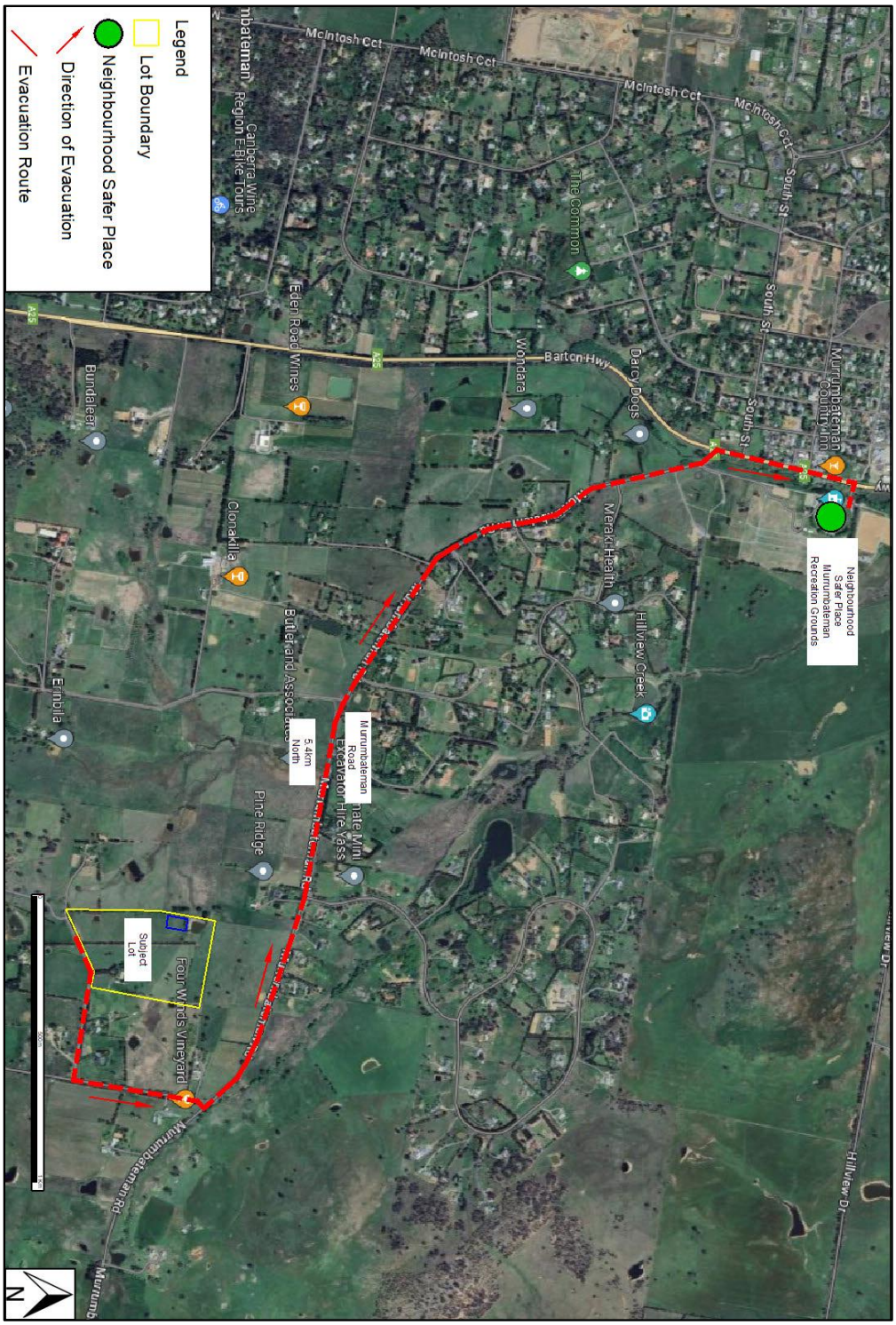
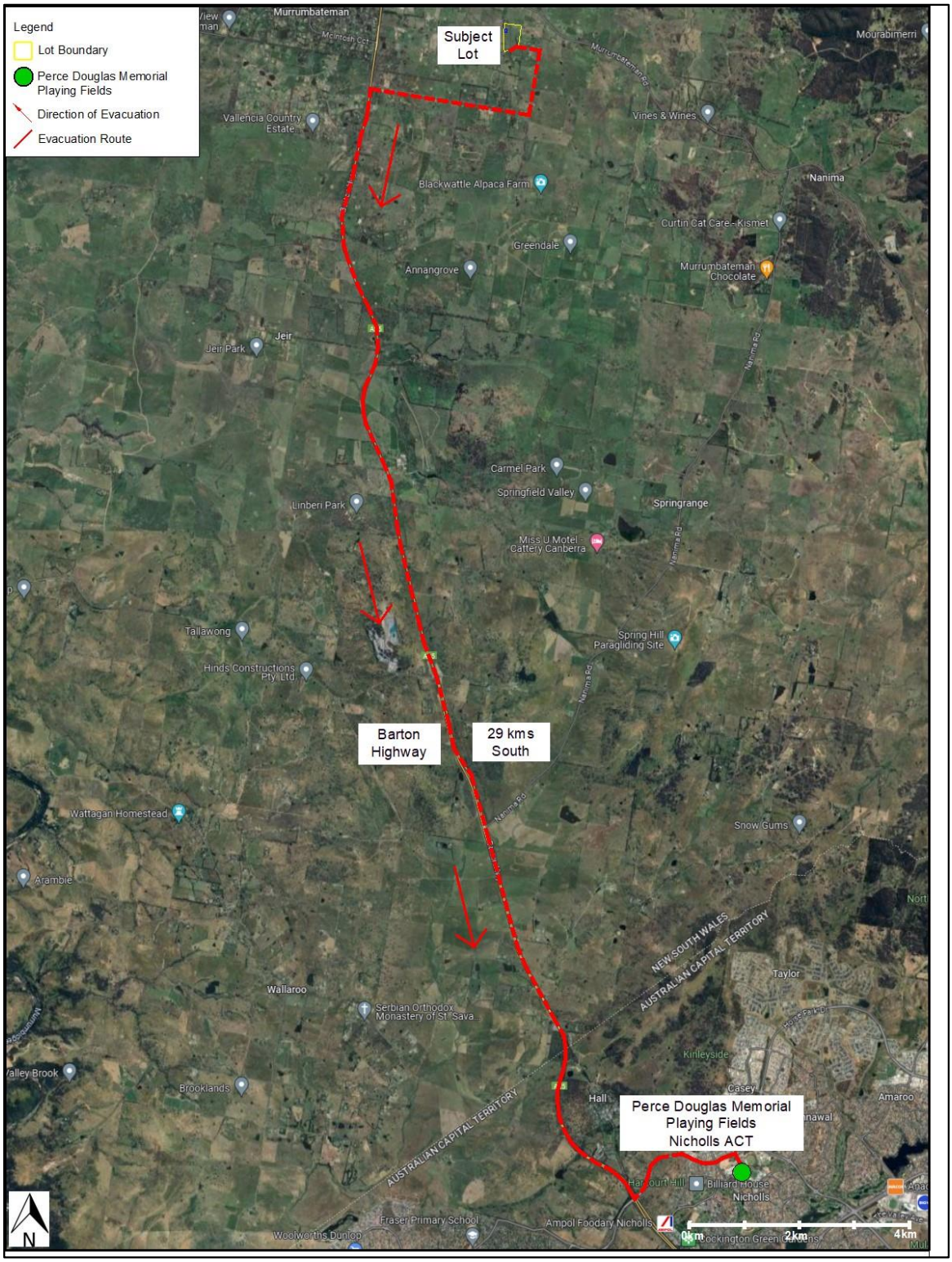


Figure 7 - Evacuation routes to ACT: North



7.5 Preparation

The Chief Warden is to prepare ahead of the start of the fire season and potential bushfire events by undertaking the following steps.

Site:

- Ensure the Plan is up to date;
- Ensure the system regularly checked and maintained by an authorised technician;
- Ensure any firefighting equipment is serviceable and available. e.g. Ladders, spades, shovels, mops, buckets, and hoses;
- Keep the important contact details such as the contractor installer, system manufacturer somewhere safe and easily accessible in case of an emergency. Labelling and signage to inform emergency responders in accordance with the Australian Standard AS/NZS 5139 Electrical installations - Safety of battery systems for use with power conversion equipment may also be required;
- Ensure areas around the assets are prepared and maintained;
- Keep the area where the system is installed clear of all materials (especially those that are combustible) and other equipment;
- Ensure all landscaping within the site is maintained to an APZ standard;
- Ensure onsite powerlines are maintained, liaise with relevant providers;
- Check and update external emergency contact numbers; and
- Monitoring risks from adjoining private and public land, maintaining communication with adjoining landowners and land managers for any changes in management or increased risks to the site.

Onsite personnel:

- Have all onsite personnel details easily identifiable to account for all persons on site;
- Have informative signage in key locations in the site (front gate) outlining the emergency management procedures and bushfire protection measures;
- Have a site layout plan that shows the designated assembly areas and evacuation details available for all onsite personnel; and
- Have emergency kits available: e.g. Whistle, portable battery radio, waterproof torch, spare batteries, first aid kit and manual, waterproof bag for valuables, emergency contact details, duct and masking tape, non-perishable food and water, and pocket knife.

Planning:

- Evacuation safety is dependent on several factors, such as fire danger rating, temperature, wind strength and direction. The time to evacuate may take more than expected during weekends or school holidays when traffic is heavy;
- When advised to evacuate, the early departure of all onsite personnel before emergency services arrive is recommended.
- Similarly, when advised to evacuate, early evacuation is recommended as it is not appropriate to move people through areas with heaving smoke or where a bushfire may be burning or is predicted to burn through;
- The Chief Warden is to check with emergency services and the Live Traffic NSW website: https://www.livetraffic.com/;

Maintenance and Training:

- Ensure up to date training for all onsite personnel. Safe work practices, including observance of standards, codes and regulations, provision of material data including safety data sheets and company policies and procedures, all have important bearing on fire safety and should be explicitly addressed;
- Ensure site is maintained including removal of trade wastes; regular maintenance of installed facilities and equipment; as well as clearance and checking of drains and collection pits.

7.6 Monitoring Bush Fire Threats

7.6.1 Information

For information on bushfires, call the **Bush Fire Information Line:**

- 1800 NSW RFS (**1800 679 737**).

The two systems used by the Rural Fire Service which provide triggers for evacuation are:

- **The Fire Danger Ratings**- used **before** a fire has started; and
- **The Bush Fire Alerts**- are used **once** a fire has started.

Both of these warning systems are described below.

7.6.2 Fire Danger Rating

Before a fire starts, monitor the **Fire Danger Ratings** daily at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/fdr. The higher the fire danger rating, the more dangerous a fire is likely to be.

These ratings are based on predicted conditions such as the temperature, humidity, wind and dryness of the landscape. It indicates how a bushfire may act, what impacts could occur and the consequences of a bushfire in the identified conditions. The table below and the graph are taken from the RFS Bushfire Survival Plan and show how the fire danger gets higher, so does the potential loss of life and property.

FIRE DANGER RATING	WHAT YOU SHOULD DO
CATASTROPHIC	**For your survival, leave bush fire risk areas.** › These are the most dangerous conditions for a fire. › Your life may depend on the decisions you make, even before there is a fire. › Stay safe by going to a safer location early in the morning or the night before. › Homes cannot withstand fires in these conditions. › You may not be able to leave and help may not be available.
EXTREME	**Take action now to protect your life and property.** › These are dangerous fire conditions. › Check your bush fire plan and ensure that your property is fire ready. › If a fire starts, take immediate action. › If you and your property are not prepared to the highest level, go to a safer location well before the fire impacts. › Reconsider travel through bush fire risk areas.
HIGH	**Be ready to act.** › There's a heightened risk. Be alert for fires in your area. › Decide what you will do if a fire starts. › If a fire starts, your life and property may be at risk. The safest option is to avoid bush fire risk areas.
MODERATE	**Plan and prepare.** › Stay up to date and be ready to act if there is a fire.
NO RATING	› Fire danger ratings are used on days when you need to take action. On days of minimal risk, 'No Rating' will be issued.

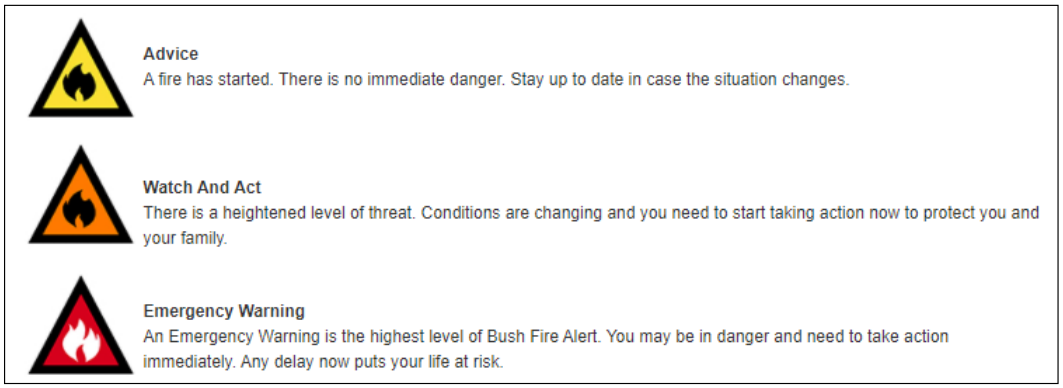
7.6.3 Fires Near Me

After a fire has started, the 'Fires Near Me' website and mobile application provide information and warnings about bushfires and other incidents attended by the NSW RFS.

Website: https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/fire-information/fires-near-me

Use the FIRES NEAR ME mobile application to help you stay up to date on bushfires in your area

The following alert levels are provided to give you an indication of the level of threat from a fire:



7.6.4 Radio Updates

In an emergency, ABC Radio can provide up-to-date information. The local stations for Griffith LGA include:

- ABC Radio – **666 AM** Canberra and Digital radio ;
- ABC Radio Central West – **549 AM** Cumnock
- ABC RN – **856 AM** Canberra and Digital radio; and
- ABC NEWS on the radio – **103.9 AM** Canberra and Digital radio ;

7.6.5 Road Closures

The unpredictable nature of bushfires may result in roads being closed without warning. Where emergency services have issued evacuation orders, leaving early is always the safest option. Information on road closures can be obtained from emergency services and found on the Live Traffic NSW website: https://www.livetraffic.com/

7.6.6 Early Evacuation

In a bushfire emergency, emergency services may issue evacuation orders. If off-site evacuation is required, Evacuation Centres will often be set up to accommodate those evacuating. The evacuation direction will depend highly on the existing fire conditions, and advice should be sought from emergency services concerning suitable evacuation routes to the designated Evacuation Centres.

7.7 Emergency

Refer to the Bushfire Emergency Response Plan for actions.

7.8 Post-Emergency Task

- The Chief Warden should seek advice from emergency services before returning to the site;
- A record of the emergency response and evacuation should be taken, and the Emergency Plan updated were applicable.

3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman

BUSHFIRE EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION PLAN

This plan has been designed to assist management in protecting life.
This plan outlines evacuation and site closure procedures to protect occupants from a bushfire threat.

The primary actions to follow are:

Evacuate and close on forecasted

Extreme and Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating days

Facility	Battery Energy Storage System
Facility type	Commercial - Utilities
Location	Lot 23 in DP 248413, 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman NSW 2582.
Estimated occupancy	During Construction: During Operation:
Travel arrangements from the site	Private vehicles.
Chief Warden	
Deputy Warden	

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

In an emergency, call

000

Organisation	Location	Contact
Murrumbateman Rural Fire Brigade	39 Rose St, Murrumbateman NSW	0419 899 979
Springfield NSWRFS	Patemans Ln, Murrumbateman NSW	0418 444 325
Fire and Rescue NSW	90 Meehan St, Yass NSW	02 6229 6711
NSW Police	47 Rossi St, Yass NSW & 31 Anthony Rolfe Ave, Gungahlin ACT	02 6226 9399 000
NSW Ambulance	Charnwood ACT	000
Yass Valley Council	209 Comur St, Yass NSW 2582	02 6226 1477

SITE CLOSURES AND EARLY EVACUATION PROCEDURES – This plan recommends non-occupation on extreme or catastrophic fire weather days and leaving early in all circumstances.	
Early evacuation procedure: Non-operational on days of forecasted extreme or catastrophic fire weather If the site is operational in a bushfire event, relocate all site occupants to the emergency assembly areas and follow the advice of local emergency services. If evacuation orders are issued, evacuate to the local safer places, evacuation centres or emergency care facilities as directed. **Emergency Assembly Area: Property Access Gate – south onto Turton Place**	
Trigger to evacuate	Actions
An extreme or catastrophic fire danger rating is forecast for the next day. OR	• The Chief Warden should consult the NSW RFS, check the NSW RFS website, call 1800 NSW RFS, or use smartphone applications and local firefighting resources for fire situations and updates;

Fire 'Advice' Warning is likely to impact the site. OR Fire' Watch and Act' Warning is likely to impact the site. OR When directed to do so by NSW Police or the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS)	• The Chief Warden is to take control of the bushfire situation: Remain calm and explain to onsite personnel what is happening and the fire situation; • The Chief Warden is to advise the local emergency service that the site is being evacuated as directed by the emergency services (including how many people and where they are going). • Ensure the Wardens and Site Manager have mobiles and are contactable. • Make arrangements for private transportation for evacuation.
	Off-site Evacuation • Arrange for onsite personnel to make their way to the designated Emergency Assembly Area; • Confirm all onsite personnel have been notified; • Make sure all onsite personnel have transportation for evacuation; • Arrange for suitable transportation to meet at the emergency assembly point for persons without transport, persons with compromised mobility and persons that require medical assistance; • Advise all onsite personnel with access to private transportation and do not require medical assistance to make their way to the **designated Safer Place** or **Evacuation Centre** as directed by the local emergency services. • Monitor the progress of the evacuation; • The Chief Warden is to advise the relevant emergency service that provided the evacuation orders when all persons have been evacuated;

	• Should the fire services arrive, the Chief Warden will hand control over to the officer in charge and provide an operational brief listing injured or vulnerable persons needing assistance. • Maintain situational awareness through radio, the NSW RFS website, 1800 NSW RFS, smartphone applications and local firefighting resources.

THIS PLAN DOES NOT SUPPORT SHELTERING ONSITE
Site closure on days of forecasted extreme or catastrophic fire weather and leaving early in all circumstances.

DAILY ACTIONS					
ACTIONS	**Bush Fire Danger Ratings**				
	NO RATINGS	**MODERATE**	**HIGH**	**EXTREME**	**CATASTROPHIC**
Chief Warden should Monitor the ACT ESA website and check the 'Fires Near Me' site or app.		By 1 pm	Minimum 1 pm and 3 pm	Monitor conditions every hour. The site should be closed and non-operational on forecasted extreme fire weather days. The site is closed.	Monitor conditions every hour. The site should be closed and non-operational on forecasted catastrophic fire weather days. The site is closed.
Fire is predicted to impact the site.	Monitor conditions every hour. Relocate all site occupants to the **Emergency Assembly Area.** Prepare for off-site evacuation. The site is closed.	Monitor conditions every hour. Relocate all site occupants to the **Emergency Assembly Area.** Prepare for off-site evacuation. The site is closed.	Monitor conditions every hour. Relocate all site occupants to the **Emergency Assembly Area.** Prepare for off-site evacuation. The site is closed.	Monitor conditions every hour. The site should be closed and non-operational on forecasted extreme fire weather days. The site is closed.	Monitor conditions every hour. The site should be closed and non-operational on forecasted catastrophic fire weather days. The site is closed.

The time to fire impact is less than the time required to evacuate.	Relocate all site occupants to the **Emergency Assembly Area.** Prepare for off-site evacuation. The site is closed.	Relocate all site occupants to the **Emergency Assembly Area.** Prepare for off-site evacuation. The site is closed.	Relocate all site occupants to the **Emergency Assembly Area.** Prepare for off-site evacuation. The site is closed.	The site should be closed and non-operational on forecasted extreme fire weather days.	The site should be closed and non-operational on forecasted catastrophic fire weather days.
After the bush fire event: The Chief Warden is to confirm with emergency services that the site is safe (utilities and buildings) and coordinate all clean-up, repair and maintenance as required to allow the site to return to normality. Where applicable, occupants affected by the event should be identified and provided with appropriate counselling and support.					

Figure 8 – Bush Management and Emergency Response Plan



Appendix I: Hazard Matrix and Risk Register

The bushfire risk to people, property (assets), and the environment has been assessed in relation to the likelihood and consequence per the Australian Standard AS ISO 310000 *Risk Management Guidelines*. Table 3 describes the likelihood and the consequence on a scale of 1 to 5, increasing with severity.

Table 3: Likelihood & Consequence Description

Likelihood		**Consequence**	
Almost Certain (5)	Expected to occur in most circumstances	Catastrophic (5)	Death or permanent injury, considerable economic and irreversible environmental damage
Likely (4)	Will probably occur in most circumstances.	Major (4)	Serious injury, hospital treatment, major economic and irreversible local environmental damage
Possible (3)	May occur occasionally	High (3)	Injury requiring medical treatment, long-term economic and environmental damage
Unlikely (2)	Could happen sometime	Medium (2)	Minor injury, first aid required, minor short-term economic and environmental damage
Rare (1)	May happen only in exceptional circumstances	Low (1)	No injuries, low financial loss, minor environmental impact

Likelihood	**Consequence**				
	Insignificant	**Minor**	**Moderate**	**Major**	**Catastrophic**
Almost Certain	High	High	Extreme	Extreme	Extreme
Likely	Medium	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
Possible	Low	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme
Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	High	Extreme
Rare	Low	Low	Medium	High	High

Risk Level	Risk Response
Extreme	**High priority - unacceptable risk – Immediate action required** Urgent site-specific mitigation and comprehensive management measures are required to reduce risk levels.
High	**High priority - unacceptable risk – Immediate action required** site-specific mitigation and comprehensive management measures are required to reduce risk levels.
Medium	**Medium priority - Potentially unacceptable risk** Site-specific mitigation and comprehensive management measures are required to reduce risk levels.
Low	**Low priority - Acceptable risk** Ongoing mitigation and management measures will ensure risk level remains low and risk is eliminated over time.

Risk Register – Construction and operation of the Murrumbateman Battery Energy Storage System					
Risk No#	**Description**	**Risk Rating**	**Treatment**	**Residual Risk Rating**	**Responsible**
1	Physical impact on persons or loss of life.	High	• Implementation of the bushfire management and protection measures detailed in section 6 & 7. • Daily actions outlined in the Bushfire Emergency And Evacuation Plan	Medium	Site management EPC Fire Wardens Site Occupants
2	Fire impacting the subject site and assets.	High	• Implementation of the bushfire management and protection measures detailed in section 6 & 7.	Medium	Site management EPC Fire Wardens
2	Fire propagation within the site and spreading from the site.	High	• Implementation of the bushfire management and protection measures detailed in section 6 & 7. • Follow advice from emergency services.	Medium	Site management EPC Fire Wardens

Appendix II: EPC Contractor

Table 1 outlines the roles and responsibilities of key personnel involved in a fire emergency during the operation of the BESS.

All personnel shall follow the corresponding Fire Emergency Protocols in **Table 2** below during or after a bushfire incident.

Table 1 – Roles and Responsibilities

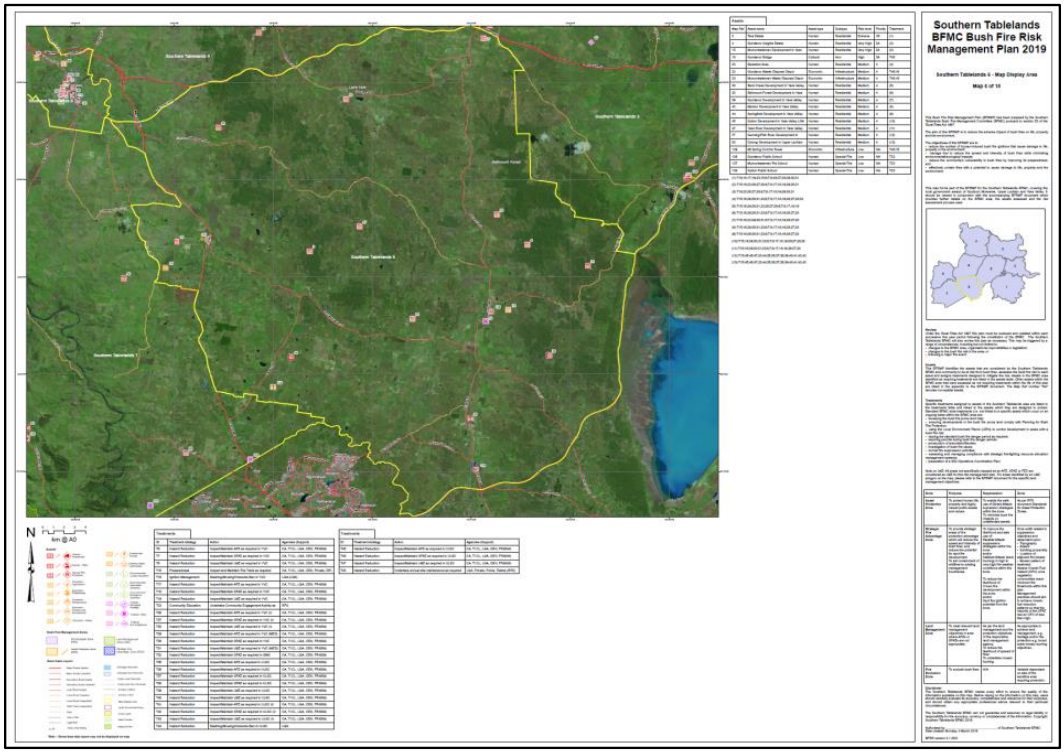
Role	Responsibility
O&M Manager (Office based)	• Respond to emergency calls • Respond to HSE Officer's request for any required assistance • Report incident to Asset Owner • Review and update relevant emergency procedures
HSE Officer (Site based)	• Respond to emergency calls • Ascertain the nature of the emergency • Initiate the corresponding emergency protocol • Arrange first responders to attend to the fire • Notify Emergency Services and First Responders • Notify the O&M Manager of any required assistance • Control and guide the emergency response process
Trained First Aiders (Site based)	• Treat injured individuals in coordination with the HSE Officer
First Responders	• Assist in the emergency response process and provide adequate resources to the HSE Officer
Employees (Site based)	• Raise the alarm • Notify HSE Officer • Follow the emergency procedure with instructions from O&M Manager and HSE Officer

Table 2 – Fire Emergency Protocol

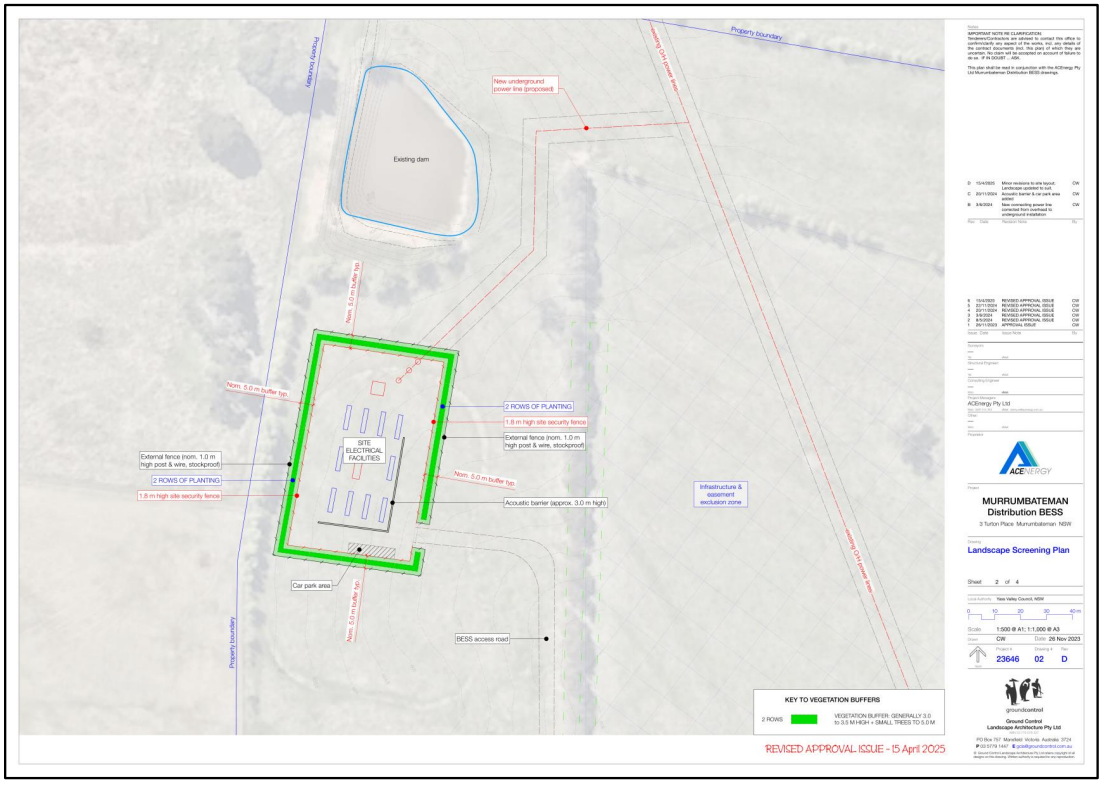
Fire	
Project # and Title	
O&M Manager	During the incident: ▪ Respond to HSE Officer's request for any required assistance ▪ Respond to emergency calls After the incident: ▪ Notify the Asset Owner of the incident. ▪ Submit incident report to Asset Owner. ▪ Review and update all applicable procedures.
HSE Officer	During the incident: ▪ Evaluate the event. ▪ Send first responders to work crew location/s. ▪ Arrange evacuation if required.

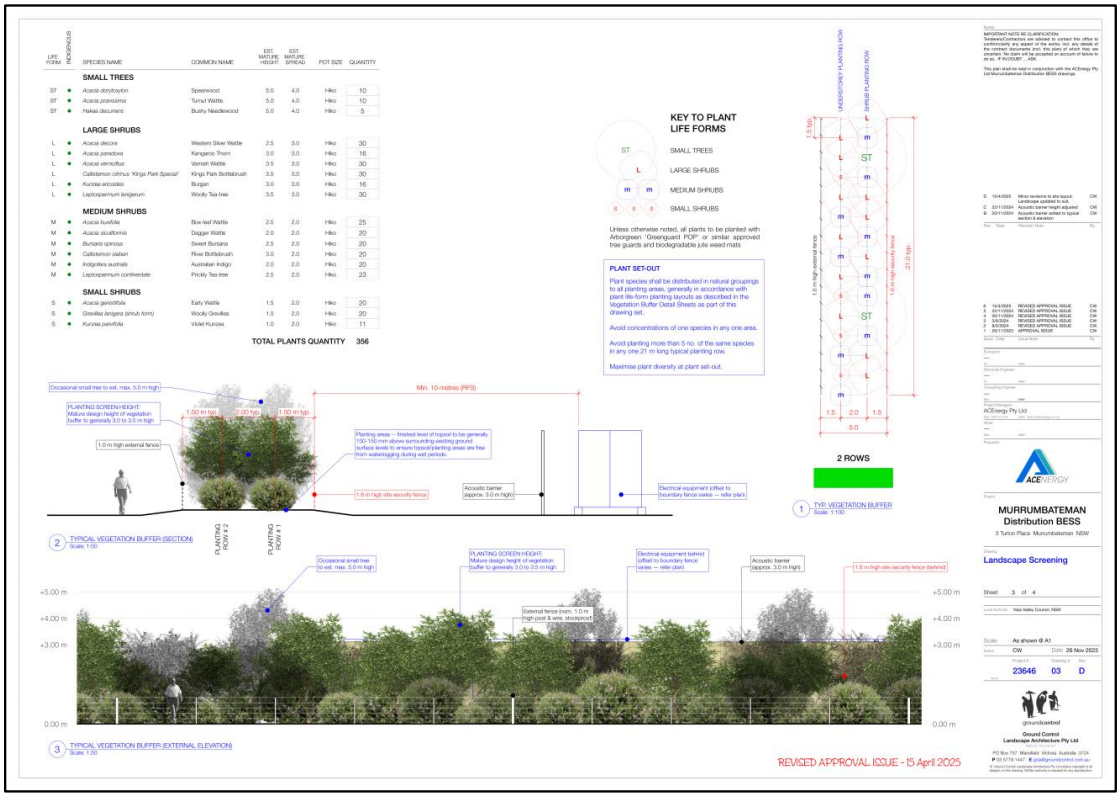
	▪ Notify the O&M Manager about the incident ▪ Notify the O&M Manager of any required assistance ▪ Keep the O&M Manager up to date on the incident. ▪ Dial 000 for emergency services, if required. ▪ Terminate incident. After the incident: ▪ Confirm it is safe to return to work. ▪ Complete debrief. ▪ Complete an incident report for O&M Manager. ▪ Provide counselling as required. ▪ Return to work if deemed safe to do so.
Employees	During the incident: ▪ Raise the alarm. ▪ Contact the HSE Officer. ▪ Provide details on the emergency. ▪ Follow the emergency procedure with instructions from O&M Manager and HSE Officer After the incident: ▪ Return to work after receiving confirmation from HSE Officer.
First Responders	During the incident: ▪ Attempt first attack extinguishing and containment, if safe to do so. ▪ Keep the HSE Officer up to date on the incident. ▪ Rescue any injured personnel, if safe to do so. ▪ Extinguish the fire, if possible and be safe to do so. After the incident: ▪ Return to work after receiving confirmation from HSE Officer.
Trained First Aiders	During the incident: ▪ Provide first aid, if required. After the incident: ▪ Return to work after receiving confirmation from HSE Officer.

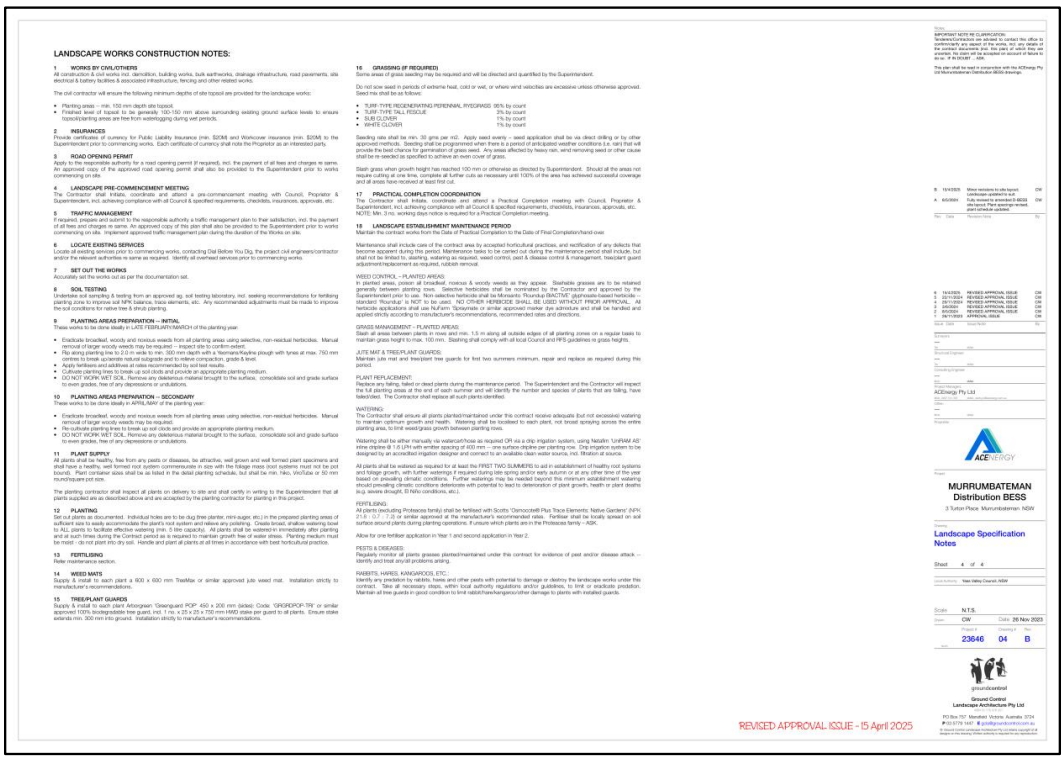
Appendix III: Southern Tablelands BFRMP Precinct Map



Appendix IV: Landscape Plan







LANDSCAPE WORKS CONSTRUCTION NOTES:

1 WORKS BY CIVIL/OTHERS
All construction & civil works incl. demolition, building works, bulk earthworks, drainage infrastructure, road pavements, site electrical & battery facilities & associated infrastructure, fencing and other related works.

The civil contractor will ensure the following minimum depths of site topsoil are provided for the landscape works:

- Planting areas – min. 150 mm depth site topsoil.
- Finished level of topsoil to be generally 100-150 mm above surrounding existing ground surface levels to ensure topsoil/planting areas are free from waterlogging during wet periods.

2 INSURANCES
Provide certificates of currency for Public Liability Insurance (min. $20M) and Workcover insurance (min. $20M) to the Superintendent prior to commencing works. Each certificate of currency shall note the Proprietor as an interested party.

3 ROAD OPENING PERMIT
Apply to the responsible authority for a road opening permit (if required), incl. the payment of all fees and charges re same. An approved copy of the approved road opening permit shall also be provided to the Superintendent prior to works commencing on site.

4 LANDSCAPE PRE-COMMENCEMENT MEETING
The Contractor shall initiate, coordinate and attend a pre-commencement meeting with Council, Proprietor & Superintendent, incl. achieving compliance with all Council & specified requirements, checklists, insurances, approvals, etc.

5 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT
If required, prepare and submit to the responsible authority a traffic management plan to their satisfaction, incl. the payment of all fees and charges re same. An approved copy of this plan shall also be provided to the Superintendent prior to works commencing on site. Implement approved traffic management plan during the duration of the Works on site.

6 LOCATE EXISTING SERVICES
Locate all existing services prior to commencing works, contacting Dial Before You Dig, the project civil engineers/contractor and/or the relevant authorities re same as required. Identify all overhead services prior to commencing works.

7 SET OUT THE WORKS
Accurately set the works out as per the documentation set.

8 SOIL TESTING
Undertake soil sampling & testing from an approved ag. soil testing laboratory, incl. seeking recommendations for fertilising planting zone to improve soil NPK balance, trace elements, etc. Any recommended adjustments must be made to improve the soil conditions for native tree & shrub planting.

9 PLANTING AREAS PREPARATION – INITIAL
These works to be done ideally in LATE FEBRUARY/MARCH of the planting year.

- Eradicate broadleaf, woody and noxious weeds from all planting areas using selective, non-residual herbicides. Manual removal of larger woody weeds may be required – inspect site to confirm extent.
- Rip along planting line to 2.0 m wide to min. 300 mm depth with a Yeoman/Keyline plough with tynes at max. 750 mm centres to break up/aerate natural subgrade and to relieve compaction, grade & level.
- Apply fertilisers and additives at rates recommended by soil test results.
- Cultivate planting lines to break up soil clods and provide an appropriate planting medium.
- DO NOT WORK WET SOIL. Remove any deleterious material brought to the surface, consolidate soil and grade surface to even grades, free of any depressions or undulations.

10 PLANTING AREAS PREPARATION – SECONDARY
These works to be done ideally in APRIL/MAY of the planting year.

- Eradicate broadleaf, woody and noxious weeds from all planting areas using selective, non-residual herbicides. Manual removal of larger woody weeds may be required.
- Re-cultivate planting lines to break up soil clods and provide an appropriate planting medium.
- DO NOT WORK WET SOIL. Remove any deleterious material brought to the surface, consolidate soil and grade surface to even grades, free of any depressions or undulations.

11 PLANT SUPPLY
All plants shall be healthy, free from any pests or diseases, be attractive, well grown and well formed plant specimens and shall have a healthy, well formed root system commensurate in size with the foliage mass (root systems must not be pot bound). Plant container sizes shall be as listed in the detail planting schedule, but shall be min. 14lo, VicOuba or 50 mm round/square pot size.

The planting contractor shall inspect all plants on delivery to site and shall certify in writing to the Superintendent that all plants supplied are as described above and are accepted by the planting contractor for planting in this project.

12 PLANTING
Set out plants as documented. Individual holes are to be dug (tree planter, mini-auger, etc.) in the prepared planting areas of sufficient size to easily accommodate the plants with adequate backfill around roots. Create broad, shallow watering bowl to each plant. Plants to be watered in immediately after planting (1 litre capacity). All plants shall be watered in immediately after planting and at all times during the Contract period as is required to maintain growth free of water stress. Planting medium must be moist - do not plant into dry soil. Handle and plant all plants at all times in accordance with best horticultural practice.

13 FERTILISING
Refer maintenance section.

14 WEED MATS
Supply & install to each plant a 900 x 600 mm TreeMax or similar approved jute weed mat. Installation strictly to manufacturer's recommendations.

15 TREE/PLANT GUARDS
Supply & install to each plant Arborgreen 'Greenguard POP' 450 x 200 mm (sides) Code: 'GRSPOP-TPI' or similar approved 100% biodegradable tree guard, incl. 1 no. x 25 x 25 x 750 mm HWD stake per guard to all plants. Ensure stake extends min. 300 mm into ground. Installation strictly to manufacturer's recommendations.

16 GRASSING (IF REQUIRED)
Some areas of grass seeding may be required and will be directed and quantified by the Superintendent.

Do not sow seed in periods of extreme heat, cold or wet, or where wind velocities are excessive unless otherwise approved. Seed mix shall be as follows:

- TURF-TYPE REGENERATING PERENNIAL RYEGRASS 95% by count
- TURF-TYPE TALL FESCUE 3% by count
- SUB CLOVER 1% by count
- WHITE CLOVER 1% by count

Seeding rate shall be min. 30 gms per m2. Apply seed evenly – seed application shall be via direct drilling or by other approved methods. Seeding shall be programmed when there is a period of anticipated weather conditions (i.e. rain) that will provide the best chance for germination of grass seed. Any areas affected by heavy rain, wind removing seed or other cause shall be re-seeded as specified to achieve an even cover of grass.

Slash grass when growth height has reached 100 mm or otherwise as directed by Superintendent. Should all the areas not require cutting at one time, complete all further cuts as necessary until 100% of the area has achieved successful coverage and all areas have received at least first cut.

17 PRACTICAL COMPLETION COORDINATION
The Contractor shall initiate, coordinate and attend a Practical Completion meeting with Council, Proprietor & Superintendent, incl. achieving compliance with all Council & specified requirements, checklists, insurances, approvals, etc. NOTE: Min. 3 no. working days notice is required for a Practical Completion meeting.

18 LANDSCAPE ESTABLISHMENT MAINTENANCE PERIOD
Maintain the contract works from the Date of Practical Completion to the Date of Final Completion/hand-over

Maintenance shall include care of the contract area by accepted horticultural practices, and rectification of any defects that become apparent during this period. Maintenance tasks to be carried out during the maintenance period shall include, but shall not be limited to, slashing, watering as required, weed control, pest & disease control & management, tree/plant guard adjustment/replacement as required, rubbish removal.

WEED CONTROL – PLANTED AREAS:
In planted areas, poison all broadleaf, noxious & woody weeds as they appear. Slashable grasses are to be retained generally between planting rows. Selective herbicides shall be nominated by the Contractor and approved by the Superintendent prior to use. Non-selective herbicide shall be Monsanto 'Roundup BIACTIVE' glyphosate-based herbicide – standard 'Roundup' is NOT to be used. NO OTHER HERBICIDE SHALL BE USED WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL. All herbicide applications shall use NuFarm 'Spraymate or similar approved marker dye admixture and shall be handled and applied strictly according to manufacturer's recommendations, recommended rates and directions.

GRASS MANAGEMENT – PLANTED AREAS:
Slash all areas between plants in rows and min. 1.5 m along all outside edges of all planting zones on a regular basis to maintain grass height to max. 100 mm. Slashing shall comply with all local Council and RFS guidelines re grass heights.

JUTE MAT & TREE/PLANT GUARDS:
Maintain jute mat and tree/plant tree guards for first two summers minimum, repair and replace as required during this period.

PLANT REPLACEMENT:
Replace any failing, failed or dead plants during the maintenance period. The Superintendent and the Contractor will inspect the full planting areas at the end of each summer and will identify the number and species of plants that are failing, have failed/died. The Contractor shall replace all such plants identified.

WATERING:
The Contractor shall ensure all plants planted/maintained under this contract receive adequate (but not excessive) watering to maintain optimum growth and health. Watering shall be localised to each plant, not broad spraying across the entire planting area, to limit weed/grass growth between planting rows.

Watering shall be either manually via watercart/hose as required OR via a drip irrigation system, using Netafim 'UNIRAM AS' inline dripline @ 1.6 LPH with emitter spacing of 400 mm – one surface dripline per planting row. Drip irrigation system to be designed by an accredited irrigation designer and connect to an available clean water source, incl. filtration at source.

All plants shall be watered as required for at least the FIRST TWO SUMMERS to aid in establishment of healthy root systems and foliage growth, with further waterings if required during late spring and/or early autumn or at any other time of the year based on prevailing climatic conditions. Further waterings may be needed beyond this minimum establishment watering should prevailing climatic conditions deteriorate with potential to lead to deterioration of plant growth, health or plant deaths (e.g. severe drought, El Niño conditions, etc.).

FERTILISING:
All plants (excluding Proteaceae family) shall be fertilised with Scotts 'Osmocote® Plus Trace Elements: Native Gardens' (NPK 21.8 : 0.7 : 7.3) or similar approved at the manufacturer's recommended rates. Fertiliser shall be locally spread on soil surface around plants during planting operations. Ensure which plants are in the Proteaceae family – ASK.

Allow for one fertiliser application in Year 1 and second application in Year 2.

PESTS & DISEASES:
Regularly monitor all plants grasses planted/maintained under this contract for evidence of pest and/or disease attack – identify and treat any/all problems arising.

RABBITS, HARES, KANGAROOS, ETC.:
Identify any predation by rabbits, hares and other pests with potential to damage or destroy the landscape works under this contract. Take all necessary steps, within local authority regulations and/or guidelines, to limit or eradicate predation. Maintain all tree guards in good condition to limit rabbit/hare/kangaroo/other damage to plants with installed guards.

REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE - 15 April 2025

B 15/4/2025 Minor revisions to site layout, landscape updated to suit
A 6/5/2024 Fully reviewed to amended ID 6233 site layout. Plant quantities revised, plant schedule updated

5 11/3/2025 REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE CW
4 22/11/2024 REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE CW
3 23/7/2024 REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE CW
2 3/5/2024 REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE CW
1 6/3/2024 REVISED APPROVAL ISSUE CW
- 26/11/2023 APPROVAL ISSUE CW

ACEnergy Pty Ltd

ACENERGY

MURRUMBATEMAN
Distribution BESS
3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman NSW

Landscape Specification Notes

Sheet 4 of 4

Yass Valley Council, NSW

Scale N.T.S.
Drawn CW Date 26 Nov 2023
Project 23646 Drawing # 04 Issue B

groundcontrol
Ground Control
Landscape Architecture Pty Ltd

8 REFERENCES

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Ahmed A

From: Letara Judd <letara@hec.eco>
Sent: Friday, 7 March 2025 11:32 AM
To: Ahmed A
Cc: Katherine Harris; Harris Environmental
Subject: RE: Murrumbateman D-BESS Project
Attachments: BMP for proposed Battery Energy Storage System 3 Turton Place Murrumbateman 250307 v3.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: Red category

Hi Ahmed,

Please find attached updated Bushfire Management Plan with Landscape Plan included.

This email confirms the proposed Landscape Plan and planting is consistent with the APZ requirements. The proposed planting is located outside the identified APZ. All recommendations remain unchanged.

Kind Regards

Letara Judd

Bushfire Consultant – BPAD L2

letara@hec.eco | (02) 4236 0954 | (02) 4862 1168

Harrisenvironmental CONSULTING

Wastewater | Bushfire | Stormwater

From: Ahmed A <Ahmed.A@acenergy.com.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 25 February 2025 12:42 PM

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Traffic Impact Assessment Report

3 Turton Place Murrumbateman NSW

Project Number 230350
Final Report 6/05/2024

Client ACEnergy Pty Ltd

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Document control record

Document prepared by:

Trafficworks Pty Ltd

ABN 59 125 488 977

1st Floor 132 Upper Heidelberg Rd Ivanhoe Vic 3079

PO Box 417 Ivanhoe Vic 3079

Ph (03) 9490 5900

www.trafficworks.com.au

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Document control	
Report title	3 Turton Place Murrumbateman NSW
Project number	230350
Client	ACEnergy Pty Ltd
Client contact	Ahmed Adel

Revision	**Date issued**	**Revision details / status**	**Prepared by**	**Authorised by**
Draft	3/04/2024	Preliminary draft	Stuart Redman	Kate Kennedy
Final	6/05/2024	Final	Stuart Redman	Kate Kennedy

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Executive summary

ACEnergy Pty Ltd engaged Trafficworks to undertake a traffic impact assessment (TIA) for the proposed development of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at **3 Turton Place Murrumbateman NSW**.

The table below summarises the subject site's proposed development and our conclusions and recommendations.

Address	3 Turton Place Murrumbateman NSW
Zoning	RU4: Primary Production Small Lots
Proposed development	Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)
Road network	— Barton Highway (A25 - State Road) — Murrumbateman Road (Regional Road) — Patemans Lane (Local Road) — Turton Place (Local Road)
Traffic generation	Construction phase (per day): — 3 light vehicles — 2 heavy vehicles Operation phase (per fortnight): — 2 light vehicles
Car parking	Construction phase: 3 spaces Operation phase: 2 spaces
Conclusion	We conclude that subject to the implementation of our recommendations, no traffic engineering reasons would prevent the development from proceeding. — the peak hour traffic generation is likely to occur during the construction phase of the development, where the peak hour volumes are expected to be: — 3 light vehicles — 1 heavy vehicle — the construction phase is expected to take 4 weeks — the subject site will generate a peak car parking demand of 3 spaces during the construction period and 2 spaces post-opening — the development plan includes a designated parking area that will satisfy the parking demand

	— adequate sight distance is available at the intersection of Patemans Lane and Murrumbateman Road; no further treatment is required — the proposed site access driveway along Turton Place satisfies the minimum entering sight distance, as specified in AS/NZS 2890.1 — the setback of the proposed security gate from the edge of Turton Place will accommodate the storage of a 19 m semi-trailer clear of the traffic lane — no additional turn lane treatments are required due to the traffic generated by the proposed development.
Recommendations	It is recommended that: — **Recommendation 1:** trim or remove the tree restricting sightlines to the north (as shown in Figure 17) — **Recommendation 2:** the subject site access driveway should be constructed according to Figure 7.4 in Austroads Guide to Road Design Part 4 requirements and to the council's satisfaction.

Referenced documents

References used in the preparation of this report include the following:

- Austroads Guide to Road Design
  - Part 4: Intersections and Crossings, for details of the access driveway
  - Part 4A – Unsignalised and Signalised Intersections, for sight distance criteria and provision for turning vehicles at intersections (AGRD4)
- Austroads Guide to Traffic Management
  - Part 6 – Intersections, Interchanges and Crossings Management**,** for sight distance criteria and provision for turning vehicles at intersections (AGTM6)
- Australian Standards:
  - AS 2890.1-2004 Parking facilities - Off-street car parking
- RTA Guide to Traffic Generating Developments, Version 2.2, October 2002.
- Yass Valley Council
  - Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2013
  - Yass Valley Development Control Plan (DCP) 2013*

    *2024 version currently on exhibition

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1 Introduction

ACEnergy Pty Ltd engaged Trafficworks to undertake a traffic impact assessment (TIA) for the proposed development of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at **3 Turton Place Murrumbateman NSW**.

For the details about:

- existing site conditions – see section 2
- description of the proposed development – see section 3.1
- traffic impact of the proposed development – see section 3
- car parking assessment of the proposed development – see section 4
- assessment of the access to the proposed development – see section 5
- our conclusions and recommendations – see section 5.3.

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2 Existing conditions

2.1 Subject site

The subject site is:

- located about 3 km southeast of Murrumbateman and comprises a small area contained within Lot 23 of DP248413
- currently occupied by farmland with a residential dwelling and outbuildings.

Vehicular access to the subject site is available from Murrumbateman Road (Regional Road) via Patemans Lane and Turton Place.

Figure 1 shows the subject site's location, which is surrounded by farmland and rural properties.



Figure 1: Location plan (reproduced with permission from Nearmap)

The subject site is located within a wider area of the RU4: Primary Production Small Lots zone on the south side of the regional road and east of the Barton Highway (a state road located within SP2: Classified Road zone), as per the Yass Valley Council's (council) Local Environmental Plan (LEP).

Figure 2 shows the zoning for the subject site and surrounding area.

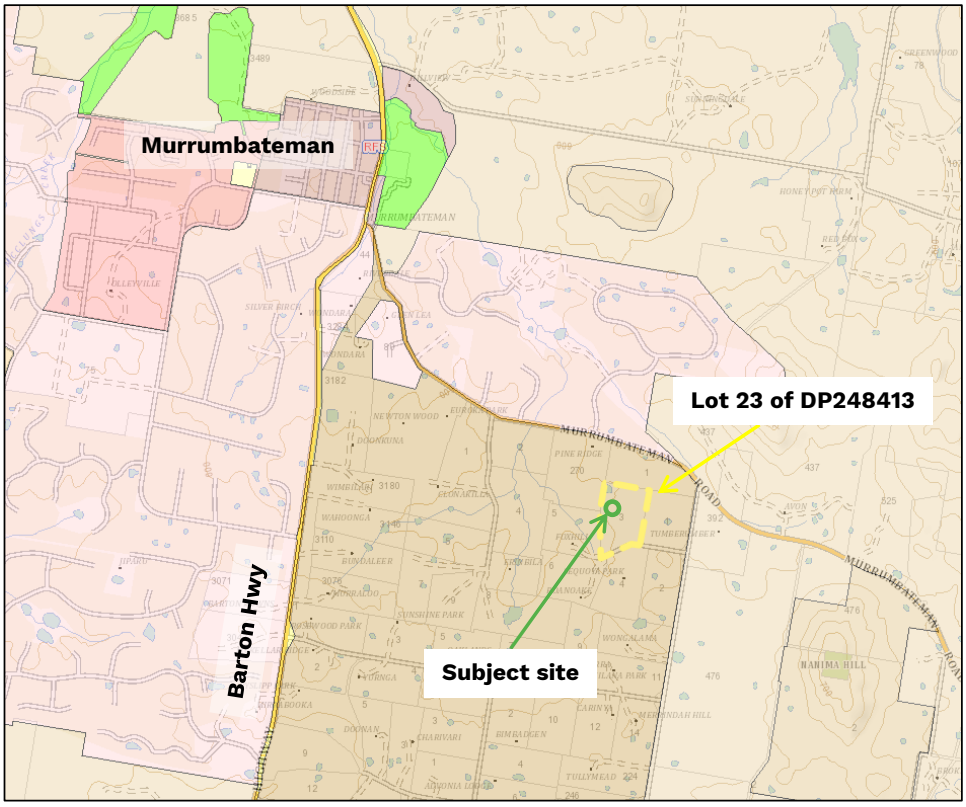


Figure 2: Zoning plan (reproduced from NSW ePlanning Spatial Viewer)

2.2 Road network

The road network includes:

- Barton Highway (A25 - State Road)
- Murrumbateman Road (Regional Road)
- Patemans Lane (Local Road)
- Turton Place (Local Road)

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2.2.1 Barton Highway (A25)

Table 1 describes the features of this road.

Table 1: Barton Highway features

Feature	Description
Road type	Classified state arterial road managed by Transport for New South Wales (TfNSW) and part of the National Auslink network.
Access	Connects Hume Highway at Yass to Federal Highway in Canberra
Carriageway	Two-lane, two-way sealed road consisting of 2x 3.5 m traffic lanes with sealed shoulders ranging from 2.0 m to 3.5 m wide. A channelised right turn lane is provided for northbound vehicles turning right at the T-intersection with Murrumbateman Road.
Road reservation	30 - 40 m wide
Speed limit	50 km/h through Murrumbateman 70 km/h about 200 m south of the intersection with Murrumbateman Road 100 km/h about 800 m south of the intersection with Murrumbateman Road

Figure 3 and Figure 4 provides further information about the road.



Figure 3: Barton Highway, looking north towards the intersection with Murrumbateman Road (Source: Google)



Figure 4: Barton Highway, looking south towards the intersection with Murrumbateman Road (Source: Google)

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2.2.2 Murrumbateman Road

Table 1 describes the features of this road.

Table 2: Murrumbateman Road features

Feature	Description
Road type	Classified regional road managed by the Council and funded by TfNSW.
Access	Connects Barton Highway (to the west) with Sutton Road (to the east)
Carriageway	Two-lane, two-way sealed road consisting of 2 x 3.2 m traffic lanes with 0.6 m wide sealed shoulders. An auxiliary right turn lane is provided for eastbound vehicles turning right at the intersection with Patemans Lane. An offroad shared use path (SUP) is within the road reserve. It crosses the road (north to south) about 80 m west of the Patemans Lane intersection.
Road reservation	20 m wide
Speed limit	70 km/h (subject length between Barton Highway and 100 m east of the intersection with Patemans Lane)

Figure 5 and Figure 6 provides further information about the road.



Figure 5: Murrumbateman Road, looking southeast from the intersection with Patemans Lane



Figure 6: Murrumbateman Road, looking northwest from the intersection with Patemans Lane towards the SUP crossing

2.2.3 Patemans Lane

Table 3 describes the features of this road.

Table 3: Patemans Lane features

Feature	Description
Road type	Local road managed by council
Access	Provides access to a few residential properties and farmland to Murrumbateman Road. The road is a no-through road south of the intersection with Euroka Avenue.
Carriageway	Two-way sealed road with a 6.0 m wide formation
Road reservation	20 m wide
Speed limit	70 km/h (subject length between Murrumbateman Road and 90 m south of the intersection with Turton Place)

Figure 7 and Figure 8 provide further information about the road.



Figure 7: Patemans Lane, looking north from the intersection with Turton Place



Figure 8: Patemans Lane, looking north towards the intersection with Murrumbateman Road, the SUP to the left of the road formation.

2.2.4 Turton Place

Table 3 describes the features of this road.

Table 4: Turton Place features

Feature	Description
Road type	Local road managed by council
Access	Provides access to a few residential properties and farmland to Patemans Lane. The road is a no-through road.
Carriageway	Two-way sealed road with a 6.0 m wide formation
Road reservation	20 m wide
Speed limit	no posted speed limit signs exist Due to short length, no-through access and horizontal/vertical alignment, the assumed operating speed is in the order of 50 km/h to 60 km/h

Figure 9 and Figure 10 provide further information about the road.



Figure 9: Turton Place, looking southwest towards the end of the road, near the proposed subject site driveway



Figure 10: Turton Place, looking northeast towards the bend in the road, near the proposed subject site driveway

2.3 Traffic volumes

2.3.1 Barton Highway

TfNSW Traffic Volume Viewer details traffic volumes for many of the arterial roads in New South Wales. Scrutiny of the records indicates that in 2012, during a typical midweek period, for Station Id: 94445:

- northbound volume of 4,354 vehicles per day (vpd) and southbound volume of 4,929 vpd
- AM commuter peak (7:00 to 8:00 am) northbound volume of 158 vehicles per hour (vph) and southbound volume of 687 vph
- PM commuter peak (5:00 pm – 6:00 pm) northbound volume of 559 vph and southbound volume of 290 vph.

Projecting the traffic volumes to 2024 by adopting an annual compound growth rate of 3 %[1] per annum, Barton Highway is currently estimated to carry:

- northbound volume of 6,208 vpd and southbound volume of 7,028 vpd
- AM commuter peak (7:00 to 8:00 am) northbound volume of 225 vph and southbound volume of 979 vph
- PM commuter peak (5:00 pm – 6:00 pm) northbound volume of 797 vph and southbound volume of 413 vph.

2.3.2 Regional / Local Roads

The council has no recent traffic volume data for any of the local roads (including Murrumbateman Road) mentioned in Section 2.2. The local roads are not expected to carry more traffic than the Barton Highway. As a result, the average daily traffic volume has been estimated for each of the roads as follows:

- Murrumbateman Road acts as a regional link road / collector road
    - about 5,000 vpd
    - peak-hour two-way volume of 500 vph
- Patemans Lane services some residential and rural farmland properties
    - less than 1,000 vpd
    - peak-hour two-way volume of 100 vph

[1] Investigation of traffic volumes within the region indicates a less than 3 % growth rate within the last 10 years. Therefore, the assumption of applying a 3 % growth rate is conservative for projecting the traffic volumes to 2024.

- Turton Place services rural residential properties
    - less than 100 vpd
    - peak-hour two-way volume of 10 vph

2.4 Crash history

The TfNSW Centre for Road Safety website details all injury crashes throughout New South Wales and reports that a single casualty crash occurred on the roads near the subject site in the last 5 years (2018 – 2022).In 2020, a minor injury rear-end (RUM code 30) crash occurred in daylight conditions on Murrumbateman Road southeast of the intersection with Patemans Lane.

Based on this, we conclude that no trend requires immediate investigation.

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3 Traffic assessment of the proposed development

3.1 The proposal

The proposed development involves constructing a BESS with batteries and a medium voltage power station (MVPS) housed in 40ft containers. The proposed facility will be unstaffed, and the period that will generate the most traffic will be the construction phase.

Vehicular access to the site is proposed directly from Turton Place via an existing farm gate access approximately 100 m southwest of the bend in the road (Figure 11). An extract of the proposed development plan is shown in Figure 12, and the full plan is provided in Appendix 1.



Figure 11: The location of the proposed driveway access to the subject site to / from Turton Place

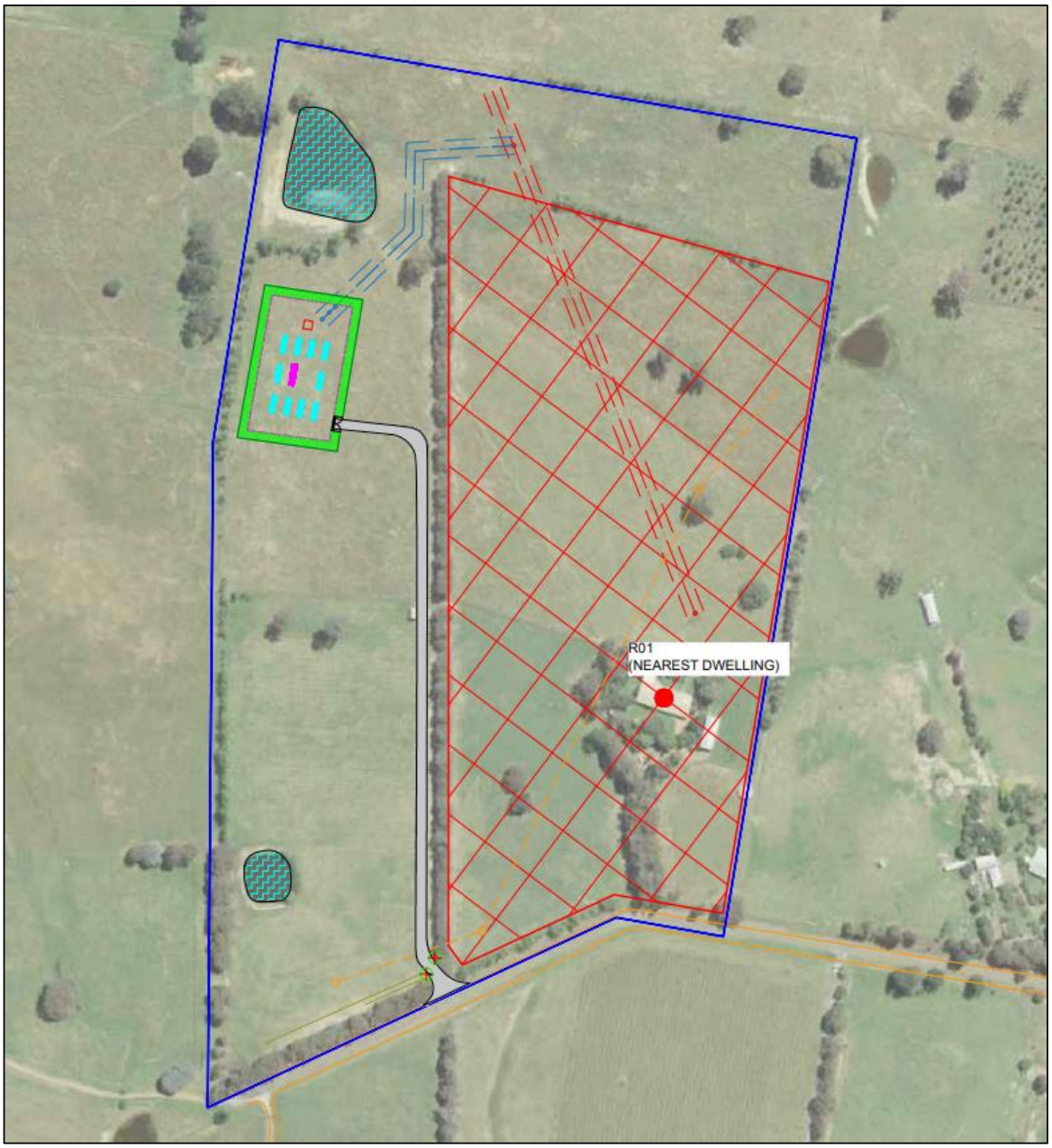


Figure 12: Extract of the development plan

3.1.1 Construction

On-site construction for the proposed BESS is limited mainly to assembly and connecting components with the typical battery energy storage system shipping containers. Most of the equipment will be transported to the subject site via rigid trucks, with only the batteries and MVPS required to be delivered by a 19 m semi-trailer (B-doubles will not be used for transportation).

The typical construction delivery schedule for this BESS is shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Construction delivery schedule

Time period	Site Works
Week 1	drainage, road and fencing works installation of concrete footings
Week 2	cable installation delivery of battery shipping containers and MVPS installation of battery shipping containers and inverter station
Week 3	electrical installation and cable termination electrical testing
Week 4	commissioning / demobilisation

There is a 4-week construction phase before the full operation of the BESS.

3.1.2 Heavy vehicle access to the subject site

All heavy vehicle traffic from Barton Highway will arrive/depart the subject site via Murrumbateman Road, Patemans Lane and Turton Place. Heavy vehicles will enter the subject site by turning left from Barton Highway to Murrumbateman Road, making 3 right turns at the intersections with Patemans Lane and Turton Place, and then entering the subject site about 500 m along Turton Place.

Heavy vehicles will exit the subject site in the reverse direction, making 3 left turns from Turton Place, Patemans Lane and Murrumbateman Road, and a right turn onto Barton Highway to head north towards Hume Highway.

Figure 13 indicates the route for all heavy vehicles arriving and departing the subject site.

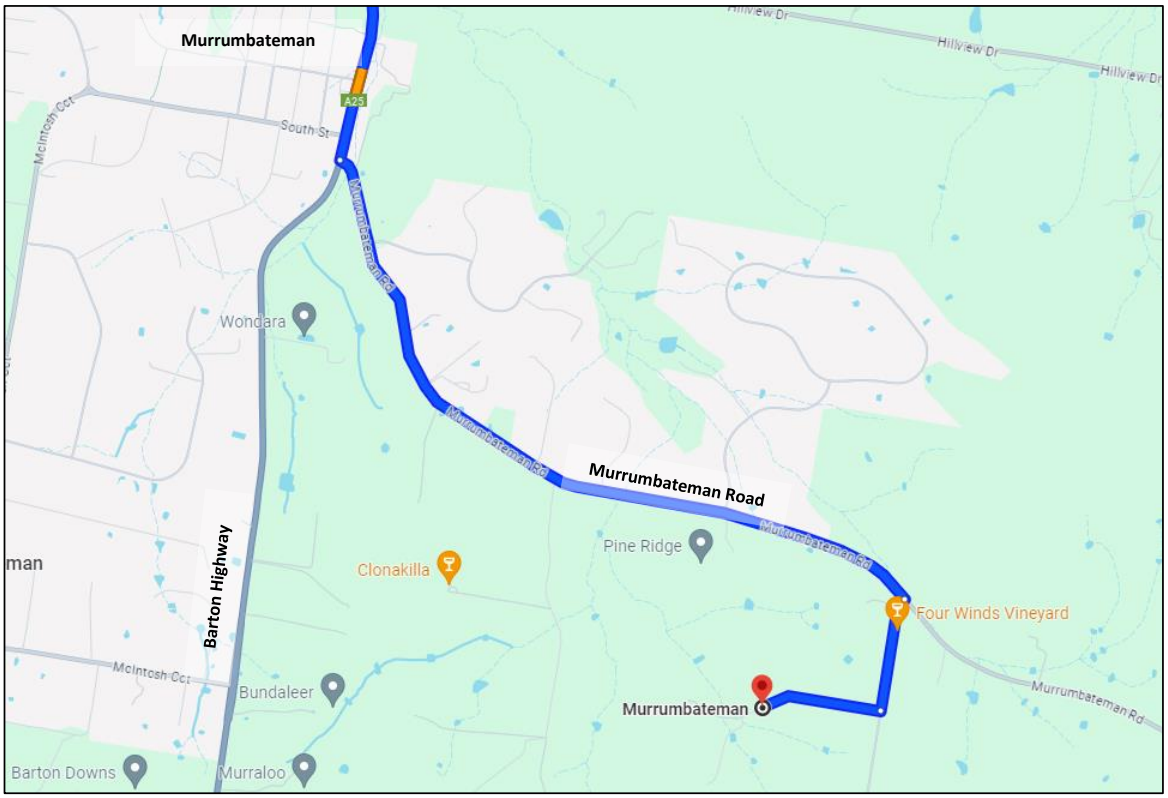


Figure 13: Indicative route for heavy vehicle arrivals (source: Google Maps)

The light vehicles are expected to arrive from Yass and Murrumbateman (from the north) or the more significant population centre of Canberra to the south.

3.1.3 Operation / decommissioning

The proposed use is based on a 40-year lease. If the lease is not renewed after this period, the facility's operator must decommission it, remove all installations, and restore the subject site to its pre-existing state.

Upon approval of this application, the responsible authority may require a decommissioning and rehabilitation plan to be submitted for endorsement.

3.2 Traffic generation

Typically, the traffic generation for new developments is estimated using the traffic generation rates provided in the RTA Guide to Traffic Generating Developments – Version 2.2A 2002 (the RTA Guide). However, the RTA Guide does not include traffic generation rates for BESS facilities.

Therefore, the traffic generation to/from the proposed development was estimated empirically. Traffic generation analysis was undertaken for the development's construction and operational phases to establish the likely peak traffic generation.

3.2.1 Construction phase traffic volumes

Based on the information provided, the peak light vehicle traffic generation is likely to occur from the start of the construction phase to the completion of this phase, with a maximum traffic generation likely to occur during weeks 1 to 3. This is when 3 construction staff vpd will access the subject site, resulting in a total daily traffic generation of 6 vpd (3 vpd arriving at the start of the shift and 3 vpd departing at the end of the shift).

Assuming the construction work will be undertaken during regular working hours, it is anticipated that 3 vehicles will access the subject site during a given peak hour (at the start of the morning shift).

Assessment of the heavy vehicles accessing the subject site during the construction phase revealed that peak traffic generation is likely to occur from the start, with a maximum number of heavy vehicles accessing the subject site during week 2. This period includes delivery of battery shipping containers when up to 10 heavy vehicles will access the subject site weekly and up to 2 vpd. Therefore, this would result in a total daily traffic generation of 4 vpd (2 vpd arriving and 2 vpd departing). It is unlikely that heavy vehicles will arrive within the same hour as deliveries will be managed by the project team (i.e. delivery schedule).

The vehicles are anticipated to access the subject site outside the commuter peak hours for the surrounding road network.

The impact of heavy vehicles is considered negligible; however, conservatively, for this assessment, it has been assumed that a single heavy vehicle will access the subject site during the AM (arriving) and PM (departing) peak hours.

3.2.2 Operational phase traffic volumes

The proposed BESS will have remote monitoring in real-time, allowing for constant surveillance and monitoring of the facility without the requirement for staffing on-site.

The compound contains critical infrastructure that requires a high degree of security. Upon identification of potential issues, action can be taken indirectly from the control centre or directly by chosen contractors who would travel to the subject site if required. During the operational phase, 2 light vehicles will attend the subject site fortnightly for general maintenance.

3.2.3 Peak traffic generation

Assessment of the likely traffic generation volumes during the construction and operational phases of the development revealed that the peak traffic generation for the subject site would occur during the construction phase. Therefore, the assessment was undertaken to determine the traffic implications during this phase.

Conclusion 1: the peak hour traffic generation is likely to occur during the construction phase of the development, where the peak hour volumes are expected to be:

- 3 light vehicles
- 1 heavy vehicle

Conclusion 2: the construction phase is expected to take 4 weeks.

3.3 Traffic distribution assumptions

Based on the surrounding road network, it has been assumed that light vehicle traffic will access the site as follows:

- 30% to/from the south (Canberra)
- 70% to/from the north (Murrumbateman / Yass)
- 100% of the heavy vehicles will arrive from the north to the subject site.

It has been assumed that all vehicles will enter the site in the AM peak and depart during the PM peak.

3.4 Anticipated traffic volumes

Given that the proposed BESS will have peak traffic generation during the construction phase, the anticipated development traffic volumes for 2024 (when the facility is under construction) are summarised in Table 6. This table reflects the turning movements at the Barton Highway / Murrumbateman Road intersection.

Table 6: Directional split of peak traffic flow at the intersection of the Barton Highway and Murrumbateman Road

Period	Type	Left In	Right In	Left Out	Right Out	Total
AM Peak	Light	2	1	0	0	3
	Heavy	1	0	0	0	1
	TOTAL	**3**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**4**
PM Peak	Light	0	0	1	2	3
	Heavy	0	0	0	1	1
	TOTAL	**0**	**0**	**1**	**3**	**4**

4 Car parking assessment of the proposed development

4.1 Planning scheme car parking assessment

The RTA Guide provides car parking rates for new developments. However, the parking requirement for BESS facilities is currently unavailable. Therefore, an empirical assessment was undertaken to estimate the demand for car parking for the proposed development.

Section 3.2.1 outlined that:

- up to 3 light vehicles are anticipated to access the subject site per day during the construction phase of the development

Section 3.2.2 outlined that:

- up to 2 light vehicles are anticipated to access the subject site every fortnight after the facility opens for periodic maintenance.

The proposed site plan indicates a formal on-site car parking area, providing sufficient space to accommodate the required on-site parking.

Conclusion 3: the subject site will generate a peak car parking demand of 3 spaces during construction and 2 spaces after opening.

Conclusion 4: the development plan includes a designated parking area to satisfy the parking demand.

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5 Access to the subject site

5.1 Site access – intersection SISD requirement

The visibility criterion typically applied to intersections is Safe Intersection Sight Distance (SISD). Figure 14 shows the SISD, which:

- is nominated in the Austroads Guide to Road Design, Part 4A (AGRD4) as the minimum distance that should be provided on a major road at any intersection (refer to Section 3.2.2 in AGRD4A)
- provides sufficient distance for the driver of a vehicle on the major road:
  - to observe a vehicle from the minor access approach moving into a collision situation, e.g., in the worst case, stalling across the traffic lanes
  - to decelerate to a stop before reaching the collision point.

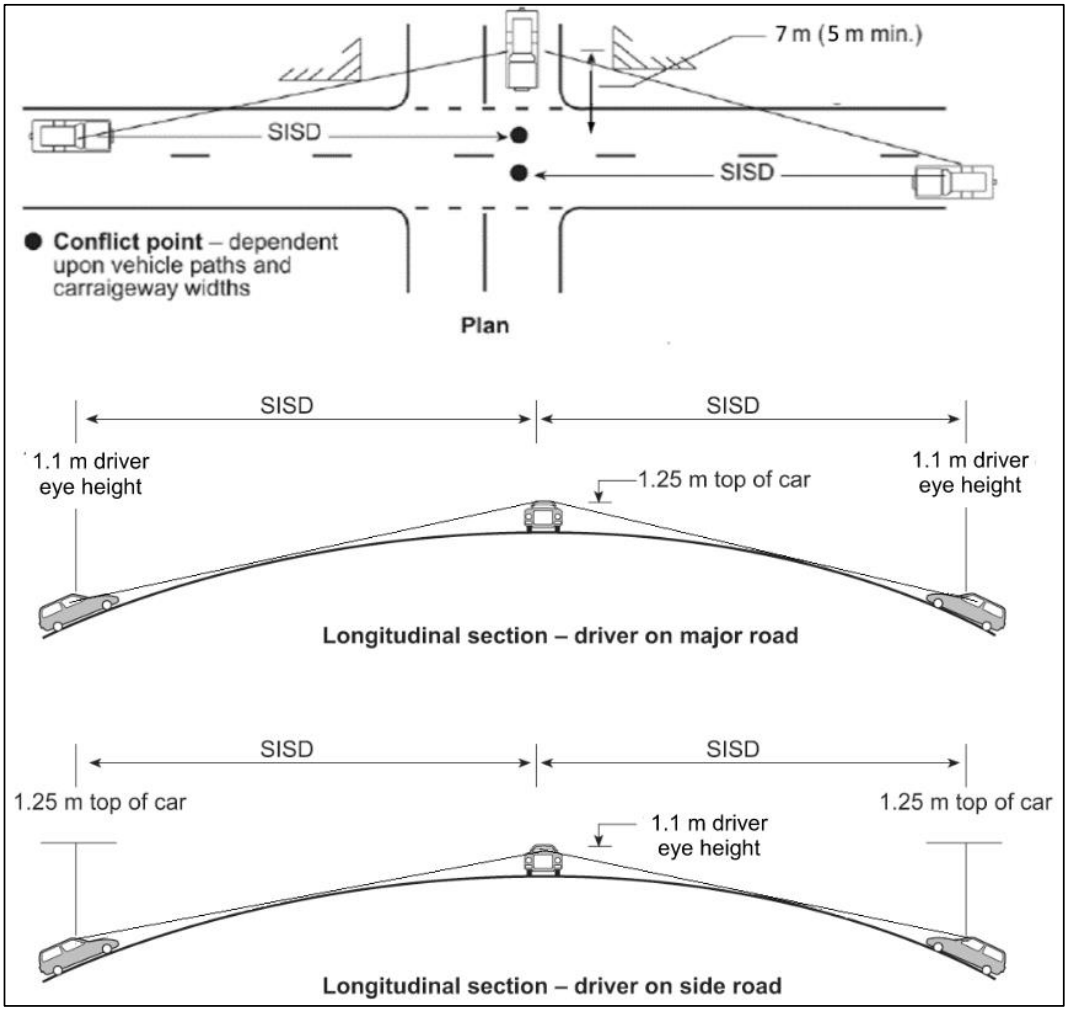


Figure 14: Safe Intersection Sight Distance (SISD) (Source: Figure 3.2 from AGRD4)

5.1.1 Murrumbateman Road

The minimum SISD criterion, specified in Table 3.2 of AGRD4A, requires clear visibility for a desirable minimum distance of **181 m**, relating to the general reaction time RT of 2 seconds and a design speed of 80 km/h (posted speed + 10 km/h).

SISD for heavy vehicles is calculated with reduced deceleration coefficients and increased observation heights to incorporate the different vehicle characteristics. With a 70 km/h design speed, the SISD for a heavy vehicle at this location is **178 m**.

The available sight distance at the intersection of Patemans Lane and Murrumbateman Road is demonstrated in Figure 15 and Figure 16.



Figure 15: Patemans Lane at the Murrumbateman Road intersection – view northwest (about 200 m)



Figure 16: Patemans Lane at the Murrumbateman Road intersection – view southeast (> 300 m)

The site assessment concluded that the visibility requirements at the Patemans Lane and Murrumbateman Road intersection are satisfied; no further treatment is required.

Conclusion 5: adequate sight distance is available at the intersection of Patemans Lane and Murrumbateman Road; no further treatment is required.

5.1.2 Patemans Lane

The minimum SISD criterion, specified in Table 3.2 of AGRD4A, requires clear visibility for a desirable minimum distance of **181 m**, relating to the general reaction time RT of 2 seconds and a design speed of 80 km/h (posted speed + 10 km/h).

SISD for heavy vehicles is calculated with reduced deceleration coefficients and increased observation heights to incorporate the different vehicle characteristics. With a 70 km/h design speed, the SISD for a heavy vehicle at this location is **178 m**.

The available sight distance at the intersection of Patemans Lane and Turton Place is demonstrated in Figure 17 and Figure 18.



Figure 17: Turton Place and Patemans Lane intersection – view north, the sightlines are restricted to 120 m due to a tree in the road reserve



Figure 18: Turton Place and Patemans Lane intersection — view south. Sightlines are about 180 m, with a slight downhill grade towards the intersection from the road's crest. A tree to the right of the road within the reserve reduces sightlines.

The site assessment concluded that the visibility requirements at the intersection of Turton Place and Patemans Lane to the:

- north is **not** satisfied
- south is satisfied.

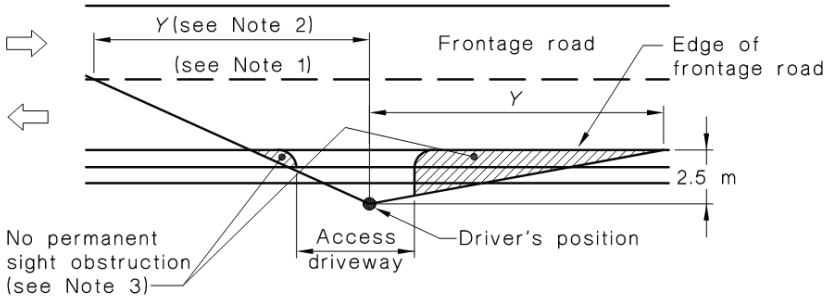
The sight constraints are existing issues, particularly the mature roadside vegetation

Recommendation 1: trim or remove the tree restricting sightlines to the north (as shown in Figure 17).

5.2 Site access – Access driveway ESD requirement

Section 3.2.4 in AS/NZS 2980.1 Parking Facilities – Part 1: Off-street car parking sets out the entering sight distance (ESD) criteria for a driver exiting an access driveway to traffic on the frontage road.

Un-signalised access driveways shall be located so the intersection sight distance available to drivers leaving the driveway along the frontage road is at least that shown in Figure 3.2 of AS/NZS 2890.1 (reproduced in Figure 19).



Frontage road speed (Note 4) km/h	Distance (*Y*) along frontage road m		
	Access driveways other than domestic (Note 5)		Domestic property access (Note 6)
	Desirable 5 s gap	Minimum SSD	
40	55	35	30
50	69	45	40
60	83	65	55
70	97	85	70
80	111	105	95
90	125	130	Use values from 2nd and 3rd columns
100	139	160	
110	153	190	

Figure 19: Sight distance requirements at driveways (Source: Figure 3.2 from AS/NZS 2890.1)

The proposed site access to the development along Turton Place is subject to an expected 60 km/h operating speed. The corresponding minimum Stopping Sight Distance (SSD) is 65 m. This can be achieved east and west of the proposed site access driveway. Figure 20 and Figure 21 show there is no vegetation restricting the sight distance to the northeast and southwest of the site access.



Figure 20: At the intersection of the site access driveway and Turton Place facing northeast



Figure 21: At the intersection of the site access driveway and Turton Place facing southwest

Conclusion 6: the proposed site access driveway to Turton Place satisfies the minimum entering sight distance specified in AS/NZS 2890.1.

5.3 Access location and operation

The subject site access driveway is recommended to be constructed per Figure 7.4 in Austroads Guide to Road Design Part 4: Intersections and Crossings requirements and to the council's satisfaction (refer to Figure 22). It should provide sufficient width to facilitate the movements of a 19 m semi-trailer accessing the subject site.

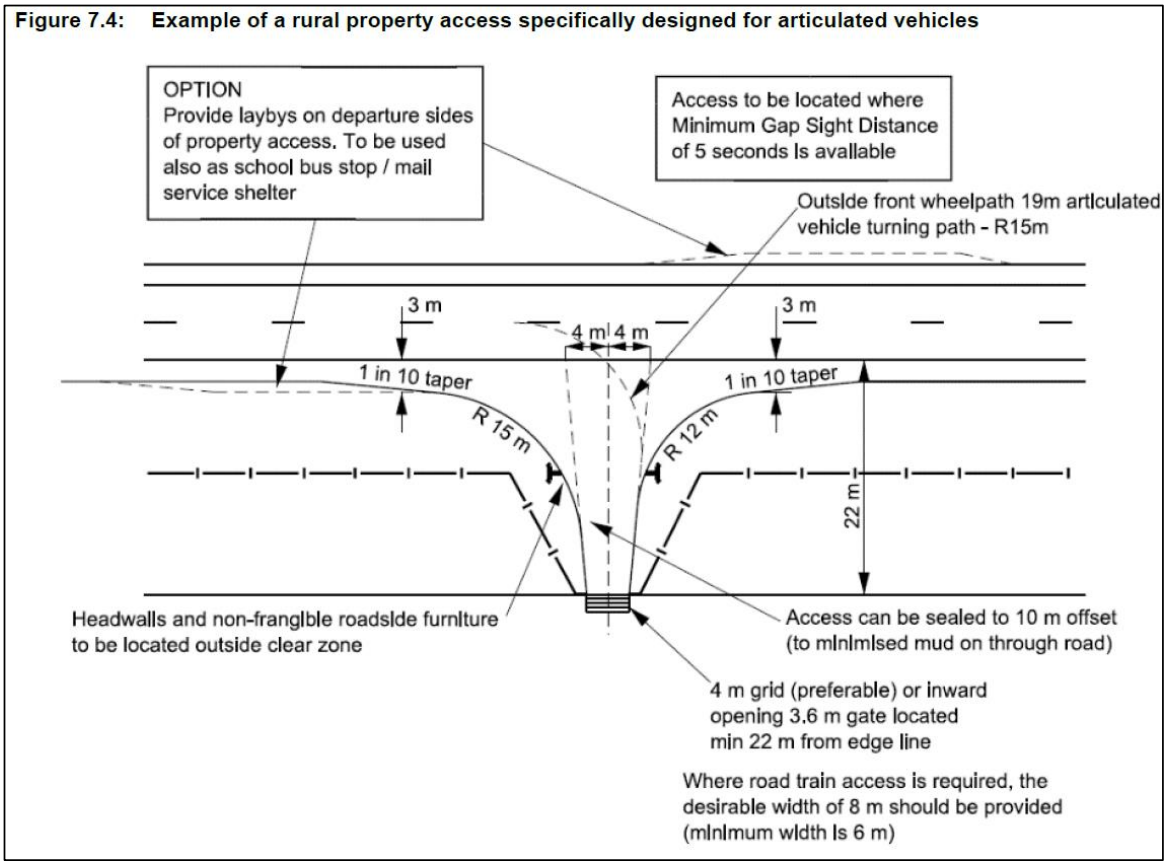


Figure 22: rural property access designed for an articulated vehicle

Recommendation 2: the subject site access driveway should be constructed according to Figure 7.4 in Austroads Guide to Road Design Part 4 requirements and to the council's satisfaction.

5.4 Site security

The proposed development will include installing site security and restricting access to authorised vehicles only. This will involve the provision of security fencing and gates at the development's entrance. The proposed security gate is >300 m from the edge of the formation on Turton Place, located at the end of the driveway.

It is indicated that only 1 truck is expected to arrive and queue at any time, with a 19 m semi-trailer being the largest vehicle accessing the subject site. Hence, the access gate is setback a sufficient distance from the edge of Turton Place to allow a 19 m semi-trailer to wait clear of the carriageway.

Conclusion 7: the setback of the proposed security gate from the edge of Turton Place will accommodate the storage of a 19 m semi-trailer clear of the traffic lane.

5.5 Local network impacts

The traffic turning from major roads into minor roads should not delay through traffic. Generally, turn treatments from major roads into minor roads at sign-controlled intersections are provided for safe and efficient intersection operation.

Due to the low turning volumes during construction (3 light vehicles and 1 heavy vehicle) and operation (2 light vehicles) and the short-term duration of the construction period, the safety and operation of the intersections between the subject site, Turton Place, Patemans Lane, Murrumbateman Road and Barton Highway can be maintained with no additional turn lane treatments.

Conclusion 8: no additional turn lane treatments are required due to the traffic generated by the proposed development.

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6 Conclusions and recommendations

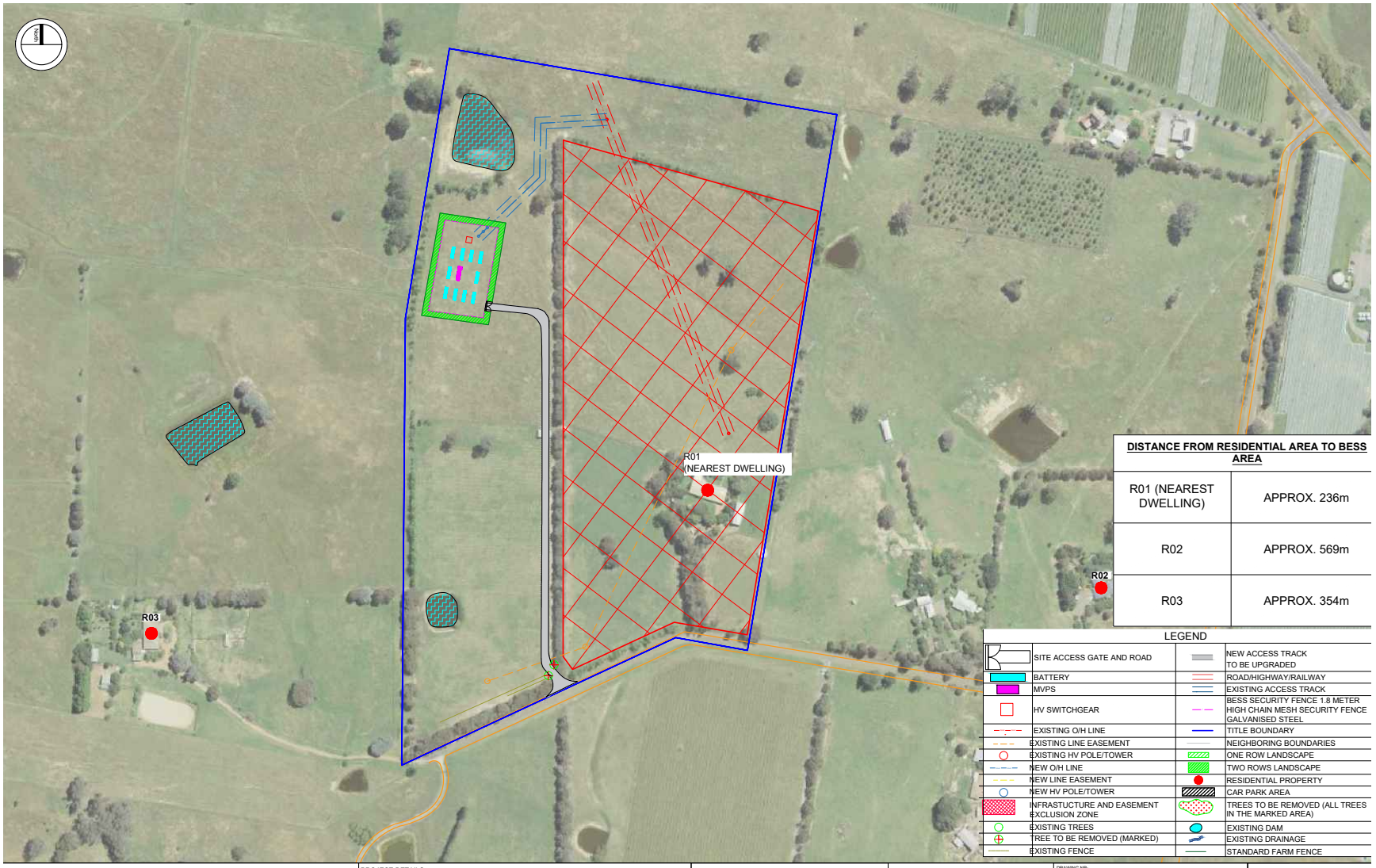
We conclude there are no traffic engineering reasons that would prevent the development from proceeding, as outlined below:

- the peak hour traffic generation is likely to occur during the construction phase of the development, where the peak hour volumes are expected to be:
    - 3 light vehicles
    - 1 heavy vehicle
- the construction phase is expected to take 4 weeks
- the subject site will generate a peak car parking demand of 3 spaces during the construction period and 2 spaces post-opening
- the development plan includes a designated parking area that will satisfy the parking demand
- adequate sight distance is available at the intersection of Patemans Lane and Murrumbateman Road; no further treatment is required
- the proposed site access driveway along Turton Place satisfies the minimum entering sight distance, as specified in AS/NZS 2890.1
- the setback of the proposed security gate from the edge of Turton Place will accommodate the storage of a 19 m semi-trailer clear of the traffic lane
- no additional turn lane treatments are required due to the traffic generated by the proposed development.

However, this TIA has identified a recommendation that needs to be addressed:

- **Recommendation 1:** trim or remove the tree restricting sightlines to the north (as shown in Figure 17)
- **Recommendation 2:** the subject site access driveway should be constructed according to Figure 7.4 in Austroads Guide to Road Design Part 4 requirements and to the council's satisfaction.

Appendix 1 – Development Plans


R01
(NEAREST DWELLING)
R02
R03
DISTANCE FROM RESIDENTIAL AREA TO BESS AREA
R01 (NEAREST DWELLING) APPROX. 236m
R02 APPROX. 569m
R03 APPROX. 354m
LEGEND
SITE ACCESS GATE AND ROAD
BATTERY
MVPS
HV SWITCHGEAR
EXISTING O/H LINE
EXISTING LINE EASEMENT
EXISTING HV POLE/TOWER
NEW O/H LINE
NEW LINE EASEMENT
NEW HV POLE/TOWER
INFRASTUCTURE AND EASEMENT EXCLUSION ZONE
EXISTING TREES
TREE TO BE REMOVED (MARKED)
EXISTING FENCE
NEW ACCESS TRACK TO BE UPGRADED
ROAD/HIGHWAY/RAILWAY
EXISTING ACCESS TRACK
BESS SECURITY FENCE 1.8 METER HIGH CHAIN MESH SECURITY FENCE GALVANISED STEEL
TITLE BOUNDARY
NEIGHBORING BOUNDARIES
ONE ROW LANDSCAPE
TWO ROWS LANDSCAPE
RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY
CAR PARK AREA
TREES TO BE REMOVED (ALL TREES IN THE MARKED AREA)
EXISTING DAM
EXISTING DRAINAGE
STANDARD FARM FENCE
REVISIONS
REV STATUS DESCRIPTION DATE D.B. C.B.
A CP INITIAL ISSUE 07/06/23 XT RZ
B CP ADDED INFRASTRUCTURE AND EASEMENT EXCLUSION ZONE 20/11/23 XZ AJ
PROJECT DETAILS: MURRUMBATEMAN DISTRIBUTION BESS
3 TURTON PLACE MURRUMBATEMAN, NEW SOUTH WALES 2582
CLIENT DETAILS: ACENERGY PTY LTD
DRAWING TITLE: AERIAL LAYOUT 1 OF 2
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DRAWING NR: CP-1.0_023118
DRAWN BY: XZ
APPROVED BY: AJ
PROJECT MGR: LZ
SCALE: AS INDICATED
ISSUE: CONCEPT PLAN
ISSUE DATE: 20/11/2023
SHEET SIZE: A3
PROJECT NO: 23118
REV. NO: B
ACENERGY

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Appendix 2 – Acronyms and terms

Acronyms / terms	Definition
AGRD4	Austroads Guide to Road Design Part 4 – Intersections and crossings
AGRD4A	Austroads Guide to Road Design Part 4A – Unsignalised and signalised intersections
AGTM6	Austroads Guide to Traffic Management Part 6 – Intersections, interchanges and crossings management
AGTM8	Austroads Guide to Traffic Management Part 8 – Local street management
AS/NZS2890.1	Australian Standard / New Zealand Standard 2890.1 Parking facilities Part 1: Off-street car parking
DPE	Department of Planning and Environment
ESD	Entering site distance
PSP	Precinct structure plan
SIDRA	SIDRA intersection – micro analytical traffic engineering software to model the performance of intersections
SISD	safe intersection sight distance
TIA	traffic impact assessment
TfNSW	Transport for New Soth Wales (NSW)
vpd	vehicles per day
vph	vehicles per hour

WARATAH ECOLOGY

Flora and Fauna Report

3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman NSW 2582

Prepared for ACENERGY Pty Ltd



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DOCUMENT TRACKING

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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of this report

Waratah Ecology was commissioned by ACENERGY Pty Ltd ('the client') to undertake a flora and fauna assessment for a proposed development at 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman NSW 2582 ('the study area'). This document reports on the ecological values identified within the study area and considers both the direct and indirect impacts from the proposed works in relation to current environmental planning legislation. This includes an assessment of the impacts of native flora and fauna listed under the NSW *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act), and the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) that could occur in the study area.

1.2. Study Area Description

The study area is located at 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman, in the Local Government Area (LGA) of Yass Valley (refer to Figure 1). The study area is approximately 16.3 hectares (163,000m^2) and can be further identified as Lot 23 in Deposited Plan (DP) 248413 (refer to Figure 2). The study area is zoned as RU4 – Primary Production Small Lots, as per the Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2013 Land Zoning Map (Sheet LZN_005). The proposed development is permissible with consent under the Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013.

The study area consists of several grassed paddocks utilised for agricultural purposes, largely cleared of vegetation. A driveway bordered by tall trees runs north-south from Turton Place to a dwelling further surrounded by vegetation. Two dams are located in the northwest and southwest corners of the property.

1.3. Proposed Development

The proposed works involve the construction of a battery energy storage system (BESS) in the northwest of the property. It will occupy approximately 0.5ha, with a driveway to be developed along the eastern boundaries of the western paddocks, as well as an underground and overhead line connecting to the onsite dwelling. As per the development plans provided by the client (Figure 3), the works will require the removal of several trees from along the property's southern boundary, to allow for connection of a driveway to Turton Place.

Figure 1: Study area (3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman NSW 2582) (source: SIX Maps)



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Figure 2: Property area and Lot numbers (source: SIX Maps)

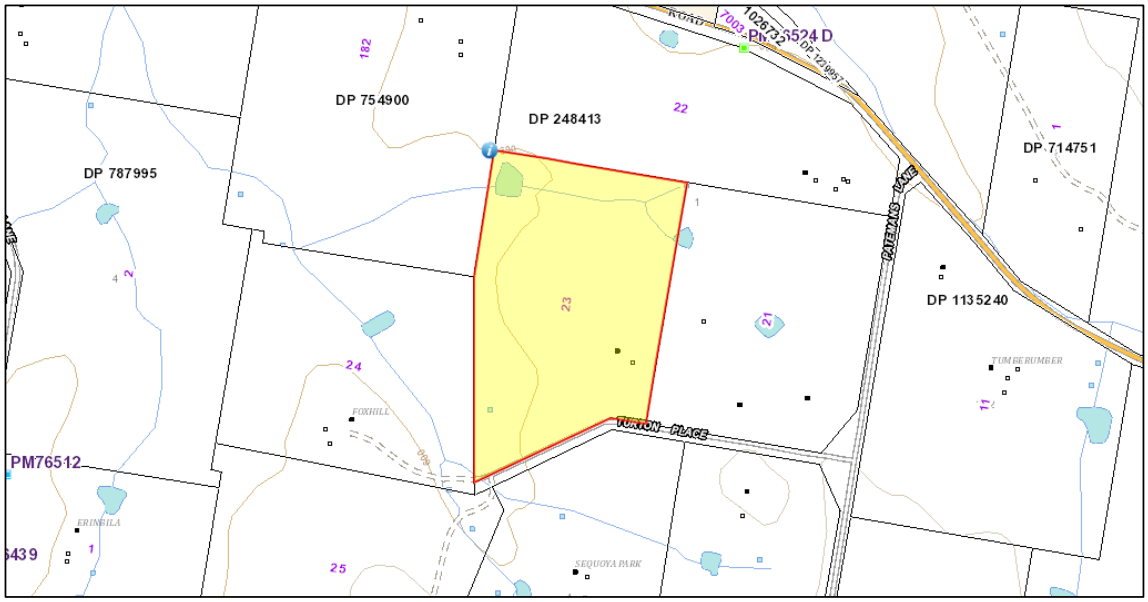
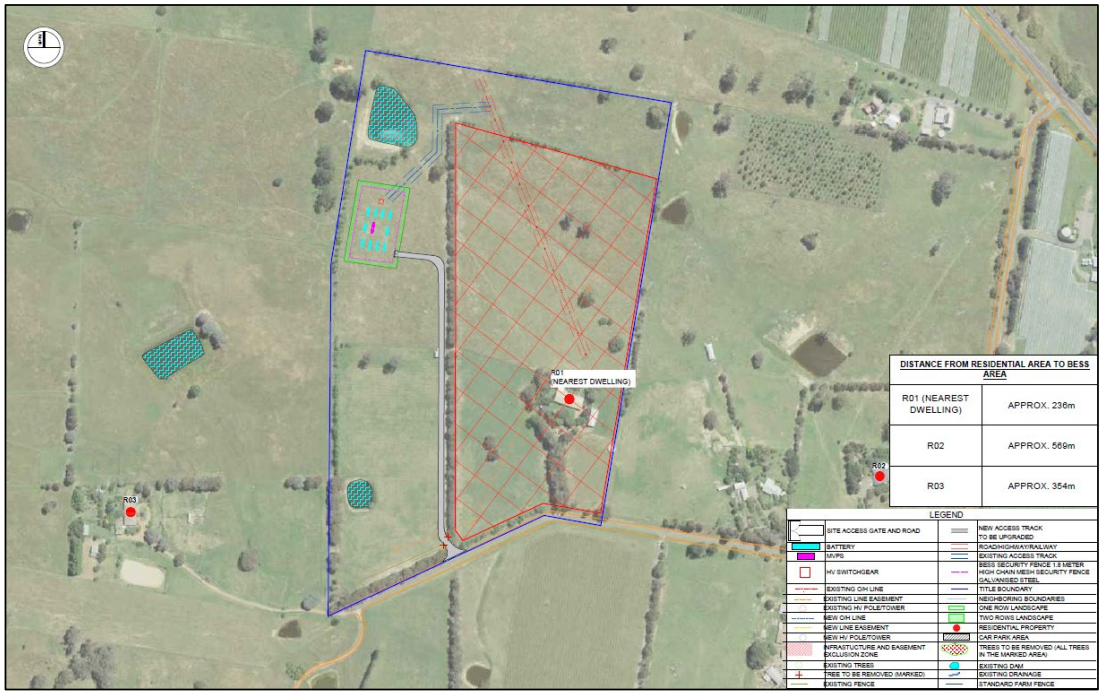


Figure 3: Proposed development at 3 Turton Place Murrumbateman (source: ACENERGY)



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1.4. Legislative context

Table 1: Legislative Framework reviewed in this report (Commonwealth, State and Local)

Instrument	Consideration	Context
Commonwealth		
Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)	Matters of National Environmental Significance	An action will require approval from the Minister if the action has, will have, or is likely to have, a significant impact on a matter of national environmental significance.
State (New South Wales)		
Biosecurity Act 2015	Priority Weeds	Describes the state and regional priorities for weeds in New South Wales
Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act)	Part 4 – Development Assessment and Consent	The EP&A Act is the principal planning legislation for NSW. It provides a framework for the overall environmental planning and assessment of proposals.
Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BBC Act)	Part 7 – Biodiversity Assessment and Approvals under the Planning Act	Section 7.3 provides the test for determining whether proposed development or activity is likely to significantly affect threatened species or ecological communities, or their habitats.
Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2017 (BC Reg)	Part 7.1	Establishes that a proposed development triggers the biodiversity offset scheme if it involves the clearing of native vegetation on land included on the Biodiversity Values Map.
Local Government		
Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013 (Yass Valley LEP 2013)		In accordance with the Yass Valley LEP 2013, the study area is zoned as RU4 – Primary Production Small Lots. The proposed development is permissible with consent under the Yass Valley LEP.

1.5. Biodiversity offsets Scheme

The BC Act and its regulations stipulate native vegetation clearing 'area threshold' values that determine whether a development is required to be assessed in accordance with the 'Biodiversity Offset Scheme' (BOS). Minimum entry thresholds for native vegetation clearing depend on the minimum lot size (shown in the Lot Size Maps made under the relevant Local Environmental Plan [LEP]), or actual lot size (where there is no minimum lot size provided for the relevant land under the LEP).

Developments that trigger the BOS may require a 'Biodiversity Development Assessment Report' (BDAR) that addresses the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) and the purchasing of Biodiversity Credits.

For a local development under Part 4 of the EP&A Act, the BOS and BAM may be triggered by the following means:

- Exceeding the area clearing threshold associated with the minimum lot size for the property will trigger entry into the BOS (**Table 2**).
- Whether the impacts occur on an area mapped on the Biodiversity Values Map (BVM).

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The minimum lot size for the subject property is between 1-40ha and less than 0.5ha of native vegetation across the study area will be removed, according to the proposed development plans (see Section 1.2). Under this assumption, the BOS would not be triggered and a BDAR does not need to be prepared.

The study area is not represented on the Biodiversity Values (BV) Map; therefore, the BV Map is not a trigger for the BOS in this instance.

Table 2: BOS Area Clearing Threshold

Minimum lot size associated with the property	Threshold for clearing native vegetation, above which the BAM and offsets scheme apply
Less than 1 ha	0.25 ha or more
1 ha to less than 40 ha	0.5 ha or more
40ha to less than 1000 ha	1 ha or more
1000 ha or more	2 ha or more

2. Methodology

2.1. Literature and database review

A site-specific literature and database review was undertaken prior to the field survey and the preparation of this report. This included desktop analysis of aerial photography and review of regional scale information from the following sources:

- Biodiversity Values Map (DPE 2024a)
- Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2013
- NSW BioNet Atlas (OEH 2024a)
- NSW BioNet Vegetation Classification (OEH 2024b)
- NSW ePlanning spatial viewer (DPE 2024c)
- EPBC Act Protected Matters Search Tool (DCCEEW 2024)
- Six Maps (LPI 2022)

Searches using NSW Wildlife Atlas (BioNet, DPE 2023b) and the Commonwealth Protected Matters Search Tool (PMST) were conducted to identify threatened flora and fauna, as well as migratory fauna records within a 10km x 10km cell search area centred on the study area using the coordinates-34.993194,149.051084. This data was used to establish the likelihood of any ecological values as occurring on or adjacent to the study area.

Vegetation communities were assessed against described Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs) listed under the EPBC Act and/or the BC Act.

2.2. Likelihood Assessment

The likelihood and occurrence of threatened species, populations and migratory species, previously recorded within 5km of the study area was assessed by:

- Reviewing the location and date of recent (<5 years) and historical (>5-20 years) records
- Reviewing available habitat within the study area and surrounding areas
- Applying expert knowledge of each species' ecology.

Following a review of available habitat within the study area, the potential for each threatened species, population and/or migratory species to occur was assessed. The potential for species to occur within the study area was assessed as either:

- 'Recent record' = species has been recorded in the study area withing the past 5 years
- 'High' = species has previously been recorded in the study area (>5 years ago) or in proximity to (for mobile species), and/or habitat is present that is likely to be used by a local population
- Moderate" = suitable habitat for a species is present onsite but no evidence of a species detected and relatively high number of recorded (5-20 years) within 5 km of the study area or species is highly mobile
- "Low" = suitable habitat for a species is present onsite but limited or highly degraded, no evidence of a species detected and relatively low number of recent records within 5 km of the study area
- "Not present" = suitable habitat for the species is not present on site or adequate survey has determined species does not occur in the study area.

2.3. Field Survey

A site survey was conducted on 12 April 2024, by Principal Ecologist, Melanie Allan. The weather conditions on the day of the survey were fine and sunny (**Table 3**).

Table 3: Weather conditions at 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman on 12 April 2024

Date	Temp (C°)		Rainfall (mm)	Wind	
	Min	Max		Direction	Speed (km/h)
12/04/2024	6.3	21.1	0	NW	39

Traverses were undertaken across the study area, whilst recording visible flora species and identifying potential habitat for threatened species. Areas that were more likely to resemble intact, resilient vegetation were surveyed more extensively than degraded areas of the site. Photographs taken during the field survey are presented in **Appendix A**.

An opportunistic fauna survey was undertaken for birds, amphibians, reptiles and mammals, which included observations along with signs of direct and indirect occupancy (i.e., scats, owl pellets, fur, bones, tracks, bark scratches, foliage chew marks etc.).

Fauna habitat searches were conducted for potential foraging, roosting, breeding or nesting habitat of nocturnal and diurnal species. This included tree hollows, stags, bird nests, possum dreys, decorticating bark, mature/old growth trees, food trees (e.g., winter-flowering eucalypts, etc.), culverts, dens, dams, riparian areas and refuge habitats.

2.4. Survey Limitations

The flora survey aimed to record as many species as possible. However, a definitive list of the flora within the study area cannot be gathered without systematic traverses and surveys across several seasons. Additional species may be recorded during a longer survey over various seasons. However, the techniques used in this investigation are considered adequate to gather the data necessary to validate the vegetation communities and vegetation condition in the study area and assess the likelihood of occurrence of any threatened flora species.

A full fauna survey following Threatened Species Survey and Assessment Guidelines (OEH 2020) was not undertaken as sufficient detail to determine the likelihood of occurrence of threatened and migratory species for the purpose of this report was achieved through opportunistic surveys and habitat assessment during the

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field survey. Further detailed targeted threatened flora and fauna surveys were not considered necessary for this assessment.

Considering the habitat available on site, the condition of the vegetation and the proposed impacts, the survey effort was deemed satisfactory for the purposes of this assessment.

3. Results

This section outlines the results of the desktop assessment and field survey.

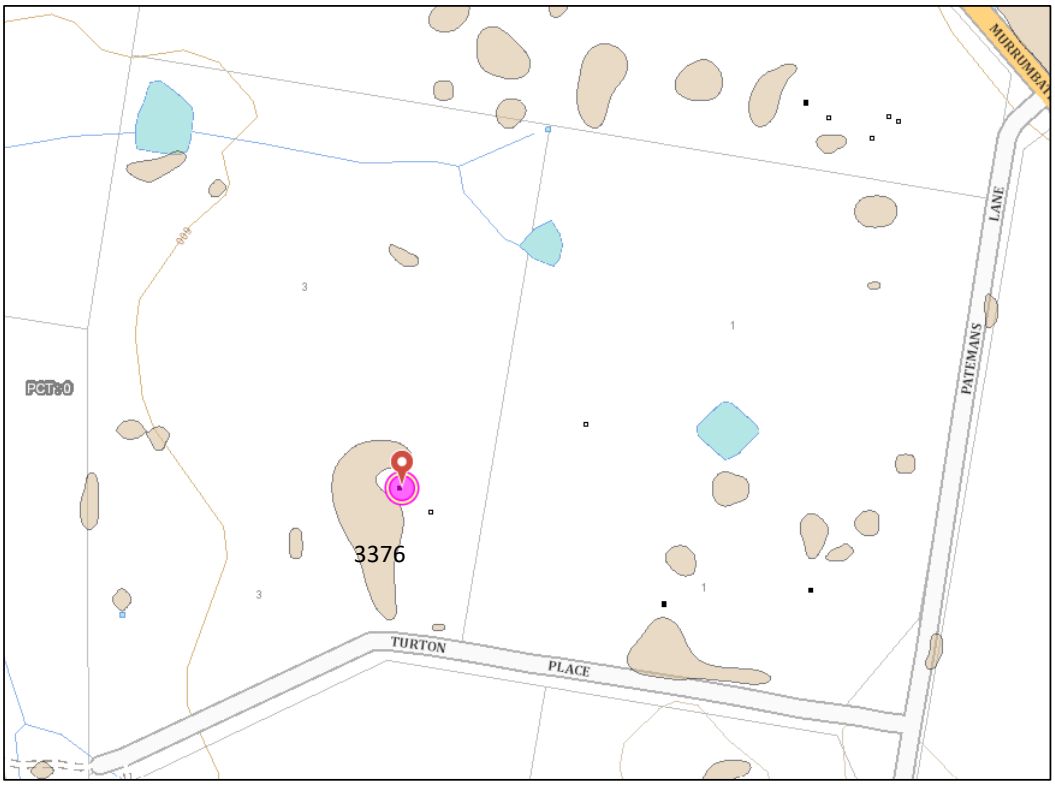
3.1. Literature and Database Review

A review of the NSW BioNet Atlas and EPBC Act PMST identified 15 threatened fauna species (including migratory species) that may occur within 5km of the study area. Many of the threatened fauna species excluded from further consideration are species that do not have suitable habitat in the study area, and thus are not likely to be affected by the proposed works. There have been no threatened flora species recorded within 5km of the study area in the last 20 years. The likelihood assessment is provided at **Appendix B**.

Based on current mapping, a small portion of the vegetation on site is mapped as follows:

- Vegetation Formation: Grassy Woodlands
- Vegetation Class: Southern Tablelands Grassy Woodlands
- Plant Community Type (PCT) name: Southern Tableland Grassy Box Woodland
- PCT Number: 3376

Figure 4 – BioNet mapped Plant Community Type – 3 Turton Place Murrumbateman (source: SEED)



This PCT consists of tall sclerophyll woodland with a dry shrub layer that is patchy to absent and a mid-dense, grassy groundcover and is not considered a Threatened Ecological Community (TEC). It is common throughout the low hills of the drier part of the Southern Tablelands between Bedbo and Rylstone in NSW.

The canopy layer almost always includes box eucalypts (*Eucalyptus melliodora* or *Eucalyptus bridgesiana*). The shrub layer is sparse to absent with occasional scattered *Melichrus erceolatus*, *Lissanthe strigose* or *Acacia* species. The mid-dense ground layer consists of grasses, forbs and graminoids, including *Hydrocotyle laxiflora*, *Austrostipa scabra* and *Lomandra filiformis*. The PCT occurs on granite, volcanic and sedimentary substrates in cold, dry environments, with a mean annual rainfall below 760mm. This PCT commonly grades into other similar grassy eucalypt woodlands in the Southern Tablelands of NSW.

3.2. Field Survey

3.2.1. Vegetation

The study area consisted of several large, grassed paddocks utilised for agricultural purposes, surrounding a single dwelling, as noted in Section 1.2. However, native vegetation boarders the driveway and some of the paddock boundaries. This vegetation is mapped as PCT 3376: Southern Tableland Grassy Box Woodland (see Section 3.1 above).

3.2.2 Threatened flora species

No threatened flora species were recorded within the study area during the survey and none have been recorded within 5km of the study area in the last 20 years. Furthermore, no suitable habitat was considered to be present for any threatened flora species due to the level of vegetation modification, and disturbance within the study area. Hence no further assessment is required under Section 7.3 of the BC Act for threatened flora species.

The majority of the study area is not mapped by NSW OEH (2024b) and was found to mainly consist of native and exotic plantings and exotic grassland.

3.2.3. Threatened Ecological Communities

No Threatened Ecological Communities are listed as being present on the site, as per the Protected Matters Search Tool (DCCEEW, 2023). Two TECs are however recognised within a 5km radius of the site:

- Natural Temperate Grassland of the Southeastern Highlands; and
- White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland.

Both TECs are listed as 'Critically Endangered' with their presence listed as '*Community likely to occur within area*', referring to the buffer area applied to the site.

The survey confirmed that neither of these TECs are present within the study area.

3.2.4 Threatened fauna and fauna habitat

No threatened fauna species were recorded during the field survey. Some fauna habitat features exist within the study area, including mature hollow bearing trees, fallen timber and groundcover. These features provide potential foraging, roosting, breeding and nesting resources (Table 4). No hollow bearing trees will be impacted by the proposed development and the groundcover to be removed is considered to be of low ecological value. The species likely to use the study area are highly mobile and the amount of habitat to be impacted is negligible in comparison to the availability of similar habitat in the adjacent landscape and locality. Hence no further assessment is required under Section 7.3 of the BC Act for threatened fauna species.

Table 4: Fauna habitat features within the subject site.

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Habitat features	Fauna species
Mature trees	Arboreal mammals, birds, and megachiropteran bats
Grassland areas	Diurnal birds, reptiles, ground mammals

4. Impact Assessment

Both direct and indirect impacts for the proposed works have been considered in the impact assessment below.

4.1. Direct Impacts

Direct impacts are those impacts that directly affect habitat and individuals. Direct impacts considered for this assessment are vegetation and habitat removal. As per the development plans provided by the client, the proposed works are likely to result in the removal of several smaller trees along the property's southern boundary, to allow for access to Turton Place. These trees were identified as a eucalypt species, young, and not hollow-bearing (refer **photograph 10**). These trees are considered to be of low to moderate retention value. Hollow-bearing trees are present within the study area but will not be impacted by the proposed development. The proposal will also require the removal of approximately 0.5ha of grasslands which has been historically cleared for grazing and consists of predominantly exotic grass species. This vegetation/habitat is considered to be of low ecological value.

4.2. Indirect Impacts

Indirect impacts of the proposed development may include noise pollution, erosion, weed spread, stormwater runoff, and edge effects associated with construction. These impacts are considered to be manageable through the development of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

Indirect impacts may include:

- Increase in surface water runoff, sedimentation and nutrients during and following construction.
- Increase in noise and disturbance to fauna in adjacent vegetation.
- Damage to native vegetation adjacent to the subject site.

Impacts are considered to be manageable through the development of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and adherence to the recommendations listed in **Section 5**.

5. Recommendations

All applications to Council for development or clearing approvals must set out how impacts on biodiversity will be avoided and minimised. This includes applications that do not trigger entry into the Biodiversity Offset Scheme.

Recommendations considered necessary to ensure that any significant impacts are avoided or minimised are provided below:

- A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) should be developed with relevant mitigation measures to ameliorate potential impacts to biodiversity values outside of the development area. The CEMP should address pollution and contamination issues such as silt control and oil/fuel/chemical-storage/spill management that could arise during construction.
- Construction fencing pre and during construction must be put in place to ensure that construction related impacts are contained within the construction areas.
- Areas of retained native vegetation adjacent to the site should be no-go zones for plant and equipment and be clearly delineated with construction fencing.

- All trees surrounding the development should be protected with appropriate tree protections to prevent damage during construction.
- Silt fences should be put in place around the construction site to limit the spread of sediment and weeds into adjacent vegetation.
- Erosion controls should be inspected regularly (daily during workdays) and after rainfall. Damaged controls should be fixed immediately. Accumulated sediment or waste material is to be removed from within the sediment controls regularly and disposed of at a licensed waste facility.
- Erosion and sediment controls are to be left in place until after the works are completed, including revegetation of any bare surfaces.
- The works should be scheduled outside of predicted heavy rain periods.
- Any exotic vegetation removed from the site should be disposed of at an approved facility.

6. Conclusions

This report provides an assessment of the ecological value of the flora and fauna within the study area and considers the impacts of the proposed development in relation to current environmental planning legislation.

No threatened flora or fauna species were recorded within the study area. The study area is unlikely to contain suitable habitat for threatened species. This is due to historical clearing and a large area of the site being dominated by exotic grasses/pasture. There are also no hollow bearing trees and the site is isolated from areas of intact significant native vegetation. As such, a significant impact under Section 7.3 of the BC Act for threatened species was considered unnecessary and a Test of Significance was not undertaken.

The proposed native vegetation clearing is below the clearing threshold that triggers the Biodiversity Offset Scheme under the BC Act. Furthermore, no vegetation clearing is proposed in areas identified as high biodiversity on the BVM nor is a significant impact to a species listed under the BC Act likely to occur. As such, the Biodiversity Offset Scheme is not triggered, and a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report will not be required. No threatened flora or fauna listed under the EPBC Act were identified within the study area.

Potential impacts associated with the proposed works can minimised and mitigated through the recommendations listed in Section 5 of this report.

WARATAH ECOLOGY

7. References

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WARATAH ECOLOGY

Appendix A: Site Photographs



Photograph 1: View facing north along the proposed driveway.



Photograph 2: View facing south towards Turton Place from along the proposed driveway.

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Photograph 3: View of the two larger eucalypt trees in the central west of the site, facing west. These trees will be unaffected by the proposed works.



Photograph 4: Closer view of the eucalypt located in the central west of the site, with grassed paddocks present in the background.

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Photograph 5: Example of the grasses encountered throughout the site.



Photograph 6: View of the dam located in the northwest corner of the site.

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Photograph 7: View of one of the larger eucalypts located in the central northern area of the site, with several hollows identified.



Photograph 8: A hollow identified in one of the larger central northern eucalypts.

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Photograph 9: View of the southwestern paddocks and the vegetation utilised as wind barriers along its border.



Photograph 10: Example of the younger eucalypts located along the borders of the paddocks.

Appendix B: Flora and Fauna List and Likelihood Assessment

Scientific Name (Common Name)	Fauna/ flora type	BC Act Status EPBC Act Status,	Distribution and Habitat	Records within 5km of study area within the last 20 years	Most recent record and proximity	Closest record and date	Likelihood of occurrence (potential habitat to be disturbed)	Impact Assessment Required
Litoria aurea Green and Golden Bell Frog	Amphibian	E1, P V	Formerly distributed from the NSW north coast near Brunswick Heads, southwards along the NSW coast to Victoria where it extends into east Gippsland. Records from west to Bathurst, Tumut and the ACT region. Since 1990 there have been approximately 50 recorded locations in NSW, most of which are small, coastal, or near coastal populations. These locations occur over the species' former range; however, they are widely separated and isolated. Large populations in NSW are located around the metropolitan areas of Sydney, Shoalhaven and mid north coast (one an island population). There is only one known population on the NSW Southern Tablelands.	1	1/3/2011 Northwest Murrumbateman	2011 Within 5km	**Moderate** No records within 10 years, older record occurred within a rural dam in Murrumbateman.	**No** This species was not detected in the subject site during surveys. Suitable habitat in the form of the two on-site dams are present, however will not be impact during the proposed works. The subject site is not considered important to the long-term survival of this species.
Artamus cyanopterus cyanopterus (Dusky Woodswallow)	Bird	V, P N/L	Dusky woodswallows are widespread in eastern, southern and southwestern Australia. The species occurs throughout most of New South Wales, but is sparsely scattered in, or largely absent from, much of the upper western region. Most breeding activity occurs on the western slopes of the Great Dividing Range. They primarily inhabit dry, open eucalypt forests and woodlands, including mallee associations, with an open or sparse understorey of eucalypt saplings, acacias and other shrubs, and groundcover of grasses or sedges and fallen woody debris. It has also been recorded in shrublands, heathlands and	8	2020 Within 5km	2019 Within 1km	**Moderate** Records within 1km of study area in the last 5 years. Some suitable woodland foraging habitat present. No signs that the subject site is used for breeding by this species	**No** This species was not detected on the subject site during surveys. Suitable habitat is present but not limited in the locality. Subject site is not considered important to the long-term survival of this species. No significant impact on this species is anticipated as a result of the proposed development

Scientific Name (Common Name)	Fauna/ flora type	BC Act Status EPBC Act Status,	Distribution and Habitat	Records within 5km of study area within the last 20 years	Most recent record and proximity	Closest record and date	Likelihood of occurrence (potential habitat to be disturbed)	Impact Assessment Required
			very occasionally in moist forest or rainforest. Also found in farmland, usually at the edges of forest or woodland.					
Callocephalon fimbriatum (Gang-gang Cockatoo)	Bird	E V	In NSW, distributed from the south-east coast to the Hunter region, and inland to the Central Tablelands and south-west slopes. Isolated records known from as far north as Coffs Harbour and as far west as Mudgee. Tall mountain forests and woodlands in summer; in winter, may occur at lower altitudes in open eucalypt forests and woodlands, and urban areas.	1	2021 Within 5km	2021 Within 5km	**Moderate** Recent records (within 4 years). Some suitable habitat in study area, however sighting made as a wildlife rehabilitation.	**No** This species was not detected in the subject site during surveys. Suitable habitat is present but not limited in the locality. No hollow bearing trees will be impacted by the proposed works and impact to foraging habitat is marginal for this highly mobile species. The subject site is not considered important to the long-term survival of this species.
Circus assimilis Spotted Harrier	Bird	V, P N/L	The Spotted Harrier occurs throughout the Australian mainland, except in densely forested or wooded habitats of the coast, escarpment and ranges, and rarely in Tasmania. Individuals disperse widely in NSW and comprise a single population.	1	16/10/2013 North Murrumbateman	2013 Within 5km	**Moderate** No records within 10 years. Older record occurred along Barton Highway north of Murrumbateman.	**No** This species was not detected in the subject site during surveys. Some potential foraging habitat is present in the form of larger eucalypt trees and open grasslands. The subject site is not considered important for to the long-term survival of this species.
Climacteris picumnus victoriae (Brown Treecreeper	Bird	V V	Occupy dry open eucalypt forests and woodlands. The subspecies mainly inhabits woodlands dominated by stringybarks or other rough-barked eucalypts, usually with an open grassy understorey. In New South Wales the western boundary of the range runs	3	2019 Within 5km	2018 Within 5km	**Low** Recent records (within 5 years) within 5km of site.	**No** This species was not detected on the subject site during surveys. Minimal suitable habitat is present. Subject site is not considered important to

Scientific Name (Common Name)	Fauna/ flora type	BC Act Status EPBC Act Status,	Distribution and Habitat	Records within 5km of study area within the last 20 years	Most recent record and proximity	Closest record and date	Likelihood of occurrence (potential habitat to be disturbed)	Impact Assessment Required
[south-eastern])			approximately through Corowa, Wagga Wagga, Temora, Forbes, Dubbo and Inverell.				Minimal woodland habitat present. No signs that the subject site is used for breeding by this species.	the long-term survival of this species. No significant impact on this species is anticipated as a result of the proposed development.
Falco subniger (Black Falcon)	Bird	V, P N/L	The Black Falcon is widely, but sparsely, distributed in New South Wales, mostly occurring in inland regions. Some reports of 'Black Falcons' on the tablelands and coast of NSW are likely to be the Brown Falcon. In NSW there is assumed to be a single population that is continuous with a broader continental population, given that falcons are highly mobile. The Black Falcon occurs as solitary individuals, in pairs, or in family groups of parents and offspring.	1	2018 Within 5km	2018 Within 5km	**Low** One record within 5km in the last 10 years. Some suitable habitat on the study area, however no indications of species breeding.	**No** This species was not detected on the subject site during surveys. Suitable habitat is present but not limited in the locality. Subject site is not considered important to the long-term survival of this highly mobile species. No significant Impact on this species is anticipated as a result of the proposed development.
Hieraaetus morphnoides (Little Eagle)	Bird	V, P N/L	The Little Eagle is found throughout the Australian mainland excepting the most densely forested parts of the Dividing Range escarpment. It occurs as a single population throughout NSW. Occupies open eucalypt forest, woodland or open woodland. She Oak or Acacia woodlands and riparian woodlands of interior NSW are also used.	22	2020 Within 3km	2009 Within 2km	**Moderate** Several records within last 10 years within 5km of the site. Some suitable foraging habitat present. No signs to indicate site is used for breeding.	**No** This species was not detected on the subject site during surveys. Suitable habitat is present but not limited in the locality. Subject site is not considered important to the long-term survival of this species. No significant impact on this species is anticipated as a

Scientific Name (Common Name)	Fauna/ flora type	BC Act Status EPBC Act Status,	Distribution and Habitat	Records within 5km of study area within the last 20 years	Most recent record and proximity	Closest record and date	Likelihood of occurrence (potential habitat to be disturbed)	Impact Assessment Required
								result of the proposed development.
Lophoictinia isura (Square-tailed Kite)	Bird	V, P N/L	The Square-tailed Kite ranges along coastal and subcoastal areas from south-western to northern Australia, Queensland, NSW and Victoria. In NSW, scattered records of the species throughout the state indicate that the species is a regular resident in the north, north-east and along the major west-flowing river systems. It is a summer breeding migrant to the south-east, including the NSW south coast, arriving in September and leaving by March. Found in a variety of timbered habitats including dry woodlands and open forests. Shows a particular preference for timbered watercourses.	1	2015 Within 5km	2015 Within 5km	**Low** 1 record within 5km of study are in the last 10 years. Some minor suitable woodland habitat present. No signs to indicate site used for breeding.	**No** This species was not detected on the subject site during surveys. Suitable habitat is present but not limited in the locality. Subject site is not considered important to the long-term survival of this species. No significant impact on this species is anticipated as a result of the proposed development.
Petroica boodang (Scarlet Robin)	Bird	V, P N/L	The Scarlet Robin is found from southeast Queensland to southeast South Australia and also in Tasmania and south west Western Australia. In NSW, it occurs from the coast to the inland slopes. After breeding, some Scarlet Robins disperse to the lower valleys and plains of the tablelands and slopes. Some birds may appear as far west as the eastern edges of the inland plains in autumn and winter. The Scarlet Robin lives in dry eucalypt forests and woodlands. The understorey is usually open and grassy with few scattered shrubs. Forages primarily in the canopy of open *Eucalyptus* Forest and woodland, yet also finds food in Angophora, *Melaleuca* and other tree species. Riparian habitats are particularly used, due to	1	2018 Within 3km	2018 Within 3km	**Low** No records within the last 5 years within 5km of the site. Some suitable woodland foraging habitat present. No signs that the subject site is used for breeding by this species.	**No** This species was not detected on the subject site during surveys. Some suitable habitat is present but not limited in the locality. Subject site is not considered important to the long-term survival of this species. No significant impact on this species is anticipated as a result of the proposed development.

Scientific Name (Common Name)	Fauna/ flora type	BC Act Status EPBC Act Status,	Distribution and Habitat	Records within 5km of study area within the last 20 years	Most recent record and proximity	Closest record and date	Likelihood of occurrence (potential habitat to be disturbed)	Impact Assessment Required
			higher soil fertility and hence greater productivity.					
Petroica phoenicea (Flame Robin)	Bird	V, P N/L	Found throughout southeastern Australia from near the QLD boarder to southeast SA and in Tasmania. It breeds in upland areas and moves to inland slopes and plains in winter. It is thought there are two separate populations in NSW, one in the Northern Tablelands and one in the Central and Southern Tablelands.	2	2018 Within 3km	2015 Within 2km	**Moderate** Several records within last 10 years within 5km of the site. Some suitable foraging habitat present. No signs to indicate site is used for breeding.	**No** This species was not detected on the subject site during surveys. Suitable habitat is present but not limited in the locality. Subject site is not considered important to the long-term survival of this species. No significant impact on this species is anticipated as a result of the proposed development.
Polytelis swainsonii (Superb Parrot)	Bird	V, P V	Found throughout eastern inland NSW, with breeding grounds between Cowra and Cootamundra. Birds are known to migrate north during the winter, towards the region of Upper Namoi and Gwydir Rivers. Also known to breed throughout the Riverina throughout riparian vegetation.	40	2020 Within 5km	2015 Within 2km	**Moderate** Several records within last 10 years within 5km of the site. Some suitable foraging habitat present. No signs to indicate site is used for breeding.	**No** This species was not detected in the subject site during surveys. Some potential foraging habitat is present in the form of larger eucalypt trees and open grasslands. The subject site is not considered important for to the long-term survival of this species.
Ninox strenua (Powerful Owl)	Bird	V, P N/L	The Powerful Owl is endemic to eastern and south-eastern Australia, mainly on the coastal side of the Great Dividing Range from Mackay to south-western Victoria. In NSW, it is widely distributed throughout the eastern forests from the coast inland to tablelands, with	1	2018 Within 5km	2018 Within 5km	**Low** One record within 5km in the last 10 years. Some suitable habitat on the	**No** This species was not detected on the subject site during surveys. Some suitable habitat is present but not limited in the locality. Subject site is not

Scientific Name (Common Name)	Fauna/ flora type	BC Act Status EPBC Act Status,	Distribution and Habitat	Records within 5km of study area within the last 20 years	Most recent record and proximity	Closest record and date	Likelihood of occurrence (potential habitat to be disturbed)	Impact Assessment Required
			scattered records on the western slopes and plains suggesting occupancy prior to land clearing. Now at low densities throughout most of its eastern range, rare along the Murray River and former inland populations may never recover. Recent increases in population density across Sydney and some other semi-urban areas do not seem to be solely due to increased awareness of this flagship species.				study area, however no indications of species breeding.	considered important to the long-term survival of this species. No significant impact on this species is anticipated as a result of the proposed development
Stagonopleura guttata (Diamond Firetail)	Bird	V, P V	Endemic to southeastern Australia, extending from Central Queensland to the Eyre Peninsula in South Australia. Widely distributed in central NSW, not commonly found in coastal areas.	1	2006 Within 5km	2006 Within 5km	**Low** One record in the last 20 years within 5km of the study area. Some suitable habitat on the study area, however no indications of species breeding.	**No** This species was not detected on the subject site during surveys. Some suitable habitat is present but not limited in the locality. Subject site is not considered important to the long-term survival of this species. No significant impact on this species is anticipated.
Miniopterus orianae oceanensis (Large Bent-winged Bat)	Mammal	V, P N/L	Eastern Bent-winged bats occur along the east and north-west coasts of Australia. Caves are the primary roosting habitat, but they also use derelict mines, storm-water tunnels, buildings and other man-made structures.	2	2018 Within 5km	2013 Within 3km	**Low** No records within last 5 years. Some suitable habitat present.	**No** This species was not detected on the subject site during surveys. Suitable habitat is present but not limited in the locality. Subject site is not considered important to the long-term survival of this species. No significant impact on this species is anticipated as a

Scientific Name (Common Name)	Fauna/ flora type	BC Act Status EPBC Act Status,	Distribution and Habitat	Records within 5km of study area within the last 20 years	Most recent record and proximity	Closest record and date	Likelihood of occurrence (potential habitat to be disturbed)	Impact Assessment Required
								result of the proposed development.
Phascolarctos cinereus (Koala)	Mammal	E1, P E	Fragmented distribution throughout eastern Australia from north-east Queensland to the Eyre Peninsula in South Australia. In New South Wales, koala populations are found on the central and north coasts, southern highlands, southern and northern tablelands, Blue Mountains, southern coastal forests, with some smaller populations on the plains west of the Great Dividing Range.	1	2022 Within 5km	2022 Within 5km	**Low** Scattered suitable native feed trees species present and records within 5km of the study area in the last 2 years.	**No** This species was not detected on the subject site during the survey. No significant impact on this species is anticipated.
Pteropus poliocephalus (Grey-headed Flying-fox)	Mammal	V V	Along the eastern coast of Australia, from Bundaberg in Qld to Melbourne in Victoria. Subtropical and temperate rainforests, tall sclerophyll forests and woodlands, heaths and swamps as well as urban gardens and cultivated fruit crops.	8	2019 Within 5km	2015 Within 3km	**Moderate** Records within 3km of study area over the last 10 years. Some suitable foraging habitat present. No evidence of a camp was observed on the subject site or adjacent lands.	**No** This species was not detected on the subject site during surveys. Suitable habitat is present but not limited in the locality. Subject site is not considered important to the long-term survival of this species. No significant impact on this species is anticipated.
Keyacris scurra Key's Matchstick Grasshopper	Insect	E1 E	Typically found in native grasslands and grassy woodlands throughout southeast NSW and into northern Victoria.	2	2022 Within 4km	2022 Within 4km	**Moderate** Recent records (within last 2 years), with suitable habitat present on the study area.	**No** This species was not detected on the subject site during surveys. Suitable habitat is present but not limited in the locality. Subject site is not considered important to the

Scientific Name (Common Name)	Fauna/ flora type	BC Act Status EPBC Act Status,	Distribution and Habitat	Records within 5km of study area within the last 20 years	Most recent record and proximity	Closest record and date	Likelihood of occurrence (potential habitat to be disturbed)	Impact Assessment Required
								long-term survival of this species. No significant impact on this species is anticipated as a result of the proposed development.
Synemon plana Golden Sun Moth	Insect	V V	Found throughout central southeastern NSW in natural temperate grasslands and grassy Box-Gum Woodlands.	56	2020 Within 3km	2020 Within 3km	**Moderate** Several records within the last 5 years. Suitable habitat present throughout the site.	**No** This species was not detected on the subject site during surveys. Suitable habitat is present but not limited in the locality. Subject site is not considered important to the long-term survival of this species. No significant impact on this species is anticipated as a result of the proposed development.

EPBC Act Key: M = migratory, CE = critically endangered, E = endangered, V = vulnerable, N/L = not listed.

BC Act key: E1 = endangered, E2= endangered population, E4 = Extinct, E4A = critically endangered, V = vulnerable, N/L = not listed.

Appendix C: Flora and Fauna List

Family	*Scientific Name*	Common Name	Native / Exotic
Asteraceae	*Calotis cuneata*	Mountain Burr-Daisy	N
Asteraceae	*Centaurea melitensis*	Maltese Cockspur	E
Asteraceae	*Hypochaeris radicata*	Catsear	
Asteraceae	*Sonchus asper*	Prickly Sowthistle	E
Fabaceae	*Trifolium campestre*	Hop clover	E
Juncaceae	*Juncus usitatus*	Common rush	N
Myrtaceae	*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*	River Red Gum	N
Myrtaceae	*Eucalyptus tereticornis*	Forest red gum	N
Myrtaceae	*Eucalyptus bridgesiana*	Apple box	N
Oxalidaceae	*Oxalis perennans*		N
Plantaginaceae	*Plantago lanceolata*	Lamb's tongues	E
Poaceae	*Nassella trichotoma*	Serrated tussock	E
Poaceae	*Dactylis glomerata*	Cocksfoot	E
Poaceae	*Aira caryophyllea*	Silvery Hairgrass	E
Poaceae	*Nassella neesiana*	Chilean needle grass	E
Salicaceae	*Salix humboldtiana*	Chilean pencil willow	E
Cacatuidae	*Cacatua roseicapilla*	Galah	N

This water system also provides for local wildlife, such as echidnas, wallabies, the endangered australian bittern, swift parrot, south eastern hooded parrot, Gang Gang Cockatoo, and Regent Honeyeater (critically endangered), etc.

Our domestic and drinking water comes from a bore, where the groundwater and stream water interact, with the ground water feeding springs and the stream feeding into the groundwater.

The siting of the proposed development makes the water supply vulnerable to toxic pollution stemming from leaks from the batteries. The probability of leaks rises to almost certain in the event of a fire, along with the leaking of toxic and flammable gases into the atmosphere.

The fire management plan ignores the need to drain firefighting water to ensure it does not enter streams.

No provisions are being made to ensure leaks do not enter the stream system or groundwater.

The impact on human health in the event of a leak would be severe, given the vulnerability of the site and likely delays in warning residents not to drink water or wash.

Zoning

The site of the facility is zoned small lot rural and the application does not fit in with the objectives of this zoning. It is immediately adjacent to zoned residential areas.

A more appropriate siting would be in an area zoned unrestricted rural – where minimum acreages are large.

Noise

The predicted noise levels at night would make my property unsuitable for its current use as a home and as it is currently zoned, i.e. residential living. The World Health Organisation advises that 'Noise is an underestimated threat that can cause a number of short and long term health problems, such as for example sleep disturbance, cardiovascular effects, poorer work and school performance, hearing impairment, etc. Noise has emerged as a leading environmental nuisance in the WHO European region and the public complain about excessive noise more and more often."

The WHO guidelines for community noise recommend less than 30 A-weighted decibels (dB(A)) in bedrooms during the night for a sleep of good quality.

The predicted (and recommended) night-time noise levels in the acoustic report significantly exceed WHO health guidelines, and thus could be expected to have a significant adverse effect on human health on those living in the currently zoned residential areas surrounding the proposed facility.

It is normally necessary in Murrumbateman to keep windows open in summer at night to reduce heat in the house. Artificial methods of cooling provide reduced amenity in comparison to natural fresh air methods and are costly and wasteful of energy.

Summary

In summary, the current development application is opposed on the grounds of negative impacts on surrounding land use (residential) including projected noise pollution at levels above WHO health guidelines, the high risk posed of causing catastrophic bushfires or intensifying them, and the significant risk of poisoning the waterways and groundwater sources on which we currently rely.



There is a natural creek running near Murrumbateman road and it is possible that run off, along with potential contaminants, would enter this creek and be further carried to water sources.

Thank you.

[redacted]

While a non-flammable battery chemistry would remove both of these factors. Given fire fighters would not need to worry about protection of the plant in event of a fire. Resources can be focused elsewhere for containment.

Happy to be contacted to discuss further on [redacted] or via email.

Kind regards,

[redacted]

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CRISPS LANE
02
MURRUMBATE
DISTRIBUTION
BESS
Infrastructure

Environment

Furthermore, the proposed development is located near wineries in a designated tourist zone. The presence of a battery storage facility is incongruous with the existing character of the area, which is known for its scenic beauty and tranquil environment. This type of industrial development could deter tourists, negatively impacting local businesses and the broader community. This contradicts the purpose of the popular Winery Trail. The development could also have a negative impact economically on the valuation of properties in the surrounding area.

Fire Risk

The area is a designated bush fire prone zone.
There have been an estimated 40 incidents internationally that have impacted Battery Storage Units.
Some incidents within large-scale batteries date back to 2012, but most have occurred in the past three years and include the Victorian fire near Geelong and four fires at three facilities in the United States. More recently there was a fire at Beijing while South Korea has reported multiple fires between 2017 and 2019.

The Bushfire Management Plan acknowledges the risk of on-sight fires and incidents have recorded thermal runaway fires and explosions. The fire risk strategy does not indicate the size of the area that would be impacted by one or ten of the units catching fire. There is no provision for water resources and firefighting resources in an area serviced by volunteers.

No recognition of the financial impact of such a fire hazard on nearby properties in relation to insurance premiums or the risk that insurance companies may refuse to insure.

In light of these concerns, I urge the Council to reconsider the approval of this development application. The potential negative impacts on noise levels, water safety, the local tourism economy and fire concerns far outweigh any perceived benefits. I believe that alternative locations should be explored for such a facility, ones that are more suitable and less disruptive to residential areas and tourism zones.

Thank you for considering my objection. I trust that the Council will take the necessary steps to protect the interests of the residents and preserve the unique character of our community.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

[redacted]

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This proposal does not align with this community vision or investment, it may adversely impact future investment decisions, by private and public actors.

Technical Planning Objections

The proposed development is inconsistent with the *Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013* land use objectives for RU4 zoning. DA240159 proposes an industrial development, which is considered a prohibited development within section 4 of the RU4 Zoning Land Use Table. Whilst state policy may override this prohibition and permit the development within RU4 zoning, we feel industrial developments should be located within appropriately zoned industrial areas. In our view, the proposal is likely to shift the focus of future investment in the area away from agritourism and viticulture towards more industrial developments. We believe this is likely to significantly change the character, rural amenity and vistas of the Murrumbateman area.

The Statement Of Environmental Effects submitted with DA240159, on page 19, acknowledges the *Yass Valley Council Developmental Control Plan 2024* and indicates the proposal is expected to be generally compliant with this plan. This statement does not appear be supported by details included in the proposal. DA240159 fails to meet many of the objectives and controls identified within the *Yass Valley Council Developmental Control Plan 2024*. Points 1 through 6 below identify specific examples of these failings:

1) Part E – Rural, Large Lot and Environmental Zone Development p. 58 states:
   This part seeks to ensure that:
   - *the siting of new development in the following zones maintain the low density, dispersed character, rural amenity and vistas of the Yass Valley;*
   - *ridgelines and scenic vistas are protected where buildings respect topography, use neutral non reflective materials and do not dominate the landscape;*
   - *separation distances are to be provided to ensure rural amenity and right to farm is maintained by limiting the potential for land use conflict.*

2) *Section E.1 Siting of Buildings* has the stated objective of ensuring developments are sited in a manner to not dominate the rural landscape and to minimise land use conflict potential. *Control E.1 (c)* states all buildings shall have a setback of no less than 250 m from the boundary of a property where intensive plant agriculture, including vineyards and orchards, is conducted. Both our property at [redacted] and our neighbours property at 1 Patemans Lane conduct intensive plant agriculture, namely a truffière and vineyard respectively. The proposed development is situated within 250m of the boundary to [redacted]. Shifting the building 250m away from the boundary with [redacted] will bring it to within 250m of our boundary.
3) *Section E3* addresses common rural based activities likely to occur and provides acceptable developmental design, siting and operation controls for RU4 zone including:
   a) E3.1 (a) providing, among other things, that all potential stationary noise be sited as far away as possible from common property boundaries and sensitive use dwellings, and
   b) E3.1 (b) that proposed development noise abatement measures ensure constant noise does not exceed 5dB(A) above background noise levels when measured at the boundary with any adjoining property.
   c) The Acoustic Report submitted with DA240159 does not provide guidance on the proposed level of noise generating, as measured at our boundary or any other area of our property including two residential dwellings.

i. As dwellings are permitted development within RU4 zoning, we consider any acoustic impact activities on a 24 hour per day, 365 days per year basis to be unacceptable.

4) The proposed site and surrounding properties are classified Bush Fire Prone Land (BFPL) under the Yass Valley BFPL Map.
   a) DA240159 should be considered against Section E3.1(i) page 63, which states land uses which pose a fire hazard may not be supported if the land is mapped as Bushfire Prone.
   b) DA240159 should also be considered against *Part H – Development in Hazard Affected Areas* in particular section H2 Bushfire Prone on page 91, which states the objectives of preventing the loss of life and property by providing development compatible with the identified bushfire hazard.
   c) The Bush Fire Management & Emergency Response Plan submitted with DA240159 failed to include consideration of the *Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013*, the *Yass Valley Council Developmental Control Plan 2024* or consideration of specific land use in the surrounding properties.
   d) The Bush Fire Management & Emergency Response Plan submitted with DA240159 does not asses the risk or impact to key installations on our property including farm sheds and machinery, a residential dwelling (being [redacted] located about 470m from the proposed installation), or our truffière located about 340m from the proposed installation. The consequences of a fire to the surrounding dwellings and primary industries including our truffière is significant.
   e) We are concerned the increased risk pose by this installation is also likely to have an ongoing financial impact on us and other neighbours through increased insurance premiums.
5) Whilst not a renewable Energy Development Project aspects of the controls sited in Part L section L6 page 138, could be considered persuasive. Part L6 describes an objective of providing guidance to developers on the local matters to be taken into consideration in addition to those in any state or national guidelines. DA240159 has not considered and/or adequately addressed relevant controls such as:
   a) L6(a) the location of development project shall be consistent with the *Yass Valley Settlement Strategy*.
   b) L6(c) infrastructure not being within view of clusters of rural dwellings.
   c) L6(d) infrastructure not having an adverse impact on the amenity of any dwellings.
   d) L6(e) the impact of infrastructure on the rural landscape and tourism values of the Yass Valley to be minimised.
   e) L6(f) a sharing of the benefits scheme with the host landowners, immediate neighbours and a community enhancement fund (as per Council policy) shall be identified in any development application. The application is not transparent in this regard.
   f) L6(g) the noise impacts at adjoining dwellings is not to exceed acceptable standards.

6) The proposed development in DA240159 is an industrial development with a footprint of 5000 square metres. As such, it would be more appropriate for it to be located on industrial zoned lands and complying with the requirements of *Part F – Industrial and Commercial Development* objectives and controls.

Submission Inadequacies

DA240159 and supporting documentation contain inconsistencies, unsupported or unexplained assumptions, clear omissions and misleading statements. For example, the introduction of the acoustic report states 'The subject site is currently vacant and is generally surrounded by vacant grassland which in some instances includes scattered residential premises.' The site and surrounding land is used for small holding primary production in accordance with the RU4 zoning. Each property surrounding the site has at least one and in some instances, like our property, two residential dwellings.

The Statement Of Environmental Effects and other documents submitted with DA240159 do not identify the residential dwelling at [redacted] or the truffière located on the northern area of our property, both of which are clearly visible on the maps and relevant to consideration of this proposed development. This page identified Dionysus Winery as being 650m to the east and fails to include relevant information that the winery holds land with a common boundary to the proposed development.

The acoustic report is not accessible to the layman reader. It contains technical jargon and relies on units of measurement which are difficult to interpret. The report's assumptions are not clearly articulated, for example we have not been identified as a sensitive receptor, despite sharing a boundary with the projects land owner. This omission is not satisfactorily explained. Page 6 of the report notes the closest and therefore most critical sensitive uses with proximity have been considered. There is no explanation for the omission of a neighbour sharing a boundary with the project site.

The report does not consider site specifics including the actual usage of neighbouring properties, the Murrumbateman community or the Yass Valley Council's development strategy and plan for the region. We have no confidence in the reliability or validity of the report's findings or recommendations.

Impact on our Past, Current and Future Activities in Alignment with RU4 Zone Objectives

Our family business operates in alignment with the Murrumbateman community's efforts to invest in and develop a local agritourism and viticulture region. As a Primary Production Small Holding we have invested in activities which align with the *Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013* land use objectives for RU4 zoning.

The proposed development raises concerns relating to its impact on our past, current and future investment, business activities and opportunities.

The Truffle Patch

In 2009 our family invested in the establishment of a truffière consisting of about 500 trees for the growing and harvesting of Perigord black truffles.

Establishing a truffière is a long term commitment as the trees take years before producing any truffles and decades to reach full harvest potential.

The truffière is located about 337m from the proposed development and has not been considered in any of the planning reports submitted with the development application.

Operating as the Truffle Patch our activities enhance the regions reputation as an agritourism destination. The establishment of an industrial battery facility will have a material impact on our current and future activities as the Truffle Patch. Concerns include but are not limited to:

1) **Impact on Harvest -** We are concerned the sustained noise created by the facility will have a direct impact on our ability to harvest produce from our truffière. Our ability to harvest truffles relies on the use of dogs. Dogs can hear sound at four times the distance and detect a greater range of frequencies than the human ear (Cole, 2009). According to Barber et al (2020) dogs may also be more negatively impacted by sounds than humans due to the greater amplification of their hearing mechanisms.
2) **Agritourism, Impact on Truffle hunts** – this season we have begun taking people through the truffière on truffle hunts. Important to the experience is the picturesque and tranquil nature of the truffière and surrounds. The development of an industrial scale battery facility visible and audible from the truffière will have a significant negative impact on the truffière as an agritourism destination of choice.
3) **Agritourism, Impact on Farm Stay** – our future planning, investment and development includes consideration of the potential for farm stay or bed and breakfast accommodation leveraging our truffière and ideal location amongst the regions wineries. An industrial scale battery facility on the adjacent property, creating a constant auditory emission and being a visual eyesore, will dimmish the desirability and amenity of any future accommodation offerings on our property.
4) **Risk of Fire** – as stated above, the establishment of a truffière is a long term commitment. The heightened risk of fire within close proximity creates a significant risk to our investment. If a fire does result and the trees are destroyed it will take over a decade to return the truffière to its current state and further delay achieving maximum harvest potential from our investment. Should the truffière be destroyed it is not possible for us to achieve full harvest potential within our working lifespan.

[redacted]

In conjunction with our truffière we are registered breeders of Lagotto Romagnolo, Italian Truffle Dogs.

We offer a boutique agritourism experience for families seeking to purchase a Lagotto Romagnolo. Our families are personally engaged in their puppy's journey from meeting the sire and dam through visiting their puppy during the eight weeks prior to collecting.

Our kennel has drawn visitors to the region from NSW, ACT and Victoria. Our clients located further away have opted to travel to Murrumbateman spending at least one weekend taking advantage of the local agritourism and viticulture options when collecting their puppy.

Operating as [redacted] our activities enhance the regions reputation as an agritourism destination. Likewise the location and the ability to offer agritourism activities increases our competitiveness against other kennels. The establishment of an industrial battery facility will have a tangible negative impact on our current and future activities as [redacted].

Concerns include but are not limited to:

1) **Impact on Dog Health -** We are concerned the noise created by the facility 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year will have a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of our dogs. Research has indicated consistent exposure to loud sounds can result in stress associated with fear and anxiety and negatively impact dogs health, welfare, behaviour and lifespan (Grigg et al, 2021).
2) **Impact on Competitive Pricing** – Part of the appeal of [redacted] is the location. Clients tell us our location amongst the wineries of Murrumbateman encourages them to visit, spend the weekend and collect their puppies. When viewed on Google Earth the scale of the proposed development directly adjacent to our property will negatively impact on our clients decision to attend Murrumbateman and collect their puppies. This will result in increased costs due to the need to transport puppies across the country to their new owners. This will have a tangible impact on our competitiveness with other kennels.
3) **Agritoursim, Impact on visitors experience** – Clients of [redacted] are seeking a boutique agritourism experience. They visit our property and spend time with our dogs and their puppy in a tranquil and beautiful setting. An industrial scale battery facility on the adjacent property, creating a constant auditory emission and being a visual eyesore, will dimmish our ability to deliver this boutique experience.
4) **Agritoursim, Impact on Truffle Dog Training** – This season we have begun working with our clients and their puppies through truffle hunt training. Important to the experience is the picturesque and tranquil nature of the truffière and surrounds. We are concerned the sound in particular will impact on the ability of visiting dogs to focus and learn. The development of an industrial scale battery facility that will be visible and audible from the truffière will have a significant negative impact on the ability of [redacted] to offer truffle dog training as an agritourism activity.
5) **Impact on Animal Boarding** – our future planning, investment and development includes consideration of the potential for offering dog boarding. An industrial scale battery facility on the adjacent property, creating a constant auditory emission and being a visual eyesore, will dimmish the desirability and amenity of any future animal boarding offerings on our property.

Summary

We consider the proposed development will have significant negative impacts on our current and future activities, investment and development opportunities. The proposal appears to be in conflict with existing investment in the region by Council and private business, including ourselves. We further consider the proposal to be prejudicial to future planning within the RU4 zone surrounding the facility by setting a precedent encouraging investment in industrial development in the region at the expense of existing agritourism and viticulture activities.

We respectfully request the proposal not be supported by Council.

Thank you for your consideration, please contact us if any additional clarification is required regarding this submission.

[redacted]

18 July 2024

that a power storage facility exists on 3 Turton Place and that the impact of noise emissions will be prejudicial. This has the potential to not only undermine the intent of the current RU4 planning zone, but to deliver a manifest injustice to property owners who would otherwise have a DA for dual occupancy considered free of the prejudice of the effects of the power storage plant.

Granting approval for this development will significantly reduce Council's flexibility in making decisions about managing future development of land in this area in the medium to longer term including the potential to rezone from RU4 as Murrumbateman grows over the next 40 to 50 years.

Prohibited development

It should be noted that a Power Storage Plant is a prohibited development under RU4.

The Statement of Environmental Affects report prepared by Premise identifies a legal work around this LEP prohibition by reference to *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021* (p17) which permits development of electricity generating works by consent on the basis that this land is zoned RU4 and therefore it is 'non-residential land'.

This is purely a technical legal analysis which ignores the on-ground reality in this case that with the relatively small land plots of the surrounding properties (16 Hectares) there are people (my family included) living in relatively close proximity within 550 metres of the proposed plant who will be subject to unacceptable levels of residual noise emissions as identified by the Acoustic report.

This problem is further compounded when one takes into account the potential establishment of second residences on each property under dual occupancy development permitted with consent under the LEP for RU4 zone as discussed above.

The SEPP merely changes the status of the proposed development from 'prohibited' (as provided by the LEP to one 'permitted by consent'. Council has the ability to withhold its consent to the power storage plant proposed in the DA.

In my submission, the local circumstances on the ground at surrounding properties discussed above and the potential future use of this land for dual occupancy provided by the LEP for zone RU4 are compelling reasons for Council to reject this DA and the proposed development for electrical storage plant on the basis that an electrical storage plant is likely to significantly negatively impact existing and future residents for the next 40 years.

Compromised Visual amenity

The proposal to build walls 4.5 and 3.4 metres high around the power storage plant to mitigate noise emissions will serve to negatively affect the visual amenity of this small valley. One of the great attractions valued by the people who live in and visit this community is the unique rural landscape and views it affords.

The storage site and walls will be visible in a direct line of sight from the front door of my house about 550 metres away which sits on a moderately elevated site. It will also be visible from our neighbour's house which is much closer.

I therefore entirely disagree with the comments at paragraph 5.8 of the Statement of Environmental Affects report prepared by Premise. Contrary to the report's conclusions, the

topography of the site, the separation distance from affected properties and vegetation surrounding the site **will not** obscure direct views of the site of the plant walls from my veranda or my neighbours home. In fact there is a direct line of sight from my residence to the proposed power storage plant walls if the development proposal proceeds.

I note our residence at [redacted] was not included in the Noise Emission report as an affected residence which in itself represents methodological error potentially producing skewed results and invalid conclusions.

Reduction in land value

The existence of a power storage plant has the very real potential to reduce the value of surrounding properties as a result of the unattractive prospect to potential purchases of being located next to an industrial power storage plant carrying the amenity disadvantages discussed here. This has the potential to significantly penalise existing landholders financially.

Neighbouring property owners

I have discussed these issues with my neighbour [redacted] who has asked me to note here that he agrees with and fully supports the submissions contained in this letter.

[redacted]

18 July 2024

2. **Approval of the development application would undermine the credibility and intended function of the Murrumbateman Masterplan 2031, which identifies the proposed development area as within a "Winery Precinct with a minimum 16-hectare lot size".**
    a. In effect, the proposed application amounts to a change of zoning or a sub-division in terms of the significant change in land use and scale of impacts on surrounding landowners (including land values, amenity and development potential for more compatible land uses consistent with the Primary Production Small Lot and 'Winery Precinct' zoning). Specifically, the approval of the application would result in two unrelated land uses, with two separate access roads, inconsistent building structures across two distinct locations, and two discrete land use operators (with a complex array of contracts for construction, operation and maintenance over the lifetime of the project).
    b. Lot 23 DP 248413 is inadequately sized to be (effectively) subdivided into two 16-Ha minimum sized lots, while any re-zoning to change the Primary Production Small Lot and 16-Ha minimum lot holding would require significantly more onerous community consultation and detailed consideration of the implications.
    c. The proposed development application is akin to a sub-division and has the potential to harm the objectives of the Yass Valley LEP 2013 regarding minimum subdivision lot size, which include: to minimise likely impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties; give appropriate regard to characteristics of the land and rural environment (in this instance, a Winery Precinct); to ensure subdivision occurs in a planned and sustainable way; and to avoid negatively influencing the layout of future urban areas.
    d. The *Murrumbateman Masterplan 2031* identifies more compatible land use areas for industrial battery facilities, including: 19. Industrial; 20. Land retained for industrial expansion; and 9. to 11. Field Exhibition, Recreation Reserve and open space areas. These alternative areas represent more compatible land uses for the proposed development, including with underground access to nearby electricity transmission.
    e. Approval of the proposed development would undermine more compatible development and investments that will generate income within the Winery Precinct. For example, the proposed development would change the character and amenity of the Winery Precinct and deter more sympathetic investment in short-stay tourist accommodation. The Masterplan recognises the limited availability of short-stay accommodation at present.
    f. The development proposal would foreclose future land uses and planning options that may need to be considered to accommodate Murrumbateman's forecast 10,000 population and would be contradictory to the Yass Valley's LEP core planning principle: 'to avoid negatively influencing the layout of future urban areas'.

3. **The proposed development application does not represent efficient infrastructure investment – as per the recommendations of the Yass Valley Settlement Strategy.**
    a. Investment in commercial scale batteries should be coordinated in partnership with, or directed by, the licenced Distribution Network Service Provider (DNSP), the local council, and with the developers of new residential or industrial areas (including in conjunction with the scoping of the North Murrumbateman development).
    b. DNSPs are in a superior position to rollout community scale batteries, with knowledge of where best to locate them and easy access to existing assets, infrastructure and know-

how. DNSP-led battery solutions avoid more costly infrastructure upgrades across the network and benefits accrue to all electricity consumers.

c. Conversely, big battery developers are pursuing projects for their own investment returns, they are not community-owned or regulated, unlike DNSPs, to deliver the greatest net benefits to electricity consumers. Requiring a bespoke, uncoordinated and uncertain development application for each of these projects raises the costs of development, especially when proposed in established residential areas where land use conflicts arise, which ultimately makes such battery solutions more expensive for electricity users.

4. **The change of land use proposed by the applicant would represent an unpredicted and substantially different land use to anything currently within the "Winery Precinct", which requires more thorough planning and management of risks over the lifetime of the development – particularly acoustic, fire and groundwater risks and end-of-life project costs.**

   a. The application states that the proposed facility 'will include electrical infrastructure which will generate noise emissions with the potential to impact on the acoustic amenity of the surrounding environment including at residential receptors'.

   b. The planned location of my future residential dwelling on [redacted] (Figure 1) has not been evaluated as a 'noise sensitive receptor location' and was omitted from the 'noise mitigation strategies' that have been proposed to reduce adverse impacts at nearby residential locations. Figure 2 shows a large gap in the proposed acoustic barrier, which has been oriented towards [redacted].

   c. The application identifies that 'based on the nature of the development, there is the potential for fires to initiate from the components within the site'. The technologies incorporate some precautions to contain the fire, however, the risk of toxic chemical escape, thermal runaway and an uncontained explosion cannot be ruled out.

   d. The real-life operating performance of battery facilities is still being evidenced, with many projects malfunctioning in real-world conditions and more affected by human and system errors than would be predicted by controlled test settings. This reality demands a cautious approach to approval of proposed sites in established areas with distinctly different land uses. If approved in the current location, stronger planning conditions and compliance requirements are necessary.

   e. Given the potential for an intense, self-sustaining fire and chemical leakage, any approval needs to impose greater planning precautions and conditions.

      i. The proposed distance between the batteries and the landscaped area is approximately 10–13 metres, consisting of grass less than 100 millimetres mown in height. It is implausible that this height of grass will be maintained year-round and, if it were, gravel solutions would likely be both more effective and less costly overall. The proposed bi-annual auditing would be insufficient.

      ii. I question whether the 10–13-metre distance from the batteries to the landscaped area is sufficient to contain a fire initiating from within the facility, especially with an intense fire and the proximity of trees planted within the landscaped area. I note that the development plans are misleading, or inconsistently detailed, as to whether there would be a single or double row of trees within the landscaped area.

iii. Chemicals may not be fully contained, and there could be potential for runoff or leakage into the groundwater. My sole permanent water source is a spring-fed dam (supplied directly from the groundwater), which is in close proximity of the proposed development. The fact that my dam is predominantly supplied by an underground water reservoir and the nearby bore access point (GW416988) naturally discharges underground water is inconsistent with the claims of the consultant's report attached to the development application. The report claims that bore GW416988 has a standing water level 20 meters below ground level, which does not accord with the natural overflow of water from the groundwater access point and the near-permanent sustainment of the dam from a groundwater reservoir. This is also evident from satellite imagery, which shows the distinctly different colour of the dam water at [redacted], in contrast to other dams in the area that are supplied by water runoff (Figure 3). Given this apparent inaccurate characterisation of the surrounding groundwater properties, insufficient regard is given to chemical risks in the development application.

f. Such a substantial change in land use requires a thorough and involved process of engaging the local community (including professionals within or independently contracted by the Council) to appraise the nature of the proposed development and associated risks. I urge the Yass Valley Council to consider the risks and full potential costs to the proponents, nearby landholders and current and future ratepayers over the lifetime of the development.
    i. This should include costs in the event of malfunction, fire/explosion, chemical leakage into soil, runoff and groundwater, and remediation.
    ii. The application did not substantially address facility closure and remediation arrangements.
    iii. In the event of a malfunction, it is unclear from the application what remediation would be required, what costs could be involved, and who would be liable and have adequate financial security.

5. The applicant and operator essentially propose to self-assure compliance within construction and operating safety limits. The enforceability and consequences of non-compliance are unclear within the application, while the extreme consequences of any inadequate maintenance and real-life system faults could be borne by nearby landowners. A more appropriate planning process would:

a. Allow the Council to assure surrounding landholders of robust risk controls and compliance and enforcement procedures, having regard to multiple options to manage risks within the risk appetite of the community and surrounding landholders.
b. Consider the risk of unsafe and cost-minimising practices and decisions.
    i. The proponent intends to contract out the operation and maintenance of the facility, potentially increasing risks if not well-managed through contract terms.
    ii. The proponent is investing in an uncertain market, in which battery investments could occur more efficiently through Distribution Network Service Providers (DNSPs) and community-led solutions integrated into new developments. There is a risk that the battery asset is less profitable than expected, which could

compromise incentives to strictly observe safety and maintenance procedures without stronger audit, compliance and enforcement requirements.

c. Require stronger safety assurance mechanisms around extreme and catastrophic fire risk days, to guarantee that the facility is not in use and not reliant on human involvement (as proposed in the application).

6. **Noting that I have raised significant concerns and oppose the approval of the application, if it were to be approved, an acoustic barrier would need to be incorporated to shield sound travelling towards my residence.**
    a. Currently, the acoustic mitigations fail to include a barrier oriented towards the location of my proposed residential site (Figure 2).

I request that the Council provide a version of the policy (Planning Framework) that will be used to assess the project in its current proposed location. A policy to specifically address land use conflict associated with such energy proposals in the Yass Valley is required and should be developed in close consultation with the community in advance of any ad-hoc project approvals. The planning process must identify how such projects will provide lasting community benefits within the Valley, enhance environmental assets and sustainable development in the region, and protect agricultural land and water resources.

Lastly, concerns of Murrumbateman community members should be weighted considerably higher than any support for the application that may be expressed from those residing in more distant locations not directly affected by the proposal.

I would welcome the opportunity to engage further in the process.

Kind Regards

[redacted]

From:	[redacted]
To:	YVC Customer Service Team
Subject:	DA 240159 - Proposed battery at Turton Place
Sent:	19/07/2024 2:27:22 PM

[EXTERNAL] Please exercise caution when clicking on links or attachments from external sources.

Dear Council,

I am writing to ask that if you approve the application to place a large storage battery at Turton Place Murrumbateman, you impose certain conditions upon the project.

I am concerned about the negative impact that the proposal will have on the values of close by properties. It is not fair that people may suffer a windfall loss. Please speak with licenced valuers and facilitate appropriate compensation from the proponent for properties impacted.

The negative impacts are mainly driven by the prospect of noise and risk of fire.

I live out of the range of noise and wouldn't seek any compensation but I am well within the area that would likely be impacted by any fire that starts east of the Barton Highway. Fires do a lot of damage and they frighten people and they absorb a lot of resources to control them and rehabilitate areas affected.

Therefore I request that you impose the following condition:

"The manager of the battery storage system shall, as well as meeting all conditions to minimise and contain any fire on site, organise an on-site meeting in October each year. Attendees at the meeting shall include at least a Southern Tablelands RFS manager and the Captains of Murrumbateman, Springfield, Yass River Nanima and Back Creek brigades. The meeting shall determine what maintenance work is to be undertaken urgently before the most dangerous part of the bushfire season commences.
"

Thank you,

[redacted]

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SUBMISSION #22

From:	[redacted]
To:	YVC Customer Service Team
Subject:	DA240159 # Turton Place Murrumbateman NSW
Sent:	21/07/2024 11:46:40 PM

[EXTERNAL] Please exercise caution when clicking on links or attachments from external sources.

Private and Confidential
PERSONAL INFORMATION TO BE REDACTED

[redacted]

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to object to the DA proposing a battery storage facility at 3 Turton pl Murrumbateman for the following reasons.

1.Zone RU 4 Primary Production Small Lots

- To enable sustainable primary industry and other compatible land uses.
- To encourage and promote diversity and employment opportunities in relation to primary industry enterprises, particularly those that require smaller lots or that are more extensive in nature.
- To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses adjoining zones.
- To ensure that the development does not prejudice the orderly and economic development of future urban land.
- To ensure that the development is sympathetic to the ecological attributes of the area.

2. Permitted without consent Home occupations.
3. Permitted with consent Agriculture produce industries; Aquaculture; Bed and Breakfast accommodation; Building identification signs; Business identification signs; Cemeteries; Community facilities; Crematoria; Dwelling houses; Environmental facilities; Environmental protection works; Extensive agriculture; farm buildings; Flood mitigation works; Heliports; Home businesses; Home industries; Intensive plant agriculture; landscaping material supplies;Places of public worship; plant nurseries; Recreation facilities (outdoors); Roads; Roadside stalls: Veterinary hospitals; Water reticulation systems
4. Prohibited Agriculture; Any other development not specified in item 2 or 3

A battery farm does not appear to come under permitted development for this zone. Rather than "minimise conflict between land uses within this zone", I think that it will potentially cause considerable conflict with the adjoining properties. The area is not suited to an industrial operation as the location is in a highly valuable wine growing area. The proposed site is in close proximity to established vineyards, namely Dionysus

and Four Winds. There has been no acknowledgement made as to the impact that this battery storage will have on surrounding businesses. Murrumbateman is a very unique area that survives on Agritourism. It needs to be preserved. I feel that a development of this scale will have a detrimental impact on the rural landscape and will not be disguised by a bit of landscaping. In recent years the Australian wine industry has suffered economic loss from China's trade embargoes, loss of business from Covid lockdowns and has suffered from extremes in climate. It's an industry that needs our continued support.

The applicant has noted that the facility will be in the 'public interest'. I don't understand how this facility will benefit me? Energy will be stored from the grid.. then who is is sold to? Why store energy from the grid to sell it back to the grid? I would have a better understanding of its purpose if it was connected to a solar or wind farm and it was storing renewable energy. I don't understand the necessity to invest $5.6 millions in this project...in this location?

The noise impact statement is based on assumptions and bears no relevance to what may occur at the actual site. This report is irrelevant and should be disregarded.

I am very concerned about the potential fire risk to the area. The fire report downplays the risk to surrounding properties and the township of Murrumbateman. How would the local RFS deal with a fire from this source?

To conclude:
To have a battery farm of this capacity, in this beautiful location, is not in keeping with the zoning criteria. It is potentially damaging to existing primary industries in its immediate locality.
I strongly urge the YVC to refuse this DA in an area that provides economic benefit for Murrumbateman and the Yass Valley Shire.

Kind regards

[redacted]

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SUBMISSION #23

21st July 2024

[redacted]

[redacted]

Murrumbateman NSW 2582

To Yass Valley Council,

We are writing this letter in objection to the proposed Murrumbateman Distribution Battery Energy Storage System.

We moved here for the peace and quiet and so I could be with my animals as I have mental health issues which include anxiety, OCD and depression.

I rarely leave the property due to not been able to deal with ppl and noise etc, the proposed Battery Storage Systems noise will impact not only my life but my families as well.

I take in rescue horses that have had extremely traumatic lives and get distressed and anxious just from noise and strong winds, I work with them to try and overcome their issues and gain their trust so they can have some kind of normal life again, they don't handle any noises well and I feel that this Battery storage system will only add to their already nervousness and anxiety. I also take in other rescue animals as well as owning 4 dogs, a therapy pig and sheep which also don't tolerate noise.

I have also looked into other places where the Battery Energy Storage Systems are located and found the insurance policies increase which are already becoming unaffordable to families. If a fire was to start it's a hazmat situation and our local rural fire brigade cannot even attend, it would have to be Yass fire Brigade that would have to attend, which by the time they arrived it would be to late to save anything and that's without the environmental impact it has. A fire that started at a facility in Bouldercombe near Rockhampton residents were told it could burn for days and to stay in doors to avoid hazardous fumes.

Who is going to be liable if this has an impact on my mental health which I am already medicated for? Who is liable for my family's mental health when it impacts them? Who is liable if anything happens and causes issues to my horses and other animals?

If there was going to be no impact on peoples lives that live in this area, why did we only find out about it happening today the 21st July 24? And I know of other residents in the area that have only just been told, how many others don't know still?

Yass Valley Council there is a lot of questions that need answering before this goes ahead and also local residents in the area need to be made aware of the proposed project and not kept in the dark to only find out after the date has passed to object.

I would appreciate a reply to my letter of concern as soon as possible due to having anxiety attacks over this proposal.

Regards

[redacted]

SUBMISSION #24

From:	[redacted]
To:	YVC Customer Service Team
Subject:	DA240159 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman
Sent:	21/07/2024 6:26:33 PM

[EXTERNAL] Please exercise caution when clicking on links or attachments from external sources.

Dear YVC

Note: I do not agree to my personal information being made available to the applicant nor published as part of processing this application.

I am writing to object to this development for the reasons set out below.

The address subject to the application, 3 Turton Place Murrumbateman, is zoned RU4. YVC must reject this proposal as the LEP does not explicitly state that a battery farm is permissible on this site.

The area is not suited to an industrial operation of this nature due to the impact on critical tourism drivers to this region, including Four Winds and Dionysus wineries. This part of Murrumbateman is predominantly used for small hobby farms in a large lot rural residential setting. The proposal is completely incongruent with this surrounding use. Its impacts on surrounding properties (noise and fire) has not been appropriately articulated nor mitigated in the application.

As I live within three kilometres of this development I am concerned that no proper consultation has been undertaken to explain the detail of the proposal and what measures have been planned to minimise impacts. I am deeply concerned about noise and the erosion of the rural residential nature of the eastern part of Murrumbateman. Not all residents receive or read the local news so they would be unaware of this development proposal which will have tangible impacts on surrounding communities. I only heard about it through a letterbox drop from a concerned resident. This is appalling given the scale and impacts this development will have on the local community (not just immediate neighbours).

In particular it is not clear how the applicant proposes to manage fire risks associated with a battery farm noting that this area is subject to high winds and drought.

YVC should reject this proposal on the basis that:

- it is not permissible under the current local environment plan
- insufficient consultation with the community has taken place and that insufficient detail has been provided as to how noise and fire risks will be managed and mitigated
- the proposal is not in keeping with the rural lifestyle and setting of the surrounding community and will ultimately detract from Murrumbateman being seen as a premier tourism and residential destination.

Kind regards

[redacted]

SUBMISSION #25

To whom it may concern.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on DA240159 Proposal Installation of a Distribution Battery Energy Storage System at 3 Turton Place Murrumbateman NSW 2582.

I have lived in the Murrumbateman area for approx. 41 years and have seen the broader area change significantly over these years. I understand that change and development is inevitable, and in principle I am in support of change and progress overall. I also understand that if it were not the case, the majority of us would not reside here now.

I have also been an active member /volunteer firefighter with the Springfield Rural Fire Brigade (SRFB) for approx.. 40 years to the present, including the role of Captain on 2 previous occasions.
DA 240159 is within the SRFB boundaries and is approx. 1.5km from the SRFB Northern Station.

I have a few questions and concerns/comments (in bold) for clarification please.

1. **Assuming the proposal is approved does this "green light" any future expansion of the site/ BESS system without the need for further DA's?**

2. Aerosol fire extinguishing system. Therefore, a container will automatically suppress an internal fire in the first instance…… **What is plan B should the automatic Aerosol fire extinguishing system fail and/or reignition occur post deployment of the system?**

3. The battery type is a lithium-Ion phosphate (LFB) which are considered to be one of the safest battery chemistries within the industry…….**What are the Bi products if/should combustion/ fire of these batteries occur?**

4. **And if so, what are the Evacuation Considerations first responders should consider and implement ? What are the minimum PPE considerations given that none of the local NSW RFS Brigades have breathing apparatus or Hazmat Capabilities ?**

5. A minimum of 20,000L of static water should be located within the development site**…….Should be or will be? If so what's the proposed location and how will this be supplied and replenished? I could not see the location on any of the drawings submitted within the DA.**

6. **From my experience and in my opinion the proposed native vegetation buffer plantings are far too close to the proposed assets to provide defensive protection safely and effectively from an approaching/ impacting fast moving grass fire. In addition, the drawings only show one point of entry and egress into the proposed fenced compound area on the SE corner. I believe one access/egress point to be unwise and potentially unsafe when surrounded by the vegetation buffer consisting of native species.**

7. **Worst case scenario, the proposed BESS facility catches fire from within (non-grass/bushfire related) and the automatic suppression system fails.. my understanding is that significant amounts of water (greater than 20KL) is/are potentially required to cool and eventually extinguish . The contaminated water runoff is generally always an afterthought for hazmat jobs…….. Would it not be an**

environmentally friendly "green" proactive approach to consider contour drains, catchment ponds, bunding's etc in the construction phase?..... Rather than the alternative of the scrambling reactive approach to contain runoff during /or after the fact.

I look forward to your response.

Thanks & regards.
[redacted]

SUBMISSION #20

From:	[redacted]
To:	YVC Customer Service Team
Subject:	DA 240159-3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman.Proposed Installation of a Battery Energy Storage System.
Sent:	21/07/2024 4:40:51 PM

[EXTERNAL] Please exercise caution when clicking on links or attachments from external sources.

To whom it may concern.
The following questions,I feel need to be addressed in relation to the above DA.
-In the event of a fire,will the suppression system extinguish the fire?
-If toxic smoke is released into the atmosphere how will it affect people, pet's, livestock,grapes, vegetables,birds,bees, insects and other living creatures?
-If firefighting efforts create vast amounts of water as runoff,how will it affect the soil and waterways?
-Would compensation be paid in the event of a fire?
-Would insurance policies be affected by the BESS, with or without an incident?
-Are more of these BESS in the pipeline?
-Who profits from this facility?
Kind regards,
[redacted]
[redacted].

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SUBMISSION #27

From:	[redacted]
To:	YVC Customer Service Team
Subject:	DA240159 3 Turton Place Murrumbateman
Sent:	21/07/2024 4:30:04 PM

[EXTERNAL] Please exercise caution when clicking on links or attachments from external sources.

Private and Confidential
PERSONAL INFORMATION TO BE REDACTED

[redacted]

To whom it may concern

I am writing to object to the DA proposing a battery storage facility at 3 Turton Place Murrumbateman for the following reasons.

1.The address 3 Turton Place comes under RU4 NSW zoning. A battery farm does not appear to come under permitted development for this zone and I am unsure as to why this is even being considered. The applicant has noted that electricity generating works are allowed under the LEP however, specifics of this are not noted on the application and it is not clear to the layperson of what this entails from the Yass Valley LEP 2013. Therefore this does require clarification to the community at large because it lacks transparency.



2. The area is not suited to an industrial operation as the location is in a highly valuable wine growing region, in particular on the boundary of Dionysus Vineyard and Four Winds across on the corner, measuring 300m and 576m respectively. Other vineyards are 2.1 km - 2.6 km distance and zero acknowledgement has been made in any of the impact statements as to the effect this battery storage facility will have on these businesses. Murrumbatman is a town which relies on agritourism and given that 2.5 million dollars has been invested in bringing the vision of a cycle path to life and encourages visitors to the region, a battery power storage plant being seen from

Murrumbateman Road will do nothing to enhance this. Therefore landscape, visual and viewpoint sensitivity have really not been considered and no panoramic baseline photographs have been provided by the applicant to show a genuine overall landscape impact.



3. The applicant has noted that the facility will be in the public interest. This needs to be quantified as to who this benefit is because to note 'public interest' is a broad and

sweeping statement. Again the comment is ambiguous and lacks context for the Murrumbateman community.
4. The noise impact assessment was based on assumptions and generalisation as no site visit has been conducted. Therefore without an actual physical assessment the report is irrelevant.
5. The applicant is also noted to have advised that vibration intense activities will not form part of the project construction or operational phase and therefore not considered within the assessment. Again this remains unclear as to whether or not it should or should not be considered. As a layperson I would argue that anything relating to power generation and industrial use must have a proper and full noise and vibration assessment done given the proximity to residential and tourist properties.
6. I am concerned that the fire report again downplays the risk that this industrial facility poses for the area. The prevailing easterly winds will ensure any contamination will propagate across the whole of Murrumbateman in the event of a fire. Therefore the report is again called into question.
7. Noise mitigation strategies are noted in the report however, nothing is specified. It's also noted that an acoustic barrier is recommended but again there are no details and therefore remains ambiguous in its delivery because the community does not know how this will appear and how it will benefit the area.
8. It is also noted that vegetation is going to be planted and again a photo montage must be provided to enable the community surrounding the proposed facility to determine the effect and visual impact. Again this has not been properly provided and is limited in detail.

To conclude:
As a local resident I am concerned that there has been no proper public consultation with the applicant to better understand their proposal. I have read in the local news articles that the applicant notes that the residents needn't worry about the construction of the facility and that residents can speak to them directly should they have any concerns which while superficially appears helpful, has not been widely advertised. The residents in the area beyond the 1km written notification drop, were unaware that they could do this and nothing is noted on the application or on the YVC website. The applicant has also noted that the facility did not require to have public consultation ie Q & A, which I would disagree with. The reports are confusing to the layperson and offer no clarity. As we all know reports are written in favour of applicants and the community is rarely given any opportunity to have their concerns answered. To have a battery farm of this size in the midst of this area is not only incongruous but not in keeping with the objectives of the zoning criteria. I would strongly urge the council to not approve this industrial operation in an area which provides economic benefit for Murrumumbateman and the shire as a whole.

Kind regards

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SUBMISSION #28

From:	[redacted]
To:	YVC Customer Service Team
Subject:	DA240159 - 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman
Sent:	21/07/2024 4:25:21 PM

[EXTERNAL] Please exercise caution when clicking on links or attachments from external sources.

To whom it may concern,

I would like to submit an objection to the development application DA240159 at 3 Turton Place Murrumbateman, I do not believe the location is appropriate. It will have a financial impact on homes and businesses in the area from the continuous noise produced from the batteries, as well as health impacts and increased fire risk. I feel that there should have been an opportunity for community consultation, a longer period for people to review the development application, and the reports within the application cannot be understood by the average reader due to the high level of technical information within the reports.

Noise:
While the site is in a rural location, there are many homes and some businesses within the area that will be subjected to continuous noise.

Our home is 1.3km from the site, and within the radius that can be affected by noise when the battery storage is operational. The anticipated noise levels can cause health effects, which are likely to have a negative impact on sleep and cause headaches. This sort of noise can be a migraine trigger for myself and others, and cannot be avoided in a location like this that produces noise 24 hours a day. This noise can cause insomnia and disrupted sleep patterns, which are also recognised as migraine triggers, and can increase anxiety and depression in people.
These sort of health issues are known to be factors in road accidents that cause injury or death, which is concerning for many users of the Barton Highway.

There are two local businesses that are next door and across the road from the site that will be exposed to the constant noise from the batteries. Four Winds Vineyard is open 7 days a week for wine tastings and wood fire pizza for locals and tourists, and may suffer a financial impact from customers that no longer visit due to the noise. Many people have sensitivity to noise, ie migraine suffers, neurodivergent people and others, and will avoid visiting businesses that have this sort of noise pollution.

Fire risk:
The site and surrounding area does not have access to piped water supply, this increases the risk of uncontrolled fire that is a recognised risk from battery storage, and important to prevent fire spreading if started at the site or from a bush fire. Battery fires can burn for days, the locally stored water on site will not be adequate to manage a fire, and there is no piped water access nearby to supplement this. This increases the risk spreading to neighbouring properties, and will likely result in damage or loss of homes, businesses and other buildings on properties, as any available water will be used to

control the fire at the site to prevent it spreading, to the detriment of neighbouring properties or others in the area.
This may increase potential loss of life or permanent injury to others, who will risk their lives to save their homes if the RFS is using all or most of their resources at the battery storage site.

Fumes released from battery fires are extremely toxic, and cause great harm to people and livestock, as well as crops at wineries in the Murrumbateman area (which creates award winning cool climate wines). Many of the local wineries lost all or most of their crops in the 2019/2020 summer due to smoke taint from one of the worst bushfire seasons. This location is extremely unsuitable for battery storage due to this risk.
There may be a decrease in number of volunteer fire fighters due to concern and fear of toxic smoke produced by fires at battery storage sites.
If there is a fire at the site that spreads to nearby properties and moves quickly up the hill that is between the site and the Ambleside Estate, this could make evacuation of Broughton Circuit/Ambleside Avenue properties due to having only one entry/exit to the estate. Our home would be one that could be impacted by fire in these circumstances, particularly in a day with strong winds which are common in this area.

Financial:
House values will be significantly affected due to noise levels, fire risk, and health issues from the battery storage. It will also be more difficult to sell homes as people won't want to move close to batteries emitting noise and the risk of fire that is difficult to put out, and toxic smoke produced.
Insurance premiums will be severely impacted due to the fire risk, and the related expectation of damage or loss of property and lives if there is a fire at the site or a bushfire. The site will be a priority for RFS and emergency services to protect, and nearby homes and businesses will be lost as a result both from lack of water in the area, and limited fire trucks and personnel.

I am a very strong supporter of renewable energy to help manage climate change, but this location is not appropriate for battery storage. There is already one new housing estate planned nearby that will increase the number of nearby homes, and there will likely be more subdivisions in the future that will increase the population in the area. The battery storage site should be developed in an area that will be more rural than this site in Murrumbateman, and in a location with greater access to water.

Kind regards

[redacted]

[redacted]

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SUBMISSION #29

Submission in Response to:

DA240159 - 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman – Proposed Installation of Distribution Battery Energy Storage System

Submitted by: [redacted]

Contact email: [redacted]

[redacted]

Contact phone: [redacted]

[redacted]

We hereby formally object to DA240159 concerning 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman, for the Proposed Installation of Distribution Battery Energy Storage System. Our residence at [redacted] has been entirely disregarded in assessing the impacts of this development.

We lack confidence that this proposal will yield positive outcomes for the broader community or that planners have taken the appropriate steps to inform surrounding residents of impacts and hazards arising from DA240159.

The supporting documentation and plans for DA240159 are inadequate for several reasons, including but not limited to:

- **Mischaracterisations**: The assertion that the surrounding area comprises "vacant grassland with scattered residential premises" is incorrect. Our property is fully utilised under RU4 zoning and we reject any assertions that it be considered vacant grassland for planning purposes.

- **Omission of [redacted] From Planning:** Despite being a separate and inhabited dwelling, [redacted] (circled in yellow below) has been glaringly omitted from all planning and reporting processes. This omission leaves us uninformed about the potential impacts of the development on our residence.



- **Noise Disturbance:** The acoustic report acknowledges 1 Turton Place as the second closest dwelling to the proposed development but fails to identify it as a sensitive receptor. This omission is not adequately explained. 1A Turton Place, is clearly identifiable as being closer than both 1 Turton Place and 5 Turton Place to the proposed development site however has not been assessed for the impact of noise admissions made from the proposed development.

- **Bushfire Management:** The bushfire management plan demonstrates that the proposed development poses an unacceptable risk level for a residential area. We adamantly oppose the establishment of permanent medium-risk infrastructure situated in high-risk vegetation in such close proximity to neighbouring properties, residences, and agricultural land. Namely, our home, animals and property would face catastrophic consequences in the event of a fire.

Summary

In light of these concerns, we respectfully request that the Council does not support this proposal. We appreciate your consideration and welcome any further clarification you may require regarding our objections.

Thank you.

SUBMISSION #30

From:	[redacted]
To:	YVC Customer Service Team
Subject:	Comment re: DA240159 (3 Turton Rd, Murrumbateman)
Sent:	21/07/2024 2:23:19 PM

[EXTERNAL] Please exercise caution when clicking on links or attachments from external sources.

Please accept this submission in relation to DA240159, 3 Turton Rd, Murrumbateman.

My comment is in relation to the characterisation of this development as not meeting the threshold for Regionally Significant Development. Page 1 of the Statement of Environmental Effects (SoEE), dated 4 June 2024 includes advice that the development:

Is not regionally significant development (RSD) as, by way of Schedule 6, clause 5 of the Systems SEPP,
it does not have a CIV of more than $5 million.

On 4 March 2024 the SEPP was updated to reflect changes related to the costs of development. It now refers to the '*estimated cost of development'*. The Application form related to the abovementioned development states an estimated development cost of just over $5.6M.

Schedule 6, clause 5 of the Systems SEPP states the following type of development is considered to be Regionally Significant Development (emphasis added to highlight relevant aspect of provision):

Private infrastructure and community facilities over $5 million

Development that has an estimated development cost of more than $5 million for any of the following purposes—

(a) air transport facilities, ***electricity generating works****, port facilities, rail infrastructure facilities, road infrastructure facilities, sewerage systems, telecommunications facilities, waste or resource management facilities, water supply systems, or wharf or boating facilities,*

As such this subject development appears to meet the threshold for RSD and, if so, would need to be referred for an assessment by the relevant Panel.

I can be contacted in relation to this submission by reply email or on [redacted]

Regards

[redacted]

SUBMISSION #31

3 TURTON PLACE MURRUMBATEMAN

PROPOSED ELECTRICAL FACILITY (DA240159)

We make the following submission opposing the proposed Distribution Battery Energy Storage System (DBESS) on 3 Turton Place Murrumbateman.

The proposed development is completely inappropriate for this location and inconsistent with the gazetted Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013 (LEP).

This submission includes relevant diagrams, statutory references and reasoning which clearly establish why this development application should be rejected. This reasoning includes the proximity to the Murrumbateman Winery Trail, adjacent truffle and vineyard operations, impact on neighbouring properties and scenic agricultural location. Further to the above is the fact that the proposed development does not and cannot comply with Yass Valley Council Development Control Plan 2024 (DCP).

LEP Land Use and existing residential use

The LEP does not provide any consideration in respect to developments of this type. The development application as shown in Figure 1, is within the RU4 zone (Primary Production small lots).

The site

Figure 1: Zoning Context



SEPP and LEP – LAND USE

The proposed electrical generating facility is a permitted use under the SEPP (Transport and Infrastructure). This is due to RU4 being identified as a prescribed non-residential zone, in which electrical generating facilities are permitted with consent, see below.

2.36 Development permitted with consent

(1) Development for the purpose of electricity generating works may be carried out by any person with consent on the following land—(a) in the case of electricity generating works comprising a building or place used for the purpose of making or generating electricity using waves, tides or aquatic thermal as the relevant fuel source—on any land,

(b) in any other case—any land in a prescribed non-residential zone.

In addition, within the Yass Valley LEP, electrical generating facility is prohibited, evident in the Land Use Table and Dictionary within the LEP. Proposing 'Electrical generating facility (non-solar or wind)', this is defined as Electrical generating works, as per the dictionary, which states: "***Electricity generating works*** *means a building or place used for the purpose of— (a) making or generating electricity, or (b) electricity storage."*

Therefore, the land use is prohibited, as any use not listed in the below tables are not permitted.

Permitted without consent

- Environmental protection works.
- Extensive agriculture.
- Home-based child care.
- Home businesses.
- Home occupations.
- Horticulture.
- Viticulture.
- Water storage facilities.

Permitted with Consent

- Agricultural produce industries.
- Agritourism.
- Animal boarding or training establishments.
- Aquaculture.
- Artisan food and drink industries.
- Bed and breakfast accommodation.
- Cellar door premises.
- Cemeteries.
- Dual occupancies.
- Dwelling houses.
- Farm buildings.
- Farm stay accommodation.
- Flood mitigation works.
- Function centres.
- High technology industries.
- Home industries.
- Industrial retail outlets.
- Intensive plant agriculture.
- Markets.
- Plant nurseries.
- Recreation areas.
- Restaurants or cafes.
- Roads.
- Roadside stalls.
- Rural supplies.
- Signage.
- Truck depots.
- Veterinary hospitals.
- Water supply systems.

However, despite local council provisions, the SEPP (Transport and Infrastructure) takes precedence, which defines RU4 as "*prescribed non-residential use*", therefore the electrical generating facility is a permitted use.

While the land use is permitted due to the SEPP, the Yass Valley Local Environment Plan, as formulated by Yass Valley Council, clearly concluded this specific area was unsuitable for the use. This is due to the unique conditions which are present in this council's RU4 zoned land – of which there is very little. In this it is noted the SEPP provisions only override the controls that are inconsistent with the SEPP. Just because the use is permitted in the zone, does not mean that it warrants approval against all applicable legislation.

Residential Context

As shown in Figure 1, the surrounding area is largely residential use, with Murrumbateman town centre located West and North-West, shown as R2 and R5 zones. Subsequently, the RU4 zone acts as a transition between zones, specifically between residential zones to the West and North (R2 and R5) and Production Zones to the East (RU1).

This is evident in the zone objectives for this zone within the Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan, specifically "*To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.*"

Further evidence of RU4 acting as a transitional zone between prescribed non-residential zones (RU1) and prescribed residential zones (R2 and R5 within the Murrumbateman town centre) is the higher dwelling density, and smaller lot sizes. This is particularly evident when comparing the proposed design and siting of the electrical generating facility, and an alternative design and siting on the same block (see Figure 4) and again on adjacent RU1 zoning to the East (see Figure 5). This demonstrates that,

(1) The specific RU4 sites in Figure 1 act as prescribed residential use, and the development should not be permitted on this RU4 site.
(2) The development is far better suited to adjacent RU1 zones (or more suitable RU4 zones), which protects residential amenity.
(3) The development is far better suited to adjacent RU1 zones (or more suitable RU4 zones), which protects the amenity of wineries and orchards.

As demonstrated in Figure 2, the closest dwelling on an adjoining block is located North-west. Adversely, the alternate design siting on the same lot (Figure 3) shows that should the electrical facility be moved further East, this could result in **no** dwellings using an identical buffer (to the nearest dwelling) from the original design and siting (Figure 2).

As a result, it is clear that the design can further mitigate noise impacts.

Figure2: Existing proposal - distances between adjoining dwellings and proposed development (measured to boundary)

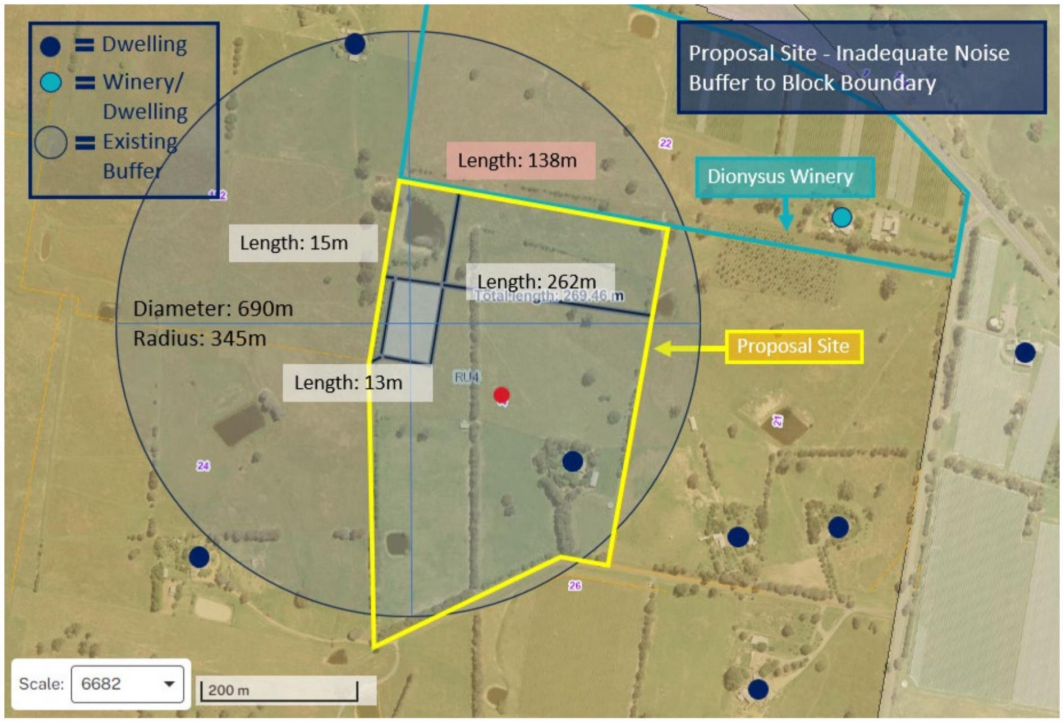


Figure 3: Alternate Proposal - Distance between adjoining dwelling and proposed development (measured to boundary)

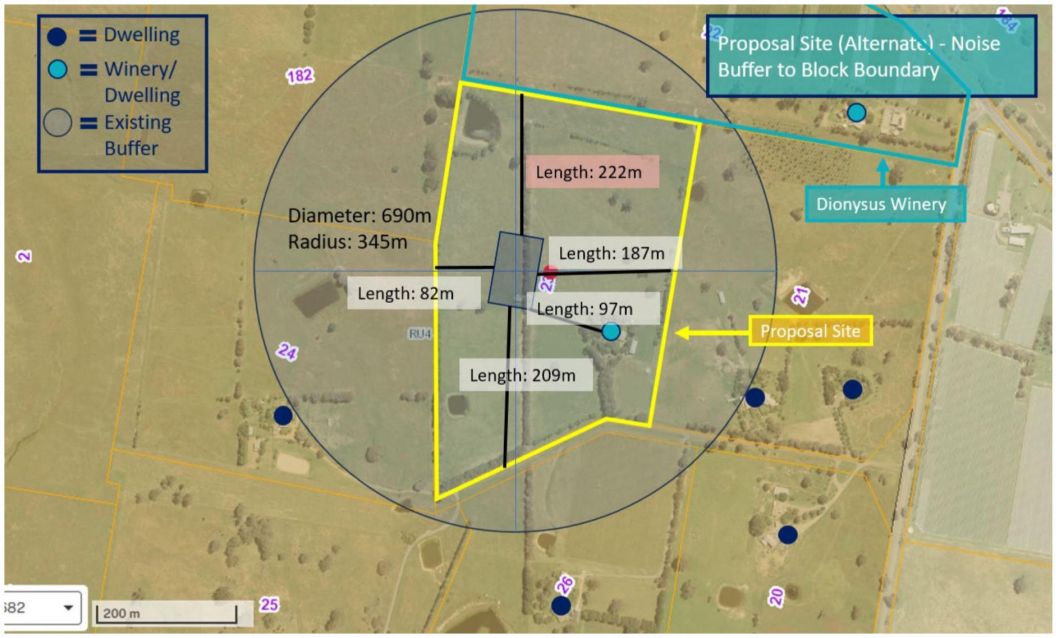


Figure 4: Distance between adjoining dwellings, and alternate proposal on Local RU1 Site (measured to boundary) – Demonstrating RU1 as more suitable for this development



In conclusion, the RU4 zoning in this site context acts as a prescribed residential zone, where the RU4 acts as a transitional zone between prescribed non-residential zones (RU1) and prescribed residential zones within the Murrumbateman town centre (R2 and R5). Additionally, through comparing Figure 2 and Figure 3, it is clear the original design prioritises residential amenity on the subject site, rather than providing adequate setbacks to adjoining lots.

Therefore, the development should not be permitted, as the local context results in this RU4 zone acting like a prescribed residential zone. Notwithstanding this, the local context also shows the proposed development is unlikely to be able to comply with the Development Control Provisions that apply.

DCP non-compliance

Yass Valley Council Development Control Plan

RU4 is a permitted zone for electricity generating works under the SEPP (Transport and Infrastructure) but not the Yass LEP. The Yass DCP controls for all development (Part B of the DCP) and RU4 zones (Part E of the DCP) still apply where there are no inconsistencies.

Within the acoustic report submitted alongside the DA, section 4.2.1 'Noise Prediction Methodology' outlines that the noise predictions considered a source-to-receiver approach, or noise directly from the electrical generating facility (source) and the receiver (dwelling). Additionally, this option is considered the 'worst case' scenario, as stated: "*a conservative approach that considers source-to-receiver wind vectors for all receivers*" and stated again: "*is often considered conservative as it represents a worst case operation scenario.*"

Furthermore, within the Part E of Yass Valley Council Development Control Plan (DCP) 2024 (section relating to RU4), the following is stated:

"*separation distances are to be provided to ensure rural amenity and right to farm is maintained by limiting the potential for land use conflict.*", and "*In rural areas it is particularly important that consideration is given to the siting of dwellings and outbuildings to minimise land use conflicts.*", and, "*Development applications should detail what noise attenuation or abatement measures are proposed to ensure that constant noise does not exceed 5dB(A) above background noise levels* ***when measured at the boundary with any adjoining property*** *or public road"*

Furthermore, under Part B of the DCP (section relating to all developments), the following is stated

"*In determining whether a site is suitable for the proposed development the following need to be considered […]* ***Adjoining land uses****, this is particularly important for intensive agricultural and* ***industrial uses which may require physical separation from residential areas and existing dwellings****;*"

Evidently, the DCP outlines multiple provisions that consider site suitability, and setbacks to protect rural and residential amenity, and limit land use conflict.

Noise Mitigation

The acoustic report seems to effectively suggest that placement of the battery location has been chosen to share the noise evenly between all the closest sensitive receptors. We find this is totally unacceptable as the RO1 landholder has chosen to have this facility on their land. Therefore, as RO1 derives the economic benefit of having this facility on their land, the battery units should in fact be facing South, so that RO1 receives the heaviest impact of the noise (should the DA be approved)- which we do not believe should be the case.

The acoustic report does not adequately demonstrate that the development is consistent with the Yass DCP 2024, as **the acoustic report explicitly states that noise amenity is measured from the receiver (dwelling) and not the boundary**, as required under the Yass DCP. Subsequently, Figure 2 demonstrates that the 345m setback/buffer to the closest adjoining dwelling (apart from the dwelling that exists on the site of the proposed electrical generating facility) is not adequate, particularly when compared to the current 13m setback to the western boundary, as defined by the requirements of the DCP.

This is reinforced in Figure 3 and Figure 4 which shows a partially better noise buffer to adjoining boundaries can be achieved on the same site, and an adequate noise buffer to boundaries can be achieved on another nearby RU1 site. As a result of the lot size, dwelling density, and planning context, the RU4 small lots cannot adequately mitigate noise, as seen in Figure 2. For this reason, the proposed development is inconsistent with both Part B and Part E of the Yass DCP 2024.

To further mitigate noise, the development should be sited further east, as seen in Figure 2 and to achieve adequate noise mitigation, should be sited within the RU1 zone, seen in Figure 3.

The acoustic report prepared by Watson Moss Growcott also states; “The findings of the assessment indicate that in the absence of noise control, residual noise levels at the RO1 and RO4 receptors have the potential to be higher than the Project Trigger Noise Levels during the evening and night periods. In consideration of the above, WMG has amended the noise model to include acoustic barriers around the equipment to provide noise shielding in the direction of the critical receptors”.

In layman’s terms, this means that the battery is too noisy to be approved in this location on this site without the addition of sound barriers. Let us now consider these sound barriers. The proponent is suggesting they will be approximately 140 lineal meters in length (almost one and a half football fields long) around the enclosed batteries, and rise to an effective height of 3.5m to 4.5m. This is a massive structure. For the purpose of clarity, these sound barriers are not part of a normal DBESS structure and play no part in its function of storing electricity. They are only included here because without them, the noise emissions from these batteries will exceed NSW Environment Protection Authority Project Intrusiveness Noise Levels.

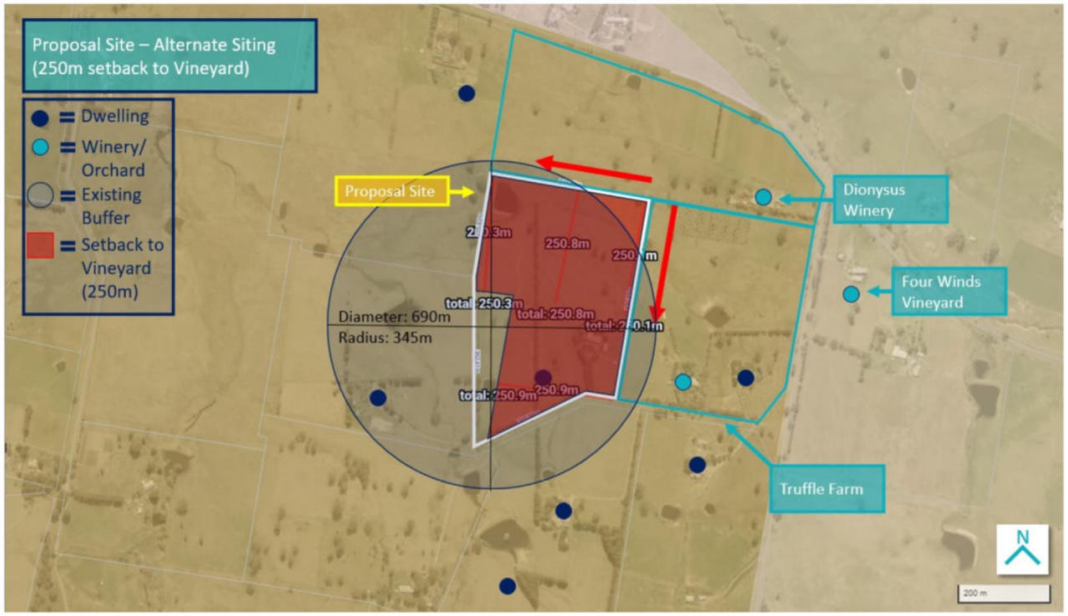
There is no detail included in this DA submission that states any detail of either the engineering, construction or component details of this sound barrier. **THERFORE- these sound barriers require separate approval which would not fall under the SEPP (T&I) guidelines where there appears to be no reference to them at all.**

On that basis, the LEP would prevail, however the erection of sound barriers of this size (for any cause) is not a permitted use in this RU4 zone, therefore it is prohibited. And if for any reason it was permitted, it would not meet the requirements of the Yass Valley DCP 2024 for many of the reasons already discussed. Again for the purposes of clarity these sound barriers would be both a prohibited use and inconsistent with SEPP, LEP and DCP controls if the Proponent were seeking to build these barriers in this location on their own (without the DBESS) On that basis alone, this DA should be rejected as it is clear the DBESS will fail to meet legislative requirements for approval in its own right without mitigation works.

Siting of Building – Setbacks

Furthermore, as per 'Part E.1 Siting of Buildings' of the Yass DCP, "*All buildings shall have a* ***setback of no less than 250 meters from the boundary*** *of a property where the following activities exist:* […] *intensive plant agriculture* ***(including vineyards and orchards)*** and 50 metres from any other boundary. Evident in Figure 3, the development is not setback 250m from the Northern boundary where Dionysus Winery is located, the Eastern boundary where a truffle farm is located. Therefore, the development does not meet the requirements of the Yass DCP2024.

Figure 5: 250 Setback to Wineries and Orchards



When comparing Figure 2 and Figure 5, it is evident the development cannot be adequately setback to the winery, cannot be adequately setback to the nearest adjoining dwellings, and cannot be adequately setback to the dwelling on site. This provides further evidence that this specific RU4 site is not suitable.

Furthermore, as the development is zoned RU4, the setbacks from side and rear boundaries within table 12 within Part E of the Yass DCP apply. This has been extracted under Figure 6, with the relevant provision highlighted.

In addition, the lot is divided into two parts, as per the DA submission. This includes the electrical generating facility site, and the residential site (see Exclusion Zone within Figure 7).

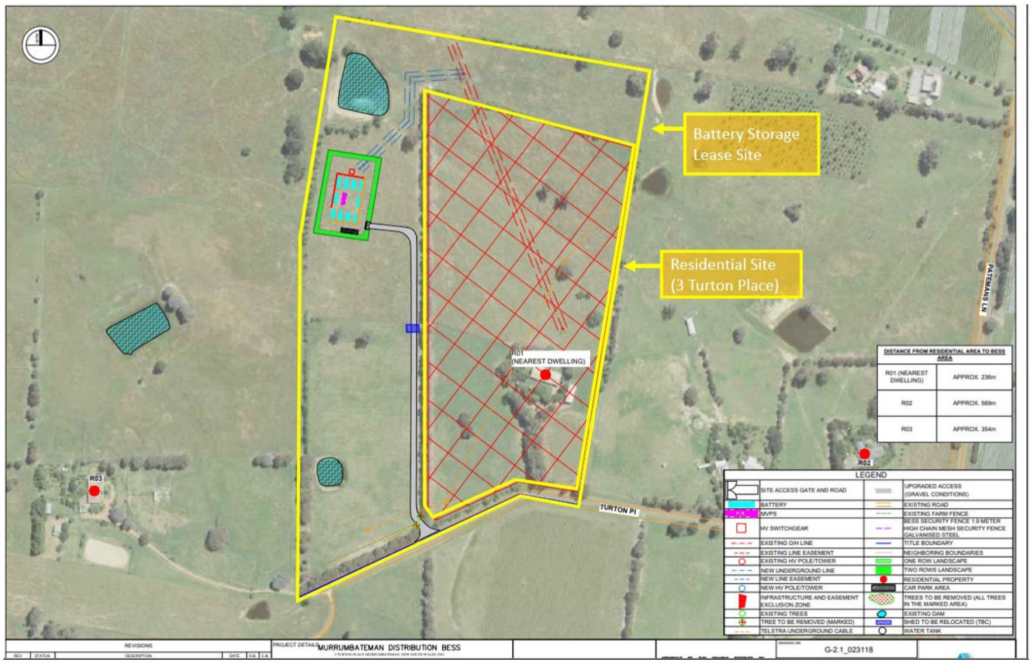
Therefore, the development application is inconsistent with the DCP as a 50m setback to the Western boundary is not included, as shown in Figure 2 and the development application plans.

Figure 6: Setbacks for Rural Areas

Table 12 Setbacks for Rural Areas

Zone	Lot Size	Setback from Road Frontages	Setback from Side and Rear Boundaries
R5 Large Lot Resident, C4 Environmental Living	0.2 – 0.49ha	10 metres	5 metres
R5 Large Lot Resident, C4 Environmental Living	0.5 – 1ha	20 metres	10 metres
R5 Large Lot Resident, C4 Environmental Living	1.1 – 2ha	30 metres	10 metres
R5 Large Lot Resident, C4 Environmental Living	2.1- 5 ha	30 metres	30 metres
R5 Large Lot Resident, C4 Environmental Living	Above 5 ha	50 metres	50 metres
RU4 Primary Production Small Holding	All	50 metres	50 metres
RU1 Primary Production, RU2 Rural Landscape, C3 Environmental Management	All	50 metres	50 metres

Figure 7: Infrastructure and Easement Exclusion Zone - Project drawings 'G-2.1_023118' from DA240159



The development is required to be consistent with Table 12 of the DCP, which outlines 50m setback to all side and rear boundaries. As the lot is divided in to two parts, consideration should be given to all other areas not within the infrastructure and easement exclusion zone to be considered a separate site. Therefore, each of these sites should be treated as separate, particularly regarding the required 50m setback to all rear and side boundaries.

To further demonstrate the developments inconsistencies with the DCP and required 50m setbacks, diagrams have been provided. These show a 50m setback to all boundaries, including both sites within the lot, and a 50m setback in conjunction with the required 250m setback to vineyards and orchards. See Figures 8 and 9 below.

Figure 8: 50m Setback to all side and rear boundaries, as per the DCP



Figure 9: 50m and 250 setbacks, as per the DCP

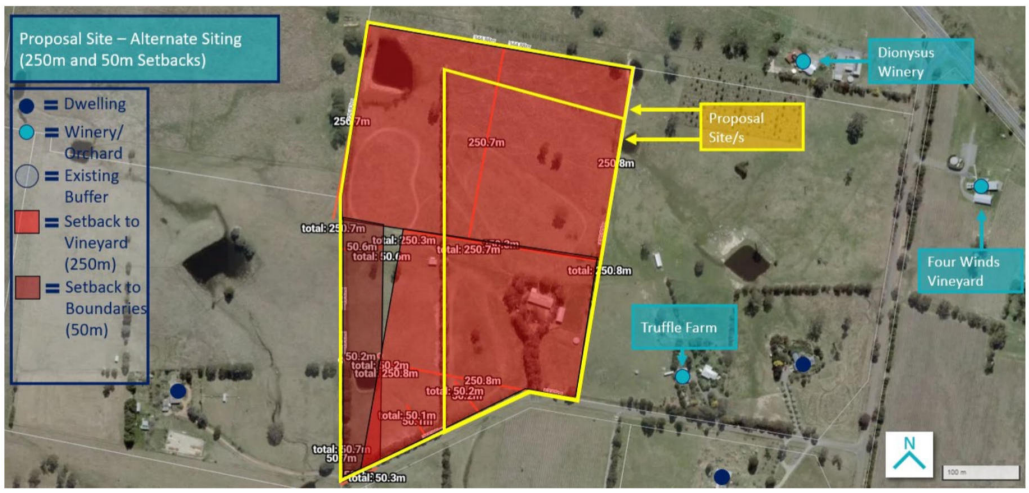


Figure 9 and Figure 10, establish the proposal cannot satisfy requirements of the DCP.

Visual Screening- Use of reflective materials

Part E of the Yass DCP outlines that reflective materials should be avoided, stating: "*ridgelines and scenic vistas are protected where buildings respect topography, use neutral non reflective materials and do not dominate the landscape;*", and within character and built form stating, "*Only non-reflective material shall be used for the construction of outbuildings*".

The development currently proposes some level of visual screening via two rows of planting. However, the 1m external fence, 1.8m galvanised steel security fence, and white energy storage container can still be visible. This is evident in the landscape plans, which show visibility of the batteries, fences, and lack thereof adequate screening, see Figure 10.

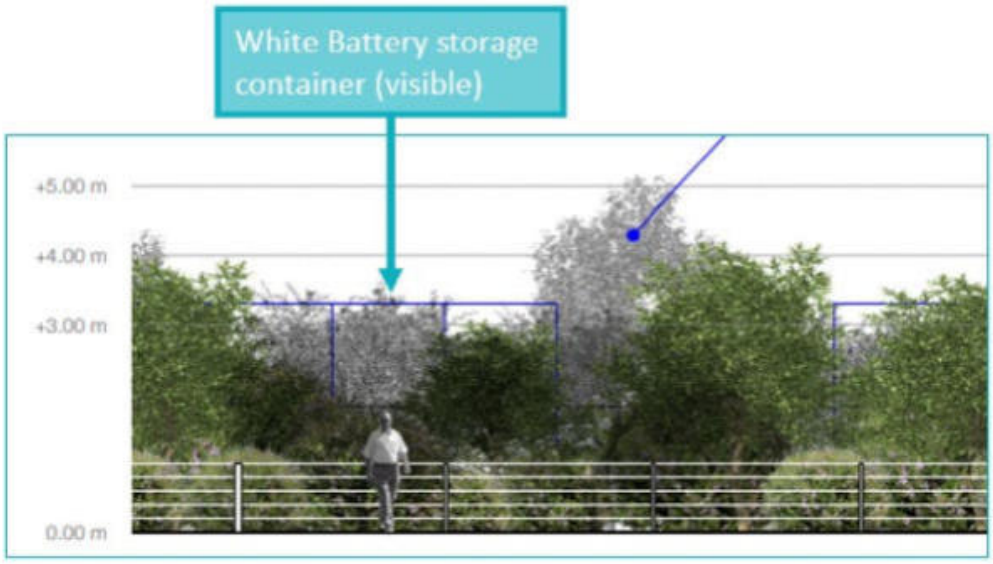


Figure 10: Landscape Plan Perspective

Furthermore, the colours palette and materials used are considered reflective, including galvanised steel fencing and white energy storage batteries. Reflective materials, including the materials and colours proposed, are prohibited by the DCP.

Given these structures are still visible, and materials and colours considered reflective, the development is therefore inconsistent with the Yass DCP.

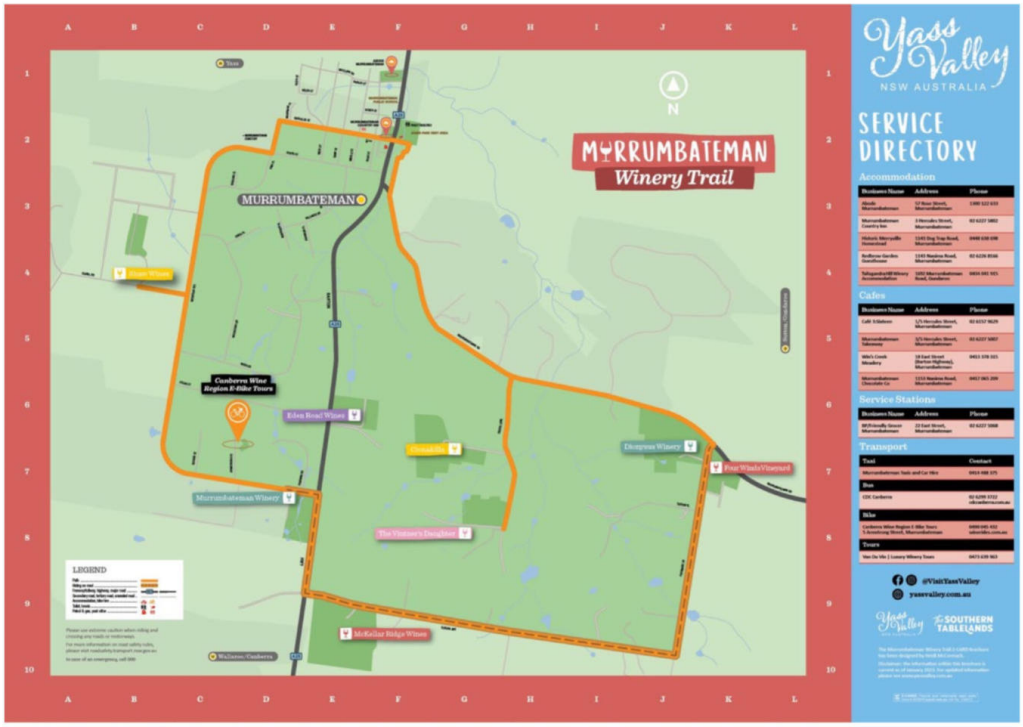
Also, the plants proposed in the landscape plan as represented by the render above draw a very long bow at best. The plants (including the 5 metre small trees) are Hiko pot size. Approximately 150mm-200mm high. These plants will take 10 to 15 years to reach the maturity suggested in this render. This means that **most** of the reflective material will be visible for many years.

Given proposed structures will be highly visible, and materials and colours considered reflective, the development is inconsistent with the DCP and should be rejected.

Yass Strategic Planning – Winery Trail and Site Context

The proposed development is at the centre of the Yass Valley Murrumbateman Winery Trail, seen in Figure 11. This area accommodates industry leading wineries and features bike paths for visitors and residents to use for relaxation and recreation. The proposed development which includes inadequate noise setbacks to dwellings and wineries, and deficient visual screening will adversely impact the Murrumbateman winery trail and should be rejected. Construction of this DBESS in this location has a high possibility of not only harming the current local tourism industry, but of also inhibiting further growth and investment in the future.

Figure 11: Yass Valley Murrumbateman Winery Trail



Bushfire Mitigation

Due to the residential context of this specific RU4 site, and the required setbacks to the boundary and existing dwellings, bushfire mitigation on site would be become an even more significant threat is this development is allowed.

The Bushfire Management and Emergency Response Plan does not appear to have taken into consideration the presence of the proposed acoustic wall, as it is not shown on the detailed site plan included in this Response Plan. An almost entirely enclosed perimeter wall approximately 140 lineal meters in length and ranging between 3.5m and 4.5m high will have a huge impact on how a fire would behave, and possibly even more so if the wall is constructed of timber.

Further independent professional advice should be sought in respect to how this acoustic wall will influence the associated fire risks should there be a catastrophic event. This advice should also include an assessment of the specific training, experience, capacity and equipment the local Springfield Bushfire brigade has in respect to responding to a DBESS fire.

We also note the entrance to the facility is through the break in the acoustic wall on the Western side, yet the driveway to the site approaches from the East. Logically the entrance should also be on the Eastern side so Emergency vehicles can get in and out easily as well as having a visual perspective of activity inside the facility as they approach, rather than having to drive around to the Western side where manoeuvrability is much more limited.

The development application appears to be inconsistent with the DCP, which outlines that:

"*Land uses which pose a fire hazard may not be supported if the land is mapped as Bushfire Prone. This includes Depots with any bulk fuel storage, Sawmills, or other Rural Industries which involve the bulk manufacture or storage of flammable goods*"

Additionally, within Pg.16 of the Statement of Environmental Effects submitted alongside the DA, the electric batteries are denoted as Class 9 dangerous goods. The following is stated:

> The project includes delivery of a DBESS. The dangerous good associated with DBESS are lithium batteries which are a class 9 dangerous good under the ADG Code. Class 9 goods do not exceed the screening thresholds under the guidelines under the Applying SEPP 33 Guideline as they "pose little threat to people or property" (Department of Planning 2011, p. 33). The proposed development is therefore considered unlikely to pose a significant hazard or risk associated with the use of lithium batteries.

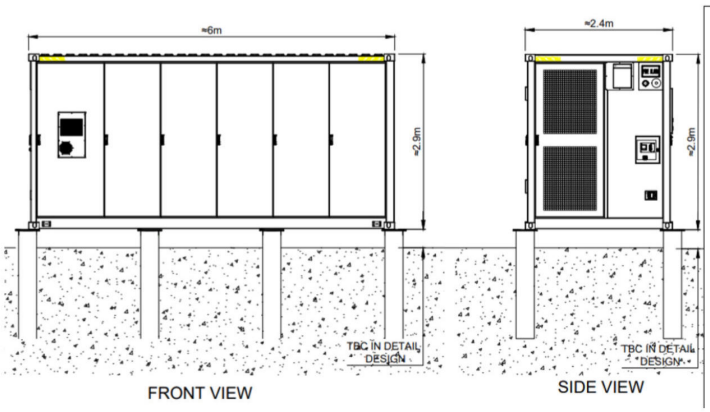
When reviewing 'The Hazards SEPP' and 'Hazardous and Offensive Development Application Guidelines – Applying SEPP 33', the development of the 10 Electric Batteries exceeds the listed 'Manifest Threshold Quantities' (10,000L) for Class 9 dangerous goods, demonstrated in Figure 12 below.

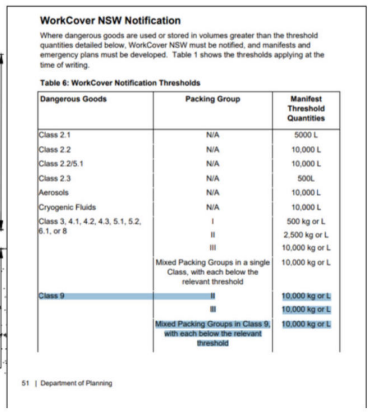
Furthermore, Applying SEPP 13 states: "*Where dangerous goods are used or stored in volumes greater than the threshold quantities detailed below, WorkCover NSW must be notified, and manifests and emergency plans must be developed*".

The development is therefore inconsistent with the SEPP, and likely poses a Bushfire Risk. This is supported by NSW Fire Australia, in which they outline lithium ion batteries as highly flammable, and subject to combustion. This is evident in both Figure 13 and Figure 14.

Figure 12: Manifest Threshold Exceeded

Manifest Thresh = 10,000L or 10,000kg
Volume (L) =
= Length (cm) X With (cm) X Height (cm)
= 600cm X 290cm X 240cm = 41,760,000cm3/1000
= **41,760L or above the Manifest threshold**





WorkCover NSW Notification

Where dangerous goods are used or stored in volumes greater than the threshold quantities detailed below, WorkCover NSW must be notified, and manifests and emergency plans must be developed. Table 1 shows the thresholds applying at the time of writing.

Table 6: WorkCover Notification Thresholds

Dangerous Goods	Packing Group	Manifest Threshold Quantities
Class 2.1	N/A	5000 L
Class 2.2	N/A	10,000 L
Class 2.2/5.1	N/A	10,000 L
Class 2.3	N/A	500L
Aerosols	N/A	10,000 L
Cryogenic Fluids	N/A	10,000 L
Class 3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, or 8	I	500 kg or L
	II	2,500 kg or L
	III	10,000 kg or L
	Mixed Packing Groups in a single Class, with each below the relevant threshold	10,000 kg or L
Class 9	II	10,000 kg or L
	III	10,000 kg or L
	Mixed Packing Groups in Class 9, with each below the relevant threshold	10,000 kg or L

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Figure 13: Fire NSW – Lithium ION Batteries

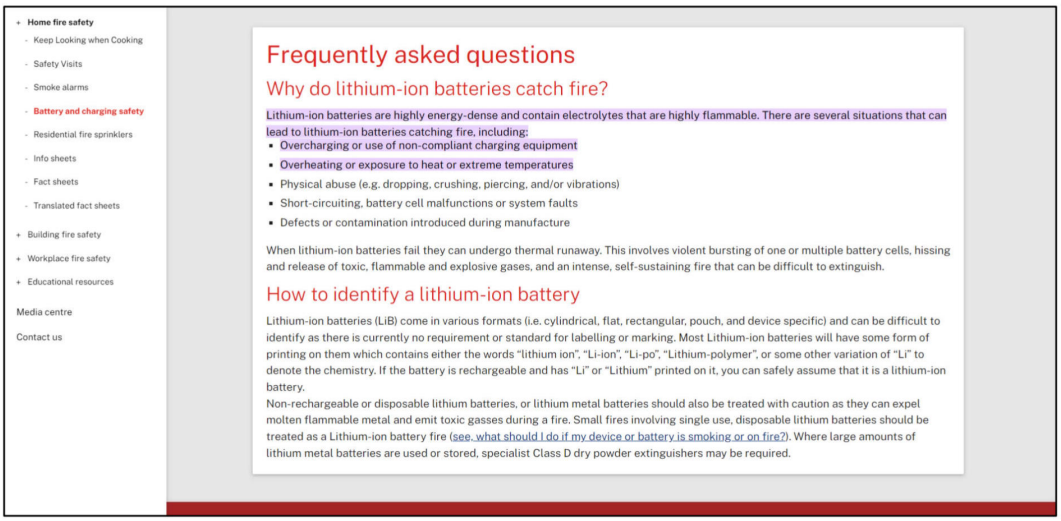
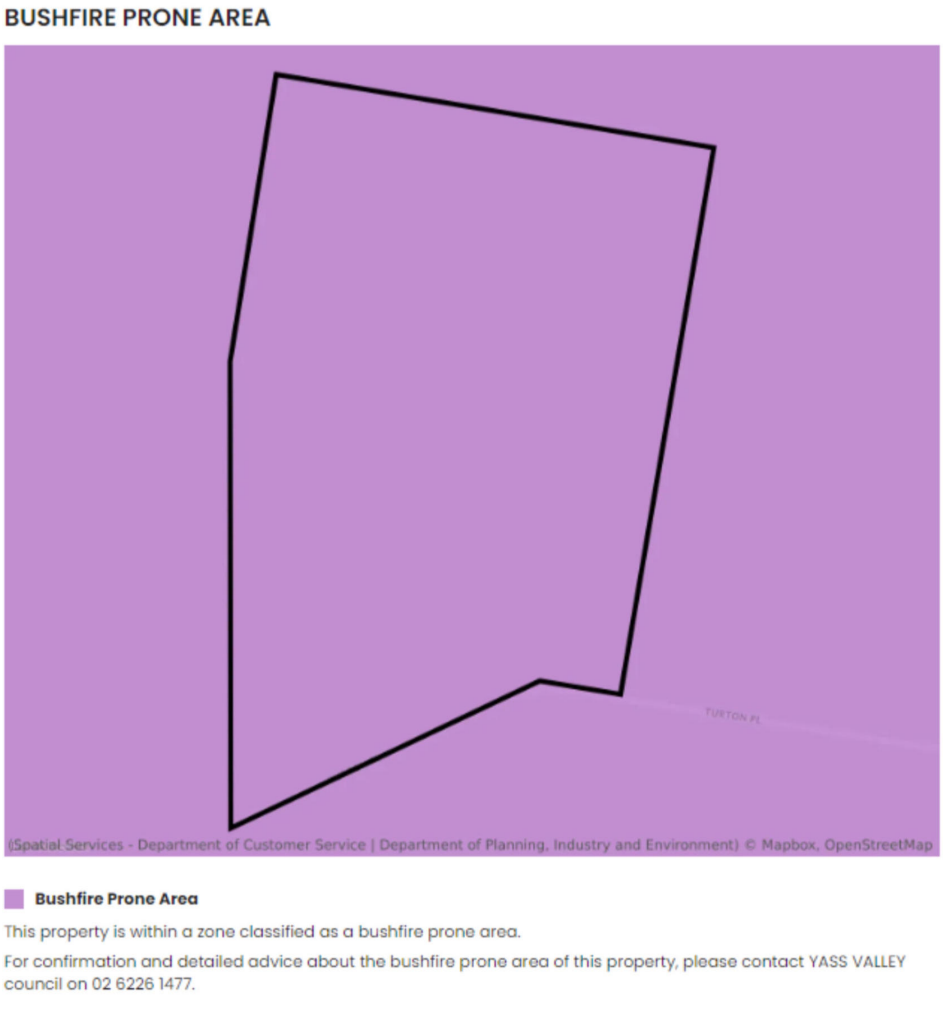


Figure 14: Bushfire Prone Land within 3 Turton Place – Category 3 (Land Checker, 2024)



Precedence/ Need for further assessments of future applications of this type

As outlined in this submission, the development application does not comply with the Yass Valley Council DCP. For this reason, the development should be rejected. Yass Valley Council should conduct significant research, engage independent experts and the community on the potential suitability of this and related developments as the risks to the community cannot be understated.

Furthermore, the existing site/s that the development is proposed within, may be further developed, and cause more adverse impacts, such as adverse noise impacts, bushfire impacts and impacts on residential amenity, rural amenity, and the amenity of local wineries.

Conclusion

In summary, we believe this DA should be rejected for the following reasons;

- This RU4 location at 3 Turton place is unsuitable for a DBESS
- The block is too small to adequately mitigate noise issues
- Noise issues themselves have not been adequately addressed
- Proposed sound barriers have no detail and cannot be approved in this location against any applicable legislation. They do not form any operational part of a DBESS
- DBESS cannot be approved in this location without mitigating works (sound barriers)
- Conflicts with DCP in relation to all setbacks
- Conflicts with DCP in relation use of visual screening and reflective materials
- Conflicts with Yass Valley strategic plan- winery trail and tourism destination
- Bushfire and hazardous material risk in Bushfire prone area

Finally, it is worth pointing out the complexity of this development application. A total of 236 pages of a highly technical reports were included. There was no summary, and no way for the average person to understand what the acoustic impact of this proposal would be. Then there is the need to cross reference those 236 pages with hundreds more pages of relevant state and local legislation. Of course, all needing to be done in 14 days.

Whilst we are appreciative of the addition few days to respond to this DA, the reality is we have had to divert much time and resources away from our business and personal life to deal with this.

In normal circumstances, one would also expect the proponent to engage in some level of community consultation. In this instance, we believe the proponent has treated the Murrumbateman community, affected residents and the Yass Council with total disregard and lack of respect by giving out zero information on this DA to the public before it was lodged. Despite repeated attempts to get any information at all, none was forthcoming until after the DA was lodged.

And finally we need to consider all the time, effort, energy and money that everyone including Yass Council has put into growing Murrumbateman into an outstanding food and wine destination- and one worth fighting to preserve. One which is now all put at risk for next to no benefit to the wider community. It just doesn't make sense.

We urge Yass Valley Council to reject this development application as it is completely unsuitable to this location, fails to meet the requirements of current planning legislation and is already causing high levels of concern and anxiety in the community.

Yours Sincerely,



SUBMISSION #32

[redacted]

20 July 2024

Objection to DA240159 - 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman

I am writing to formally object to the Development Application for the proposed battery storage facility in Murrumbateman. As the owner of a winery and vineyard, my agritourism business is intertwined with the serene rural environment that Murrumbateman is renowned for. The following points highlight my primary concerns:

Impact on Agritourism Businesses

The council has invested over $2 million in developing a winery trail aimed at attracting cycling tourists to experience the tranquil rural countryside. Agritourism is one of Murrumbateman's most significant industries, contributing substantially to the local economy. Introducing industrial operations within this prime agritourism area would undermine the very essence that attracts visitor and sustains local businesses.

The proposed battery storage facility threatens to disrupt the peaceful rural environment, through noise and visual aspects, which our agritourism businesses depend on, potentially leading to a decline in tourist numbers and negatively impacting our local economy.

Fire Risk

Lithium battery storage facilities are known to pose a high fire risk. Current firefighting advice indicates that such fires are challenging to extinguish and can burn for extended periods. The Bushfire report only has a small section at para 6.8 dealing with the risk of fire from within the facility and this does not provide enough information for Council to be able to state that the risk of a fire from within the facility has been considered and mitigated.

A fire occurring during the grape season (September to April) would be catastrophic for local grape growers and wineries, destroying crops from smoke taint and jeopardising livelihoods.

Significant water resources would be required to combat such fires, and the local Rural Fire Service (RFS) does not have the capacity to handle this as they use water from surrounding dams and tanks to fight fires. It is crucial that the RFS be consulted to provide expert advice on this risk, in particularly in regards to their capacity to manage a fire at such an establishment and the potential fire safety implications for the area. I note that an increased fire risk may then affect neighbouring properties insurance premiums.

Wind and Smoke Dispersion

The region is characterised by an afternoon easterly wind, which was responsible for bringing smoke from the 2019-20 coastal bushfires into the Canberra region.

In the event of a fire at the proposed facility, the village of Murrumbateman, situated to the east of the development, would likely be engulfed in smoke from the facility, posing significant health risks to residents. The toxicity of such smoke should be elaborated on by the applicant.

Noise concerns

The noise report for this application is difficult to interpret for the average layperson and I am not aware of any consultation/discussions that has been undertaken by the applicant with affected residents which is disappointing and shows a lack of respect for impacts on the region and neighbours.

I note that the report was prepared using environmental noise modelling software and does not appear to have required a site visit by the acoustic experts. Issues with such modelling include that they rely on simplified assumptions and generalisations about sound propagation, which may not account for complex real-world scenarios. As a grape grower I am acutely aware that the environmental conditions in this region are unique with climate extremes unlike anywhere else in the country. Environmental factors such as wind speed and direction, temperature, humidity, and atmospheric pressure can significantly impact noise propagation. Many models use average conditions, which may not reflect the actual variability in this environment. For instance, this region is prone to extreme temperatures and temperature inversions which unfortunately increase spray drift damage (of which our vineyard has suffered from in recent years) and can also increase and travel noise over long distances. Which this in mind there is a reasonable risk that residences further away than what has been considered in this report will be affected by this noise.

Furthermore, the cumulative effects of noise disturbance have not been considered. While residents in the area may already experience some noise from traffic on Murrumbateman Road and the highway, this noise is currently bearable due to its infrequency and short-term nature. However, the addition of constant noise from the proposed facility is likely to significantly disrupt the peaceful environment valued by both residents and tourists in this region.

Finally, it is evident that the facility will generate significant noise, as the report recommends installing a substantial acoustic barrier around the site. The concern remains whether this barrier will be sufficient to mitigate the noise. Since the effectiveness of the acoustic barrier has only been determined through modelling, there are again concerns that this may not adequately account for the specific environmental factors of the region. These factors include temperature, climatic conditions, and the distinct lack of tree or shrub coverage in the surrounding area which would reduce noise, particularly to the west of the facility.

Inappropriate Site for Industrial Project

The proposed location is unsuitable due to its proximity to valuable wine-growing regions and rural residential housing estates. Such industrial operations should be situated in areas that do not compromise the existing agritourism industry or rural residential communities which are significant to the Murrumbateman region in particular.

In conclusion, I urge the council to reconsider the approval of this Development Application. The proposed battery storage facility poses significant risks to the agritourism industry, local economy,

and the safety of residents. A more suitable location should be sought that does not jeopardise the prosperity and well-being of the Murrumbateman community.

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Sincerely,

[redacted]

[redacted]

SUBMISSION #33

[redacted]
Murrumbateman NSW 2582

20 July 2024
[redacted]

[redacted]

Yass Valley Council
209 Comur Street
Yass NSW 2582

OBJECTION TO DA240159 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman

I have no objection to the overall intent of the project, but I have some concerns over the fire risks of the project and those are the only terms on which I am lodging this objection.

The “Bush Fire Management & Emergency Response Plan” and the general information in the remainder of the documentation indicates that there is no fuel stored on site, however the “Flood and Groundwater Assessment Report” indicates there will be 100 litres of fuel stored on site. The reports should be consistent and the “Bush Fire Management & Emergency Response Plan” should explicitly address the 100 litres of fuel stored on site.

The “Bush Fire Management & Emergency Response Plan” suggests that onsite wardens and personnel will report a fire occuring at the site, however the remainder of the documentation indicates that there are no staff onsite once it is operational. The “Bush Fire Management & Emergency Response Plan” needs to account for there being no staff onsite and address how the local fire services will be notified should a fire begin within the site. It would certainly be possible for an automatic fire detection system which notifies the local fire services to be installed on site.

The “Bush Fire Management & Emergency Response Plan” relies largely on the battery manufacturer’s statements that the batteries are the safest available to minimise the risks of a fire spreading from the site. There are no other measures described in relation to preventing a fire occuring or spreading from the site. The “Bush Fire Management & Emergency Response Plan” also indicates that an area of grassland 100mm high would be sufficient to prevent an incoming fire impacting the site (which is very unlikely to be the case, the grass will simply burn). In addition, there is no assessment of how this would prevent a fire spreading from the site. In high summer with no staff and no remote callout of fire services, this would be insufficient to prevent fire spreading. The fire report should address these circumstances. An area completely devoid of vegetation containing non flammable material should surround the area at a minimum, rather than 100mm high grassland in the Asset Protection Zone.

As any fire starting within the site would need to be dealt with by the local fire services, the operational company should be required to fund the local fire services (Springfield RFS and Murrumbateman RFS) to provide training and equipment to combat a Lithium/Electrical fire for the lifespan of the installation. Without this the community would have to fund this training and equipment, and this burden should not be placed upon the community.

Yours Sincerely
[redacted]
20 July 2024

SUBMISSION #34

Submission in Response to:

DA240159 - 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman – Proposed Installation of Distribution Battery Energy Storage System

Submitted by: [redacted]

Contact email: [redacted]

Contact phone: [redacted]

We wish to lodge an objection to DA240159 - 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman – Proposed Installation of Distribution Battery Energy Storage System.

We live on and own [redacted]n and have been here for the past 45 years. We love the region's small farms and wineries and want to keep it this way. We feel the ACEnergy Pty Lt Batteries will be unsightly, impact wineries and reduce tourism in the area.

Objections:

We have a number of concerns with the proposal including:

1) There are many equine properties in the area, including ourselves. The reports submitted do not provide advice on what impact the constant noise will have on horses.
2) The area includes many small farms and wineries and has a rural culture we would like to keep.
3) Fire risk to the area will be increased by the batteries. The fire danger in summer in the area is very high. We have concerns as to whether a fire at the battery facility should could be contained by the Springfield Rural Fire Brigade in time to prevent catastrophic damage to property.
4) The past and current investment in the area has been small farms, residential, wineries and tourism. We are concerned future investment will move toward more industrial developments.
5) The proposed development is large and will change the look in the area. We worry it will be unsightly and not fit with the country scenery. We do not want to be looking at a huge power battery.
6) The proposal is not in line with the zoning of our area. This area was meant to be for small rural and residential. The area has a character and feel that we love and want to keep.
7) The noise impact 24 hours a day could impact local wildlife, dogs, horses and families living close by. This too is not in keeping with the feel of our community.

Murrumbateman Butchery

We have been in the area for 45 years. We established the Murrumbateman Butchery in 1992 and owned and operated it until 2023. We are very familiar with this community and understand the character and culture of Murrumbateman.

We are concerned the introduction of industrial facilities like this proposal will negatively impact the character and feel of our community.

[redacted] Harness Racing

We have bred and trained horses for the 45 years we have been here. We are now engaged with breeding and training trotters as full time hobbyists. We value our experience with harness horses and people and are concerned this development may encourage other similar developments in the region, making it progressively less suitable for harness racing activities.

Summary

We believe this development will significantly impact the regions activities, investment and development opportunities. The proposal does not align with current zoning activities or investments by Council or private business.

We respectfully request the proposal not be supported by Council.

Thank you for your consideration, please contact us if any additional clarification is required regarding this submission.

[redacted]

20 July 2024

SUBMISSION #35

[redacted]

To: Yass Valley Council

Re: DA240159 - 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman – Installation of a Distribution Battery Energy Storage System

Date: July 18, 2024

[redacted] is a longstanding vineyard and winery business in Murrumbateman, established by the [redacted] at [redacted].

We strongly oppose the proposed installation of a distribution battery energy storage system at 3 Turton Place Murrumbateman (DA240159).

Murrumbateman has built a reputation over five decades as a centre of high-quality wine and food production. In the immediate vicinity of the proposed battery site there are internationally famous vineyards, olive groves, a truffle farm, a cider apple orchard restaurants, cafes and boutique accommodation. [redacted] alone attracts an average of 20,000 visitors a year into the council area, offering visitors a taste of world class wines grown within the Yass Valley in a picturesque natural setting. The Yass Valley Council has for many years been highly supportive of the vision of Murrumbateman as a centre of food and wine tourism. The recently installed cycle paths connecting numerous vineyards are one example of the priority the council has placed on focussing attention on the tourism draw of the developing wine and food culture of Murrumbateman.

It is entirely inappropriate that an industrial battery complex be placed in the middle of a wine and food precinct. The proposal is for 10 large distribution batteries running 24 hours a day all year round producing high noise levels. Apart from the perpetual noise pollution, large scale lithium batteries are known for their capacity to catch fire, presenting an unacceptable fire risk. As well as the potential for bush fires, toxic smoke and fumes pouring from a burning industrial battery would taint grapes in the vicinity through the sensitive Summer ripening period. In addition, an industrial development of this nature, to be built it seems with no apparent reference to the Yass Valley Council development control plan, would be a blot on the landscape in direct line of sight of all our winery visitors as they drive down our driveway.

A combination of negative community impact, persistent noise, fire risk, visual pollution and damage to the vision of Murrumbateman as a wine and food tourism hub make this proposal an entirely bad one. Given the council's long-standing support for and investment in the wine tourism focus of this area it is deeply surprising to me that this proposal is being considered at all. I earnestly request that the council reject the application.

Sincerely,

[redacted]

[redacted]

SUBMISSION #36

[redacted]

Yass Valley Council

209 Comur Street, Yass, NSW 2582
Phone: +61 2 6226 1477

SUBMISSION ON DA240159 - 3 TURTON PLACE, MURRUMBATEMAN

INSTALLATION OF A DISTRIBUTION BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM

The proposed development should not proceed without further consideration of its potential to degrade amenity for Murrumbateman residents and businesses by introducing a significant new fire hazard (and associated toxic smoke) risk.

Recent battery storage fires in Victoria and Queensland have highlighted the risks posed by these developments.

In July 2021 a fire at a battery storage facility in near Geelong spread toxic smoke over nearby areas and took 150 firefighters four days to get under control (https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-09-28/fire-at-tesla-giant-battery-project-near-geelong-investigation/100496688).

A fire at a battery storage facility near Rockhampton in September 2023 produced hazardous smoke that lingered over neighbouring areas. The ABC reported that "Fires caused by lithium batteries are expected to increase over the coming years as use of the highly flammable product continues to rise, an energy storage expert has warned" (https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-09-28/fire-large-scale-battery-storage-sites-bouldercombe-ev/102907664).

The Financial Times reported in August 2021 that there had been 38 large lithium-ion battery fires since 2018 (https://www.ft.com/content/8c9c3d50-98a3-4cdf-907f-901f8c328b90). The FT noted that in April 2021 "In Beijing, a fire at a lithium-ion battery installation in April killed two firefighters and took 235 firefighters to control".

The FT noted that: "Lithium-ion batteries can catch fire after a process called "thermal runaway", which results when a battery is overcharged or crushed. Heat as well as a mixture of gases are produced, which when released form a vapour cloud that can ignite or cause an explosion." Lithium-ion battery fires are not able to be extinguished by conventional firefighting methods.

A recent US study found that "One quarter of large-scale batteries have built-in fire risks caused by manufacturing defects in components. Audits over six years found that 26 per cent of battery energy storage systems (BESS) have quality problems with their fire detection and suppression systems, says advisory firm Clean Energy Associates. These faults include fire alarm abort buttons and smoke and temperature sensors not

being correctly wired in" (US study says defects create fire risk in one quarter of big batteries | RenewEconomy).

In relation to the more widely used small lithium-ion batteries, The Guardian reported in March this year that "Fire and Rescue NSW has tackled 63 fires from lithium-ion batteries in 2024, at an average of nearly six a week. Seven people have been injured and two have died" (Growing safety concerns over lithium-ion batteries after four fires in one day in NSW | New South Wales | The Guardian).

The Statement of Environmental Effects for the proposed development does not address these fire risks other than to assert that the battery containers "will automatically suppress an internal fire in the first instance". No doubt this was also the expectation in relation to the Geelong and Rockhampton projects that experienced catastrophic fires.

The Statement of Environmental Effects claims that according to the *Hazardous and Offensive Development Application Guidelines – Applying SEPP 33*, lithium batteries "pose little threat to people or property". But this assessment is clearly inadequate as the relevant guidelines date from 2011, before large scale lithium batteries had begun to be deployed in Australia.

The Statement of Environmental Effects notes that: "The subject site is classified Bush Fire Prone Land (BFPL) under the Yass Valley BFPL Map". The proposed development adds to the existing bush fire risk, which is of particular concern to vineyards nearby because of the potential for damage to grape crops from smoke taint.

Based on the documented incidences of fires associated with large lithium-ion battery installations in Australia and elsewhere, there are clear risks to residents and businesses of Murrumbateman from the proposed development. The proposal provides no indication of how these risks might be mitigated if the development were to proceed.

The developer should be required to demonstrate that these risks can be managed adequately and subject the proposed approach to a further round of consultations before the proposal is considered for approval.

[redacted]

19 July 2024

SUBMISSION #37

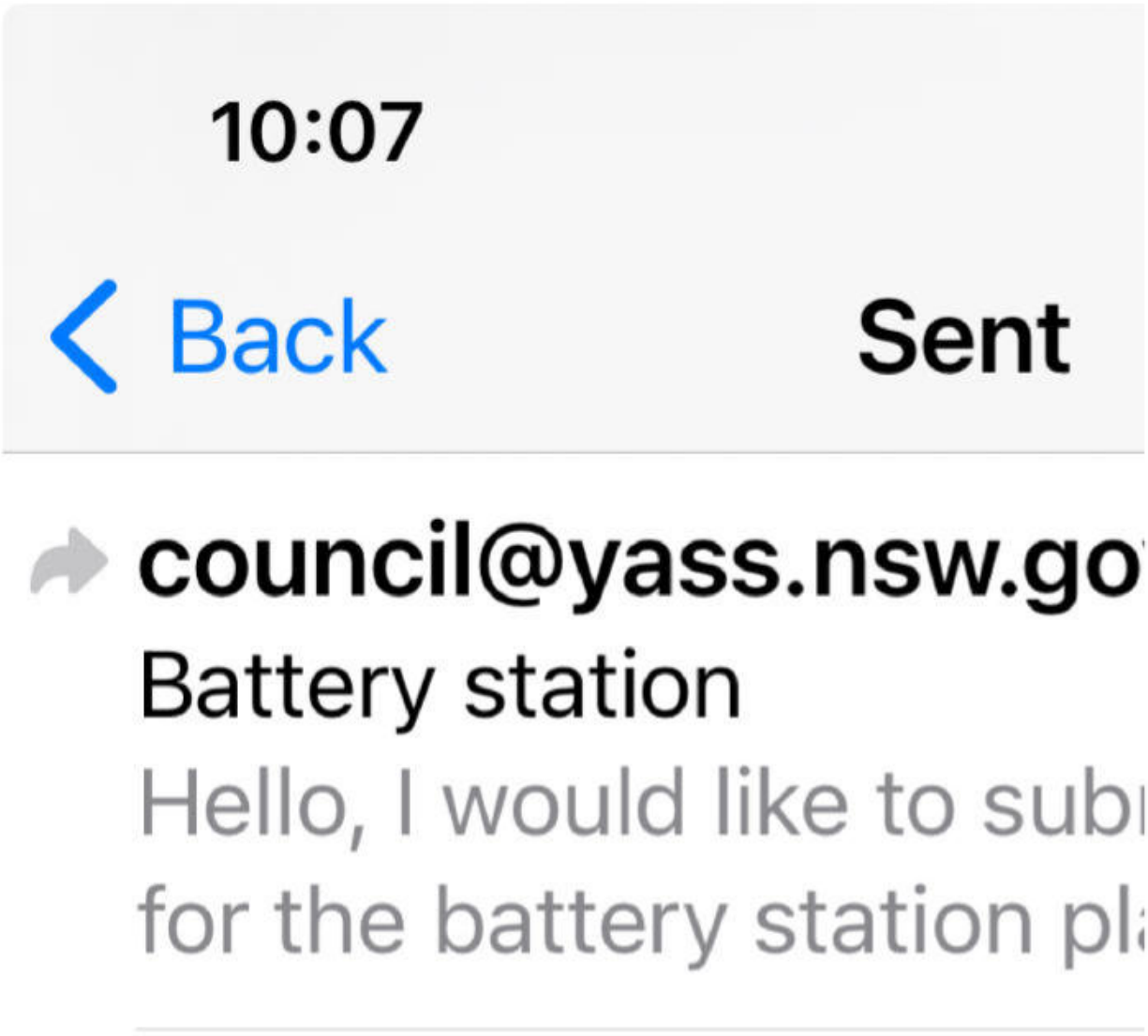
Jeremy Knox

From: [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 6 August 2024 10:16 AM
To: YVC Customer Service Team
Subject: Fwd: Battery station

[EXTERNAL] Please exercise caution when clicking on links or attachments from external sources.

Hello,

Please find forwarded email below that I sent on the 21/7/24. I have not yet had a response and just want to make sure it was received. My sent items show that it was sent. Please see photo. I would like to ensure my email has been registered in regards to this. Thank you for your time.
Kind regards,
[redacted]



Begin forwarded message:

From: [redacted]
Date: 21 July 2024 at 22:59:22 AEST
To: council@yass.nsw.gov.au
Subject: Battery station

Hello,

I would like to submit my concerns for the battery station planned for 3 Turton place. We are the owners of properties [redacted]. I would like to firstly inform you that considering we own three of the homes directly opposite the planned site that we will be affected and 80 acres of land that this station will impact. We were not approached

by the company or the council to have a discussion about this. Three homes, a vineyard and livestock within a one-kilometre range of the station is absolutely significant enough to warrant a discussion with us. It would be appreciated if you could please explain why the council or the company did not feel the same given the sheer significant impact this will have on us.

Our concerns are as follows:

Could you please explain how this submission falls under our zone of R4 small farming lots?

During summer evenings the valleys are so clear that I can hear our tenants at [redacted] and our tenants at [redacted] even clearer. I don't believe the drone of the station will remain at 35 -40 dB during the summer months. As you can appreciate it will be consistently annoying and more so for our animals.

We have run sheep across around 60 acres of the properties for the last 6 years. We currently have around 200 sheep on the property. As you would be aware sheep have acute hearing. The noise range is estimated to be around 40dB from our property at [redacted] to 35dB at 138 Patemans Lane. But the World Health Organisation suggests this is an unsafe noise level for sheep if it is of a consistent nature. Several studies have been carried out in regards to noise level in a sheep's environment that show consistent noise can create pain and health issues including suckling issues between ewes and lambs. If this is the case and the noise level is consistently 35-40dB we cannot in good conscious keep sheep on the farm.

The WHO guidelines for community noise recommends intermittent periods of less than 30 A-weighted decibels for a healthy life style. The submission states this will not be the case admitting we will be subjected to continuous noise levels 24/7 for years to come. In the Compendium of WHO and other UN guidance on health and environment 2022 update. It notes that consistent noise that is continued for a prolonged period of time over 30 A-weighted decibels can cause annoyance and mental health problems. In addition, research around consistent noise shows increasing evidence for other health impacts.

One of our tenants at [redacted] has sensitivities to noise, she also has anxiety issues which means she is home most of the time and as a part of her mental health she takes on and cares for rescue animals. She rents around 15 acres from us. My concern is if this impacts her and we lose her as a Tennent it will be a financial loss for us. Our Tenants at [redacted] who only rent the house and house paddock is directly across the road from the planned station. Making his home subjected to constant 40 dB noise level. If this impacts them and we lose them as tenants this is also a financial loss for us. The other concern is we know that battery stations lower land value due to the constant drone and increase insurance due to the impact of fire risk. The Rockhampton battery facility that caught fire in October 2023 emitted toxic smoke. I know it says they are different but they are both lithium batteries but I did not read anything in the multiple complicated pages you placed on your site on what this toxic smoke would do to human inhalation and vineyard grapes .

I have had a site visit and a site mapped and plans drawn up by Alpine log and timber homes with the future intention of one day having a Canadian style log accommodation and event centre at [redacted]. Feel free to contact Alpine log homes to confirm but covid set our plans back. I hold a large Christmas event in Canberra and last year we made numbers of over 10,000 in my 2nd year of this event. When I get a good loyal following every year, I intend on brining this event to Murrumbateman. Would the noise impact an accommodation lodge and event centre if it was across the road from the plant?

So far what I have explained in this letter is that this station has the potential to affect everything we have on our 80 acres and even our future tourism plans. Yet no one has contacted us to date to discuss who would compensate us in any or all of these situations.

Can you please inform us if it will be council or ACEnergy who will compensate us of weekly rent if one or both of our tenants move out?

Will it be Council or ACEnergy who will compensate us our yearly income if we can no longer run sheep on our property?

Will it be Council or ACEnergy who will compensate us if the station reduces the land value of both our properties?

Will it be Council or ACEnergy who will compensate us if insurances go up?

Will it be Council or ACEnergy who will compensate us if it impacts our grapes.

Will it be Council or ACEnergy who will compensate us if we cannot go ahead with our accommodation and event centre plans?

Will it be Council or ACEnergy who will compensate us if we do go ahead with our accommodation plans and the noise effects our business?

Thank you for considering our concerns and we look forward to your response.

Kind regards,

[redacted].

Message protected by MailGuard: e-mail anti-virus, anti-spam and content filtering.
https://www.mailguard.com.au/mg

DA240159
Additional Information 1
Public Exhibition Submissions

From:	[redacted]
To:	YVC Customer Service Team
Subject:	DA240159 - 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman
Sent:	14/01/2025 2:33:37 PM

[EXTERNAL] Please exercise caution when clicking on links or attachments from external sources.

Planning and Development

To Whom it many concern

I wish to lodge a I objection to **DA240159 - 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman.**
I acknowledge that additional information has been received, however it does not, in my my opinion, sufficiently address the concerns that I raised earlier.

1. This is a tourism area. The pictures provided are absolutely useless as to showing what the EXACT view of the battery storage unit will be from Murrumbateman Rd and Pateman's Lane. Council have spent considerable time and money on the yet to be completed wine trail in order to encourage tourism. What possible benefit could putting a battery in this location be. There are numerous other locations, close to the power lines that could be used that are not in the middle of rural residential, tourism and viticulture area.
2. The fire risk, prevention and action has been completely minimised. The comment about the APZ is below critical limits is simply not satisfactory. The fact that the ECO lists a number of "roles" that will be responsible if there is a fire, it doesn't state where these "roles" will be located. If a fire starts and ECO members do not reside within the close vicinity, what use are they going to be? Saying that they live in Canberra - or worse are remote and will manage via zoom etc, is simply not good enough. There is no plan for how often the area would be mown and other such battery installations are built on massive concrete pad or large cleared earth plots with extensive clear non flammable surrounds. Whilst there is detail in the plan it is very generic and would provide little comfort to residents immediately in the path of a fire.
3. This type of project does not fit with the zoning of the area.

Thank you for your time

[redacted]

Additional Information - Submission 2

[redacted] **Murrumbatemen**

NSW

To: Yass Valley Council

DA240159 – 3 Turton Place Murrumbateman – OBJECTION – further submissions

By way of objection to the development proposal the subject of DA 240159 we make the following further submissions.

[redacted] reside at the property [redacted] Murrumbateman. [redacted] property is located diagonally opposite adjacent to 3 Turton Place on its south western boundary corner. [redacted]. Their property shares the western boundary of 3 Turton Place and their residence is located about 260 metres from the proposed Battery Energy Storage site.

Hazardous development – Lithium batteries

The conclusions drawn in the *Response to Request for Additional Information* by Premise Australia on behalf of the proponent AC Australia are often flawed and misleading.

At paragraph 4.5.3.1the Premise report concludes *"The proposed development is therefore considered unlikely to pose a significant hazard or risk associated with the use of lithium batteries"*. This statement is drawn from the Department of Planning NSW 2011 document Applying SEPP 33 Guideline which makes a similar statement on the basis that Lithium batteries fall into Class 9 dangerous goods under the Australian Dangerous Goods code (ADG code).

This statement is self serving, misleading and carries no validity on the following basis:

- The Premise report fails to include the very next sentence @p33 Applying SEPP33 – *"They* [class 9 dangerous goods] *may be substances which pose an environmental hazard and* ***the consent authority should consider whether or not a potential for environmental harm exists***."
- The ADG code specifically relates to the transportation of hazardous goods which would be relevant to the transportation of the lithium batteries to the 3 Turton Place site but not relevant to the lithium batteries sitting static on site for up to 40 years within its unique site conditions climate and location of surrounding residences and wineries.
- The ADG code at p187 defines class 9 substances as *"substances and articles which during transport present a danger not covered by other classes"*. Class 9 includes Lithium batteries, asbestos, fire suppressants etc. the ADG code sets out strict compliance requirements for the transport of such dangerous goods. Nowhere in the ADG code does it say that the use of lithium batteries is unlikely to present a substantial hazard or risk to people property or the environment as the Premise report states.

Fire Hazard

The NSW Fire and rescue website states *"Lithium-ion batteries are the fastest growing fire risk in New South Wales*. The website sites overheating or exposure to extreme temperatures as a cause of catastrophic failure of Lithium batteries and states "*When lithium-ion batteries fail they can undergo thermal runaway. This involves violent bursting of one or multiple battery cells,*

hissing and release of toxic, flammable and explosive gases, and an intense, self-sustaining fire that can be difficult to extinguish".

In our time here Turton Place has not directly suffered bush fires. However the risk of grass fire and therefore resultant damage to the proposed Lithium batteries is ever present . Should this occur the placement of a bank of industrial scale Lithium batteries in Turton Place represents the insertion of a significant increased risk of damage to environment, people and property resulting from an intense lithium self sustaining fire with consequent release of toxic flammable explosive gases.

The risk of a Lithium enhanced self sustaining spreading fire is of immense concern to nearby residents and commercial operators. For example,

- adjacent wineries are at risk of losing their livelihood, their grape vines in such a fire
- there is the likely consequence of huge increases in commercial insurance premiums which is a significant financial impost.
- Even if a fire can be contained the release and spread of toxic gases poses a significant risk of tainting wine grapes and ruining a harvest as occurred when bushfire smoke spread across local wineries in the 2020 bushfires. These issues have not been addressed in the reports concerning fire risk.
- Nearby residents are at risk of losing their homes and small farm infrastructure to say nothing of the obvious enhanced risk to personal injury and life.

Conclusions

The risk of Lithium enhanced fire posed by the proposed siting of the Lithium Battery Energy Storage plant and consequent potential damage and loss to local residents and winery businesses their property and the environment through fire **is totally unacceptable.**

The conclusions drawn by the Premise Report that the placement and use of Lithium batteries at 3 Turton Place Murrumbateman is unlikely to pose a significant hazardous risk **is inherently misleading, invalid and false and as such casts doubt on the reliability of Premise report generally.**

[redacted] [redacted]

17 January 2025

Additional Information - Submission 3

Battery Energy Storage System (BASS), DA240159

Dear Yass Valley Council Development Planner and the Southern Regional Planning Panel,

I wish to raise significant concerns with the proposed battery Development Application (DA 240159) at 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman. This is further to my original submission (Attachment A), which provides extensive reasons as to why the DA should not be approved.

The additional information provided by the applicant has failed to address these concerns or instil any confidence in the proponent's appreciation of the sensitivity of the development, risks and impacts on the community over the project's estimated 40-year lifespan.

The community's trust has further diminished through **poor local engagement and revisions to the proposal** that disregard valid concerns raised regarding the loss of amenity and irreversible impacts of the project. It is instructive that the proponent's revised plans have now dispensed with the acoustic barrier facing all properties (except for the landowner on 3 Turton Place who is financially involved with the applicant and has a capacity to exercise control over the implementation of the project). It is also unclear why the existing 'associated' residence on 3 Turton Place and its surrounds have now been identified as an 'infrastructure and easement exclusion zone'. Does this reflect a privately negotiated outcome to reduce the impacts of the development on them personally, and instead locate the development on a boundary line as an entirely distinct development and incompatible land use?

I continue to maintain that any approval of the proposed project, even with conditions imposed by the Southern Regional Planning Panel, would:

- represent an **incompatible and unforeseeable chance in land use**, which is contradictory to local planning processes under the LEP and SEPP. In practice, any **approval would amount to an ad-hoc change, at least as significant as re-zoning the area** and without the expected level of community engagement.
- inappropriately **prioritise a passive income for the landholder** of 3 Turton Place, despite uncompensated and irreversible impacts on surrounding residential and rural lifestyle holdings.
- inappropriately prioritise the so-called status of 'Regional Significance', despite **wanting evidence of the regional significance**, not being located within a Renewable Energy Zone, and over-stepping the more appropriate and regulated role of Distribution Network Service Operators. The 'regional significance' and broader potential benefits of the project (consistent with the objectives of the SEPP) are tenuous and should not be assumed to exist or automatically over-rule consideration of the well-balanced objectives of the Yass Valley LEP.
- inappropriately **subvert robust end-of-life, site remediation and financial obligations that would be ordinarily imposed** on electricity generators and other major projects with contamination, explosion and fire risks, leaving the community facing a potential future liability. The application proposes such risks would be managed only through the goodwill of the operator and a private contract with the landowner. The Additional Information provides the unhelpful guidance that a decommissioning plan would be prepared just prior to decommissioning. Instead, if the project were to proceed, full liability for restoration of the site and compensation for any impacts on surrounding properties and the community (including from fire or explosion) should be legally enforceable and, at minimum, imposed ex-ante through appropriate conditions and a covenant (or similar restriction) on any future sale of the property.
- **foreclose future potential residential development in the area** to meet expected population growth and the need for affordable housing in the district.

I query the **status of the DA as a Regionally Significant Development under the State Environmental Planning Policy** (SEPP) 2021. Typically, state-based approval is reserved for genuinely significant development (greater than $30 million). Alternatively, if eligible on the basis of exceeding a $5 million threshold, this would be because the project is directly for the State of NSW; a council; an eco-tourism development; or a private infrastructure and community project. The proposed project is antithetical to each of these criteria and prioritised approval under the SEPP. Moreover, just because a project may be deemed eligible for approval with consent under the SEPP does not mean that approval would be appropriate or consistent with the broader objectives of the SEPP and its underpinning legislation. In particular:

- The project is **not a community project**. It is a private, purely profit-making, project that is facilitated through overseas investors. The project's supporting material masquerades as a community project, but the only basis for the project is to deliver financial returns to investors.
- The project **undermines the mandate of regulated electricity Distribution Service Operators** (DSOs) who must adhere to consumer benefit principles, which are written into the objectives of the legislation that governs them.
- The project is **not located within a designated Renewable Energy Zone**, which are identified precincts in which the benefits of renewables-related infrastructure development are assessed as high and of strategic importance for the state. In such cases, community engagement is prioritised and embedded early into the designation of an area and the rigorous process involves upfront land-use planning and coordinated community consultation. Development outside of Renewable Energy Zones should not become a means of circumventing robust community engagement and forward-looking planning.
- No forward-looking planning process has occurred in the Murrumbateman region or Yass Valley and ad-hoc projects, such as **this Battery DA, would bypass and undermine genuine community engagement** and exploration of the best investment option (and its location) for the community and state.
- Any approval of this ad-hoc project could **irrevocably jeopardise responsible future developments and community acceptance** of the climate transition and related infrastructure investments.
- If the area was a residential zone, the Yass Valley LEP would prevail over the SEPP. However, only very recently, **part of the RU4 zone and Winery Precinct of Murrumbateman was rezoned to R5** – Large Lot Residential -- consistent with the growing population of Murrumbateman. Any approval of the battery project on the urban fringe **would foreclose potential future residential development**, failing to service the need for affordable housing and the increasing demand for rural lifestyle lot holdings.
  - My holding, [redacted] and the proposed battery location are more proximate to the Murrumbateman town centre than existing residential (R5 zoned) development.
  - Within the estimated 40-year life of the battery project, it is estimated that the Murrumbateman population will need to expand rapidly.
- If the project is deemed eligible for assessment under the SEPP process, which technically takes precedent over the project's incompatibility with the Yass Valley's LEP, **the assessment should not favour approval of the project at the expense of the local community and forecast population growth**. In effect, **doing so would disregard robust planning processes underpinning the Yass**

Valley LEP and create extreme uncertainty for more appropriate land uses and future development.

A conservative approach to planning approval is appropriate given the new and uncertain nature of the technology and the highly technical and untested claims within the application. Real-world experiences of such developments are still in their infancy, and many have been marred with miss-haps that was not predicted by detailed specifications and manufacturer guidance. The Murrumbateman township and its role in the region is too important to be left to a risky experiment. On the other hand, the proposed project is purely for the benefit of a profit-making energy investor and landowner looking for a passive income at the expense of their neighbours' land values and amenity.

I would welcome the opportunity to participate in the process further.

Kind Regards

[redacted]

Attachment A: Original submission

I wish to raise significant concerns with the proposed development – **Installation of a 5MW Distribution Battery Energy Storage System (BASS), DA240159, at Lot 23 DP 248413**.

I am the titleholder of [redacted] which shares a boundary fence approximately 400 metres from the proposed industrial development site. I purchased the block in 2014 and, as always planned, I will build a residential dwelling on my 27-hectare property and commence the DA process later in 2024. My planned residence has not been afforded any consideration within the battery development application, and yet my residence will be located at a roughly similar proximity as other residential dwellings that have been specifically considered in the proposed battery development application and acoustic management. The proposed acoustic barriers to the industrial site are not orientated to shield a residence on [redacted] – specifically, there is a large gap in the proposed acoustic barriers facing my property.

I also wish to raise concerns about the inadequacy of the process. The application was only brought to my attention by a neighbour, and I am concerned that the period for making a submission has been inadequate (less than 28 days). The application process does not constitute genuine community engagement on what is a highly technical development application and a significant proposed change in land use for the area. The proposed industrial project is self-described as 'pioneering a first of its kind solution', and the technologies require a more robust planning assessment process that recognises risks, costs and liabilities over the lifetime of the project in its currently proposed location. I urge the Council to thoroughly review the consultant reports, which provide the veneer of rigor and credibility but are largely based on assumptions and include inconsistencies – for example, a two-row landscape area is proposed in one attachment and a one-row landscape area is proposed in another attachment.

The specific basis of my significant concerns and opposition to the proposed project include:

1. **Approval of the development application would represent an ad-hoc planning approval and an unpredictable change of land use that is contradictory to the *Yass Valley Settlement Strategy 2036* (the Strategy).**
    a. The Strategy recommends that: 'Future development, particularly at the residential/agricultural and residential/industrial interfaces should be planned for and managed to minimise conflict between adjacent land uses'.
    b. This recommendation should be upheld, such that residents, developers and the community have confidence in planning processes, especially where a proposed change of land use would affect land values, amenity of residents and the development potential of surrounding land uses.
    c. The proposed development is an ad-hoc and unpredicted proposed change of land use, which has not been 'planned for or managed' to minimise conflict with adjacent land uses.
    d. The landholder of 3 Turton Place could never have purchased their property with the expectation or intention of using the land for the purpose proposed in the application. In contrast, surrounding landholders would find their land uses, amenity, and land value (including development potential consistent with established land uses) negatively affected.
    e. Conflicts between land uses within the Murrumbateman area are well-explored within the Strategy. Indeed, p. 67 of the Strategy identifies that 'it is a priority that a specific

area is set aside for industrial and commercial uses' to address the loss of amenity to residential properties from industrial and commercial uses.

2. **Approval of the development application would undermine the credibility and intended function of the Murrumbateman Masterplan 2031, which identifies the proposed development area as within a "Winery Precinct with a minimum 16-hectare lot size".**
    a. In effect, the proposed application amounts to a change of zoning or a sub-division in terms of the significant change in land use and scale of impacts on surrounding landowners (including land values, amenity and development potential for more compatible land uses consistent with the Primary Production Small Lot and 'Winery Precinct' zoning). Specifically, the approval of the application would result in two unrelated land uses, with two separate access roads, inconsistent building structures across two distinct locations, and two discrete land use operators (with a complex array of contracts for construction, operation and maintenance over the lifetime of the project).
    b. Lot 23 DP 248413 is inadequately sized to be (effectively) subdivided into two 16-Ha minimum sized lots, while any re-zoning to change the Primary Production Small Lot and 16-Ha minimum lot holding would require significantly more onerous community consultation and detailed consideration of the implications.
    c. The proposed development application is akin to a sub-division and has the potential to harm the objectives of the Yass Valley LEP 2013 regarding minimum subdivision lot size, which include: to minimise likely impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties; give appropriate regard to characteristics of the land and rural environment (in this instance, a Winery Precinct); to ensure subdivision occurs in a planned and sustainable way; and to avoid negatively influencing the layout of future urban areas.
    d. The *Murrumbateman Masterplan 2031* identifies more compatible land use areas for industrial battery facilities, including: 19. Industrial; 20. Land retained for industrial expansion; and 9. to 11. Field Exhibition, Recreation Reserve and open space areas. These alternative areas represent more compatible land uses for the proposed development, including with underground access to nearby electricity transmission.
    e. Approval of the proposed development would undermine more compatible development and investments that will generate income within the Winery Precinct. For example, the proposed development would change the character and amenity of the Winery Precinct and deter more sympathetic investment in short-stay tourist accommodation. The Masterplan recognises the limited availability of short-stay accommodation at present.
    f. The development proposal would foreclose future land uses and planning options that may need to be considered to accommodate Murrumbateman's forecast 10,000 population and would be contradictory to the Yass Valley's LEP core planning principle: 'to avoid negatively influencing the layout of future urban areas'.

3. **The proposed development application does not represent efficient infrastructure investment – as per the recommendations of the Yass Valley Settlement Strategy.**
    a. Investment in commercial scale batteries should be coordinated in partnership with, or directed by, the licenced Distribution Network Service Provider (DNSP), the local council,

and with the developers of new residential or industrial areas (including in conjunction with the scoping of the North Murrumbateman development).

b. DNSPs are in a superior position to rollout community scale batteries, with knowledge of where best to locate them and easy access to existing assets, infrastructure and know-how. DNSP-led battery solutions avoid more costly infrastructure upgrades across the network and benefits accrue to all electricity consumers.

c. Conversely, big battery developers are pursuing projects for their own investment returns, they are not community-owned or regulated, unlike DNSPs, to deliver the greatest net benefits to electricity consumers. Requiring a bespoke, uncoordinated and uncertain development application for each of these projects raises the costs of development, especially when proposed in established residential areas where land use conflicts arise, which ultimately makes such battery solutions more expensive for electricity users.

4. The change of land use proposed by the applicant would represent an unpredicted and substantially different land use to anything currently within the "Winery Precinct", which requires more thorough planning and management of risks over the lifetime of the development – particularly acoustic, fire and groundwater risks and end-of-life project costs.

a. The application states that the proposed facility 'will include electrical infrastructure which will generate noise emissions with the potential to impact on the acoustic amenity of the surrounding environment including at residential receptors'.

b. The planned location of my future residential dwelling on [redacted] (Figure 1) has not been evaluated as a 'noise sensitive receptor location' and was omitted from the 'noise mitigation strategies' that have been proposed to reduce adverse impacts at nearby residential locations. Figure 2 shows a large gap in the proposed acoustic barrier, which has been oriented towards [redacted]

c. The application identifies that 'based on the nature of the development, there is the potential for fires to initiate from the components within the site'. The technologies incorporate some precautions to contain the fire, however, the risk of toxic chemical escape, thermal runaway and an uncontained explosion cannot be ruled out.

d. The real-life operating performance of battery facilities is still being evidenced, with many projects malfunctioning in real-world conditions and more affected by human and system errors than would be predicted by controlled test settings. This reality demands a cautious approach to approval of proposed sites in established areas with distinctly different land uses. If approved in the current location, stronger planning conditions and compliance requirements are necessary.

e. Given the potential for an intense, self-sustaining fire and chemical leakage, any approval needs to impose greater planning precautions and conditions.

   i. The proposed distance between the batteries and the landscaped area is approximately 10–13 metres, consisting of grass less than 100 millimetres mown in height. It is implausible that this height of grass will be maintained year-round and, if it were, gravel solutions would likely be both more effective and less costly overall. The proposed bi-annual auditing would be insufficient.

   ii. I question whether the 10–13-metre distance from the batteries to the landscaped area is sufficient to contain a fire initiating from within the facility, especially with an intense fire and the proximity of trees planted within the

landscaped area. I note that the development plans are misleading, or inconsistently detailed, as to whether there would be a single or double row of trees within the landscaped area.

iii. Chemicals may not be fully contained, and there could be potential for runoff or leakage into the groundwater. My sole permanent water source is a spring-fed dam (supplied directly from the groundwater), which is in close proximity of the proposed development. The fact that my dam is predominantly supplied by an underground water reservoir and the nearby bore access point (GW416988) naturally discharges underground water is inconsistent with the claims of the consultant's report attached to the development application. The report claims that bore GW416988 has a standing water level 20 meters below ground level, which does not accord with the natural overflow of water from the groundwater access point and the near-permanent sustainment of the dam from a groundwater reservoir. This is also evident from satellite imagery, which shows the distinctly different colour of the dam water at [redacted], in contrast to other dams in the area that are supplied by water runoff (Figure 3). Given this apparent inaccurate characterisation of the surrounding groundwater properties, insufficient regard is given to chemical risks in the development application.

f. Such a substantial change in land use requires a thorough and involved process of engaging the local community (including professionals within or independently contracted by the Council) to appraise the nature of the proposed development and associated risks. I urge the Yass Valley Council to consider the risks and full potential costs to the proponents, nearby landholders and current and future ratepayers over the lifetime of the development.

i. This should include costs in the event of malfunction, fire/explosion, chemical leakage into soil, runoff and groundwater, and remediation.

ii. The application did not substantially address facility closure and remediation arrangements.

iii. In the event of a malfunction, it is unclear from the application what remediation would be required, what costs could be involved, and who would be liable and have adequate financial security.

5. The applicant and operator essentially propose to self-assure compliance within construction and operating safety limits. The enforceability and consequences of non-compliance are unclear within the application, while the extreme consequences of any inadequate maintenance and real-life system faults could be borne by nearby landowners. A more appropriate planning process would:

a. Allow the Council to assure surrounding landholders of robust risk controls and compliance and enforcement procedures, having regard to multiple options to manage risks within the risk appetite of the community and surrounding landholders.

b. Consider the risk of unsafe and cost-minimising practices and decisions.

i. The proponent intends to contract out the operation and maintenance of the facility, potentially increasing risks if not well-managed through contract terms.

ii. The proponent is investing in an uncertain market, in which battery investments could occur more efficiently through Distribution Network Service Providers

(DNSPs) and community-led solutions integrated into new developments. There is a risk that the battery asset is less profitable than expected, which could compromise incentives to strictly observe safety and maintenance procedures without stronger audit, compliance and enforcement requirements.

c. Require stronger safety assurance mechanisms around extreme and catastrophic fire risk days, to guarantee that the facility is not in use and not reliant on human involvement (as proposed in the application).

6. **Noting that I have raised significant concerns and oppose the approval of the application, if it were to be approved, an acoustic barrier would need to be incorporated to shield sound travelling towards my residence.**
    a. Currently, the acoustic mitigations fail to include a barrier oriented towards the location of my proposed residential site (Figure 2).

I request that the Council provide a version of the policy (Planning Framework) that will be used to assess the project in its current proposed location. A policy to specifically address land use conflict associated with such energy proposals in the Yass Valley is required and should be developed in close consultation with the community in advance of any ad-hoc project approvals. The planning process must identify how such projects will provide lasting community benefits within the Valley, enhance environmental assets and sustainable development in the region, and protect agricultural land and water resources.

Lastly, concerns of Murrumbateman community members should be weighted considerably higher than any support for the application that may be expressed from those residing in more distant locations not directly affected by the proposal.

I would welcome the opportunity to engage further in the process.

Kind Regards

[redacted]

Figure 1: Site of affected residential development planned on [redacted]

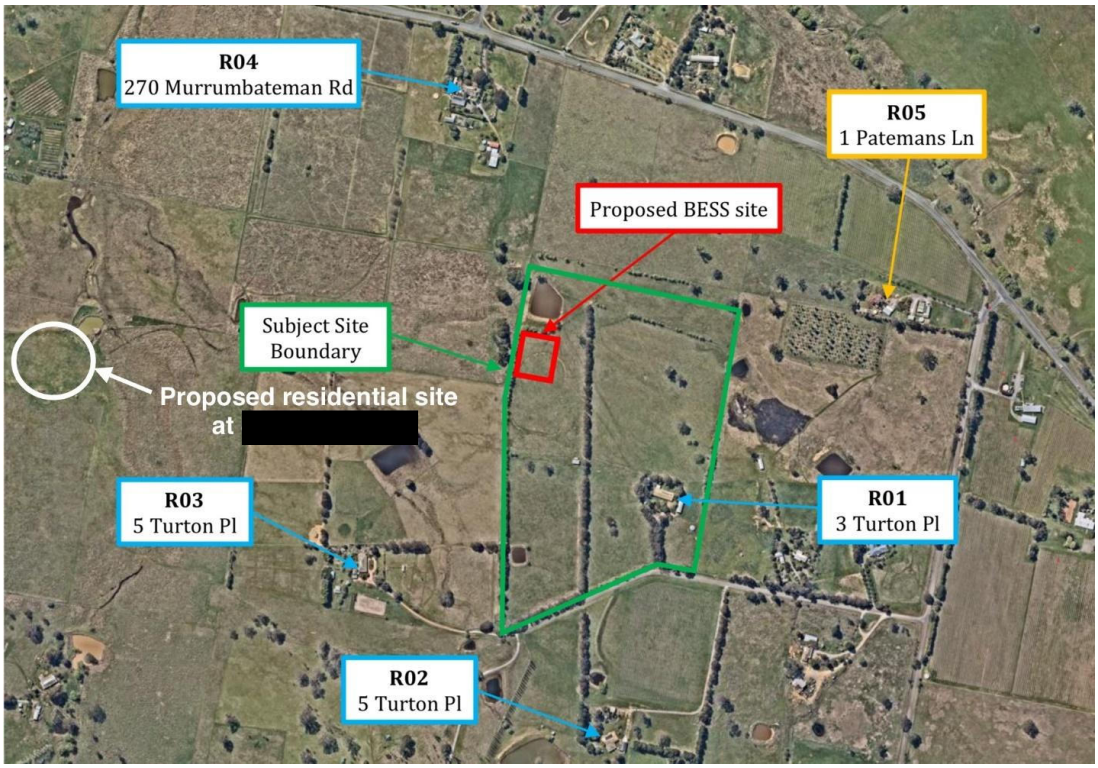


Figure 2: Gap in proposed acoustic barrier oriented towards planned residence at [redacted]

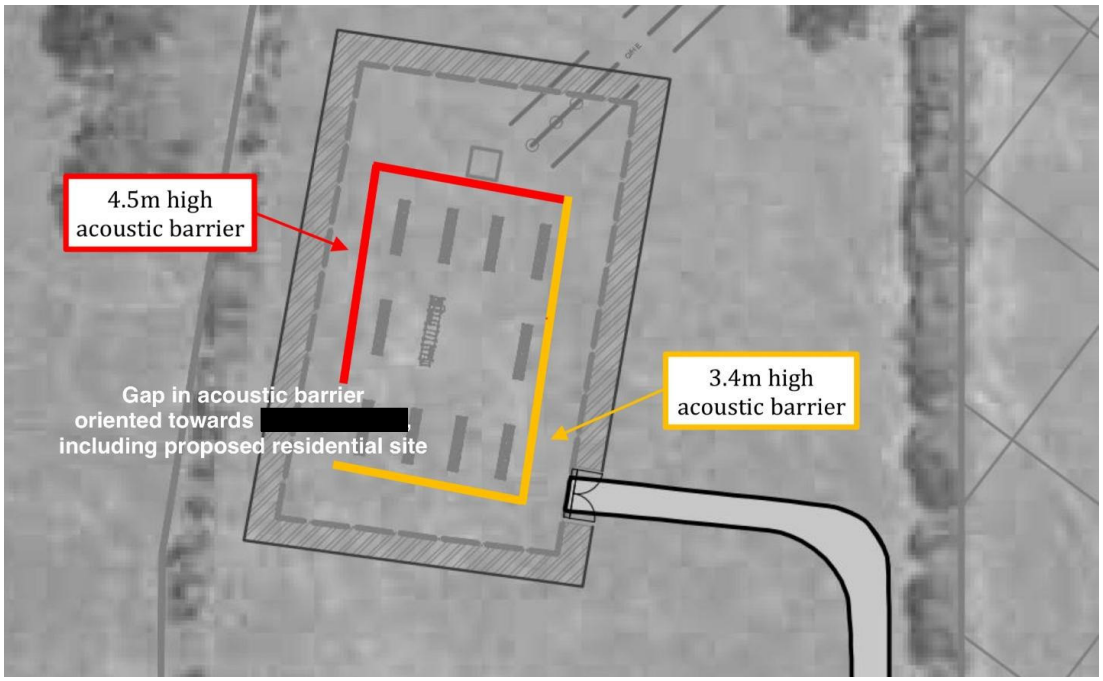
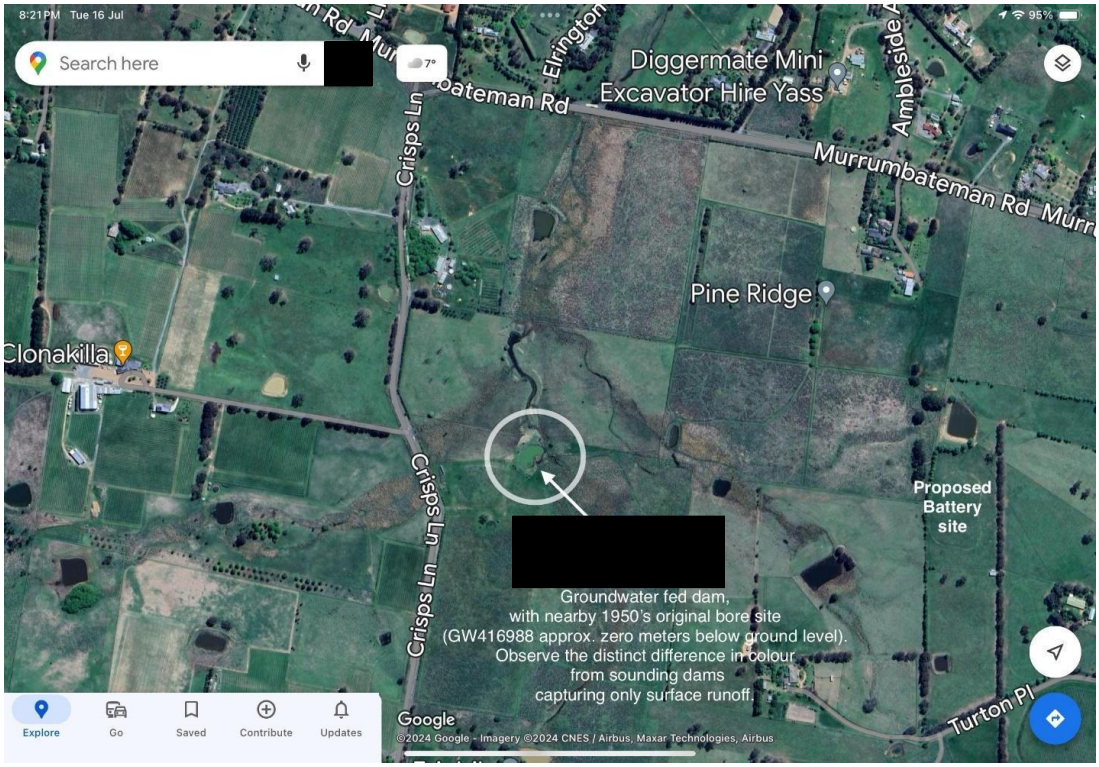


Figure 3: Groundwater fed dam on [redacted] and groundwater access point with water discharging naturally ~0 meters below ground level



Additional Information - Submission 4

3 Turton Place Murrumbateman
Development Application DA240159

We make the following submission in relation to the proposed Distribution Battery Energy Storage System (DBESS) for 3 Turton Place Murrumbateman.

Yass Valley Council has received additional information in relation to the above DA. Whilst we retain our view of this DA as per our original response, we also make the following comments to the updated information as follows.

Revised Statement of Environmental Effects (SEE)

3.1 Development description states "The project will be designed to provide grid flexibility services. It will support the efficiency of the electrical network by charging from the grid during periods of low demand and discharging back to the grid during periods of high demand". To be clear- this is not the purpose of the project, it is a by-product. This is not a renewable energy source (according to the proponents themselves), and nor are they investing $5 million + just to help add efficiency to the electrical grid. This is a commercial investment by a multi-national company designed to make a return on their money. Which is perfectly fine, however lets just make sure we view this in the correct context here as there is very little upside for anyone in the local community, other than the landholders.

The proponent also states "The project would include implementation of mitigating measures considered necessary to minimise risks posed by and to the development". This appears to be a common theme throughout much of this DA. Whenever something is non-compliant, the response appears to often be "we can fix it with mitigation measures considered necessary at the time- after we get approval". And just like the mitigation measures considered necessary to minimise risk posed by the development, there is little acknowledgment of what the risks are, and no detail of what the mitigation measures entail.

4.5.1.1 States "The proposed DBESS is not antipathetic to the objectives of the RU4 land zone. The implementation of appropriate mitigating measures (again) as part of the design of the project and during construction and operational phase would seek to *minimise significant impacts* to the objectives of the land zone and surrounding land uses. If the project is not antipathetic to the objectives of the RU4 land zone why does it require undetailed appropriate mitigating measures, and why would its significant impact need to be minimised?

The simple answer is because the proposed DBESS is actually in conflict with the RU4 land zone use and is not suitable for this particular RU4 block.

4.5.3.1 Chapter 3 Hazardous and Offensive Development. The proponent states "The dangerous goods associated with DBESS are lithium batteries which are a class 9 dangerous good under the ADG code. Class 9 goods do not exceed the screening thresholds under the guidelines under applying SEPP 33 guideline *as they pose little threat to people or property*.(Dept of Planning 2011, p.33). The proposed development is therefore unlikely to pose a significant risk or hazard associated with the use of lithium batteries".

The Murrumbateman community, and we would hope Yass Council would take the issue of the threat to life and property seriously. By taking a 14 year old quote issued in 2011 that lithium batteries are safe and pose little threat to people or property is comparable to quoting a 14 year old report suggesting vaping is a much healthier alternative to smoking and is considered safe. This demonstrates that the proponent has in fact very little regard for the safety and well being of our community and is more intent on maximising the return on their $5M investment than our safety.

A simple Google search for dangers of lithium batteries will show hundreds of results with examples of the danger of lithium batteries as reported by numerous Fire Departments, Universities, Worksafe and other government departments. The fire danger (particularly in a rural bushfire prone area) and toxic fallout when these batteries catch fire cannot be underestimated. The Proponent and all their consultants continue to assure us these batteries are safe. We assume the residents of Bouldercombe in Queensland were told the same thing when their local grid scale battery caught fire and they were told to stay indoors for days and keep respiratory medication close by because of the toxic smoke as the fire eventually burned itself out. Should such a catastrophic event happen in a bush fire prone area such as Murrumbateman, we would like to know who will be responsible and how will they be held accountable given the clear and abundant evidence of the danger of these batteries.

4.5.6 Development Control Plan (DCP)
We will combine our comments here together with the Proponents Appendix B responses for simplicity.
The proponent states that "On the basis of the assessment in Appendix B, it is considered that the proposed development is consistent and capable of achieving the relevant **objectives** of the DCP". We however, disagree strongly with this statement.
It is noted that Part A of the DCP includes a Land Use Matrix to detail the applicability of each part to different types of development, and Part A,B,H,I,K and L apply. We agree that Part E still applies given the subject site is zoned RU4. The point to made here is that Part E of the DCP was not included in the Electricity Generating Works (EGW), as it was never intended or envisaged that EGW would be carried out in RU4 zoned land. Given however that EGW is a Permitted Use under the SEPP, the broader objectives of Part E should still apply. In practical terms, there is currently no suitable description for a EGW structure in Part E, therefore in keeping with the intentions of Part E- either the Guidelines for Farm Buildings or Outbuildings, or Residential Dwellings should apply. After all, if you cannot build a dwelling or farm building in a particular location, then surely common sense would suggest you cannot build an industrial or commercial building in the same location- and still keep the intent of Part E of the DCP where "Separation distances are to be provided to ensure rural amenity and right to farm is maintained by limiting the potential for land use conflict".

E.1 Siting of Buildings
E.1.C States "All buildings shall have a setback of no less than 250metres from the boundary of a property where intensive plant agriculture including vineyards and orchards exist". The Proponent has acknowledged the DA is non compliant as the subject site is only 140 meters from the boundary of a property that undertakes such intensive plant agriculture, however it believes that as the closest vines are approximately 270m away it should be given flexibility. This does not allow for the fact that the intention of the vineyard owners is to increase planting up to the boundary at some future point. The DCP makes no mention of where on the property the agriculture takes place, only that it is used for the purpose and the boundary shall be the point of measure. It is once again proposing the use of mitigation measures of which we still have no significant detail (such as noise walls) yet again.

E.1.1 Siting of dwellings and setbacks refers to dwellings and outbuildings, and as previously stated, by implication should also apply to structures containing EGW. The Objective is "To minimise land use conflict potential and respect the rights of adjoining properties to use the land for rural [purposes]". The proposed setback of approximately 11 meters from the Western boundary is completely unacceptable and causes total conflict with adjoining land use which is what the DCP seeks to avoid.

Table 12 shows Setbacks for Rural Areas in RU4 Primary Production Small Holding having a minimum setback to side boundaries of 50 metres. The proponent continues to argue that the current location is best position for the subject proposal , taking all factors into account. However the reality is that it is only the best location for the current landowner who, in conjunction with the Proponent are the ones who are deriving the economic benefit from this proposal and in doing so have shown complete disregard for the local community. This further demonstrates however, that this particular RU4 block is not suitable for this proposal as the siting requirements cannot be met if the intent of the DCP is applied.

E2.i Farm Buildings and Outbuildings, whose objectives are to provide guidance on the placement of rural buildings also confirms “Setbacks from side boundaries shall be no less that 5 metres for allotments less that 5ha or 50 metres for allotments with a greater area than 5 ha”, which should therefore apply to the subject site.

Whilst acknowledging that EGW is not an agricultural or rural industry, when located in an RU4 zone, the same intentions must apply.

E3.1 Intensive agriculture and rural industry- whose Objective is “To ensure that agricultural activities limit off site nuisance as much as practical”.

E.3.1.b states ”Development applications should detail what noise attenuation or abatement measures are proposed to ensure that constant noise does not exceed 5dB(A) above background noise when measured at the boundary of any adjoining property or road”. For the purpose of clarity, we could not get approval for a 81dB(A) pump, or any other similar machinery located 11 metres from the side boundary running 24 hours a day / seven days a week, but that is exactly what the proponent is seeking approval for. The fact that the noise generates from EGW as opposed to a rural pump should be irrelevant. This is a commercial enterprise no different to any other and should be held to the same standards in an RU4 zone which is that it should not be intrusive or dangerous to the rest of the community. Again the Proponent argues that compliance can be achieved through the implementation of mitigating measures which they will consider if necessary after it has been built. Unfortunately based on experience, we have absolutely no faith or trust in the proponent doing what they say will do. And the repeated use of “implementation of mitigating measures if and when appropriate” is wearing thin.

On the basis of assessment against the DCP, the proposal is both non-compliant and inconsistent and should be rejected.

5. Likely Impacts Of The Development

5.10 Noise and Vibration.
Again for simplicity we will combine our comments here with the Accoustic Report Appendix I.

It is noted that a new Acoustic Report (AC) dated 18th November 2024 has now been submitted in place of the original one dated 6th May 2024 by the same author. In response to the original AR we stated that the DA should be rejected as the proposed sound wall was neither a functional part of the DBESS, nor was it approvable. Further there was absolutely no detail around the construction of the wall which was deemed necessary for the DBESS to be approved. Council has also asked the proponent for more construction detail on the proposed sound wall in their Request For Information letter. We then fast forward to the new all improved AC, and now almost by magic- a sound wall is no longer required. And yes, you guessed it- should a sound wall actually be required after it has been built because the modelling wasn't quite accurate…….Implementation of appropriate mitigating measures will be undertaken.

It appears however that the only thing that has actually changed has been the inputs given to the author of the AR by the Proponent. The Proponent now states that the MVPS inverter will run at 88dB(A) instead of the original 92dB(A), and that the Battery Cabinet liquid cooling- per unit (x 10) will run at 81dB(A) per unit instead of the original 95dB(A) per unit.
All of that theoretically sounds reasonable until you compare it to the Proponents response to council in Attachment 1-Tabular response to Council RFI letter, page 1 which states "The final specification of electrical components including their potential to generate noise impacts and the requirement for noise mitigating measures would be subject to the completion of detailed design and the final selection and commissioning of electrical equipment".
In other words, **they have not yet selected the equipment they intend to commission so how can they possibly reassess the acoustic modelling** other than for their own convenience.

It would be very easy for a reasonable person looking at this from a distance to suspect that the proponent either has no idea, or doesn't want to deal with the issues of noise abatement. It seems quite remarkable that one of the bigger issues of this DA is expected to be brushed aside simply because the proponent has given the author of the AR some new inputs and now there is "nothing to see here- just move along". Our local community expects much better.

We also note that Council has asked for actual measurement of background and ambient noise levels at the site in order to properly determine the acoustic environment- however none has been forthcoming.

We assume implementation of appropriate mitigating measures will be put in place if required. If however, actual acoustic measurements are ever undertaken, we would request they are taken at the boundary points- as per DCP requirements.

5.17 Social Impact

With due respect to the authors of the Revised Statement of Environmental Effects, they clearly have no idea of the impact developments such as this have in local communities. If they genuinely believe this proposal has minimal social impact which can be overcome by the benefits of the works providing greater flexibility for the electrical network, then they really need to get out in the real world. There are countless people in the neighbourhood who are already suffering extreme anxiety over this DA, including some who have had to seek medial assistance to deal with it. This DA has turned peoples lives upside down already and it has barely started its journey. The Proponents in particular have shown zero regard for the community.

Their one attempt at community consultation after the notice period for the DA had closed was a complete farce. They had virtually no information and could answer very few questions. They certainly had no interest in any community feedback or looking at our points of view. They made promises to get back to people with information within a two week period, and now months and months later- we still have had no response. And just for the record, we are not aware of a single person who genuinely believes that this project will give them a better or more consistent electricity supply, or that it will reduce energy costs which is what the proponents have claimed to us (in writing). All of this is reinforced by the proponents seeking to make this DA very complex and technical (with no layman's summary), not answering any real community concerns, and refusing to show any flexibility- such that most people will just throw their hands up in the air and walk away. Fortunately, we are a resilient community that will not give up that easily.

5.18 Economic Impact

We agree that the proposed development will have a minor local economic benefit for the month or so during construction. No doubt the Murrumbateman Country Inn and the local take away will pick up some increased turnover. The long term maintenance opportunities for the contractors turning up once a fortnight however is not detailed in any way, and there is certainly no guarantee that any locals would get this work. The likelihood is high that the proponent would have a specialised team traveling to most of their sites, who could be based anywhere in the country, or they would be contactors from Canberra. The economic benefits associated with improving the reliability and flexibility (whatever that may mean) of the electrical network would be extremely difficult to predict or measure, and is aspirational at best. On the other hand, the economic detriment to the local economy is a lot easier to contemplate.

Yass council and local businesses have invested huge amounts of time effort and money in building the Murrumbateman Wine Trail as a food and wine destination. We have world class wineries such as Clonakilla (who would look directly over the proposed site) and the adjacent Four Winds Winery who late last year won the coveted Jimmy Watson trophy which is regarded as the most prestigious award in the Australian wine industry. Tourists come from all over Australia (and the world) to visit this beautiful, serene and quiet country location to experience all we have on offer. We are aware of many people (ourselves included) who are contemplating further development to add to the vibrancy of our beautiful village. The subject site at 3 Turton Place sits almost in the centre of the Murrumbateman Winery Trail. A development such as this has the potential to cause great economic harm as tourists will rapidly avoid being anywhere near a development that buzzes 24 hours a day for 365 days a year. We have absolutely no confidence that the proponent is capable of achieving anything that will be sympathetic to our local environment, and thus all future potential investment in the area will be at risk if this proposal proceeds.

The other economic impact that has not been addressed is the potential devaluation of land values on all adjoining and nearby landholders. There is zero chance that adjoining landholders will not suffer some level of economic loss with the value of their properties if this DA is approved. If you had the option of buying two similar properties- one next to a DBESS, and one that was not, the one next to the DBESS is always going to achieve a lower price.
And why will this happen? Simply because the proponent and the landholder are seeking to build an industrial / commercial EGW business on their land in an RU4 zone so that they can make an economic gain, and everyone else around them suffers an economic loss. Remember, this is not renewable energy. Its simply a business model that allows the proponent to buy cheap electricity, store it through the day and then sell it for a profit at night. RU4 zoned land was never designed for this type of industry, and 3 Turton Place reinforces that because this DA is unable to comply with the DCP as well as the intent of the DCP and the LEP, and as such should be rejected.

5.22 <u>The Public Interest</u>
The proponent claims the proposed development is in the Public Interest on the following grounds;

1) It is permitted with consent via the Infrastructure SEPP and is not inconsistent with the objectives of the RU4 zone as per LEP.

We completely disagree. For clarity, the objectives of the RU4 zone in the LEP are shown below. There is absolutely nothing that is consistent between the proposed DA and the objectives of the RU4 zone as per the LEP. All it shows is the conflict.

Zone RU4 Primary Production Small Lots

1 Objectives of zone

- To enable sustainable primary industry and other compatible land uses.
- To encourage and promote diversity and employment opportunities in relation to primary industry enterprises, particularly those that require smaller lots or that are more intensive in nature.
- To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.
- To enable residential development if it supports viable primary production on the land.
- To ensure that the location, type and intensity of development is appropriate, having regard to the characteristics of the land, the rural environment and the need to protect significant natural resources, including ground and surface water.
- To prevent premature and sporadic subdivision of land on the fringe of urban areas into small lots that may prejudice the proper layout of these areas in the future.

2) ”Will have minimal impacts to short term traffic, public domain, air and microclimate, waste and noise and vibration impacts during the construction phase. These impacts are capable of being managed through the implementation of standard management measures as outlined throughout this report and summarised in Section 5.19”

   Just because something is manageable does not make it in the Public Interest. There is nothing here that is in the Public Interest.

3) “Is within a suitable site for the proposed works which is generally level, located within a rural environment and unconstrained in terms of significant soils, heritage, watercourses, vegetation or hazards such as bushfire or flood events”.

Again, none of that makes it in the Public Interest. It just means its easier for the proponent to get their DA approved.

The Public Interest is defined as *“The welfare of the general public and society. It is a broad concept that considers the needs of the community as a whole, rather than the interests of individuals.”*

This proposal is not in the Public Interest. It is in the interest of the proponent and the landholder only.

The proponent continues to refer to the benefit of this DA as the stability of the electrical grid. Our local grid is not unstable. We can count on one hand the number of blackouts we have had over the last 14 years, and most have been from lightening strikes during storms. The proponent is not here to do the community any favours.

Yes, we absolutely need to work on our energy supply across Australia (and the world)- but this proposal is about commercial return, not energy stability, which is certainly in the proponents interest. Not the Public Interest.

We would also like to make a brief comment in relation to Appendix F, the Landscape Plan.

We reiterate our previous comments that this landscape plan will do very little to blend this eyesore into the landscape. The montage photos provided by the proponent provide very little context. To that extent, we have included pictures taken in front of the subject site at a height of 3 meters looking back to Murrumbateman Road and Crisp Lane. These show that the site will be quite visible the other way unless this addressed. We acknowledge these photos were taken in front of the site which means it will have some addition tree coverage, but certainly nowhere near enough to stop the built form sticking out like a sore thumb. After all, it is 88 metres long.



Looking back to Crisp lane and Clonakilla

10



Looking back to Murrumbateman Road

The Landscape plan shows all plants as Hiko size, which are generally 150mm high. Therefore it must be noted the revised rendering of the typical vegetation buffer issued 22nd November 2024 will most likely take 10 to 15 years to reach that stage (if ever).

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A much more appropriate render would be to show what the vegetation buffer will look like on potential completion of the project, which will be vastly different to the current render.

Conclusion:

We thank Yass Council for the opportunity to view the updated information for DA 240159 at 3 Turton Place Murrumbateman and provide further feedback. Unfortunately after reviewing the updated information we have only strengthened our view that this proposal is completely unsuitable for this particular block for the following reasons;

- Although EGW is a permitted use in RU4, this particular site is unsuitable as it is unable to comply with neither the provisions, nor the intention of the Yass Valley DCP, whose setbacks cannot be achieved.
- Potential noise issues have not been adequately addressed and the proponent appears to be unable to clearly articulate how they will be dealt with. The attitude seems to be “Just let me build it and trust me to make it work in the end”.
- It is clear from both the LEP and DCP that neither a dwelling, nor a farm outbuilding would be approved in the current proposed location of this DA. Based on the intent of RU4 zoning, it would then be ludicrous to allow a large noisy industrial complex that operates 24/7 for 365 days a year to be built in that exact same location. That is the very definition of conflict of use.
- There is a conflict with the DCP in relation to visual screening and reflective materials.
- There is a conflict with the Yass Valley strategic plan as a Winery Trail and Tourism Destination.
- The potential dangers and risk of Lithium Batteries fires to the community have not been adequately addressed.
- There is very little to no benefit to the Murrumbateman community directly with this DA. Even the electricity stored on this site is not designated specifically for Murrumbateman.
- This DA is not in the Public Interest by any definition.
- The adverse social and economic impact on the local community is high, and the only beneficiaries of this commercial venture are the landholders and the proponent
- This is NOT a renewable energy project and should not be treated as one.

We would once again urge Council support the local community by rejecting all support for this proposal, which is completely unsuitable for this particular site.

Yours Sincerely



Additional Information - Submission 5

Submission in Response to:

DA240159 - 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman – Proposed Installation of Distribution Battery Energy Storage System



We refer to our objection made on 21 July 2024.

The additional information provided has not addressed any concerns raised.

The objections outlined in our correspondence of 21 July 2024 and our position to the proposed development remains unchanged.

From: [redacted]
To: Jeremy Knox
Subject: Re: DA240159 - Reminder on Public Exhibition Period for Additional Information Received - 3 Turton Place
Sent: 20/01/2025 5:29:10 PM

[EXTERNAL] Please exercise caution when clicking on links or attachments from external sources.

Dear Jeremy

Please redact personal details from this submission and would you please add to the submissions again.

My submission against this DA still stands even with the additional information provided. The additions are poor and the applicant still has not provided all the necessary details originally requested. This type of business has no place on that site and should not be accepted just to tick a box for the NSW government.

The Zoning is totally inappropriate for this DA. With recent discoveries of flora and fauna in other areas of Murrumbateman, I for one am not confident that due process has been done by the consultants engaged in this report. I am also not confident that the fire risks have been properly assessed having spoken with the RFS down the road. The photographs taken do not show the true impact of these ten container sized batteries onto the Murrumbateman Road. Added to which the amateurish sketch of a blue box plonked in a paddock to depict the ten batteries, is to be blunt, laughable.

All we can see as a community is that not one shred of evidence has been provided by AC Energy to give due consideration for those who will be affected by this business, be it the vineyards or families living in this area of Murrumbateman. Ultimately the Murrumbateman Road provides tourist access (of which over 2.4 million dollars was spent to upgrade and provide a stunning trail around the area) and stunning scenery for those travelling through or staying for a break. This specific area epitomizes this wine region which provides a huge financial support for the Yass Valley Shire and the community must be supported in continuing to do so. The matter should have been immediately dismissed by Yass Council from the get go.

I hope that we will get an opportunity to present at the Southern Regional Planning Panel and they will support us against this matter. I'd be grateful if you would keep us all informed.

[redacted]

[redacted]

DA240159
Additional Information 2
Public Exhibition Submissions

Additional Information 2 - May 2025 - Submission #1

6 Turton Place Murrumbatemen

NSW

To: Yass Valley Council

DA240159 – 3 Turton Place Murrumbateman – OBJECTION – second further submission

By way of objection to the development proposal the subject of DA 240159 we make the following further submissions.

[redacted] reside at the property [redacted] Murrumbateman being [redacted] property is located diagonally opposite adjacent to 3 Turton Place on its south western boundary corner. The home is located 670 metres from the proposed Battery Energy Storage Site (BESS) The front door of the house lies in direct line of sight to the south west of the BESS. We consider that our house will be significantly impacted by the proposed development but has been omitted from consideration in the assessment reports as being a sensitive receptor.

[redacted], reside at [redacted] referred to in the reports as R03. Their property shares the western boundary of 3 Turton Place and their residence is located 365 metres to the west of the proposed BESS. Bruce and Diana point out that the BESS is proposed to be located right on the boundary between the two properties which has the effect of minimising the distance between the BESS and their residence (thus enhancing the potential impact on their property and lifestyle) and maximising the distance between the BESS and the land owners residence at 3 Turton Place to minimise impact on the land owners.

ACOUSTIC BARRIER – proposed reduction in size

The previous report of Watson Moss Growcott (WMC) dated 24 May 2024 at section 4.2.3 of the report recommended the configuration of the acoustic barrier be along the southern and eastern site boundary at 3.4 meters high and the northern and western boundary at 4.5 metres high (effectively enclosing the electrical equipment) on the basis that this was necessary to "provide noise shielding in the direction of the critical receptors".

However, in the WMC report of 16 April 2025 (at section 5.2.4) the dimensions of the proposed acoustic barrier have been drastically reduced. The proposal is now a barrier of 3 metres high along the south boundary and 3 metres high along two thirds of the east boundary only.

This reduction in proposed barrier dimensions has not been specifically identified in the latter report or justified by reference to estimated noise emissions.

On the contrary the latter report states that this barrier will reduce the noise impacts on the basis that "the barrier will effectively block line of sight between the receptors and the electrical infrastructure".

A number of points need to be made:

1. It is reasonable to expect that the proposed barrier reduced in size in April 2025 report would be **far less effective** in mitigating noise emissions than the original proposed acoustic barrier measuring 3.4 m high on south and east boundaries and 4.5 metres high on the west and north boundaries.

2. The removal of the north and west barrier walls in the latter proposal will expose residents [redacted] AT R03, and residents at R04 and [redacted] at [redacted] and future residence at R08 to unmitigated noise emissions from the site.

3. The statement in the report of 16 April 2025 that the barrier, reduced in size, will effectively block line of site between the receptors and the electrical infrastructure is a **self evident falsehood** in respect of these homes and is not capable of supporting the assertion made in the 2025 report "hence will reduce noise impacts". One needs only to stand at each of these locations on site or from the desktop draw a straight line from the site to each receptor location on the aerial photograph included in the report to see that there is a direct line from the north and western boundary of the site to each receptor and [redacted] house at [redacted].

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the development application be refused.
2. If the DA receives consent then a strict condition of consent be that the dimensions of the acoustic barrier wall proposed in the report dated 24 May 2024 be reinstated.

[redacted]

[redacted]

13 May 2025

Additional Information 2 - May 2025 - Submission #2

Battery Energy Storage System (BASS), DA240159

Dear Yass Valley Council Development Planner and the Southern Regional Planning Panel,

In response to **Additional Information 2** regarding the proposed Battery Development (DA240159), I wish to raise significant concerns. My original submission to the YVC and further submission to the Panel (in response to Additional Information 1) outline the scope of my concerns, as a nearby affected landowner at [redacted] Murrumbateman (R08).

My concerns continue to be fundamental. I encourage the Panel to prioritise the valid and **fundamental concerns** about the proposed project:

- The site is inappropriate for the development.
- The project is not regionally significant.
- The BASS would jeopardise future residential development and foreclose future land uses.
- The technology and operation of such large-scale battery projects are emergent, requiring a cautious approach to site selection and approval at this phase of their maturity and real-world testing.

In terms of **Additional Information 2**, the adjustments proposed are insignificant and do not provide adequate protections to nearby affected landowners. The Panel should recognise the unproven lifetime operating limits and risks associated with the technology, the inexperienced record of the proponent, and the inherent fire and safety risks faced by the surrounding residents when assessing such projects. There is currently no place for such projects within an established residential and small rural lot zone, which is a dedicated winery precinct that is considered positive for amenity, tourism and land values. Alternative sites should be evaluated by the proponent, restoring trust in the YVC's well-engaged planning framework and the prioritised purpose of the SEPP to advance projects that are genuinely regionally significant.

I request that the Panel (seek the proponent to) provide the following for the community's clarification:

- **A list of relevant state-based regulations that would enforce compliance with operational and maintenance requirements** of the project. In the event of non-compliance, what penalties would apply?
  - For example, if the facility is operated on an extreme weather day, what regulatory framework and official authority would have responsibility to enforce non-compliance? I note that wholesale prices typically peak on such days and the opportunity cost of feeding-back power could be extremely material to the profitability of the project.
  - For example, if the grass in the Asset Protection Zone is not maintained at a <100mm height, what official authority would have responsibility to monitor compliance and administer enforcement?
- **Relevant indemnities, applicable to all contractually related parties, in the event that the project imposes demonstrable harm on surrounding landholders**.
  - For example, if the facility gives rise to a fire or causes contamination, what risks are insured against and what contributory negligence could void that coverage? What solvency risks would the project operator face in bearing all potential liabilities?

Any failure to specify the above requirements and financial protections would fall short of community expectations, creating the impression that the Panel is not appropriately evaluating the risks associated with the ongoing project. The Panel has a stewardship role to ensure that the objectives of the planning framework are carried out over time. Evaluation of such risks lends itself to a cautious and meticulous approach to planning, preventing mishaps during the experimental phase of new technology projects.

I request that the Panel confirm that the **RFS response to Additional Information 1** included expert advice – that is, advice that is familiar with the unique and complex fire risks associated with large-scale battery systems, which demand specialist and pro-active input into safety and compliance.

A complex array of commercial incentives, legal exposure, and regulatory frameworks govern the successful operation of a large-scale battery system. The **full lifetime commercial, legal and regulatory picture must be within the scope of the Panel's assessment.** Regulatory, compliance and risk management are still being bedded down, adapting to incidences, real world testing and technology improvements. A cautious approach to the selection of a suitable site, installation, operation and maintenance should be adopted. Approving the location of a project proximate to residential sites within a high-value winery precinct would not adhere to good stewardship of the broader planning system. Overseas, BASS technologies have faced evolving regulator requirements to manage newly identified or misunderstood risks. In just one year, 23 BESS fires were reported in South Korea, with a 5-month investigation finding deficiencies in protection systems to stop short circuits; poor maintenance (including management of dust, humidity and temperature swings) that increased fire and explosion risk; poor installation quality; and insufficient monitoring and control systems.

My property, [redacted] (identified as receptor R08 for the purposes of the revised sound assessment), **is only 2 units short of breaching the nominated project trigger thresholds**. Respecting the inherent error in such calculations, including the necessary simplifying assumptions, the somewhat arbitrary nature of a 'project trigger threshold' should be treated a guide, to inform but not determine design considerations. Should the project be contemplated by the Panel, **it would be appropriate that an acoustic barrier on the western side of the development is incorporated at an early stage of the planning process**.

- Firstly, any sound disturbance emanating from the project is significant to a surrounding landowner, especially where it is reducible and is so near to breaching the rubbery guide of the project trigger threshold.
- Second, the western side of the project has now incorporated a slightly wider APZ (following the advice of the RFS), which is yet to afford space for an acoustic barrier.

The apathy of the project proponents to engage in more comprehensive risk management is demonstrated by their **explicit non-commitment to the installation of a basin to mitigate contamination risks.** They have referred to mere space considerations at the small site. If the project was indeed suitably located, there would not be a space constraint. The proponents also appeal to a deep clay soil layer protecting against chemical infiltration. However, the construction site would foreseeably disturb this layer, including to anchor the batteries and associated large-scale equipment, creating deep cracks more amenable to infiltration than some other soil types. It is also unclear what groundwater bores would do to address the infiltration of chemicals into a connected groundwater aquifer. Please clarify this aspect. I also

encourage the Panel to re-assess the quality of the groundwater assessment. The initial report failed to identify that my principal dam is in fact fed from an aquifer below the surface. The groundwater and aquifers are likely to be more complex than the desktop research revealed.

Please continue to engage the nearby community in this proposed development, and I welcome the opportunity to engage further.

Additional Information 2 - May 2025 - Submission #3

19th May 2025

3 Turton Place Murrumbateman

Development Application DA240159

Thank you for the opportunity to respond again to the additional information received by Yass Valley Council in relation to the above DA for 3 Turton Place Murrumbateman.

Whilst we retain the views in our first two submissions regarding this DA, we also make the following comments to the updated information and offer some additional information as follows.

Acoustic Report;

The revised acoustic report has been provided following a request from the Planning Panel. Premise notes that “A copy of the Peer Review report is attached for your reference”, however the Peer Review report is not included in the additional information supplied to us. We would like the opportunity to read the Peer Review report, with the option to make further comment if it is warranted.

We note the third Acoustic report provided by WMG is still using the lower Adopted Noise Level’s for their modelling as compared to the original report, however it appears that the proponent has still not selected the *actual* equipment they intend to use yet (there any many reference which still refer to needing to make final design and selection of equipment- including battery equipment). We find it quite extraordinary that the proponent appears to be just cherry picking numbers to suit their modelling, which is reflective of the attitude they seem to have consistently taken with this DA. “Just get an approval under any circumstances and then work the details out afterward.

The Sound Barrier still has insufficient design detail. Pulling a few possible options from a suppliers website and telling us it is “subject to final design” gives absolutely no comfort to us or our neighbours as to what we are likely to end up with should this industrial development be approved. We have been asking for this acoustic wall detail for almost 18 months now, and still we have nothing. To make matters even worse, it now appears the on again, off again, on again acoustic wall is only being proposed to be built on the Eastern and Southern sides. We assume that means that for everyone looking at it from the North, or West (which is most people other than the landholder) we will be looking at the back of the wall and instead of the clean lines of a finished wall, we will be looking at……well don’t know because we have no

detail of what the inside of the wall will look like. Subject to final design I assume? And we reiterate our view that the proposed landscaping design is completely unsuitable for any visual relief as 150mm hiko sized plants will take more than a decade to grow to maturity.

The Acoustic report also references the EPA Noise Policy for Industry numerous times and goes to great lengths to explain how this DA will comply with this policy.

We note however that one important part of this policy has been completely ignored by the proponent. Section 3.2 of NPfI titled Community Engagement states “The management of industrial noise impacts requires effective public involvement and communication strategies to help everyone understand the impact of industrial noise on the community. This is best approached by proponents/ owners of industrial premises providing the community with amongst other things; “The opportunity where appropriate, for input and /or involvement in activities that may effect it”.

There has been zero opportunity for the community to have any consultation or give any feedback on this DA. The one opportunity to engage the community where the proponents held an “information session" was one where no information was handed out, very few questions were answered, and there has since been absolutely no opportunity to have any input into this DA. Some of high levels of anxiety and stress in the community could well have been alleviated if this process had been handled more appropriately.

Bushfire/ Firefighting Water Contamination Risk and Mitigation Strategies

Yet again here, the proponent fails to respond to legitimate concerns from both Council and the community about how they might deal with risks of extreme concern to all stakeholders. “*The evaluation of contamination risks associated with firefighting water is dependent on the final sizing and layout of the facility, the implementation of site management plans and the procurement of battery equipment, including embedded safety devices and battery technology*”. Really? The reasonable person test here would likely deduce a less than flattering response. It seems obvious that the safety of local resident and the environment comes very much second to the commercial outcomes of this project which is being designed to ensure profitability first, and everything else second.

This is evidenced by the response to;

“Secondary Control Measures- Managing Larger Incidents”- Firefighting Strategy.

A defensive “controlled burn” approach is intended for fire management and would allow battery units to consume themselves. This approach would restrict the application of firefighting water to surrounding areas cooling nearby exposures outside of effected battery containers. The application of water directly to effected

battery units is considered to have minimal effect , is unlikely to extinguish a BESS fire, and would only likely delay the combustion of an effected unit"

So it appears that when one of these units catch fire its either option A- fill Murrumbateman and surrounds with toxic smoke for days on end until it burns out, or B- Given permanent retention basins are impractical for small scale DBESS (equates to too expensive), we will live in hope that temporary containment measures such as impermeable surfaces, bunding and portable spill barriers can be put in place before the local fire brigade starts hosing any fire down. We are fairly certain that a reality check here would find that no one in their right mind would be happy with a solution like this for a battery that they had to live next door to.

Once again we must say that the potential fire risks posed to our community by this DBESS cannot be underestimated. The threat is high and based on what we have seen so far, we have no confidence that adequate safety measure will be put in place.

Bush Fire Management and Emergency Response Plan.

Figure 4- page 11 shows a 140m Bushfire Prone Vegetation Setback. This setback is of concern for two reasons. Firstly, there appears to be no reference to it other than in the Legend. We would like to get an explanation of what this means. Secondly, this 140m setback encroaches into 3 adjoining properties other than the subject property. Clearly neighbouring properties cannot have any responsibilities for vegetation setback from the subject property?

Lighting

There has still been no detail about how this industrial facility will be lit at night. We are led to believe there will probably be some type of lighting, but this like so many things, will clearly be "subject to final siting and design"!!! In a rural setting such as this, bright lights can become an issue. Not just for the humans but also for the many native animals including Kites and Hawkes that nest in the adjacent pine trees (which were not noted in the Fauna and Flora report)

Further information.

We also wish to advise that due to a change in circumstances, we are now considering applying to build a second residence on our land for one of our adult children and their family in the not too distant future. Their preferred location on the property is in the South East corner to provide adequate separation from our current residence. Whilst the DCP mandates a minimum 50m setback from both boundaries, it is most likely that this potential new residence would be the closest receptor to the proposed DBESS should it be approved. We wish to ensure that similar to the situation at 4 Crisp Lane, this is adequately allowed for to minimise impact on such a dwelling.

The final point we wish to make in this submission is a fact that has been completely missed by the Proponent and the authors of the Acoustic report. All of the discussion about noise generated by this industrial DA has been about the impact of noise at the sensitive receptors- The houses where we live. The point that is missing here is that people choose to live in rural communities so that they can have the quiet enjoyment a rural lifestyle offers. That doesn't mean being confined to your home all day. People living on RU4 rural properties are generally out and about on their properties for much of the day. In our case, we walk our dogs along the boundary adjoining the proposed batteries on almost a daily basis and spend considerable time in that vicinity. Ten batteries shrieking away at 81dB 12 meters from our boundary is just unacceptable. Hence, the intent of section E of the Yass Valley DCP states a requirement of no more than 5dB increase in sound level *when measured at the boundary*. Again, this is obviously a requirement so that any DA approval does not interfere with the quiet enjoyment of neighbouring properties, or cause land use conflict.

The landholder (who will derive much of the economic benefit) will have a Sound Barrier effectively shielding the whole of their property from any real noise impacts- yet we and our other neighbours will be afforded no such protection across other parts of our property.

We do not believe that this DA should be approved at all for the reason already stated, however if the Proponent does succeed in gaining approval we would respectfully ask that a condition of such approval includes construction of a Sound Barrier around the entire facility (which is what the proponent had promised from day one).

Yours Sincerely

[redacted]

Additional Information 2 - May 2025 - Submission #4

Jeremy Knox

From: [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 19 May 2025 3:02 PM
To: Jeremy Knox
Subject: Re: DA240159 - Update 1.5.2025 - Additional Information 2 Public Exhibition - 3 Turton Place

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

[EXTERNAL] Please exercise caution when clicking on links or attachments from external sources.

Hi Jeremy

Thank you for your timely and much appreciated updates.

Whilst I not the new information, I do still have some queries.

1. Whilst I note the RFS response, from looking at other such installations, the size of the concrete apron around the battery storage does not appear to provide a sufficient area of "cleared and non flammable" space in order to stop embers and a fast moving grass fire.

2. What is the county of manufacture of the batteries?

3. Is there a 100% guarantee of no fire from the batteries

4. As the batteries are composed of highly toxic material, what studies have been undertaken to show the impact of the smoke fall out if there is a fire. As we know these batteries are located right in the middle of wine growing and production. The fallout onto the grape vines has not been discussed. What are the toxic effects? What about near by residents' health?

5. Is there insurance coverage incase of fallout ?

6. Where is the modeling of the fallout area?

Thank again for your time and all your efforts

[redacted]

[redacted]

Additional Information 2 - May 2025 - Submission #5

Objection Submission to DA240159 – 3 Turton Place, Murrumbateman

Objections:

- Noise
- Fire and Ground Pollution

Explanations to Objections:

Noise:

Whilst I object to this development for several reasons, the noise that will be generated by the proposed battery energy storage system (BESS) is of significant concern.

This whole area is residential with a few sites used for grape vines and livestock. I would call the area residential.

It is noted in the submission that the proposed BESS "will generate noise emissions with the potential to impact on the acoustic amenity of the surrounding environment including at residential receptors". I note that a peer review was conducted on the initial acoustic report, and that as a result of this review an acoustic barrier is required.

It is evident that this development will generate noise, and the noise generated will be constant, and of a level that is heard by all neighbouring properties. This is unacceptable. Whilst you hear traffic throughout the day and night, it is spasmodic, not constant and on a still day or night, I do not want the continual noise that the BESS will generate.

I note that a recommendation was that when a development application is submitted by 4 Crisps Lane, a new acoustic report should be conducted. If the BESS is already built, it is way too late for a new report. This raises another question: if once built, the noise is too loud, what will be done to correct it?

Fire and Ground Pollution:

The Bushfire Assessment provided details as to how the planted vegetation would assist in fire management, sizes of the fire barriers around the BESS, and some details that appear to be irrelevant, considering the proposal.

What I could not understand was water accessibility, water storage and water runoff. Whilst we know that water does not work for battery type fires, how would any suitable chemicals to extinguish a fire be stored? Where would any chemical runoff be captured?

The report states that "Site Layout and Design: Strategic site planning incorporates safety measures, including asset protection zones, fuel-free zones, static water tanks, site access, battery separations, and setbacks, to minimize fire spread". The fact that such redundancies minimise fire spread, cause me concern. A fire can spread quickly, and with the location being close to residential homes, this is a huge risk.

An article in the Canberra Times on 13 May 2025, noted that a proposed solar farm for Yass had been shelved due to the residents in the area noting the fire risk it created.

Many residents in the area have horses and some of these are of high value. Others have had hours of training that has developed them into being of high value. This is also applicable for other livestock in the area. Ground contamination is a huge concern to these

residents. Many have spent large sums of money improving the grasses that grow in their paddocks, removing any toxic weeds.

If there was a fire and either water or chemicals were used to extinguish it, how would such an event be managed and the water or chemicals be contained?

At the initial meeting held at the Murrumbateman Recreation Ground, the residents were told that any electric stored at this site would not be used here, it would be used elsewhere. When I asked why not develop this where the electricity was going to be used, I was not given an answer.

I found it interesting in the documents provided to see the following quoted several times. “The applicant has no objection to a condition of consent requiring the provision of this information to Council’s satisfaction prior to issue of a construction certificate”. I read this as we are unsure what we are doing, but if you tell us we’ll do it. From this statement alone, the answer should be no.



RFS

NSW GOVERNMENT

Yass Valley Council
Locked Bag 6
YASS NSW 2582

Your reference: (CNR-72586) DA240159
Our reference: DA20240823003455-Original-1

ATTENTION: Jeremy Knox

Date: Tuesday 24 September 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

Development Application
s4.14 – Other – Electricity Generating Works
BESS - 3 TURTON PLACE MURRUMBATEMAN 2582, 23//DP248413

I refer to your correspondence dated 23/08/2024 seeking advice regarding bush fire protection for the above Development Application in accordance with section 4.14 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

The New South Wales Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) has considered the information submitted and provides the following recommended conditions:

General Conditions

1. The recommendations are based on the documents/plans supplied via Councils referral to the NSW RFS.
   - The plans prepared by ACENERGY project number 23118 dated 30/4/2024.
   - The bush fire management and emergency response plan prepared by Harris Environmental Consulting REF 6559BF dated 16/5/2024.

Council is advised that where a minor amendment to the above-noted documents is proposed, Council may use its discretion to determine whether the minor amendment warrants further assessment by the NSW RFS.

2. All Bushfire Management and Protection Measures identified in Chapter 6 of the bush fire management and emergency response plan prepared by Harris Environmental Consulting REF 6559BF dated 16/5/2024 shall be maintained during construction, operation and decommissioning of the development **except that a 12 metre wide APZ shall be maintained to the west of the BESS**.

3. The following amendments shall be made to the "Bushfire and Emergency Evacuation Plan" at page 31 of the report prepared by Harris Environmental Consulting REF 6559BF dated 16/5/2024:
   - For Murrumbateman Brigade - remove the mobile phone number referenced and replace with "02 6226 3100" and "000".
   - For Springfield Brigade - remove the mobile phone number referenced and replace with "02 6226 3100" and "000".

Postal address
NSW Rural Fire Service
Locked Bag 17
GRANVILLE NSW 2142

Street address
NSW Rural Fire Service
4 Murray Rose Ave
SYDNEY OLYMPIC PARK NSW 2127

T (02) 8741 5555
F (02) 8741 5550
www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

RFS

NSW GOVERNMENT

For any queries regarding this correspondence, please contact Stephen McKinnon on 1300 NSW RFS.

Yours sincerely,

Anna Jones
Supervisor Development Assessment & Plan
Built & Natural Environment

Jeremy Knox

From: TE_Technical Enquiries <te_technical.enquiries@essentialenergy.com.au>
Sent: Friday, 1 November 2024 10:20 AM
To: Jeremy Knox
Subject: CNR-72586 - A-91234 - 3 TURTON PLACE MURRUMBATEMAN 2582

[EXTERNAL] Please exercise caution when clicking on links or attachments from external sources.

Dear Sir/Madam,

We refer to Council's correspondence via the NSW ePlanning portal seeking comment from Essential Energy in relation to the proposed development at the above property.

Strictly based on the documents submitted, Essential Energy has no comments to make as to potential safety risks arising from the proposed development.

Essential Energy makes the following general comments:

1. If the proposed development changes, there may be potential safety risks and it is recommended that Essential Energy is consulted for further comment.

2. Any existing encumbrances in favour of Essential Energy (or its predecessors) noted on the title of the above property should be complied with.

3. In addition, Essential Energy's records indicate there is electricity infrastructure located within close proximity of the property. Any activities within this location must be undertaken in accordance with the latest industry guideline currently known as *ISSC 20 Guideline for the Management of Activities within Electricity Easements and Close to Infrastructure*. Approval may be required from Essential Energy should activities within the property encroach on the electricity infrastructure.

4. Prior to carrying out any works, a "Dial Before You Dig" enquiry should be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of *Part 5E (Protection of Underground Electricity Power Lines)* of the *Electricity Supply Act 1995* (NSW).

5. Given there is electricity infrastructure in the area, it is the responsibility of the person/s completing any works around powerlines to understand their safety responsibilities. SafeWork NSW (www.safework.nsw.gov.au) has publications that provide guidance when working close to electricity infrastructure. These include the *Code of Practice – Work near Overhead Power Lines* and *Code of Practice – Work near Underground Assets*.

Should you require any clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,

Essential Energy

T: 13 23 91 |
PO Box 5730 Port Macquarie NSW 2444 | www.essentialenergy.com.au | www.intelligentnetwork.com.au

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Jeremy Knox

From: Tony Nolan <tony.nolan@dpie.nsw.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 18 June 2024 9:51 AM
To: Hugh Shackcloth-Bertinetti
Subject: V18/1021-72#67 Laying underground electrical cable for electricity generating works - Lot 23 DP 248413 near Murrumbateman

Hi Hugh,

Thank you for your enquiry relating to laying underground cable in the vicinity of a mapped second order watercourse on Lot 23 DP248413.

The review of trenching works on plan G-2.2_023118 dated 30 April 2024 situated on Lot 23 DP248413 has determined the works are not situated on waterfront land.

The trenching works as shown on plan G-2.2_023118 dated 30 April 2024 do not require a controlled activity approval.

Please contact me should you require further clarification on the matters discussed.

Regards

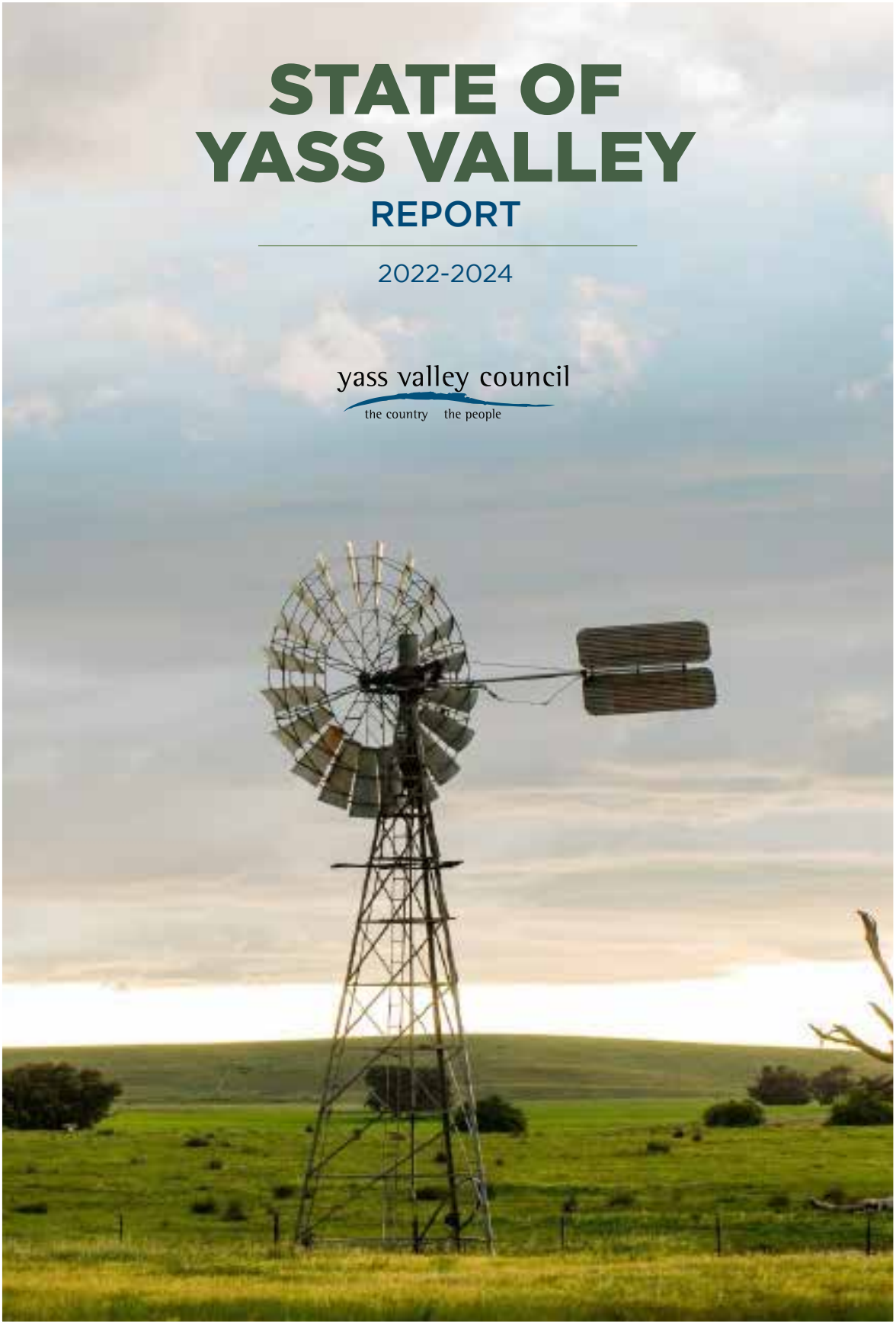
Tony Nolan
Water Regulation Officer
Licensing & Approvals
Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
105 Prince Street, Orange
Mobile 0484 357 186

Our Vision: We protect, enhance and restore rivers and water sources through considered assessment and issuing of licences and approvals.
E Tony.nolan@dpie.nsw.gov.au **W** dpie.nsw.gov.au/water/licensing-and-trade/

NSW GOVERNMENT

I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land and pay respects to Elders past and present.
I also acknowledge all the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff working with NSW Government at this time.

Important information about delays - see Assessment timeframes


STATE OF
YASS VALLEY
REPORT
2022-2024
yass valley council
the country the people
YassValleyCouncil
YassValleyCouncil



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MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



It is with pleasure that I present the State of Yass Valley Report for the 2022-2024 Term of Office. This Report is produced in accordance with the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework, a Council requirement under the *NSW Local Government Act*, 1993. The purpose of this report is to provide a record of the achievements made and challenges faced by Council and our community, and also detail the progress towards our vision statement set out in our draft version of the *Community Strategic Plan 2042*.

"In 2042 the people of Yass Valley will be enjoying a country lifestyle whilst living in a harmonious, safe and connected community."

I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank my fellow Councillors for their unwavering commitment to the residents of Yass Valley and their shared vision for the growth and enhancement of all aspects of our community. I would like to thank Yass Valley Cr Cecil Burgess, who has served as a Yass Valley Councillor for currently 29 years, an honourable achievement and one that shows great commitment and dedication to the service of his community.

Through this report, we highlight the progress made across various projects, events, and initiatives that have enhanced the lives of our local residents and strengthened our region.

We consider the most impactful improvements to be:

- In July 2023, we celebrated the opening of the newly revitalised Riverbank Park, a project made possible by $2 million in funding from the NSW Government through the Public Spaces Legacy Program.
- The replacements of Jeir Creek and Back Creek Road bridges were major infrastructure achievements, jointly funded by Round 6 of the Bridges Renewal Program and Yass Valley Council. Both were upgraded from single-lane, low-level crossings to dual-lane concrete bridges, significantly improving safety and providing much needed accessibility during flood events for residents and travellers in these areas and beyond.
- The extension of Victoria Park Skate Park was made possible through $500,000 in funding from the Stronger Country Communities Fund.
- The Crago Mill Precinct redevelopment is now underway, marking an exciting new chapter for Yass Valley. This significant project will include a modern administration building, a state-of-the-art library, and a vibrant community/commercial hub, all designed to meet the growing need of our region. Additionally, the historic Crago Mill will be restored and transformed into a café, blending heritage with community life.

I would like to express our gratitude to our staff for their dedication over the past term in upholding the values of Yass Valley Council. We also extend our appreciation to the many volunteers who generously contribute their time and efforts to support the community, helping to make Yass Valley an exceptional place to live.

The last two years have been an honour for me to represent and lead this community.

Yass Valley Mayor (2022-2024)
Allan McGrath

yass valley council

OUR COUNCILLORS FOR THE 2022-2024 TERM



Top Row L-R: Cr Kim Turner; Mayor Allan McGrath; Cr Kristin Butler; Cr Cecil Burgess; Cr Mike Reid.

Bottom Row L-R: Cr Jasmin Jones; Cr Jim Abbey; Cr Cayla Pothan; Cr Adrian Cameron

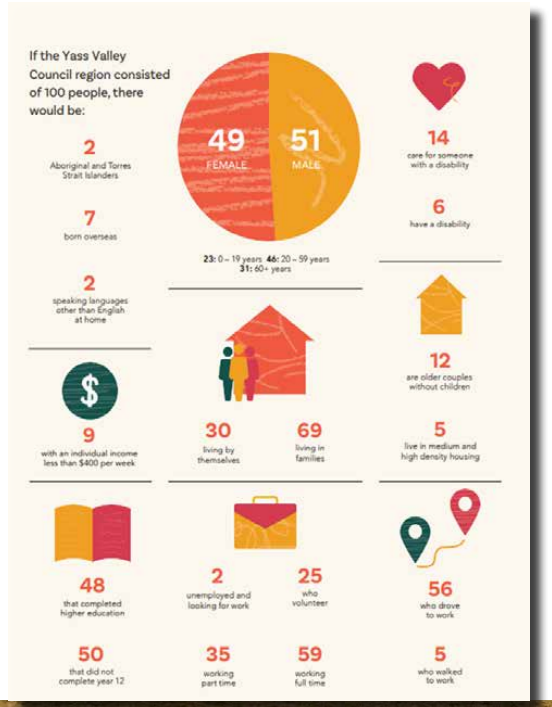
OUR YASS VALLEY

About Yass Valley

Our Community's vision to build and maintain sustainable communities while recognising and respecting the environment and First Nations people of the country.

About Yass Valley Council

Yass Valley Council is made up of nine elected Councillors. Elections are held every four years to determine the Councillors who will represent the people of Yass Valley. A Mayor and Deputy Mayor are elected by the Councillors every two years. The day-to-day operations are managed by the CEO and three Directors.



OUR VISION FOR YASS VALLEY

Yass Valley Council is pleased to present the State of Yass Valley Report 2022-2024.

Council is required to produce a report on its progress in implementing their Community Strategic Plan (CSP) during its term. The *State of Yass Valley Report* was previously known as the End of Term Report and summarises Council's achievements over the period December 2021 to September 2024, prior to the September 2024 Local Government Elections.

This report shows how Council delivered against the strategic objectives listed in our Community Strategic Plan (CSP). Yass Valley Council adopted the CSP *'Yass Valley 2030 - Our Valley, Our Future'* in June 2011 after conducting a comprehensive engagement and consultation strategy with the Yass Valley community. In 2022, Yass Valley Council started work to update the CSP to the *'Yass Valley Community Strategic Plan 2042'* and this was placed on public exhibition on 28 February 2022. Council committed in mid-2023 to move towards the more current version, whose strategic objectives are used in this report. The *Yass Valley CSP 2042* will formally be adopted in mid-2025.

In addition to the CSP, Council's Integrated Planning & Reporting Framework includes the four-year *Delivery Program 2022-2026* and the annual *Operational Plans*.

The Delivery Program describes how Council will work with the community to achieve community goals. The Operational Plans includes Council's annual budgets and provides detailed information on the range of actions and projects Council will undertake in the financial year that will assist in progressing towards the agreed community goals.

This State of Yass Valley Report provides information on the progress Council has made through its Delivery Program and Operational Plans between 2022 and 2024 against the agreed strategies presented in Yass Valley CSP 2042. This report covers the term of the Council in office during 2022-2024 with a focus on progress made towards objectives and key achievements.

The Yass Valley CSP consists of five themes and strategic objectives:

- CO. Our community. We are a network of vibrant, inclusive and diverse communities that value our rural and regional lifestyle.
- EC. Our economy. We have a strong regional economy experiencing sustainable growth, which provides for a diverse range of employment opportunities.
- EN. Our environment. We appreciate our range of rural and regional landscapes and habitats and are stewards of the natural and built environment for future generations.
- IN. Our infrastructure. Our community is well serviced and connected to built, social and communications infrastructure.
- CL. Our civic leadership. Our leaders operate ethically and implement good governance. Each theme outlines the strategic objectives, strategies for achieving them, important partners and collaborators, and the specific role of the Council.

This report provides a list of achievements that we have made in these five areas.

A SNAPSHOT OF OUR HIGHLIGHTS DURING 2022-2024

- Winning the Innovation in Planning, Policies and Decision Making Award at the LGNSW Environmental Awards for the Sutton Road Strategic Bio-certification.
- Completed stage one upgrade works for Yass Water Treatment Plant – plus gaining funding for a new plant
- Redevelopment of the Riverbank Park, Yass through the Public Spaces Legacy Program
- Coordinated community events such as Yass Valley Christmas Parade and 'Alive in the Park'
- Receiving the LGNSW Award for 'Most Innovative Youth Week Program' for 'Alive in the Park'
- Commenced construction of the Crago Mill Precinct
- Upgrades to Yass Soldiers' Memorial Hall including the roof, shrine, and front doors
- Implementation of the successful 'Shop Yass Valley' voucher program
- Delivered the 'Small Business Month' program in collaboration with the Yass Valley Business Chamber
- Supported and delivered numerous community events for our seniors and young people
- Success in tourism awards with Gundaroo winning the Canberra Region Top Tourism Town Award, and placed 3rd nationally in the Australian Top Tiny Tourism Town Award
- Construction of the new Shingle Hill Bridge
- Completing a full programme of pothole repairs across our regional roads
- Reopening the new and improved Murrumbateman Road
- Recognising and preserving Indigenous culture and heritage in our region with the Scar Tree Acknowledgement
- Supporting the opening of Murrumbateman Primary School
- Enjoying enhanced facilities at the Murrumbateman Recreation Ground, including, horse yards, sand arenas and storage sheds
- Crossing the new and improved Jeir Creek and Back Creek Road bridges












OUR COMMUNITY

Our health and wellbeing are supported by equitable access services

Library & Lifelong Learning

- **Mobile Library -** Back on the Road after a two-year pause due to COVID-19, the Mobile Library resumed services in July 2022, visiting 17 rural and remote locations on a fortnightly basis. It now delivers library access to preschools, schools, early learning centres, and local communities.
- **The Yass Valley Library -** Continues to deliver a packed schedule of programs for all ages, from *Tots Wriggle & Rhyme* for the littlest residents to *Storytime, Lego Club*, author talks, and adult workshops. Highlights include entries in the Yass Show from the Lego Club and an evolving micro-exhibition series in the foyer Gallery Box, presented in partnership with Southern Tablelands Arts.
- **Community Connection Groups -** The library remains a welcoming space for community groups, hosting book clubs, the *Wrapped with Love* knitters, the Y*ass Gardening Club*, and new initiatives such as the *Red Cross Trauma Teddy* project.
- **New Library Building -** Design and construction of new library building is under way with consideration of community needs now and into the future.

Youth and Seniors Programmes

- **Riverbank Park -** In July 2023, the community celebrated the opening of the revitalised Riverbank Park, a $2 million project funded by the NSW Government's Public Spaces Legacy Program. This transformation has created a vibrant space for recreation, events, and relaxation along the riverbank. The opening of Riverbank Park was a highlight for the community. The day was filled with exciting activities, including a duck race organised by Yass Rotary Club, supported by the Yass Valley Youth Council, and performances from street walkers and bubble makers that entertained attendees. The event marked a significant enhancement to the recreational offerings along the river.
- **Alive in the Park –** This lively event brought the community together in May 2022 with music, markets, a moonlight cinema, food vans, and activities for young people. Delivered in partnership with YASSarts, it received the NSW Local Government Award for "Most Innovative Youth Week Program."
- **Youth Forum -** Council hosted a Youth Forum at Yass High School to provide a platform for students to share their ideas, challenges, and priorities with local decision-makers fostering leadership and civic involvement.
- **School Holiday Programs -** Expanded with the support of NSW Government grants, the school holiday programs now offer a wide variety of activities each term - from spray painting workshops and outdoor movie nights to archery, fishing in Wee Jasper, horse riding, golf, and virtual reality escape rooms.
- **Celebrating Seniors Week -** Council has supported a range of activities and events as part of the annual Seniors Festival, with the support of NSW Government grants, to focus on inclusion, wellbeing and fun. In 2023, the Seniors Spring Program shone a spotlight on the incredible work of the Men's Sheds across the Valley and included a scenic bus trip to the Tulip Gardens.
- **Supporting Mental Health Iniatives -** From the establishment of the *Yass Suicide Prevention Network* to ongoing partnerships with the *Vine Foodcare Shop,* Council actively supports local volunteers and community mental health initiatives. Council staff continue to offer time and resources for emergency food hamper preparation and delivery in times of need.





OUR COMMUNITY

We have a vibrant, inclusive, and creative community life

Community Events & Celebrations

- **Christmas Parade -** In 2023, the Christmas Parade was a festive triumph, with over 70 market holders and 80 participants contributing to a lively celebration. The parade brought the community together, and Santa's visit was the perfect highlight, adding a magical touch to the evening.
- **The 2023 Australia Day Celebration –** This was a huge success, with the theme of Keeping Cool by the Pool. The event featured live performances from a band and DJ at the Yass Memorial Pool, providing a fun and festive atmosphere while residents enjoyed the summer heat.
- **Murrumbateman Winery Trail -** Council celebrated the launch of the *Murrumbateman Winery Trail* and *ZCard.*
- **Local Government Week -** Our annual initiatives included handing out breakfast rolls to commuters heading to Canberra and engaging with schools through gardening projects and animal education sessions.

Our community is connected, safe and proud

Animal Services and Off-Leash Areas

- **Microchipping Dogs -** Council continued to improve animal services through education, outreach, and rehoming efforts. The free working dog microchipping program, delivered with SELX and local partners has helped reduce the number entering the shelter system.
- **The Yass Valley Animal Shelter Facebook page -** Played a key role in reuniting pets with owners and promoting adoptions. Shelter dogs also visited the local retirement village as part of a community outreach project.
- **Ranger Services -** Council maintains several off-leash dog areas, including a new fenced park in Murrumbateman. Our rangers are being kept busy - for example in 2023/24, Council responded to 33 dog attack incidents, issued nine orders for dangerous or nuisance dogs, and provided education to promote responsible pet ownership. Education has included visits to local schools and walking patrols in popular dog walking areas in Yass.

Beautification of our villages

- **Yass and Villages Masterplans –** Developed for the main street and surrounding business areas of Yass along with village plans for Bookham, Binalong, Bowning and Wee Jasper. These plans were developed working in partnership with our communities.

School Safety Upgrades

- **Safer Routes to School -** Council has worked in partnership with State and Federal Governments to deliver vital safety improvements around local schools. These include new pedestrian crossings, upgraded bus zones, and pathway upgrades at:
  - o Yass Public School
  - o Berinba Public School
  - o Gundaroo Public School
  - o Mount Carmel School
  - o Sutton Public School (including a new refuge island)

OUR COMMUNITY

Local Grants that Make a Difference

- **Community Grants -** Through Section 356 of the Local Government Act, Council distributed grants and donations to support a wide range of community groups. Recipients included local sports clubs, rural fire brigades, VRA, schools, arts organisations, music and cultural festivals, and food relief groups.

Community Partners

- **LEMC –** Ongoing involvement in the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) attending bi-monthly meetings.
- **CRJO -** Active participation in the CRJO Resilience Blueprint.

We celebrate our diverse cultural identity and heritage

Traditional Owners and First Nations

- **NAIDOC WEEK -** In September 2023, we honoured NAIDOC Week with a *Scar Tree Acknowledgement,* recognising and preserving Indigenous culture and heritage in our region. This acknowledgement was an important moment for the Yass Valley community, bringing focus to the region's rich idigenious history.







OUR ECONOMY

Our location attracts business and industry to our region, boosting our local economy and jobs

Yass Valley Council has continued to support strong economic growth across the region by encouraging development, promoting tourism, supporting small business, and enhancing regional collaboration.

Supporting Small Business

- **Yass Valley Business Chamber -** Council partnered with the YVBC and local businesses to deliver a range of programs, including:
  - o **Small Business Month 2022 & 2023** – The team hosted 21 events across the region, with over 380 attendees engaging in workshops on marketing, social media, and business growth.
  - o **'Shop Local' Gift Card Program -** Celebrated its first anniversary in Nov 2023, with 50 local businesses participating and over $34,000 in gift cards purchased (in 2023/24) to support local trade.

Plan for sufficient land availability and employment generation.

- **Planning agreements -** Council continued to assess development applications and planning agreements that support growth and infrastructure across the region. In particular a number of residential subdivisions have been improved enabling land availability for housing in Yass Valley.

Major Strategic Projects – Parkwood

- **Parkwood Development Control Plan –** commenced the Parkwood Development Control Plan for the future development of the NSW portion of the Ginninderry development.
- **ACT Border developments -** Council continued to explore long-term strategies for the Parkwood/Ginninderry development on the ACT border. Two options are under consideration and work is ongoing to assess the financial and service delivery implications of both options.
  - o A border realignment to the ACT.
  - o A special rate variation for Parkwood residents to ensure existing Yass Valley ratepayers are not disadvantaged over the long term by servicing this development.



The local and regional tourism offering is expanded, increasing visitation to the region

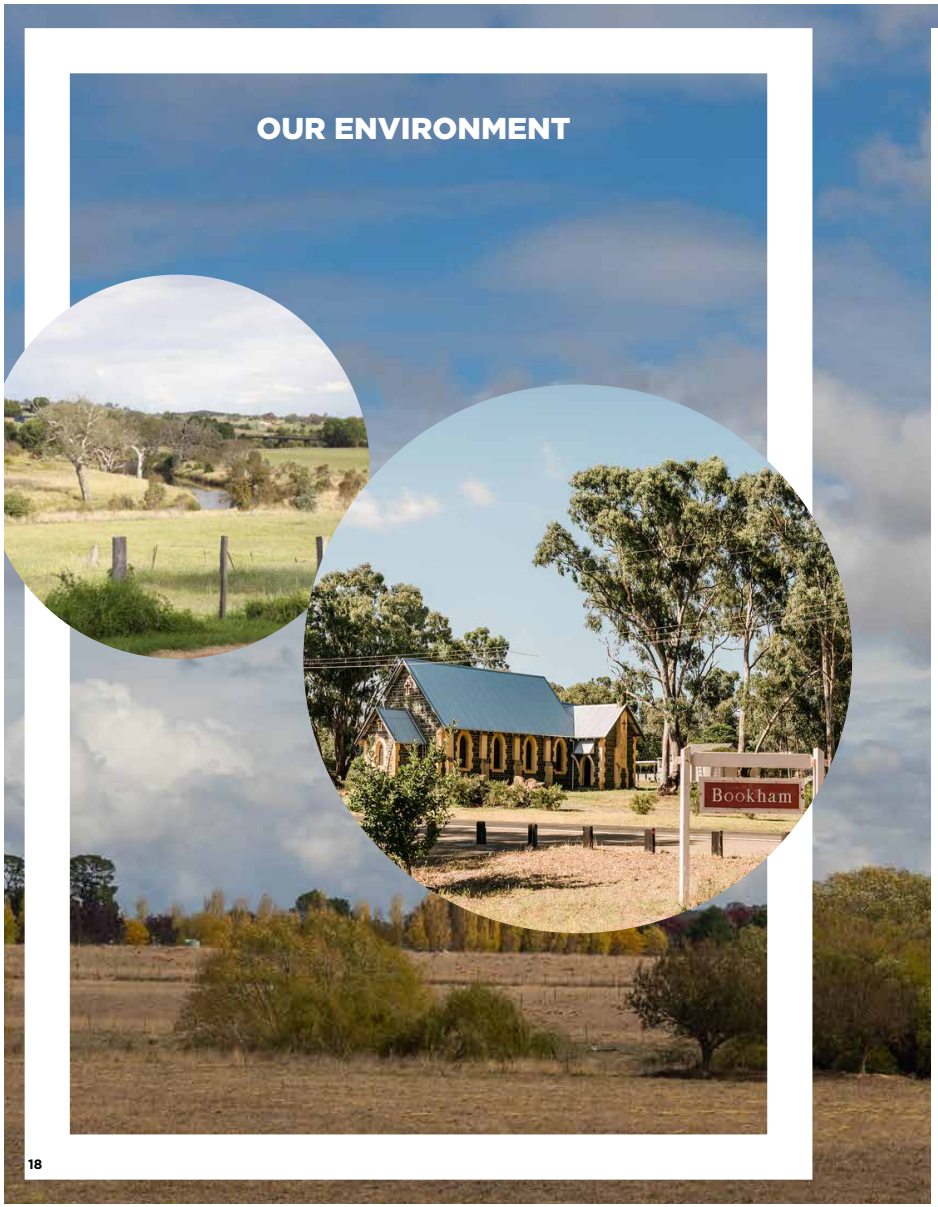
Promoting the Yass Valley Brand

- **Destination for Tourism and Business** – Promoted the Yass Valley brand through promotion in local, regional and national media channels and publications such as Australian Women's Weekly Christmas 2022 special.
- **Yass Valley Destination Guide & ZCard (fold-out leaflet)** – Created and published to promote Yass Valley with physical information & industry advertising taking into consideration the Southern Tablelands Brand Strategy. Delivered multiple seasonal marketing campaigns and 67 advertising partnerships for the 2024–2025 Yass Valley Destination Guide.
- **Visitor Social Media Strategy –** Continued to encourage visitation to the area.
- **Visitors Information Centre –** Increased the local range of retail products and souvenirs to develop an e-commerce facility and provided high-level visitor services 7 days per week, for 363 days a year.
- **Canberra District Wine Association** – Collaborated with the Council to boost wine tourism and rebranding efforts, which support the 40 local wineries in Yass Valley LGA.
- **Gundaroo Top Tiny Town** –Success in tourism awards with Gundaroo winning the Canberra Region Top Tourism Town Award, and placed 3rd nationally in the Australian Top Tiny Tourism Town Awards.
- **Stakeholder Engagement** – Council maintained strong engagement with regional organisations including:
  - o CRJO, Destination Southern NSW, Visit Canberra
  - o Regional Development Australia Southern NSW & ACT
  - o Service NSW, Workforce Australia, local schools, and local businesses
- **Tourism Authorities** – Increased stakeholder advertising in Destination Guide and marketing campaigns and continued with the Yass Valley branded billboards across the region, taking into consideration the Southern Tablelands Brand Strategy.
- **Destination NSW** – Yass Valley Council is a proactive member of Destination NSW and partnered with regional councils to strengthen tourism efforts by participating in Destination Workshops, Regional Connectivity Forums, and Strategic Planning Projects.

Our local established and emerging businesses are supported to thrive

Support small businesses

- **Scores on Doors Program –** Implemented for food premises.
- **NSW Food Authority Education –** Delivered appropriate education sessions for small businesses.



OUR ENVIRONMENT

Our natural environment is maintained, protected and enhanced in line with community expectations

Yass Valley Council supported and delivered a wide range of environmental initiatives aimed at protecting natural resources, improving sustainability, and engaging the local community.

Weed Control and Biosecurity

- **Spraying -** Council continued to undertake our weed control responsibilities through targeted spraying and community education programs aimed to help prevent and eliminate the establishment of new State and regional priority weeds. Council continues to participate in the NSW Government funded Weeds Action Program and has been successful in obtaining funding each year. As well as smaller grant opportunities for weed control of Crown Lands. Council was also successful at receiving funding from NSW DPIRD (Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development) to erect Alligator Weed surveillance information signs in the Ginninderra Creek Parkwood area.

- **Weeds Promotion -** Council worked with the community to share information by attending rural trade days, hands on paddock walks, property weed inspections, social media information posts, awareness campaigns, and inspect all high-risk weed pathways.

- **Investment in Weed Control –** Council received grant funding from Crown Reserve Infrastructure Fund (CRIF), Weeds Action Program (WAP), NSW Crown Lands and NSW DPIRD for weed control - investing $150k in 2022/2023, $200k in 2023/2024, and $35k in 2024/25 (due to previous years significant investment).

Waterway Health

- **Yass River -** Council partnered with Yass Landcare to continue riparian restoration projects along the Yass River and nearby creeks. Council staff also presented at the Upper Murrumbidgee Catchment Network Forum in March 2022, focusing on water quality and security for the region.

Heritage

- **The Yass Soldiers' Memorial Hall –** Underwent significant upgrades including a roof replacement, shrine improvements, and restoration of the hall's historic front doors.

- **Local Heritage Grants Program -** Council has supported numerous heritage projects to assist in the preserving valuable community assets.

Our community is resilient to climate impacts

Clean Energy and Council Assets

- **Solar Panels -** To support lower carbon emissions, solar panel (PV) systems were approved and installed at key Council sites, including the Council Depot, Water Treatment Plant, and Sewage Treatment Plant in January 2022.

- **Environmental Education in Schools -** Council worked closely with local primary schools to raise awareness about environmental care and urban design. In 2022, the EnviroMentors program, run by Keep Australia Beautiful and part-funded by CRJO, delivered workshops on topics like worm farming, reducing food waste and composting to 510 students across four schools.

- **Waste Reduction and Recycling -** Efforts to reduce landfill waste continued, with a strong focus on community education and improved sorting at our waste transfer stations. Initiatives such as Love Your Leftovers encouraged residents to reduce food waste, and the Eco Champs program promoted sustainable eco-friendly habits through local businesses.

- **Climate Change Plan -** Finalisation of the Climate Change and Natural Disaster Action Plan.

OUR ENVIRONMENT

We have a robust planning framework that protects and maintains our rural character and natural landscapes

- **Biodiversity and Sustainable Development in Sutton -** Yass Valley became the first in NSW to apply standard biodiversity certification under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016. This certification ensures the protection of important environmental areas at the Woodbury Ridge Estate near Sutton while allowing for economically viable residential development. The project includes up to 66 new residential lots whilst providing protection to 130 hectares of high-value biodiversity land, including endangered box gum woodland and superb parrot habitat.
- **Open Space Strategy –** Council adopted this in April 2024 to identify requirements for open space across Yass Valley.
- **Yass Development Control Plan –** Council finalised the comprehensive Yass Development Control Plan.





OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

We have transport links that connect towns within the region and increase access to significant centres.

Roads

The wet weather of 2022 caused significant damage and disruption across Yass Valley's 1,237 km road network. Not only did it severely damage road surfaces, but it also made timely repairs extremely challenging. Since the flooding, Council has addressed damage to 420 sections of road throughout the region. Council responded with extensive roadworks, prioritising major freight routes and pothole repairs on regional roads.

- **Road Upgrades** - During the reporting period, Yass Valley Council received over $10 million in funding from the NSW Government's Fixing Local Roads Program. This allowed the completion of rehabilitation works on Nanima, Illalong, Dog Trap, Wee Jasper and Back Creek Roads and safety improvements on Mulligans Flat Road.
- **Murrumbateman Road -** A key link in the Yass Valley road network, Murrumbateman Road underwent safety upgrades in early 2022, including tree removal, road widening, and drainage works. However, in October 2022, torrential rain severely damaged the culvert over Broken Dam Creek, leading to a six-month road closure. Delays caused by repeated bad weather and limited availability of specialist contractors and equipment meant the road couldn't reopen until April 2023. Murrumbateman Road will now benefit from an additional $826,536 in Federal funding under the Road Black Spot Program, with further safety upgrades scheduled to commence in February 2025.
- **Potholes -** Following the 2022 flooding, Council launched an intensive heavy patching program to address widespread pothole damage and extend the life of local roads:
  - o Heavy patching of over 61,000 m of potholes on bitumen roads, funded by RERRF and Block Grants
  - o Resealing of 19.31 km of road, funded by FLRPRR, RTR, and FLR(2) Grants, including parts of Murrumbateman, Nanima, Mountain Creek, and Woolgarlo Roads.

Bridges

- **Bridge Renewal Program -** In 2023, Yass Valley Council secured Federal funding through the Bridge Renewal Program to replace four much needed low-level crossings:
  - o Back Creek Road
  - o Nanima Road over Jeir Creek
  - o Greenwood Road over Yass River
  - o Greenwood Road over Murrumbateman Creek
- **Jeir Creek and Back Creek Road Bridge -** In 2023-24, the Jeir Creek and Back Creek Road bridges were successfully replaced with dual-lane concrete structures, upgrading former single-lane, low-level crossings. Funded through Round 6 of the Bridges Renewal Program and Yass Valley Council, the $2 million and $3.2 million projects significantly improved safety and flood access for local residents and travellers.
- **Shingle Hill Way Bridge Opens Near Gundaroo -** In December 2023, the new $4.4 million Shingle Hill Way bridge near Gundaroo officially opened. The 45-metre structure features a 166-tonne load limit and extended lifespan, replacing the old crossing and supporting key industries such as wineries and livestock transport. The project was funded with $800,000 from the Federal Government's Bridges Renewal Program and $3.6 million from the NSW Government's Fixing Country Roads Program.



OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

We are proud of our liveable and accessible local places and spaces

Crago Mill Precinct

The Crago Mill Precinct is a major civic development for Yass Valley, with the approved Development Application marking a significant milestone in May 2023. The project includes the construction of a new Council administration building and chambers, a modern community library with a children's area and study centre, community meeting rooms for hire, long-term spaces for community groups, public amenities, and a central plaza. The precinct also features commercial and start-up spaces, along with the refurbishment of the historic Crago Mill, blending modern services with heritage character. As at late 2024:

- **First Construction Certificate -** Construction is well underway following the issue of the first Construction Certificate on 2 July 2024.
- **Early Works -** Include demolition, hazardous material removal, bulk excavation, and site remediation due to contamination. The garage has been fully demolished and asphalt has been stripped from the carpark and driveways.
- **Design Development –** This is progressing, with 90% architectural plans and 80% of service documentation submitted for stakeholder review.
- **A Second Construction Certificate -** Has been submitted and approved as of September 2024, while a Section 4.55 DA modification, lodged in June to reflect pre-contract design changes, is expected to be approved following public exhibition.
- **Change Management Efforts –** These are ongoing to keep staff informed and engaged as the project progresses.

Sport and Recreation Upgrades

- **Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCI) Grant Program -** Five shared pathways were built across the Valley, improving access and safety in key areas: Queen Street (Binalong), Dutton Street (Yass), Alf Fletcher Park, and Bywong Street (Sutton).
- **Murrumbateman Amenities Block –** Located at the Murrumbateman Recreation Grounds, the new amenities block started construction and was due for completion in October 2024, (just in time for the Murrumbateman Field Days). Designed to be accessible and multifunctional, the facility will support over 100 sporting and community activities held at the grounds each year.
- **Victoria Park Skate Park Extension -** Added new ramps suitable for various skill levels, along with shaded seating, water facilities, and improved parking. The $500,000 project was funded by the Stronger Country Communities Fund and has enhanced safety and inclusivity for youth recreation.
- **Wee Jasper Carpark and Paths –** Delivery of a carpark and paths in Wee Jasper with funding from Stronger Country Communities Fund Round 5.





OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

Community Education Programmes

- **Parks & Gardens Team -** Planted a new vegetable garden at Bowning Primary School, which was a big hit with students and teachers alike.
- **Rangers And Their Resident Dog -** Visited Sutton Primary School, teaching the importance of microchipping pets.
- **Lunchbox Safety -** Our environment team also gave a presentation on lunchbox safety, helping ensure healthy and sustainable habits for the children.

Other Key Community Infrastructure Projects
Council also completed or progressed many other significant community infrastructure projects:

- New fenced **dog park and horse yards** at Murrumbateman Recreation Ground.
- Completion of the **five bay storage shed** at the Murrumbateman Recreation Ground.
- **Upgraded boat ramp** at O'Connor Park and **Memorial Hall roof replacement**.
- Detailed design for the **Yass Rail Trail** and the **Bowning Activity Circuit** ($1.3M and $700K grants).
- New **bus shelters and stormwater upgrades** on Browne Street and Woolgarlo Road.
- **Road Safety improvements** around Yass Primary Schools
- **Barton Highway duplication** continues, with Council pushing for further upgrades.
- **Murrumbatemen All-abilities playground** concept designs prepared.
- Collaboration on improving **regional telecommunications** black spots.

Our essential infrastructure is sound and reliable

Yass Water Treatment Plant (WTP)

- **Necessary Upgrades -** Yass Valley Council has taken significant steps to upgrade water and sewer infrastructure in response to growing community needs and to ensure the long-term reliability and quality of services.
- **Yass Raw Water Supply –** Our local water is very hard and may contain iron, magnese and organic matter from the surrounding catchment area, hence requires a considerable amount of treatment to reach the necessary basic water quality standards. The Yass Water Treatement Plant is 30 years old and most of the buildings, structures, equipment and electrical control systems need replacement or upgrading to be able to meet the target treated water quality standards.
- **Stage 1 Upgrade -** In early 2022, Council reached agreement with the NSW Department of Planning, Infrastructure and Environment (Water) to proceed with Stage 1 of the Yass WTP upgrade. Supported by a $2.543 million grant from the NSW Government's Housing Acceleration Fund, work commenced in February 2022 and reached completion in early 2023. Key Stage 1 improvements have already led to a noticeable reduction in water discolouration and odour experienced by residents:
  - **Yass Dam:** Installation of bubble plume aeration to improve raw water quality by reducing manganese levels and controlling thermal stratification, reducing taste, odour, and discolouration issues.
  - **Raw Water Pump Station (Yass River):** Installation of a new switchboard and upgraded control systems to ensure reliable delivery of raw water to the treatment plant.
  - **Water Treatment Plant (Laidlaw Street):** Upgrades to chemical dosing systems, installation of online water quality instrumentation, and improved control systems to enhance monitoring and automation.
- **Stages 2 and 3 -** Council completed a detailed business case for Stages 2 and 3 of the upgrade, which secured an additional $6.6 million in funding from the Housing Infrastructure Fund in August 2024. The approved business case positioned Council to pursue further support from sources such as NSW Government Ad-hoc Election Funding, the National Water Grid Fund, and the NSW Health Fluoridation Grant.
- *UPDATE - Yass Valley Council was advised in December 2024 that it had been successful in securing $36 million in funding for a new water treatment plant. An $18.1 million application to the National Water Grid Fund was approved and matched by the NSW Labor Government, enabling the future construction of a fully funded, modern water treatment plant to properly service our growing community. With initial design and reference tendering already underway, the project is expected to be completed by 2028.*

Broader Water and Sewer Infrastructure Projects

- **Yass–Murrumbateman Water Transfer Pipeline -** Now operational, this pipeline connects Murrumbateman village to the Yass Water Treatment Plant.
- **Wellington Road Pump Station -** Completed and available to connect, this will support nearly 25 new residential developments.
- **Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan -** Data collection and sewer flow gauging being conducted to inform long-term water and wastewater planning.
- **Yass Sewage Treatment Plant -** Upgraded Septage Pump Station.
- **Sewer Main Maintenance -** 3.9 km cleaned, 4.6 km assessed using CCTV, and 90 m relined to extend asset life and support future upgrades.
- **Orphaned Blocks on Grand Junction Road -** Sewer and stormwater connections provided to blocks previously reliant on on-site systems.
- **Reservoir Cleaning -** Annual cleaning of nine major water reservoirs completed.
- **Binalong Reservoir -** Chlorination system upgraded to improve water safety.



OUR CIVIC LEADERSHIP

Council is an effective, responsible, and innovative organisation

Governance and Compliance

- Despite disruptions caused by wet weather and ongoing impacts of COVID-19, Council maintained its commitment to public safety and legislative compliance. Key activities included:
- High-risk food premises inspections
- On-site Sewage Management (OSSM) inspections
- Health-related Notices/Orders issued
- Protection of the Environment Notices related to dumping
- Companion animal management: orders, advisory letters and infringement notices
- Participation in the Scores on Doors program for food premises

Inclusive Planning

- Council continued to deliver on key strategic objectives to support a connected and inclusive community. The Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) was adopted in 2023 and will promote positive community attitudes and ensure safe and accessible facilities.

Financial Sustainability

- **Audits -** In 2023/24, Council faced staffing challenges in the Finance department but successfully met audit obligations with support from internal staff and contractors. The delayed 2021/22 audit was finalised in February 2023, with the 2022/23 financial statements expected to be finalised in December 2023.

- **The 2023/24 Annual Financial Statements -** were presented in October 2024. Despite a forecast deficit of $12.56M, the actual year-end result improved to a deficit of $5.13M. Council leadership teams actively worked to identify essential services and re-evaluate project priorities, to build a sustainable budget for the future.

ICT and Cyber Security

- **Improved ICT** - Council identified its ICT systems were no longer fit for purpose and implemented several key upgrades including replacement of end-of-life server infrastructure, enhanced disaster recovery systems and improved cyber security.

Dedicated and Resilient Staff

- **Resilience -** Council's workforce showed remarkable resilience throughout 2021-24, navigating the challenges of staff turnover, recruitment difficulties, and the evolving operating environment of COVID and the wet weather.
- **The Finance Team -** Managed significant audit and reporting obligations despite the departure of key staff. Roles were temporarily filled by existing employees stepping up and external contractors, ensuring Council remained compliant with financial regulations.
- **Extra Responsibilities -** Across other departments, staff demonstrated adaptability by absorbing extra responsibilities and maintaining service delivery during critical projects and events.
- **Internal Collaboration –** Council supported change management initiatives, internal communications improvements, and a renewed focus on staff consultation and wellbeing.







OUR CIVIC LEADERSHIP

Our community is informed and engaged in decision making

Community Collaboration

- **Community Engagement –** Community & Economic Development Team delivered a full suite of community programs while also providing crucial post-COVID support and engagement across the region.

- **Regional Collaboration -** Council actively participated in regional partnerships and sector organisations, including:
  - o Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO)
  - o Local Government NSW
  - o Country Mayors Association
  - o ACT and Region Catchment Management Group
  - o Southern Tablelands Arts (STARTS)
  - o South East Australia Transport Strategy Inc (SEATS)
  - o South West Regional Waste Management Committee
  - o South East Weight of Loads Group

Challenges and Pressues

Unprecedented Wet Weather
Between 2022 and 2024, Yass Valley Council grappled with a number of challenges that strained its financial and operational capabilities. The unprecedented wet weather of 2022 led to severe flooding, causing over $2.5 million in damage to Council assets, particularly the road network and recreational facilities. This extreme wet weather required extensive repair efforts, and Council was fortunate to receive funding under the NSW Government's Natural Disaster Relief Assistance (NDRA) Program to repair damaged roads to their pre-existing condition.

Staffing Issues
Compounding these issues, Council faced significant staffing challenges during this time. The proximity to Canberra makes it difficult for Yass Valley Council to compete in the regional employment market, making it challenging to attract and retain highly qualified personnel. This staffing shortfall put pressure on various Council operations, from infrastructure maintenance to service delivery, but it particularly affected administrative functions and senior leadership.

Financial Pressures
Financial pressures were further exacerbated by the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, which dramatically increased operational costs. Like many other regional NSW councils, Yass Valley Council faced inflationary pressures post-pandemic. With a significant portion of Council expenditure allocated to upgrading, maintaining, and building infrastructure, the rise in construction costs meant that councils are bearing the brunt of rising inflation.

Strategic Planning
These combined challenges underscore the need for Yass Valley Council to deliver ongoing strategic planning and resource allocation to ensure the Council's financial sustainability and its continued ability to deliver expected services to the Yass Valley community. With many regional councils experiencing similar financial and staffing pressures, Yass Valley is not alone in this predicament. It is incumbent upon us to be a collective voice as we head into the next four years and deliver a Long-Term Financial Plan that puts us on a path to financial sustainability.

yass valley council

the country the people

Council Code of Meeting Practice

Based on the Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW — issued in 2022 by the NSW Office of Local Government under Section 23A of the Local Government Act 1993

2025 Exposure Draft

Public Policy

Adopted by Council: dd mmmmmm 2025 (Minute No. 25/nn)

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Version No.: 2.3

Responsible Business Unit: Governance

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Code of Meeting Practice is prescribed under section 360 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (the Regulation).

The Code applies to all meetings of Yass Valley Council and Committees of which all the members are Councillors (committees of Council). Council committees whose members include persons other than Councillors may adopt their own rules for meetings unless the Council determines otherwise.

All NSW Councils must adopt a code of meeting practice that incorporates the mandatory provisions of the *Model Meeting Code of Meeting Practice for Councils in NSW* issued by the NSW Office of Local Government.

A Council's adopted Code of Meeting Practice may also incorporate the non-mandatory provisions of the Model Meeting Code and other supplementary provisions. However, a code of meeting practice adopted by a Council must not contain provisions that are inconsistent with the mandatory provisions of this Model Meeting Code.

A Council and a committee of the Council of which all the members are Councillors must conduct its meetings in accordance with the Code of Meeting Practice adopted by the Council.

2. MEETING PRINCIPLES

- Council and committee meetings should be:

Transparent: *Decisions are made in a way that is open and accountable.*

***Informed*:** Decisions are made based on relevant, quality information.

Inclusive: Decisions respect the diverse needs and interests of the local community.

Principled: Decisions are informed by the principles prescribed under Chapter 3 of the Act.

Trusted: The community has confidence that councillors and council officers act ethically and make decisions in the interests of the whole community.

Respectful: Councillors, council officers, and other meeting attendees treat each other with respect.

Effective: Meetings are well organised, effectively run and skillfully chaired.

Orderly: Councillors, council officers, and other meeting attendees behave in a way that contributes to the orderly conduct of the meeting.

3. BEFORE THE MEETING

Timing of ordinary council meetings

- Ordinary meetings of the council will be as follows:

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a. Ordinary meetings of council will be held on the 4th Thursday of each month with the exception of December and January. The ordinary meeting held in December will be on the 3rd Thursday of the month and there will be no ordinary meeting in January.
b. Open forum will commence at 4:00pm prior to the commencement of a formal council meeting.
c. The formal council meeting will commence immediately following the conclusion of the open forum.
d. The day and time of ordinary meetings of council may be changed by resolution of the council.

Note: Under section 365 of the Act, councils are required to meet at least ten (10) times each year, each time in a different month unless the Minister for Local Government has approved a reduction in the number of times that a council is required to meet each year under section 365A.

Extraordinary meeting

- If the mayor receives a request in writing, signed by at least two (2) councillors, the mayor must call an extraordinary meeting of the council to be held as soon as practicable, but in any event, no more than fourteen (14) days after receipt of the request. The mayor can be one of the two councillors requesting the meeting.

Note: Clause 3.2 reflects section 366 of the Act.

Notice to the public of council meetings

- The council must give notice to the public of the time, date, and place of each of its meetings, including extraordinary meetings and of each meeting of committees of the council.

Note: Clause 3.3 reflects section 9(1) of the Act.

- For the purposes of clause 3.3, notice of a meeting of the council and of a committee of council is to be published before the meeting takes place. The notice must be published on the council's website, and in such other manner that the council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the meeting to the attention of as many people as possible.
- For the purposes of clause 3.3, notice of more than one (1) meeting may be given in the same notice.

Notice to councillors of ordinary council meetings

- The Chief Executive Officer must send to each councillor, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the council, a notice specifying the time, date, and place at which the meeting is to be held, and the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.

Note: Clause 3.6 reflects section 367(1) of the Act.

- The notice and the agenda for, and the business papers relating to, the meeting may be given to councillors in electronic form, but only if all councillors have facilities to access the notice, agenda, and business papers in that form.

Note: Clause 3.7 reflects section 367(3) of the Act.

Notice to councillors of extraordinary meetings

- Notice of less than three (3) days may be given to councillors of an extraordinary meeting of the council in cases of emergency.

Note: Clause 3.8 reflects section 367(2) of the Act.

Giving notice of business to be considered at council meetings

- A councillor may give notice of any business they wish to be considered by the council at its

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next ordinary meeting by way of a notice of motion. To be included on the agenda of the meeting, the notice of motion must be in writing and must be submitted by **5:00pm on the Monday two weeks before** the meeting is to be held.

- A councillor may, in writing to the Chief Executive Officer, request the withdrawal of a notice of motion submitted by them prior to its inclusion in the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered.
- If the Chief Executive Officer considers that a notice of motion submitted by a councillor for consideration at an ordinary meeting of the council has legal, strategic, financial or policy implications which should be taken into consideration by the meeting, the Chief Executive Officer may prepare a report in relation to the notice of motion for inclusion with the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the council.
- A notice of motion for the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the notice of motion. If the notice of motion does not identify a funding source, the Chief Executive Officer must either:
    - prepare a report on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted for inclusion in the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the council, or
    - by written notice sent to all councillors with the business papers for the meeting for which the notice of motion has been submitted, defer consideration of the matter by the council to such a date specified in the notice, pending the preparation of such a report.

Questions with notice

- A councillor may, by way of a notice submitted under clause 3.9, ask a question for response by the Chief Executive Officer about the performance or operations of the council.
- A councillor is not permitted to ask a question with notice under clause 3.13 that comprises a complaint against the Chief Executive Officer or an officer of the council, or a question that implies wrongdoing by the Chief Executive Officer or an officer of the council.
- The Chief Executive Officer or their nominee may respond to a question with notice submitted under clause 3.13 by way of a report included in the business papers for the relevant meeting of the council or orally at the meeting. If the response is provided orally, a summary of the response is to be included as a supplementary report to the agenda.

Agenda and business papers for ordinary meetings

- The Chief Executive Officer must cause the agenda for a meeting of the council or a committee of the council to be prepared as soon as practicable before the meeting.
- The Chief Executive Officer must ensure that the agenda for an ordinary meeting of the council states:
    - all matters to be dealt with arising out of the proceedings of previous meetings of the council, and
    - if the mayor is the chairperson – any matter or topic that the chairperson proposes, at the time when the agenda is prepared, to put to the meeting, and
    - all matters, including matters that are the subject of council officer reports and reports of committees, to be considered at the meeting, and
    - any business of which due notice has been given under clause 3.9.
- Nothing in clause 3.17 limits the powers of the mayor to put a mayoral minute to a meeting under clause 9.6.
- The Chief Executive Officer must not include in the agenda for a meeting of the council

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any business of which due notice has been given if, in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer, the business is, or the implementation of the business would be, unlawful. The Chief Executive Officer must report, without giving details of the item of business, any such exclusion to the next meeting of the council.

- Where the agenda includes the receipt of information or discussion of other matters that, in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer, is likely to take place when the meeting is closed to the public, the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that the agenda of the meeting:
  - identifies the relevant item of business and indicates that it is of such a nature (without disclosing details of the information to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public), and
  - states the grounds under section 10A(2) of the Act relevant to the item of business.

Note: Clause 3.20 reflects section 9(2A)(a) of the Act.

- The Chief Executive Officer must ensure that the details of any item of business which, in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer, is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, are included in a business paper provided to councillors for the meeting concerned. Such details must not be included in the business papers made available to the public and must not be disclosed by a councillor or by any other person to another person who is not authorised to have that information.

Statement of ethical obligations

- Business papers for all ordinary and extraordinary meetings of the council and committees of the council must contain a statement reminding councillors of their oath or affirmation of office made under section 233A of the Act and their obligations under the council's code of conduct to disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest.

Availability of the agenda and business papers to the public

- Copies of the agenda and the associated business papers, such as correspondence and reports for meetings of the council and committees of council, are to be published on the council's website, and must be made available to the public for inspection, or for taking away by any person free of charge at the offices of the council, at the relevant meeting and at such other venues determined by the council.

Note: Clause 3.23 reflects section 9(2) and (4) of the Act.

- Clause 3.23 does not apply to the business papers for items of business that the Chief Executive Officer has identified under clause 3.21 as being likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public.

Note: Clause 3.24 reflects section 9(2A)(b) of the Act.

- For the purposes of clause 3.23, copies of agendas and business papers must be published on the council's website and made available to the public at a time that is as close as possible to the time they are available to councillors.

Note: Clause 3.25 reflects section 9(3) of the Act.

- A copy of an agenda, or of an associated business paper made available under clause 3.23, may in addition be given or made available in electronic form.

Note: Clause 3.26 reflects section 9(5) of the Act.

Agenda and business papers for extraordinary meetings

- The Chief Executive Officer must ensure that the agenda for an extraordinary meeting of the council deals only with the matters stated in the notice of the meeting.
- Despite clause 3.27, business may be considered at an extraordinary meeting of the council, even though due notice of the business has not been given, if:
  - a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and
  - the business to be considered is ruled by the chairperson to be of great urgency

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on the grounds that it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.

- A motion moved under clause 3.28(a) can be moved without notice but only after the business notified in the agenda for the extraordinary meeting has been dealt with.
- Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion moved under clause 3.28(a) can speak to the motion before it is put.
- A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling of the chairperson under clause 3.28(b) on whether a matter is of great urgency.

Pre-meeting briefing sessions

- Prior to each ordinary meeting of the council, the Chief Executive Officer may arrange a pre- meeting briefing session to brief councillors on business to be considered at the meeting. Pre-meeting briefing sessions may also be held for extraordinary meetings of the council and meetings of committees of the council.
- Pre-meeting briefing sessions are to be held in the absence of the public.
- Pre-meeting briefing sessions may be held by audio-visual link.
- The Chief Executive Officer or council officer nominated by the Chief Executive Officer is to preside at pre-meeting briefing sessions.
- Councillors must not use pre-meeting briefing sessions to debate or make preliminary decisions on items of business they are being briefed on, and any debate and decision-making must be left to the formal council or committee meeting at which the item of business is to be considered.
- Councillors (including the mayor) must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to any item of business that is the subject of a briefing at a pre-meeting briefing session, in the same way that they are required to do so at a council or committee meeting. The council is to maintain a written record of all conflict of interest declarations made at pre-meeting briefing sessions and how the conflict of interest was managed by the councillor who made the declaration.

4. PUBLIC FORUMS

- The council may hold a public forum prior to each ordinary meeting of the council for the purpose of hearing oral submissions from members of the public on items of business to be considered at the meeting. Public forums may also be held prior to extraordinary council meetings and meetings of committees of the council.
- Public forums may be held by audio-visual link.
- Public forums are to be chaired by the mayor or their nominee.
- To speak at a public forum, a person must first make an application to the council in the approved form. Applications to speak at the public forum must be received by **4:00pm** on the day on which the public forum is to be held, and must identify the item of business on the agenda of the council meeting the person wishes to speak on, and whether they wish to speak 'for' or 'against' the item.
- A person may apply to speak on no more than **three (3)** items of business on the agenda of the council meeting.
- Legal representatives acting on behalf of others are not to be permitted to speak at a public forum unless they identify their status as a legal representative when applying to speak at the public forum.
- The Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may refuse an application to speak at a public forum. The Chief Executive Officer or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.
- No more than **four (4)** speakers are to be permitted to speak 'for' or 'against' each item of

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business on the agenda for the council meeting.

- If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may request the speakers to nominate from among themselves the persons who are to address the council on the item of business. If the speakers are not able to agree on whom to nominate to address the council, the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate is to determine who will address the council at the public forum.
- If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may, in consultation with the mayor or the mayor's nominated chairperson, increase the number of speakers permitted to speak on an item of business, where they are satisfied that it is necessary to do so to allow the council to hear a fuller range of views on the relevant item of business.
- Approved speakers at the public forum are to register with the council any written, visual, or audio material to be presented in support of their address to the council at the public forum, and to identify any equipment needs at least **three (3) business days before** the public forum. The Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may refuse to allow such material to be presented.
- The Chief Executive Officer or their delegate is to determine the order of speakers at the public forum.
- Each speaker will be allowed **three (3)** minutes to address the council. This time is to be strictly enforced by the chairperson.
- Speakers at public forums must not digress from the item on the agenda of the council meeting they have applied to address the council on. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard.
- A councillor (including the chairperson) may, through the chairperson, ask questions of a speaker following their address at a public forum. Questions put to a speaker must be direct, succinct and without argument.
- Speakers are under no obligation to answer a question put under clause 4.15. Answers by the speaker, to each question are to be limited to **one (1)** minute.
- Speakers at public forums cannot ask questions of the council, councillors, or council officers. The Chief Executive Officer or their nominee may, with the concurrence of the chairperson, address the council for up to **three (3)** minutes in response to an address to the council at a public forum after the address and any subsequent questions and answers have been finalised.
- Where an address made at a public forum raises matters that require further consideration by council officers, the Chief Executive Officer may recommend that the council defer consideration of the matter pending the preparation of a further report on the matters.
- When addressing the council, speakers at public forums must comply with this code and all other relevant council codes, policies, and procedures. Speakers must refrain from engaging in disorderly conduct, publicly alleging breaches of the council's code of conduct or making other potentially defamatory statements.
- If the chairperson considers that a speaker at a public forum has engaged in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.20, the chairperson may request the person to refrain from the inappropriate behaviour and to withdraw and unreservedly apologise for any inappropriate comments. Where the speaker fails to comply with the chairperson's request, the chairperson may immediately require the person to stop speaking.
- Clause 4.21 does not limit the ability of the chairperson to deal with disorderly conduct by speakers at public forums in accordance with the provisions of Part 15 of this code.
- Where a speaker engages in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.20, the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may refuse further applications from that person to speak at public forums for such a period as the Chief Executive Officer or their

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delegate considers appropriate.

- Councillors (including the mayor) must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to any item of business that is the subject of an address at a public forum, in the same way that they are required to do so at a council or committee meeting. The council is to maintain a written record of all conflict of interest declarations made at public forums and how the conflict of interest was managed by the councillor who made the declaration.

Note: In accordance with recommended practice under the Model Code of Meeting Practice, public forums are not to be held as part of a council or committee meeting. Council or committee meetings should be reserved for decision-making by the council or committee of council. Where a public forum must be conducted in accordance with the other requirements of this code relating to the conduct of council and committee meetings.

5. COMING TOGETHER

Attendance by councillors at meetings

- All councillors must make reasonable efforts to attend meetings of the council and of committees of the council of which they are members.

Note: A councillor may not attend a meeting as a councillor (other than the first meeting of the council after the councillor is elected or a meeting at which the councillor takes an oath or makes an affirmation of office) until they have taken an oath or made an affirmation of office in the form prescribed under section 233A of the Act.

- A councillor cannot participate in a meeting of the council or of a committee of the council unless personally present at the meeting, unless permitted to attend the meeting by audio-visual link under this code.
- Where a councillor is unable to attend one or more ordinary meetings of the council, the councillor should request that the council grant them a leave of absence from those meetings. This clause does not prevent a councillor from making an apology if they are unable to attend a meeting. However, the acceptance of such an apology does not constitute the granting of a leave of absence for the purposes of this code and the Act.
- A councillor's request for leave of absence from council meetings should, if practicable, identify (by date) the meetings from which the councillor intends to be absent and the grounds upon which the leave of absence is being sought.
- The council must act reasonably when considering whether to grant a councillor's request for a leave of absence.
- A councillor's civic office will become vacant if the councillor is absent from three (3) consecutive ordinary meetings of the council without prior leave of the council, or leave granted by the council at any of the meetings concerned, unless the holder is absent because they have been suspended from office under the Act, or because the council has been suspended under the Act, or as a consequence of a compliance order under section 438HA.

Note: Clause 5.7 reflects section 234(1)(d) of the Act.

- A councillor who intends to attend a meeting of the council despite having been granted a leave of absence should, if practicable, give the Chief Executive Officer at least two (2) days' notice of their intention to attend.

The quorum for a meeting

- The quorum for a meeting of the council is a majority of the councillors of the council who hold office at that time and are not suspended from office.

Note: Clause 5.8 reflects section 368(1) of the Act.

- Clause 5.8 does not apply if the quorum is required to be determined in accordance with directions of the Minister in a performance improvement order issued in respect of the

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council.

Note: Clause 5.9 reflects section 368(2) of the Act.

A meeting of the council must be adjourned if a quorum is not present:

- at the commencement of the meeting where the number of apologies received for the meeting indicates that there will not be a quorum for the meeting, or
- within half an hour after the time designated for the holding of the meeting, or
- at any time during the meeting.

Note: For the purposes of paragraph (b), clause 3.1 provides that the designated time for an ordinary council meeting is immediately after the conclusion of the preceding public forum that may commence at 4:00pm. That time may vary depending on the number of registered speakers at any given public forum.

In either case, the meeting must be adjourned to a time, date, and place fixed:

- by the chairperson, or
- in the chairperson's absence, by the majority of the councillors present, or
- failing that, by the Chief Executive Officer.

The Chief Executive Officer must record in the council's minutes the circumstances relating to the absence of a quorum (including the reasons for the absence of a quorum) at or arising during a meeting of the council, together with the names of the councillors present.

Where, prior to the commencement of a meeting, it becomes apparent that a quorum may not be present at the meeting, or that the health, safety and or welfare of councillors, council officers and members of the public may be put at risk by attending the meeting because of a natural disaster (such as, but not limited to flood or bushfire) or a public health emergency, the mayor may, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer and, as far as is practicable, with each councillor, cancel the meeting. Where a meeting is cancelled, notice of the cancellation must be published on the council's website and in such other manner that the council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the cancellation to the attention of as many people as possible.

Where a meeting is cancelled under clause 5.13, the business to be considered at the meeting may instead be considered, where practicable, at the next ordinary meeting of the council or at an extraordinary meeting called under clause 3.3.

Meetings held by audio-visual link

A meeting of the council or a committee of the council may be held by audio-visual link where the mayor determines that the meeting should be held by audio-visual link because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency. The mayor may only make a determination under this clause where they are satisfied that attendance at the meeting may put the health and safety of councillors and council officers at risk. The mayor must make a determination under this clause in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer and, as far as is practicable, with each councillor.

Where the mayor determines under clause 5.15 that a meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, the Chief Executive Officer must:

- give written notice to all councillors that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, and
- take all reasonable steps to ensure that all councillors can participate in the meeting by audio-visual link, and
- cause a notice to be published on the council's website and in such other manner the Chief Executive Officer is satisfied will bring it to the attention of as many people as possible, advising that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link and providing information about where members of the public may view the meeting.

This code applies to a meeting held by audio-visual link under clause 5.15 in the same way

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it would if the meeting was held in person.

Note: Where a council holds a meeting by audio-visual link under clause 5.15, it is still required under section 10 of the Act to provide a physical venue for members of the public to attend in person and observe the meeting.

Attendance by councillors at meetings by audio-visual link

- Councillors may attend and participate in meetings of the council and committees of the council by audio-visual link with the approval of the council or the relevant committee.
- A request by a councillor for approval to attend a meeting by audio-visual link must be made in writing to the Chief Executive Officer prior to the meeting in question and must provide reasons why the councillor will be prevented from attending the meeting in person.
- Councillors may request approval to attend more than one meeting by audio-visual link. Where a councillor requests approval to attend more than one meeting by audio-visual link, the request must specify the meetings the request relates to in addition to the information required under clause 5.19.
- The council must comply with the Health Privacy Principles prescribed under the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002* when collecting, holding, using, and disclosing health information in connection with a request by a councillor to attend a meeting by audio-visual link.
- A councillor who has requested approval to attend a meeting of the council or a committee of the council by audio-visual link may participate in the meeting by audio-visual link until the council or committee determines whether to approve their request and is to be taken as present at the meeting. The councillor may participate in a decision in relation to their request to attend the meeting by audio-visual link.
- A decision whether to approve a request by a councillor to attend a meeting of the council or a committee of the council by audio-visual link must be made by a resolution of the council or the committee concerned. The resolution must state:
    - the meetings the resolution applies to, and
    - the reason the councillor is being permitted to attend the meetings by audio- visual link where it is on grounds other than illness, disability, or caring responsibilities.
- If the council or committee refuses a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link, their link to the meeting is to be terminated.
- A decision whether to approve a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link is at the council's or the relevant committee's discretion. The council and committees of the council must act reasonably when considering requests by councillors to attend meetings by audio-visual link. However, the council and committees of the council are under no obligation to approve a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link where the technical capacity does not exist to allow the councillor to attend the meeting by these means.
- The council and committees of the council may refuse a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link where the council or committee is satisfied that the councillor has failed to appropriately declare and manage conflicts of interest, observe confidentiality or to comply with this code on one or more previous occasions they have attended a meeting of the council or a committee of the council by audio-visual link.
- This code applies to a councillor attending a meeting by audio-visual link in the same way it would if the councillor was attending the meeting in person. Where a councillor is permitted to attend a meeting by audio-visual link under this code, they are to be taken as attending the meeting in person for the purposes of the code and will have the same voting rights as if they were attending the meeting in person.

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- A councillor must give their full attention to the business and proceedings of the meeting when attending a meeting by audio-visual link. The councillor's camera must be on at all times during the meeting except as may be otherwise provided for under this code.
- A councillor must be appropriately dressed when attending a meeting by audio-visual link and must ensure that no items are within sight of the meeting that are inconsistent with the maintenance of order at the meeting or that are likely to bring the council or the committee into disrepute.

Entitlement of the public to attend council meetings

- Everyone is entitled to attend a meeting of the council and committees of the council. The council must ensure that all meetings of the council and committees of the council are open to the public.

  Note: Clause 5.30 reflects section 10(1) of the Act.

- Clause 5.30 does not apply to parts of meetings that have been closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.
- A person (whether a councillor or another person) is not entitled to be present at a meeting of the council or a committee of the council if expelled from the meeting:
  - by a resolution of the meeting, or
  - by the person presiding at the meeting if the council has, by resolution, authorised the person presiding to exercise the power of expulsion.

  Note: Clause 5.32 reflects section 10(2) of the Act.
  Note: Clause 15.14 authorises chairpersons to expel any person, including a councillor, from a council or committee meeting.

Webcasting of meetings

- Each meeting of the council or a committee of the council is to be recorded by means of an audio or audio-visual device.
- At the start of each meeting of the council or a committee of the council, the chairperson must inform the persons attending the meeting that:
  - the meeting is being recorded and made publicly available on the council's website, and
  - persons attending the meeting should refrain from making any defamatory statements.
- The recording of a meeting is to be made publicly available on the council's website:
  - at the same time as the meeting is taking place, or
  - as soon as practicable after the meeting.
- The recording of a meeting is to be made publicly available on the council's website for at least 12 months after the meeting.
- Clauses 5.35 and 5.36 do not apply to any part of a meeting that has been closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act.

  Note: Clauses 5.33 – 5.37 reflect section 236 of the Regulation.

- Recordings of meetings may be disposed of in accordance with the *State Records Act 1998*.

Attendance of the Chief Executive Officer and other council officers at meetings

- The Chief Executive Officer is entitled to attend, but not to vote at, a meeting of the council or a meeting of a committee of the council of which all of the members are councillors.

  Note: Clause 5.39 reflects section 376(1) of the Act.

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- The Chief Executive Officer is entitled to attend a meeting of any other committee of the council and may, if a member of the committee, exercise a vote.

  Note: Clause 5.40 reflects section 376(2) of the Act.

- The Chief Executive Officer may be excluded from a meeting of the council or a committee while the council or committee deals with a matter relating to the standard of performance of the Chief Executive Officer or the terms of employment of the Chief Executive Officer.

  Note: Clause 5.41 reflects section 376(3) of the Act.

- The attendance of other council officers at a meeting, (other than as members of the public) shall be with the approval of the Chief Executive Officer.

- The Chief Executive Officer and other council officers may attend meetings of the council and committees of the council by audio-visual-link. Attendance by council officers at meetings by audio-visual link (other than as members of the public) shall be with the approval of the Chief Executive Officer.

6. THE CHAIRPERSON

The chairperson at meetings

- The mayor, or at the request of or in the absence of the mayor, the deputy mayor (if any) presides at meetings of the council.

  Note: Clause 6.1 reflects section 369(1) of the Act.

- If the mayor and the deputy mayor (if any) are absent, a councillor elected to chair the meeting by the councillors present presides at a meeting of the council.

  Note: Clause 6.2 reflects section 369(2) of the Act.

Election of the chairperson in the absence of the mayor and deputy mayor

- If no chairperson is present at a meeting of the council at the time designated for the holding of the meeting, the first business of the meeting must be the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting.

- The election of a chairperson must be conducted:

  - by the Chief Executive Officer or, in their absence, an employee of the council designated by the Chief Executive Officer to conduct the election, or

  - by the person who called the meeting or a person acting on their behalf if neither the Chief Executive Officer nor a designated employee is present at the meeting, or if there is no Chief Executive Officer or designated employee.

- If, at an election of a chairperson, two (2) or more candidates receive the same number of votes and no other candidate receives a greater number of votes, the chairperson is to be the candidate whose name is chosen by lot.

- For the purposes of clause 6.5, the person conducting the election must:

  - arrange for the names of the candidates who have equal numbers of votes to be written on similar slips, and

  - then fold the slips so as to prevent the names from being seen, mix the slips and draw one of the slips at random.

- The candidate whose name is on the drawn slip is the candidate who is to be the chairperson.

- Any election conducted under clause 6.3, and the outcome of the vote, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

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Chairperson to have precedence

- When the chairperson rises or speaks during a meeting of the council:
  - any councillor then speaking or seeking to speak must cease speaking and, if standing, immediately resume their seat, and
- every councillor present must be silent to enable the chairperson to be heard without interruption.

7. MODES OF ADDRESS

- If the chairperson is the mayor, they are to be addressed as 'Mr Mayor' or 'Madam Mayor'.
- Where the chairperson is not the mayor, they are to be addressed as either 'Mr Chairperson' or 'Madam Chairperson'.
- A councillor is to be addressed as 'Councillor [surname]'.
- A council officer is to be addressed by their official designation or as Mr / Ms [surname].

8. ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

- The general order of business for an ordinary meeting of the council shall be:

1 Opening meeting
2 Acknowledgement of country

Note: First meeting of council after an election of all councillors to include a 'Welcome to Country'

3 Prayer
4 Apologies and applications for a leave of absence or attendance by audio-visual link by councillors
5 Confirmation of minutes
6 Disclosures of interests
7 Mayoral minute(s)
8 Officer reports
9 Notices of motions
10 Questions with notice
11 Confidential matters
12 Conclusion of the meeting

- The order of business as fixed under clause 8.1 may be altered for a particular meeting of the council if a motion to that effect is passed at that meeting. Such a motion can be moved without notice.

Note. Part 13 allows council to deal with items of business by exception.

- Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 8.2 may speak to the motion before it is put.

9. CONSIDERATION OF BUSINESS AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

Business that can be dealt with at a council meeting

- The council must not consider business at a meeting of the council:

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- unless a councillor has given notice of the business, as required by clause 3.9, and
- unless notice of the business has been sent to the councillors in accordance with clause 3.6 in the case of an ordinary meeting or clause 3.8 in the case of an extraordinary meeting called in an emergency.

- Clause 9.1 does not apply to the consideration of business at a meeting, if the business:
  - is already before, or directly relates to, a matter that is already before the council, or
  - is the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting, or
  - subject to clause 9.9, is a matter or topic put to the meeting by way of a mayoral minute, or
  - is a motion for the adoption of recommendations of a committee, including, but not limited to, a committee of the council.
- Despite clause 9.1, business may be considered at a meeting of the council even though due notice of the business has not been given to the councillors if:
  - a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and
  - the business to be considered is ruled by the chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.
- A motion moved under clause 9.3(a) can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 9.3(a) can speak to the motion before it is put.
- A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 9.3(b).

Mayoral minutes

- Subject to clause 9.9, if the mayor is the chairperson at a meeting of the council, the mayor may, by minute signed by the mayor, put to the meeting without notice any matter or topic that is within the jurisdiction of the council, or of which the council has official knowledge.
- A mayoral minute, when put to a meeting, takes precedence over all business on the council's agenda for the meeting. The chairperson (but only if the chairperson is the mayor) may move the adoption of a mayoral minute without the motion being seconded.
- A recommendation made in a mayoral minute put by the mayor is, in so far as it is adopted by the council, a resolution of the council.
- A mayoral minute must not be used to put without notice matters that are routine and not urgent or matters for which proper notice should be given because of their complexity. For the purpose of this clause, a matter will be urgent where it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.
- Where a mayoral minute makes a recommendation which, if adopted, would require the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan, it must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the recommendation. If the mayoral minute does not identify a funding source, the council must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the Chief Executive Officer on the availability of funds for implementing the recommendation if adopted.

Officer reports

- A recommendation made in an officer report is, in so far as it is adopted by the council, a resolution of the council.

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Reports of committees of council

- The recommendations of a committee of the council are, in so far as they are adopted by the council, resolutions of the council.
- If in a report of a committee of the council distinct recommendations are made, the council may make separate decisions on each recommendation.

Questions

- A question must not be asked at a meeting of the council unless it concerns a matter on the agenda of the meeting or notice has been given of the question in accordance with clauses 3.9 and 3.13.
- A councillor may, through the chairperson, put a question to another councillor about a matter on the agenda.
- A councillor may, through the Chief Executive Officer, put a question to a council employee about a matter on the agenda. Council employees are only obliged to answer a question put to them through the Chief Executive Officer at the direction of the Chief Executive Officer.
- A councillor or council employee to whom a question is put is entitled to be given reasonable notice of the question and, in particular, sufficient notice to enable reference to be made to other persons or to information. Where a councillor or council employee to whom a question is put is unable to respond to the question at the meeting at which it is put, they may take it on notice and report the response to the next meeting of the council.
- Councillors must put questions directly, succinctly, respectfully and without argument.
- The chairperson must not permit discussion on any reply to, or refusal to reply to, a question put to a councillor or council employee.

10. RULES OF DEBATE

Motions to be seconded

- Unless otherwise specified in this code, a motion or an amendment cannot be debated unless or until it has been seconded.

Notices of motion

- A councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.9 is to move the motion the subject of the notice of motion at the meeting at which it is to be considered.
- If a councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.9 wishes to withdraw it after the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered have been sent to councillors, the councillor may request the withdrawal of the motion when it is before the council.
- In the absence of a councillor who has placed a notice of motion on the agenda for a meeting of the council:
    - any other councillor may, with the leave of the chairperson, move the motion at the meeting, or
    - the chairperson may defer consideration of the motion until the next meeting of the council.

Chairperson's duties with respect to motions

- It is the duty of the chairperson at a meeting of the council to receive and put to the meeting any lawful motion that is brought before the meeting.
- The chairperson must rule out of order any motion or amendment to a motion that is unlawful or the implementation of which would be unlawful.

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- Before ruling out of order a motion or an amendment to a motion under clause 10.6, the chairperson is to give the mover an opportunity to clarify or amend the motion or amendment.
- Any motion, amendment, or other matter that the chairperson has ruled out of order is taken to have been lost.

Motions requiring the expenditure of funds

- A motion or an amendment to a motion which if passed would require the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the motion. If the motion does not identify a funding source, the council must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the Chief Executive Officer on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted.

Amendments to motions

- An amendment to a motion must be moved and seconded before it can be debated.
- An amendment to a motion must relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion before the council and must not be a direct negative of the original motion. An amendment to a motion which does not relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion, or which is a direct negative of the original motion, must be ruled out of order by the chairperson.
- The mover of an amendment is to be given the opportunity to explain any uncertainties in the proposed amendment before a seconder is called for.
- If an amendment has been lost, a further amendment can be moved to the motion to which the lost amendment was moved, and so on, but no more than one (1) motion and one (1) proposed amendment can be before council at any one time.
- While an amendment is being considered, debate must only occur in relation to the amendment and not the original motion. Debate on the original motion is to be suspended while the amendment to the original motion is being debated.
- If the amendment is carried, it becomes the motion and is to be debated. If the amendment is lost, debate is to resume on the original motion.
- An amendment may become the motion without debate or a vote where it is accepted by the councillor who moved the original motion.

Foreshadowed motions

- A councillor may propose a foreshadowed motion in relation to the matter the subject of the original motion before the council, without a seconder during debate on the original motion. The foreshadowed motion is only to be considered if the original motion is lost or withdrawn and the foreshadowed motion is then moved and seconded. If the original motion is carried, the foreshadowed motion lapses.
- Where an amendment has been moved and seconded, a councillor may, without a seconder, foreshadow a further amendment that they propose to move after the first amendment has been dealt with. There is no limit to the number of foreshadowed amendments that may be put before the council at any time. However, no discussion can take place on foreshadowed amendments until the previous amendment has been dealt with and the foreshadowed amendment has been moved and seconded.
- Foreshadowed motions and foreshadowed amendments are to be considered in the order in which they are proposed. However, foreshadowed motions cannot be considered until all foreshadowed amendments have been dealt with.

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Limitations on the number and duration of speeches

- A councillor who, during a debate at a meeting of the council, moves an original motion, has the right to speak on each amendment to the motion and a right of general reply to all observations that are made during the debate in relation to the motion, and any amendment to it at the conclusion of the debate before the motion (whether amended or not) is finally put.
- A councillor, other than the mover of an original motion, has the right to speak once on the motion and once on each amendment to it.
- A councillor must not, without the consent of the council, speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, or for longer than five (5) minutes at any one time.
- Despite clause 10.22, the chairperson may permit a councillor who claims to have been misrepresented or misunderstood to speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, and for longer than five (5) minutes on that motion or amendment to enable the councillor to make a statement limited to explaining the misrepresentation or misunderstanding.
- Despite clause 10.22, the council may resolve to shorten the duration of speeches to expedite the consideration of business at a meeting.
- Despite clauses 10.20 and 10.21, a councillor may move that a motion or an amendment be now put:
    - if the mover of the motion or amendment has spoken in favour of it and no councillor expresses an intention to speak against it, or
    - if at least two (2) councillors have spoken in favour of the motion or amendment and at least two (2) councillors have spoken against it.
- The chairperson must immediately put to the vote, without debate, a motion moved under clause 10.25. A seconder is not required for such a motion.
- If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is passed, the chairperson must, without further debate, put the original motion or amendment to the vote immediately after the mover of the original motion has exercised their right of reply under clause 10.20.
- If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is lost, the chairperson must allow the debate on the original motion or the amendment to be resumed.
- All councillors must be heard without interruption and all other councillors must, unless otherwise permitted under this code, remain silent while another councillor is speaking.
- Once the debate on a matter has concluded and a matter has been dealt with, the chairperson must not allow further debate on the matter.

11. VOTING

Voting entitlements of councillors

- Each councillor is entitled to one (1) vote.

Note: Clause 11.1 reflects section 370(1) of the Act.

- The person presiding at a meeting of the council has, in the event of an equality of votes, a second or casting vote.

Note: Clause 11.2 reflects section 370(2) of the Act.

- Where the chairperson declines to exercise, or fails to exercise, their second or casting vote, in the event of an equality of votes, the motion being voted upon is lost.

Voting at council meetings

- A councillor who is present at a meeting of the council but who fails to vote on a motion put to the meeting is taken to have voted against the motion.

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- Voting at a meeting, including voting in an election at a meeting, is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system). However, the council may resolve that the voting in any election by councillors for mayor or deputy mayor is to be by secret ballot.
- All voting at council meetings, (including meetings that are closed to the public), must be recorded in the minutes of meetings with the names of councillors who voted for and against each motion or amendment, (including the use of the casting vote), being recorded.

Voting on planning decisions

- The Chief Executive Officer must keep a register containing, for each planning decision made at a meeting of the council or a council committee (including, but not limited to a committee of the council), the names of the councillors who supported the decision and the names of any councillors who opposed (or are taken to have opposed) the decision.
- For the purpose of maintaining the register, a division is taken to have been called whenever a motion for a planning decision is put at a meeting of the council or a council committee.
- Each decision recorded in the register is to be described in the register or identified in a manner that enables the description to be obtained from another publicly available document.
- Clauses 11.7–11.9 apply also to meetings that are closed to the public.

Note: Clauses 11.7–11.10 reflect section 375A of the Act.
Note: The requirements of clause 11.7 may be satisfied by maintaining a register of the minutes of each planning decision.

12. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

- The council may resolve itself into a committee to consider any matter before the council.

Note: Clause 12.1 reflects section 373 of the Act.

- All the provisions of this code relating to meetings of the council, in so far as they are applicable, extend to and govern the proceedings of the council when in committee of the whole, except the provisions limiting the number and duration of speeches.

Note: Clauses 10.20–10.30 limit the number and duration of speeches.

- The Chief Executive Officer or, in the absence of the Chief Executive Officer, an employee of the council designated by the Chief Executive Officer, is responsible for reporting to the council the proceedings of the committee of the whole. It is not necessary to report the proceedings in full, but any recommendations of the committee must be reported.
- The council must ensure that a report of the proceedings (including any recommendations of the committee) is recorded in the council's minutes. However, the council is not taken to have adopted the report until a motion for adoption has been made and passed.

13. DEALING WITH ITEMS BY EXCEPTION

- The council or a committee of council may, at any time, resolve to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together by way of a single resolution.
- Before the council or committee resolves to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together under clause 13.1, the chairperson must list the items of business to be adopted and ask councillors to identify any individual items of business listed by the chairperson that they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or that they wish to speak on.
- The council or committee must not resolve to adopt any item of business under clause 13.1 that a councillor has identified as being one they intend to vote against the recommendation

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made in the business paper or to speak on.

- Where the consideration of multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 involves a variation to the order of business for the meeting, the council or committee must resolve to alter the order of business in accordance with clause 8.2.
- A motion to adopt multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 must identify each of the items of business to be adopted and state that they are to be adopted as recommended in the business paper.
- Items of business adopted under clause 13.1 are to be taken to have been adopted unanimously.
- Councillors must ensure that they declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to items of business considered together under clause 13.1 in accordance with the requirements of the council's code of conduct.

14. CLOSURE OF COUNCIL MEETINGS TO THE PUBLIC

Grounds on which meetings can be closed to the public

- The council or a committee of the council may close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises the discussion or the receipt of any of the following types of matters:
  - personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors),
  - the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer,
  - information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business,
  - commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed:
    i. prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, or
    ii. confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the council, or
    iii. reveal a trade secret,
  - information that would, if disclosed, prejudice the maintenance of law,
  - matters affecting the security of the council, councillors, council officers or council property,
  - advice concerning litigation, or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege,
  - information concerning the nature and location of a place or an item of Aboriginal significance on community land,
  - alleged contraventions of the council's code of conduct.

Note: Clause 14.1 reflects section 10A(1) and (2) of the Act.

- The council or a committee of the council may also close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public.

Note: Clause 14.2 reflects section 10A(3) of the Act.

Matters to be considered when closing meetings to the public

- A meeting is not to remain closed during the discussion of anything referred to in clause 14.1:
  - except for so much of the discussion as is necessary to preserve the relevant confidentiality, privilege, or security, and
  - if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret – unless the council or committee concerned is satisfied that discussion of

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the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest.

Note: Clause 14.3 reflects section 10B(1) of the Act.

A meeting is not to be closed during the receipt and consideration of information or advice referred to in clause 14.1(g) unless the advice concerns legal matters that:

- are substantial issues relating to a matter in which the council or committee is involved, and
- are clearly identified in the advice, and
- are fully discussed in that advice.

Note: Clause 14.4 reflects section 10B(2) of the Act.

If a meeting is closed during the discussion of a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public (as referred to in clause 14.2), the consideration of the motion must not include any consideration of the matter or information to be discussed in that other part of the meeting other than consideration of whether the matter concerned is a matter referred to in clause 14.1.

Note: Clause 14.5 reflects section 10B(3) of the Act.

For the purpose of determining whether the discussion of a matter in an open meeting would be contrary to the public interest, it is irrelevant that:

- a person may misinterpret or misunderstand the discussion, or
- the discussion of the matter may:
  i. cause embarrassment to the council or committee concerned, or to councillors or to employees of the council, or
  ii. cause a loss of confidence in the council or committee.

Note: Clause 14.6 reflects section 10B(4) of the Act.

In deciding whether part of a meeting is to be closed to the public, the council or committee concerned must consider any relevant guidelines issued by the Departmental Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government.

Note: Clause 14.7 reflects section 10B(5) of the Act.

Notice of likelihood of closure not required in urgent cases

Part of a meeting of the council, or of a committee of the council, may be closed to the public while the council or committee considers a matter that has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed, but only if:

- it becomes apparent during the discussion of a particular matter that the matter is a matter referred to in clause 14.1, and
- the council or committee, after considering any representations made under clause 14.9, resolves that further discussion of the matter:
  i. should not be deferred (because of the urgency of the matter), and
  ii. should take place in a part of the meeting that is closed to the public.

Note: Clause 14.8 reflects section 10C of the Act.

Representations by members of the public

The council, or a committee of the council, may allow members of the public to make representations to or at a meeting, before any part of the meeting is closed to the public, as to whether that part of the meeting should be closed.

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Note: Clause 14.9 reflects section 10A(4) of the Act.

- A representation under clause 14.9 is to be made after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded.
- Where the matter has been identified in the agenda of the meeting under clause 3.20 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, in order to make representations under clause 14.9, members of the public must first make an application to the council in the approved form. Applications must be received by **4:00pm three (3) working days** before the meeting at which the matter is to be considered.
- The Chief Executive Officer (or their delegate) may refuse an application made under clause 14.11. The Chief Executive Officer or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.
- No more than **four (4)** speakers are to be permitted to make representations under clause 14.9.
- If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to make representations under clause 14.9, the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may request the speakers to nominate from among themselves the persons who are to make representations to the council. If the speakers are not able to agree on whom to nominate to make representations under clause 14.9, the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate is to determine who will make representations to the council.
- The Chief Executive Officer (or their delegate) is to determine the order of speakers.
- Where the council or a committee of the council proposes to close a meeting or part of a meeting to the public in circumstances where the matter has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.20 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, the chairperson is to invite representations from the public under clause 14.9 after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded. The chairperson is to permit no more than **four (4)** speakers to make representations in such order as determined by the chairperson.
- Each speaker will be allowed **three (3)** minutes to make representations, and this time limit is to be strictly enforced by the chairperson. Speakers must confine their representations to whether the meeting should be closed to the public. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard.

Expulsion of non-councillors from meetings closed to the public

- If a meeting or part of a meeting of the council or a committee of the council is closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act and this code, any person who is not a councillor and who fails to leave the meeting when requested, may be expelled from the meeting as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act.
- If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the first-mentioned person from that place and, if necessary restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

Obligations of councillors attending meetings by audio-visual link

- Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link must ensure that no other person is within sight or hearing of the meeting at any time that the meeting is closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.

Information to be disclosed in resolutions closing meetings to the public

- The grounds on which part of a meeting is closed must be stated in the decision to close that part of the meeting and must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The grounds must specify the following:

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- the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act,
- the matter that is to be discussed during the closed part of the meeting,
- the reasons why the part of the meeting is being closed, including (if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret) an explanation of the way in which discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.

Note: Clause 14.21 reflects section 10D of the Act.

Resolutions passed at closed meetings to be made public

If the council passes a resolution during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public, the chairperson must make the resolution public as soon as practicable after the meeting, or the relevant part of the meeting, has ended, and the resolution must be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.

Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public must be made public by the chairperson under clause 14.22 during a part of the meeting that is webcast.

15. KEEPING ORDER AT MEETINGS

Points of order

A councillor may draw the attention of the chairperson to an alleged breach of this code by raising a point of order. A point of order does not require a seconder.

A point of order cannot be made with respect to adherence to the principles contained in clause 2.1.

A point of order must be taken immediately it is raised. The chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting and permit the councillor raising the point of order to state the provision of this code they believe has been breached. The chairperson must then rule on the point of order – either by upholding it or by overruling it.

Questions of order

The chairperson, without the intervention of any other councillor, may call any councillor to order whenever, in the opinion of the chairperson, it is necessary to do so.

A councillor who claims that another councillor has committed an act of disorder, or is out of order, may call the attention of the chairperson to the matter.

The chairperson must rule on a question of order immediately after it is raised but, before doing so, may invite the opinion of the council.

The chairperson's ruling must be obeyed unless a motion dissenting from the ruling is passed.

Motions of dissent

A councillor can, without notice, move to dissent from a ruling of the chairperson on a point of order or a question of order. If that happens, the chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting until a decision is made on the motion of dissent.

If a motion of dissent is passed, the chairperson must proceed with the suspended business as though the ruling dissented from had not been given. If, as a result of the

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ruling, any motion or business has been rejected as out of order, the chairperson must restore the motion or business to the agenda and proceed with it in due course.

Despite any other provision of this code, only the mover of a motion of dissent and the chairperson can speak to the motion before it is put. The mover of the motion does not have a right of general reply.

Acts of disorder

A councillor commits an act of disorder if the councillor, at a meeting of the council or a committee of the council:

- contravenes the Act, the Regulation, or this code, or
- assaults or threatens to assault another councillor or person present at the meeting, or
- moves or attempts to move a motion or an amendment that has an unlawful purpose or that deals with a matter that is outside the jurisdiction of the council or the committee, or addresses or attempts to address the council or the committee on such a motion, amendment or matter, or
- insults, or makes unfavourable personal remarks about, or imputes improper motives to any other council official, or alleges a breach of the council's code of conduct, or
- says or does anything that is inconsistent with maintaining order at the meeting or is likely to bring the council or the committee into disrepute.

Note: Clause 15.11 reflects section 182 of the Regulation.

The chairperson may require a councillor:

- to apologise without reservation for an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.11(a), or (b), or (e), or
- to withdraw a motion or an amendment referred to in clause 15.11(c) and, where appropriate, to apologise without reservation, or
- to retract and apologise without reservation for any statement that constitutes an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.11(d) and (e).

Note: Clause 15.12 reflects section 233 of the Regulation.

How disorder at a meeting may be dealt with

If disorder occurs at a meeting of the council, the chairperson may adjourn the meeting for a period of not more than fifteen (15) minutes and leave the chair. The council, on reassembling, must, on a question put from the chairperson, decide without debate whether the business is to be proceeded with or not. This clause applies to disorder arising from the conduct of members of the public as well as disorder arising from the conduct of councillors.

Expulsion from meetings

All chairpersons of meetings of the council and committees of the council are authorised under this code to expel any person, including any councillor, from a council or committee meeting, for the purposes of section 10(2)(b) of the Act.

Clause 15.14 does not limit the ability of the council or a committee of the council to resolve to expel a person, including a councillor, from a council or committee meeting, under section 10(2)(a) of the Act.

A councillor may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the council for having failed to comply with a requirement under clause 15.12.

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The expulsion of a councillor from the meeting for that reason does not prevent any other action from being taken against the councillor for the act of disorder concerned.

Note: Clause 15.16 reflects section 233(2) of the Regulation.

- A member of the public may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the council for engaging in or having engaged in disorderly conduct at the meeting.
- Where a councillor or a member of the public is expelled from a meeting, the expulsion and the name of the person expelled, if known, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- If a councillor or a member of the public fails to leave the place where a meeting of the council is being held immediately after they have been expelled, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the councillor or member of the public from that place and, if necessary, restrain the councillor or member of the public from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

How disorder by councillors attending meetings by audio-visual link may be dealt with

- Where a councillor is attending a meeting by audio-visual link, the chairperson or a person authorised by the chairperson may mute the councillor's audio link to the meeting for the purposes of enforcing compliance with this code.
- If a councillor attending a meeting by audio-visual link is expelled from a meeting for an act of disorder, the chairperson of the meeting or a person authorised by the chairperson, may terminate the councillor's audio-visual link to the meeting.

Use of mobile phones and the unauthorised recording of meetings

- Councillors, council officers and members of the public must ensure that mobile phones are turned to silent during meetings of the council and committees of the council.
- A person must not live stream or use an audio recorder, video camera, mobile phone or any other device to make a recording of the proceedings of a meeting of the council or a committee of the council without the prior authorisation of the council or the committee.
- Without limiting clause 15.17, a contravention of clause 15.23 or an attempt to contravene that clause, constitutes disorderly conduct for the purposes of clause 15.17. Any person who contravenes or attempts to contravene clause 15.23, may be expelled from the meeting as provided for under section 10(2) of the Act.
- If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the first-mentioned person from that place and, if necessary, restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

16. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

- All councillors and, where applicable, all other persons, must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at meetings of the council and committees of the council in accordance with the council's code of conduct. All declarations of conflicts of interest and how the conflict of interest was managed by the person who made the declaration must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the declaration was made.
- Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at the meeting in accordance with the council's code of conduct. Where a councillor has declared a pecuniary or significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter being discussed at the meeting, the councillor's audio-visual link to the meeting must be suspended or terminated and the councillor must

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not be in sight or hearing of the meeting at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the council or committee, or at any time during which the council or committee is voting on the matter.

17. DECISIONS OF THE COUNCIL

Council decisions

- A decision supported by a majority of the votes at a meeting of the council at which a quorum is present is a decision of the council.

Note: Clause 17.1 reflects section 371 of the Act

- Decisions made by the council must be accurately recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the decision is made.

Rescinding or altering council decisions

- A resolution passed by the council may not be altered or rescinded except by a motion to that effect of which notice has been given under clause 3.9.

Note: Clause 17.3 reflects section 372(1) of the Act.

- If a notice of motion to rescind a resolution is given at the meeting at which the resolution is carried, the resolution must not be carried into effect until the motion of rescission has been dealt with.

Note: Clause 17.4 reflects section 372(2) of the Act.

- If a motion has been lost, a motion having the same effect must not be considered unless notice of it has been duly given in accordance with clause 3.9.

Note: Clause 17.5 reflects section 372(3) of the Act.

- A notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution, and a notice of motion which has the same effect as a motion which has been lost, must be signed by three (3) councillors if less than three (3) months has elapsed since the resolution was passed, or the motion was lost.

Note: Clause 17.6 reflects section 372(4) of the Act.

- If a motion to alter or rescind a resolution has been lost, or if a motion which has the same effect as a previously lost motion is lost, no similar motion may be brought forward within three (3) months of the meeting at which it was lost. This clause may not be evaded by substituting a motion differently worded, but in principle the same.

Note: Clause 17.7 reflects section 372(5) of the Act.

- The provisions of clauses 17.5–17.7 concerning lost motions do not apply to motions of adjournment.

Note: Clause 17.8 reflects section 372(7) of the Act.

17.9 A notice of motion submitted in accordance with clause 17.6 may only be withdrawn under clause 3.10 with the consent of all signatories to the notice of motion.

17.10 A motion to alter or rescind a resolution relating to a development application must be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer no later than 10:00am on the day after the meeting at which the resolution was adopted.

17.11 A motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the council may be moved on the report of a committee of the council and any such report must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting of the council.

Note: Clause 17.11 reflects section 372(6) of the Act.

17.12 Subject to clause 17.7, in cases of urgency, a motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the council may be moved at the same meeting at which the resolution was adopted, where:

- a notice of motion signed by three councillors is submitted to the chairperson, and

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- a motion to have the motion considered at the meeting is passed, and
- the chairperson rules the business that is the subject of the motion is of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.

17.13 A motion moved under clause 17.12(b) can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.12(b) can speak to the motion before it is put.

17.14 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 17.12(c).

Recommitting resolutions to correct an error

17.15 Despite the provisions of this Part, a councillor may, with the leave of the chairperson, move to recommit a resolution adopted at the same meeting:

- to correct any error, ambiguity, or imprecision in the council's resolution, or
- to confirm the voting on the resolution.

17.16 In seeking the leave of the chairperson to move to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.15(a), the councillor is to propose alternative wording for the resolution.

17.17 The chairperson must not grant leave to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.15(a), unless they are satisfied that the proposed alternative wording of the resolution would not alter the substance of the resolution previously adopted at the meeting.

17.18 A motion moved under clause 17.15 can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.15 can speak to the motion before it is put.

17.19 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 17.15.

17.20 A motion moved under clause 17.15 with the leave of the chairperson cannot be voted on unless or until it has been seconded.

18. TIME LIMITS ON COUNCIL MEETINGS

Meetings of the council and committees of the council are to conclude no later than **three (3) hours after the commencement of the meeting**.

If the business of the meeting is unfinished **within three (3) hours of the commencement of the meeting**, the council or the committee may, by resolution, extend the time of the meeting.

If the business of the meeting is unfinished **within three (3) hours of the commencement of the meeting**, and the council does not resolve to extend the meeting, the chairperson must either:

- defer consideration of the remaining items of business on the agenda to the next ordinary meeting of the council, or
- adjourn the meeting to a time, date and place fixed by the chairperson.

Clause 18.3 does not limit the ability of the council or a committee of the council to resolve to adjourn a meeting at any time. The resolution adjourning the meeting must fix the time, date, and place that the meeting is to be adjourned to.

Where a meeting is adjourned under clause 18.3 or 18.4, the Chief Executive Officer must:

- individually notify each councillor of the time, date, and place at which the meeting will reconvene, and
- publish the time, date and place at which the meeting will reconvene on the council's website and in such other manner that the Chief Executive Officer is satisfied is likely to bring notice

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of the time, date and place of the reconvened meeting to the attention of as many people as possible.

19. AFTER THE MEETING

Minutes of meetings

- The council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of meetings of the council.

Note: Clause 19.1 reflects section 375(1) of the Act.

- At a minimum, the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the council's minutes:
  - the names of councillors attending a council meeting and whether they attended the meeting in person or by audio-visual link,
  - details of each motion moved at a council meeting and of any amendments moved to it,
  - the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,
  - whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and
  - such other matters specifically required under this code.
- The minutes of a council meeting must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the council.

Note: Clause 19.3 reflects section 375(2) of the Act.

- Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.
- When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at the subsequent meeting.

Note: Clause 19.5 reflects section 375(2) of the Act.

- The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.
- The confirmed minutes of a council meeting must be published on the council's website. This clause does not prevent the council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of its meetings on its website prior to their confirmation.

Access to correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, a meeting

- The council and committees of the council must, during or at the close of a meeting, or during the business day following the meeting, give reasonable access to any person to inspect correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting.

Note: Clause 19.8 reflects section 11(1) of the Act.

- Clause 19.8 does not apply if the correspondence or reports relate to a matter that was received or discussed or laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting when the meeting was closed to the public.

Note: Clause 19.9 reflects section 11(2) of the Act.

- Clause 19.8 does not apply if the council or the committee resolves at the meeting, when open to the public, that the correspondence or reports are to be treated as confidential because they relate to a matter specified in section 10A(2) of the Act.

Note: Clause 19.10 reflects section 11(3) of the Act.

- Correspondence or reports to which clauses 19.9 and 19.10 apply are to be marked with the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act that applies to the correspondence or

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report.

Implementation of decisions of the council

The Chief Executive Officer is to implement, without undue delay, lawful decisions of the council.

Note: Clause 19.12 reflects section 335(b) of the Act.

20. COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Application of this Part

This Part only applies to committees of the council whose members are all councillors.

Council committees whose members are all councillors

The council may, by resolution, establish such committees as it considers necessary.

A committee of the council is to consist of the mayor and such other councillors as are elected by the councillors or appointed by the council.

The quorum for a meeting of a committee of the council is to be:

- such number of members as the council decides, or
- if the council has not decided a number – a majority of the members of the committee.

Functions of committees

The council must specify the functions of each of its committees when the committee is established but may from time to time amend those functions.

Notice of committee meetings

The Chief Executive Officer must send to each councillor, regardless of whether they are a committee member, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the committee, a notice specifying:

- the time, date, and place of the meeting, and
- the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.

Notice of less than three (3) days may be given of a committee meeting called in an emergency.

Attendance at committee meetings

A committee member (other than the mayor) ceases to be a member of a committee if the committee member:

- has been absent from three (3) consecutive meetings of the committee without having given reasons acceptable to the committee for the member's absences, or
- has been absent from at least half of the meetings of the committee held during the immediately preceding year without having given to the committee acceptable reasons for the member's absences.

Clause 20.8 does not apply if all of the members of the council are members of the committee.

Non-members entitled to attend committee meetings

A councillor who is not a member of a committee of the council is entitled to attend, and to speak at a meeting of the committee. However, the councillor is not entitled:

- to give notice of business for inclusion in the agenda for the meeting, or

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- to move or second a motion at the meeting, or
- to vote at the meeting.

Chairperson and deputy chairperson of council committees

[redacted] The chairperson of each committee of the council must be:

- the mayor, or
- if the mayor does not wish to be the chairperson of a committee, a member of the committee elected by the council, or
- if the council does not elect such a member, a member of the committee elected by the committee.

[redacted] The council may elect a member of a committee of the council as deputy chairperson of the committee. If the council does not elect a deputy chairperson of such a committee, the committee may elect a deputy chairperson.

[redacted] If neither the chairperson nor the deputy chairperson of a committee of the council is able or willing to preside at a meeting of the committee, the committee must elect a member of the committee to be acting chairperson of the committee.

[redacted] The chairperson is to preside at a meeting of a committee of the council. If the chairperson is unable or unwilling to preside, the deputy chairperson (if any) is to preside at the meeting, but if neither the chairperson nor the deputy chairperson is able or willing to preside, the acting chairperson is to preside at the meeting.

Procedure in committee meetings

[redacted] Subject to any specific requirements of this code, each committee of the council may regulate its own procedure. The provisions of this code are to be taken to apply to all committees of the council unless the council or the committee determines otherwise in accordance with this clause.

[redacted] Whenever the voting on a motion put to a meeting of the committee is equal, the chairperson of the committee is to have a casting vote as well as an original vote unless the council or the committee determines otherwise in accordance with clause 20.15.

[redacted] Voting at a council committee meeting is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system).

Closure of committee meetings to the public

[redacted] The provisions of the Act and Part 14 of this code apply to the closure of meetings of committees of the council to the public in the same way they apply to the closure of meetings of the council to the public.

[redacted] If a committee of the council passes a resolution, or makes a recommendation, during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public, the chairperson must make the resolution or recommendation public as soon as practicable after the meeting or part of the meeting has ended, and report the resolution or recommendation to the next meeting of the council. The resolution or recommendation must also be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.

[redacted] Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public must be made public by the chairperson under clause 20.19 during a part of the meeting that is webcast.

Disorder in committee meetings

[redacted] The provisions of the Act and this code relating to the maintenance of order in council meetings apply to meetings of committees of the council in the same way as they apply to meetings of the council.

[redacted]

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Minutes of council committee meetings

- Each committee of the council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of its meetings. At a minimum, a committee must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the committee's minutes:
  - the names of councillors attending a meeting and whether they attended the meeting in person or by audio-visual link,
  - details of each motion moved at a meeting and of any amendments moved to it,
  - the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,
  - whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and
  - such other matters specifically required under this code.
- All voting at meetings of committees of the council (including meetings that are closed to the public), must be recorded in the minutes of meetings with the names of councillors who voted for and against each motion or amendment, (including the use of the casting vote), being recorded.
- The minutes of meetings of each committee of the council must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the committee.
- Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.
- When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at that subsequent meeting.
- The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.
- The confirmed minutes of a meeting of a committee of the council must be published on the council's website. This clause does not prevent the council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of meetings of committees of the council on its website prior to their confirmation

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21. IRREGULARITES

- Proceedings at a meeting of a council or a council committee are not invalidated because of:
  - a vacancy in a civic office, or
  - a failure to give notice of the meeting to any councillor or committee member, or
  - any defect in the election or appointment of a councillor or committee member, or
  - a failure of a councillor or a committee member to declare a conflict of interest, or to refrain from the consideration or discussion of, or vote on, the relevant matter, at a council or committee meeting in accordance with the council's code of conduct, or
  - a failure to comply with this code.

Note: Clause 21.1 reflects section 374 of the Act.

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22. DEFINITIONS

the Act	means the *Local Government Act 1993*
act of disorder	means an act of disorder as defined in clause 15.11 of this code
amendment	in relation to an original motion, means a motion moving an amendment to that motion
audio recorder	any device capable of recording speech
audio-visual link	means a facility that enables audio and visual communication between persons at different places
business day	means any day except Saturday or Sunday or any other day the whole or part of which is observed as a public holiday throughout New South Wales
chairperson	in relation to a meeting of the council – means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by section 369 of the Act and clauses 6.1 and 6.2 of this code, and in relation to a meeting of a committee – means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by clause 20.11 of this code
this code	means the council's adopted code of meeting practice
committee of the council	means a committee established by the council in accordance with clause 20.2 of this code (being a committee consisting only of councillors) or the council when it has resolved itself into committee of the whole under clause 12.1
council official	has the same meaning it has in the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW
day	means calendar day
foreshadowed amendment	means a proposed amendment foreshadowed by a councillor under clause 10.18 of this code during debate on the first amendment
foreshadowed motion	means a motion foreshadowed by a councillor under clause 10.17 of this code during debate on an original motion
open voting	means voting on the voices or by a show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system or similar means
planning decision	means a decision made in the exercise of a function of a council under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* including any decision relating to a development application, an environmental planning instrument, a development control plan, or a development contribution plan under that Act, but not including the making of an order under Division 9.3 of Part 9 of that Act
performance improvement order	means an order issued under section 438A of the Act
quorum	means the minimum number of councillors or committee members necessary to conduct a meeting
the Regulation	means the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*
webcast	a video or audio broadcast of a meeting transmitted across the internet either concurrently with the meeting or at a later time
year	means the period beginning 1 July and ending the following 30 June

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Yass Valley Council
Code of Meeting Practice

Adopted 24 April 2019 – Res 87/19
Amended 24 July 2019 – Res 167/19
Amended 1 December 2021 – Res 275/21
Amended 24 March 2022 – Res 76/22

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1 INTRODUCTION

This Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW (the Model Meeting Code) is prescribed under section 360 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (the Regulation).

The Model Meeting Code applies to all meetings of councils and committees of councils of which all the members are councillors (committees of council). Council committees whose members include persons other than councillors may adopt their own rules for meetings unless the council determines otherwise.

Councils must adopt a code of meeting practice that incorporates the mandatory provisions of the Model Meeting Code.

A council's adopted code of meeting practice may also incorporate the non-mandatory provisions of the Model Meeting Code and other supplementary provisions. However, a code of meeting practice adopted by a council must not contain provisions that are inconsistent with the mandatory provisions of this Model Meeting Code.

The provisions of the Model Meeting Code that are not mandatory are indicated in red font.

A council and a committee of the council of which all the members are councillors must conduct its meetings in accordance with the code of meeting practice adopted by the council.

The Model Meeting Code also applies to meetings of the boards of joint organisations and county councils. The provisions that are specific to meetings of boards of joint organisations are indicated in blue font.

In adopting the Model Meeting Code, joint organisations should adapt it to substitute the terms "board" for "council", "chairperson" for "mayor", "voting representative" for "councillor" and "executive officer" for "general manager".

In adopting the Model Meeting Code, county councils should adapt it to substitute the term "chairperson" for "mayor" and "member" for "councillor".

2 MEETING PRINCIPLES

2.1 Council and committee meetings should be:

Transparent: Decisions are made in a way that is open and accountable.

Informed: Decisions are made based on relevant, quality information.

Inclusive: Decisions respect the diverse needs and interests of the local community.

Principled: Decisions are informed by the principles prescribed under Chapter 3 of the Act.

Trusted: The community has confidence that councillors and staff act ethically and make decisions in the interests of the whole community.

Respectful: Councillors, staff and meeting attendees treat each other with respect.

Effective: Meetings are well organised, effectively run and skilfully chaired.

Orderly: Councillors, staff and meeting attendees behave in a way that contributes to the orderly conduct of the meeting.

3 BEFORE THE MEETING

Timing of ordinary council meetings

3.1 Ordinary meetings of the council will be held on the following occasions:

3.1.1 Ordinary meetings of Council will be held on the 4th Thursday of each month with the exception of December and January. The Ordinary meeting held in December will be on the 3rd Thursday of the month and there will be no Ordinary meeting in January

3.1.2 Open Forum will commence at 4pm prior to the commencement of a formal Council Meeting

3.1.3 The formal Council Meeting will commence immediately following the conclusion of the Open Forum

3.1.4 The day and time of Ordinary Meetings of Council may be changed by resolution of Council

Extraordinary meetings

3.3 If the mayor receives a request in writing, signed by at least two (2) councillors, the mayor must call an extraordinary meeting of the council to be held as soon as practicable, but in any event, no more than fourteen (14) days after receipt of the request. The mayor can be one of the two councillors requesting the meeting.

Note: Clause 3.3 reflects section 366 of the Act.

Notice to the public of council meetings

3.4 The council must give notice to the public of the time, date and place of each of its meetings, including extraordinary meetings and of each meeting of committees of the council.

Note: Clause 3.4 reflects section 9(1) of the Act.

3.5 For the purposes of clause 3.4, notice of a meeting of the council and of a committee of council is to be published before the meeting takes place. The notice must be published on the council's website, and in such other manner that the council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the meeting to the attention of as many people as possible.

3.6 For the purposes of clause 3.4, notice of more than one (1) meeting may be given in the same notice.

Notice to councillors of ordinary council meetings

3.7 The general manager must send to each councillor, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the council, a notice specifying the time, date and place at which the meeting is to be held, and the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.

Note: Clause 3.7 reflects section 367(1) of the Act.

3.8 The notice and the agenda for, and the business papers relating to, the meeting may be given to councillors in electronic form, but only if all councillors have facilities to access the notice, agenda and business papers in that form.

Note: Clause 3.8 reflects section 367(3) of the Act.

Notice to councillors of extraordinary meetings

3.9 Notice of less than three (3) days may be given to councillors of an extraordinary meeting of the council in cases of emergency.

Note: Clause 3.9 reflects section 367(2) of the Act.

Giving notice of business to be considered at council meetings

3.10 A councillor may give notice of any business they wish to be considered by the council at its next ordinary meeting by way of a notice of motion. To be included on the agenda of the meeting, the notice of motion must be in writing and must be submitted by 5pm 10 days prior to each Ordinary Meeting of Council.

3.11 A councillor may, in writing to the general manager, request the withdrawal of a notice of motion submitted by them prior to its inclusion in the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered.

3.12 If the General Manager considers that a notice of motion submitted by a councillor for consideration at an ordinary meeting of the council has legal, strategic, financial or policy implications which should be taken into consideration by the meeting, the general manager may prepare a report in relation to the notice of motion for inclusion with the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the council.

3.13 A notice of motion for the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the notice of motion. If the notice of motion does not identify a funding source, the general manager must either:

(a) prepare a report on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted for inclusion in the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the council, or
(b) by written notice sent to all councillors with the business papers for the meeting for which the notice of motion has been submitted, defer consideration of the matter by the council to such a date specified in the notice, pending the preparation of such a report.

Questions with notice

3.14 A councillor may, by way of a notice submitted under clause 3.10, ask a question for response by the general manager about the performance or operations of the council.

3.15 A councillor is not permitted to ask a question with notice under clause 3.14 that comprises a complaint against the general manager or a member of staff of the council, or a question that implies wrongdoing by the general manager or a member of staff of the council.

3.16 The general manager or their nominee may respond to a question with notice submitted under clause 3.14 by way of a report included in the business papers for the relevant meeting of the council or orally at the meeting.

3.17 If a response is provided, orally, a summary of the response is to be included as a supplementary report to the agenda

Agenda and business papers for ordinary meetings

3.18 The general manager must cause the agenda for a meeting of the council or a committee of the council to be prepared as soon as practicable before the meeting.

3.19 The general manager must ensure that the agenda for an ordinary meeting of the council states:

(a) all matters to be dealt with arising out of the proceedings of previous meetings of the council, and
(b) if the mayor is the chairperson – any matter or topic that the chairperson proposes, at the time when the agenda is prepared, to put to the meeting, and
(c) all matters, including matters that are the subject of staff reports and reports of committees, to be considered at the meeting, and
(d) any business of which due notice has been given under clause 3.10.

3.20 Nothing in clause 3.19 limits the powers of the mayor to put a mayoral minute to a meeting under clause 9.6.

3.21 The general manager must not include in the agenda for a meeting of the council any business of which due notice has been given if, in the opinion of the general manager, the business is, or the implementation of the business would be, unlawful. The general manager must report, without giving details of the item of business, any such exclusion to the next meeting of the council.

3.22 Where the agenda includes the receipt of information or discussion of other matters that, in the opinion of the general manager, is likely to take place when the meeting is closed to the public, the general manager must ensure that the agenda of the meeting:

(a) identifies the relevant item of business and indicates that it is of such a nature (without disclosing details of the information to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public), and
(b) states the grounds under section 10A(2) of the Act relevant to the item of business.

Note: Clause 3.21 reflects section 9(2A)(a) of the Act.

3.23 The general manager must ensure that the details of any item of business which, in the opinion of the general manager, is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, are included in a business paper provided to councillors for the meeting concerned. Such details must not be included in the business papers made available to the public and must not be disclosed by a councillor or by any other person to another person who is not authorised to have that information.

Statement of ethical obligations

3.24 Business papers for all ordinary and extraordinary meetings of the council and committees of the council must contain a statement reminding councillors of their oath or affirmation of office made under section 233A of the Act and their obligations under the council's code of conduct

to disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest.

Availability of the agenda and business papers to the public

3.25 Copies of the agenda and the associated business papers, such as correspondence and reports for meetings of the council and committees of council, are to be published on the council's website, and must be made available to the public for inspection, or for taking away by any person free of charge at the offices of the council, at the relevant meeting and at such other venues determined by the council.

Note: Clause 3.24 reflects section 9(2) and (4) of the Act.

3.26 Clause 3.25 does not apply to the business papers for items of business that the general manager has identified under clause 3.23 as being likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public.

Note: Clause 3.25 reflects section 9(2A)(b) of the Act.

3.27 For the purposes of clause 3.26, copies of agendas and business papers must be published on the council's website and made available to the public at a time that is as close as possible to the time they are available to councillors.

Note: Clause 3.26 reflects section 9(3) of the Act.

3.28 A copy of an agenda, or of an associated business paper made available under clause 3.25, may in addition be given or made available in electronic form.

Note: Clause 3.27 reflects section 9(5) of the Act.

Agenda and business papers for extraordinary meetings

3.29 The general manager must ensure that the agenda for an extraordinary meeting of the council deals only with the matters stated in the notice of the meeting.

3.30 Despite clause 3.29, business may be considered at an extraordinary meeting of the council, even though due notice of the business has not been given, if:

(a) a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and

(b) the business to be considered is ruled by the chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.

3.31 A motion moved under clause 3.30(a) can be moved without notice but only after the business notified in the agenda for the extraordinary meeting has been dealt with.

3.32 Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion moved under clause 3.31(a) can speak to the motion before it is put.

3.33 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling of the chairperson under clause 3.31(b) on whether a matter is of great urgency.

Pre-meeting briefing sessions

3.43 Prior to each ordinary meeting of the council, the general manager may arrange a pre-meeting briefing session to brief councillors on business to be considered at the meeting. Pre-meeting briefing sessions may also be held for extraordinary meetings of the council and meetings of committees of the council.

3.54 Pre-meeting briefing sessions are to be held in the absence of the public.

3.36 Pre-meeting briefing sessions may be held by audio-visual link.

3.37 The general manager or a member of staff nominated by the general manager is to preside at pre-meeting briefing sessions.

3.38 Councillors must not use pre-meeting briefing sessions to debate or make preliminary decisions on items of business they are being briefed on, and any debate and decision-making must be left to the formal council or committee meeting at which the item of business is to be considered.

3.39 Councillors (including the mayor) must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to any item of business that is the subject of a briefing at a pre-meeting briefing session, in the same way that they are required to do so at a council or committee meeting. The council is to maintain a written record of all conflict of interest declarations made at pre-meeting briefing sessions and how the conflict of interest was managed by the councillor who made the declaration.

4 PUBLIC FORUMS

4.1 The council may hold a public forum prior to each ordinary meeting of the council for the purpose of hearing oral submissions from members of the public on items of business to be considered at the meeting. Public forums may also be held prior to extraordinary council meetings and meetings of committees of the council.

4.2 Public forums may be held by audio-visual link.

4.3 Public forums are to be chaired by the mayor or their nominee.

4.4 To speak at a public forum, a person must first make an application to the council in the approved form. Applications to speak at the public forum must be received by 4pm the day before the date on which the public forum is to be held, and must identify the item of business on the agenda of the council meeting the person wishes to speak on, and whether they wish to speak 'for' or 'against' the item.

4.5 A person may apply to speak on no more than three items of business on the agenda of the council meeting.

4.6 Legal representatives acting on behalf of others are not to be permitted to speak at a public forum unless they identify their status as a legal representative when applying to speak at the public forum.

4.7 The general manager or their delegate may refuse an application to speak at a public forum. The general manager or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.

4.8 No more than four speakers are to be permitted to speak 'for' or 'against' each item of business on the agenda for the council meeting.

4.9 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the general manager or their delegate may request the speakers to nominate from among themselves the persons who are to address the council on the item of business. If the speakers are not able to agree on whom to nominate to address the council, the general manager or their delegate is to determine who will address the council at the public forum.

4.10 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the general manager or their delegate may, in consultation with the mayor or the mayor's nominated chairperson, increase the number of speakers permitted to speak on an item of business, where they are satisfied that it is necessary to do so to allow the council to hear a fuller range of views on the relevant item of business.

4.11 Approved speakers at the public forum are to register with the council any written, visual or audio material to be presented in support of their address to the council at the public forum, and to identify any equipment needs no more than the Monday before the public forum. The general manager or their delegate may refuse to allow such material to be presented.

4.12 The general manager or their delegate is to determine the order of speakers at the public forum.

4.13 Each speaker will be allowed 3 minutes to address the council. This time is to be strictly enforced by the chairperson.

4.14 Speakers at public forums must not digress from the item on the agenda of the council meeting they have applied to address the council on. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard.

4.15 A councillor (including the chairperson) may, through the chairperson, ask questions of a speaker following their address at a public forum. Questions put to a speaker must be direct, succinct and without argument.

4.16 Speakers are under no obligation to answer a question put under clause 4.15. Answers by the speaker, to each question are to be limited to 1 minutes.

4.17 Speakers at public forums cannot ask questions of the council, councillors, or council staff.

4.18 The general manager or their nominee may, with the concurrence of the chairperson, address the council for up to 3 minutes in response to an address to the council at a public forum after the address and any subsequent questions and answers have been finalised.

4.19 Where an address made at a public forum raises matters that require further consideration by council staff, the general manager may recommend that the council defer consideration of the matter pending the preparation of a further report on the matters.

4.20 When addressing the council, speakers at public forums must comply with this code and all other relevant council codes, policies, and procedures. Speakers must refrain from engaging in disorderly conduct, publicly alleging breaches of the council's code of conduct or making other potentially defamatory statements.

4.21 If the chairperson considers that a speaker at a public forum has engaged in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.20, the chairperson may request the person to refrain from the

inappropriate behaviour and to withdraw and unreservedly apologise for any inappropriate comments. Where the speaker fails to comply with the chairperson's request, the chairperson may immediately require the person to stop speaking.

4.22 Clause 4.21 does not limit the ability of the chairperson to deal with disorderly conduct by speakers at public forums in accordance with the provisions of Part 15 of this code.

4.23 Where a speaker engages in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.21, the general manager or their delegate may refuse further applications from that person to speak at public forums for such a period as the general manager or their delegate considers appropriate.

4.24 Councillors (including the mayor) must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to any item of business that is the subject of an address at a public forum, in the same way that they are required to do so at a council or committee meeting. The council is to maintain a written record of all conflict of interest declarations made at public forums and how the conflict of interest was managed by the councillor who made the declaration.

Note: Public forums should not be held as part of a council or committee meeting. Council or committee meetings should be reserved for decision-making by the council or committee of council. Where a public forum is held as part of a council or committee meeting, it must be conducted in accordance with the other requirements of this code relating to the conduct of council and committee meetings.

5 COMING TOGETHER

Attendance by councillors at meetings

5.1 All councillors must make reasonable efforts to attend meetings of the council and of committees of the council of which they are members.

Note: A councillor may not attend a meeting as a councillor (other than the first meeting of the council after the councillor is elected or a meeting at which the councillor takes an oath or makes an affirmation of office) until they have taken an oath or made an affirmation of office in the form prescribed under section 233A of the Act.

5.2 A councillor cannot participate in a meeting of the council or of a committee of the council unless personally present at the meeting, unless permitted to attend the meeting by audio-visual link under this code.

5.3 Removed Section 5.3 of the Model Code relevant only to Joint Organisations.

5.4 Where a councillor is unable to attend one or more ordinary meetings of the council, the councillor should request that the council grant them a leave of absence from those meetings. This clause does not prevent a councillor from making an apology if they are unable to attend a meeting. However, the acceptance of such an apology does not constitute the granting of a leave of absence for the purposes of this code and the Act.

5.5 A councillor's request for leave of absence from council meetings should, if practicable, identify (by date) the meetings from which the councillor intends to be absent and the grounds upon which the leave of absence is being sought.

5.6 The council must act reasonably when considering whether to grant a councillor's request for a leave of absence.

5.7 A councillor's civic office will become vacant if the councillor is absent from three (3) consecutive ordinary meetings of the council without prior leave of the council, or leave granted by the council at any of the meetings concerned, unless the holder is absent because they have been suspended from office under the Act, or because the council has been suspended under the Act, or as a consequence of a compliance order under section 438HA.

Note: Clause 5.7 reflects section 234(1)(d) of the Act.

5.8 A councillor who intends to attend a meeting of the council despite having been granted a leave of absence should, if practicable, give the general manager at least two (2) days' notice of their intention to attend.

The quorum for a meeting

5.9 The quorum for a meeting of the council is a majority of the councillors of the council who hold office at that time and are not suspended from office.

Note: Clause 5.9 reflects section 368(1) of the Act.

5.10 Clause 5.9 does not apply if the quorum is required to be determined in accordance with directions of the Minister in a performance improvement order issued in respect of the council.

Note: Clause 5.10 reflects section 368(2) of the Act.

5.11 A meeting of the council must be adjourned if a quorum is not present:

(a) at the commencement of the meeting where the number of apologies received for the meeting indicates that there will not be a quorum for the meeting, or
(b) within half an hour after the time designated for the holding of the meeting, or
(c) at any time during the meeting.

5.12 In either case, the meeting must be adjourned to a time, date, and place fixed:

(a) by the chairperson, or
(b) in the chairperson's absence, by the majority of the councillors present, or
(c) failing that, by the general manager.

5.13 The general manager must record in the council's minutes the circumstances relating to the absence of a quorum (including the reasons for the absence of a quorum) at or arising during a meeting of the council, together with the names of the councillors present.

5.14 Where, prior to the commencement of a meeting, it becomes apparent that a quorum may not be present at the meeting, or that the health, safety or welfare of councillors, council staff and members of the public may be put at risk by attending the meeting because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency, the mayor may, in consultation with the general manager and, as far as is practicable, with each councillor, cancel the meeting. Where a meeting is cancelled, notice of the cancellation must be published on the council's website and in such other manner that the council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the cancellation to the attention of as many people as possible.

5.15 Where a meeting is cancelled under clause 5.14, the business to be considered at the meeting may instead be considered, where practicable, at the next ordinary meeting of the council or at an extraordinary meeting called under clause 3.3.

Meetings held by audio-visual link

5.16 A meeting of the council or a committee of the council may be held by audio-visual link where the mayor determines that the meeting should be held by audio-visual link because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency. The mayor may only make a determination under this clause where they are satisfied that attendance at the meeting may put the health and safety of councillors and staff at risk. The mayor must make a determination under this clause in consultation with the general manager and, as far as is practicable, with each councillor.

5.17 Where the mayor determines under clause 5.16 that a meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, the general manager must:

(a) give written notice to all councillors that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, and
(b) take all reasonable steps to ensure that all councillors can participate in the meeting by audio-visual link, and
(c) cause a notice to be published on the council's website and in such other manner the general manager is satisfied will bring it to the attention of as many people as possible, advising that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link and providing information about where members of the public may view the meeting.

5.18 This code applies to a meeting held by audio-visual link under clause 5.16 in the same way it would if the meeting was held in person.

Note: Where a council holds a meeting by audio-visual link under clause 5.16, it is still required under section 10 of the Act to provide a physical venue for members of the public to attend in person and observe the meeting.

Attendance by councillors at meetings by audio-visual link

5.19 Councillors may attend and participate in meetings of the council and committees of the council by audio-visual link with the approval of the council or the relevant committee.

5.20 A request by a councillor for approval to attend a meeting by audio-visual link must be made in writing to the general manager prior to the meeting in question and must provide reasons why the councillor will be prevented from attending the meeting in person.

5.21 Councillors may request approval to attend more than one meeting by audio-visual link. Where a councillor requests approval to attend more than one meeting by audio-visual link, the request must specify the meetings the request relates to in addition to the information required under clause 5.20.

5.22 The council must comply with the Health Privacy Principles prescribed under the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002* when collecting, holding, using and disclosing health information in connection with a request by a councillor to attend a meeting by audio-visual link.

5.23 A councillor who has requested approval to attend a meeting of the council or a committee of the council by audio-visual link may participate in the meeting by audio-visual link until the council or committee determines whether to approve their request and is to be taken as present at the meeting. The councillor may participate in a decision in relation to their request to attend the meeting by audio-visual link.

5.24 A decision whether to approve a request by a councillor to attend a meeting of the council or a committee of the council by audio-visual link must be made by a resolution of the council or the committee concerned. The resolution must state:

(a) the meetings the resolution applies to, and
(b) the reason why the councillor is being permitted to attend the meetings by audio-visual link where it is on grounds other than illness, disability, or caring responsibilities.

5.25 If the council or committee refuses a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link, their link to the meeting is to be terminated.

5.26 A decision whether to approve a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link is at the council's or the relevant committee's discretion. The council and committees of the council must act reasonably when considering requests by councillors to attend meetings by audio-visual link. However, the council and committees of the council are under no obligation to approve a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link where the technical capacity does not exist to allow the councillor to attend the meeting by these means.

5.27 The council and committees of the council may refuse a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link where the council or committee is satisfied that the councillor has failed to appropriately declare and manage conflicts of interest, observe confidentiality or to comply with this code on one or more previous occasions they have attended a meeting of the council or a committee of the council by audio-visual link.

5.28 This code applies to a councillor attending a meeting by audio-visual link in the same way it would if the councillor was attending the meeting in person. Where a councillor is permitted to attend a meeting by audio-visual link under this code, they are to be taken as attending the meeting in person for the purposes of the code and will have the same voting rights as if they were attending the meeting in person.

5.29 A councillor must give their full attention to the business and proceedings of the meeting when attending a meeting by audio-visual link. The councillor's camera must be on at all times during the meeting except as may be otherwise provided for under this code.

5.30 A councillor must be appropriately dressed when attending a meeting by audio-visual link and must ensure that no items are within sight of the meeting that are inconsistent with the maintenance of order at the meeting or that are likely to bring the council or the committee into disrepute.

Entitlement of the public to attend council meetings

5.31 Everyone is entitled to attend a meeting of the council and committees of the council. The council must ensure that all meetings of the council and committees of the council are open to the public.

Note: Clause 5.31 reflects section 10(1) of the Act.

5.32 Clause 5.31 does not apply to parts of meetings that have been closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.

5.33 A person (whether a councillor or another person) is not entitled to be present at a meeting of the council or a committee of the council if expelled from the meeting:

(a) by a resolution of the meeting, or

(b) by the person presiding at the meeting if the council has, by resolution, authorised the person presiding to exercise the power of expulsion.

Note: Clause 5.33 reflects section 10(2) of the Act.

Note: If adopted, clauses 15.14 and 15.15 confer a standing authorisation on all chairpersons of meetings of the council and committees of the council to expel persons from meetings. If adopted, clause 15.14 authorises chairpersons to expel any person, including a councillor, from a council or committee meeting. Alternatively, if adopted, clause 15.15 authorises chairpersons to expel persons other than councillors from a council or committee meeting.

Webcasting of meetings

5.34 Each meeting of the council or a committee of the council is to be recorded by means of an audio or audio-visual device.

5.35 At the start of each meeting of the council or a committee of the council, the chairperson must inform the persons attending the meeting that:

(a) the meeting is being recorded and made publicly available on the council's website, and
(b) persons attending the meeting should refrain from making any defamatory statements.

5.36 The recording of a meeting is to be made publicly available on the council's website:

(a) at the same time as the meeting is taking place, or
(b) as soon as practicable after the meeting.

5.37 The recording of a meeting is to be made publicly available on the council's website for at least 12 months after the meeting.

5.38 Clauses 5.36 and 5.37 do not apply to any part of a meeting that has been closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act.

Note: Clauses 5.34 – 5.38 reflect section 236 of the Regulation.

5.39 Recordings of meetings may be disposed of in accordance with the *State Records Act 1998*.

Note: Joint organisations are not required to webcast meetings but may choose to do so by adopting clauses 5.34–5.39. Joint organisations that choose not to webcast meetings may omit clauses 5.34–5.39.

Attendance of the general manager and other staff at meetings

5.40 The general manager is entitled to attend, but not to vote at, a meeting of the council or a meeting of a committee of the council of which all of the members are councillors.

Note: Clause 5.40 reflects section 376(1) of the Act.

5.41 The general manager is entitled to attend a meeting of any other committee of the council and may, if a member of the committee, exercise a vote.

Note: Clause 5.41 reflects section 376(2) of the Act.

5.42 The general manager may be excluded from a meeting of the council or a committee while the council or committee deals with a matter relating to the standard of performance of the general manager or the terms of employment of the general manager.

Note: Clause 5.42 reflects section 376(3) of the Act.

5.43 The attendance of other council staff at a meeting, (other than as members of the public) shall be with the approval of the general manager.

5.44 The general manager and other council staff may attend meetings of the council and committees of the council by audio-visual-link. Attendance by council staff at meetings by audio-visual link (other than as members of the public) shall be with the approval of the general manager.

6 THE CHAIRPERSON

The chairperson at meetings

6.1 The mayor, or at the request of or in the absence of the mayor, the deputy mayor (if any) presides at meetings of the council.

Note: Clause 6.1 reflects section 369(1) of the Act.

6.2 If the mayor and the deputy mayor (if any) are absent, a councillor elected to chair the meeting by the councillors present presides at a meeting of the council.

Note: Clause 6.2 reflects section 369(2) of the Act.

Election of the chairperson in the absence of the mayor and deputy mayor

6.3 If no chairperson is present at a meeting of the council at the time designated for the holding of the meeting, the first business of the meeting must be the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting.

6.4 The election of a chairperson must be conducted:

(a) by the general manager or, in their absence, an employee of the council designated by the general manager to conduct the election, or
(b) by the person who called the meeting or a person acting on their behalf if neither the general manager nor a designated employee is present at the meeting, or if there is no general manager or designated employee.

6.5 If, at an election of a chairperson, two (2) or more candidates receive the same number of votes and no other candidate receives a greater number of votes, the chairperson is to be the candidate whose name is chosen by lot.

6.6 For the purposes of clause 6.5, the person conducting the election must:

(a) arrange for the names of the candidates who have equal numbers of votes to be written on similar slips, and
(b) then fold the slips so as to prevent the names from being seen, mix the slips and draw one of the slips at random.

6.7 The candidate whose name is on the drawn slip is the candidate who is to be the chairperson.

6.8 Any election conducted under clause 6.3, and the outcome of the vote, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Chairperson to have precedence

6.9 When the chairperson rises or speaks during a meeting of the council:

(a) any councillor then speaking or seeking to speak must cease speaking and, if standing, immediately resume their seat, and
(b) every councillor present must be silent to enable the chairperson to be heard without interruption.

7 MODES OF ADDRESS

7.1 If the chairperson is the mayor, they are to be addressed as 'Mr Mayor' or 'Madam Mayor'.

7.2 Where the chairperson is not the mayor, they are to be addressed as either 'Mr Chairperson' or 'Madam Chairperson'.

7.3 A councillor is to be addressed as 'Councillor [surname]'.

7.4 A council officer is to be addressed by their official designation or as Mr/Ms [surname].

8 ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

8.1 Removed – Clause 8.2 satisfies the Model Code of Meeting Practice

8.2 The general order of business for an ordinary meeting of the council shall be:

01 Opening meeting
02 Acknowledgement of country *Note: first meeting of Council following an election to include a Welcome to Country*
03 Prayer
04 Apologies and applications for a leave of absence or attendance by audio-visual link by councillors
05 Confirmation of minutes
06 Disclosures of interests
07 Mayoral minute(s)
08 Staff Reports
09 Notices of motions
10 Questions with notice
11 Confidential matters
12 Conclusion of the meeting

Note: Councils must use either clause 8.1 or 8.2.

8.3 The order of business as fixed under clause 8.2 may be altered for a particular meeting of the council if a motion to that effect is passed at that meeting. Such a motion can be moved without notice.

Note: If adopted, Part 13 allows council to deal with items of business by exception.

8.4 Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 8.3 may speak to the motion before it is put.

9 CONSIDERATION OF BUSINESS AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

Business that can be dealt with at a council meeting

9.1 The council must not consider business at a meeting of the council:

(a) unless a councillor has given notice of the business, as required by clause 3.10, and
(b) unless notice of the business has been sent to the councillors in accordance with clause 3.7 in the case of an ordinary meeting or clause 3.9 in the case of an extraordinary meeting called in an emergency.

9.2 Clause 9.1 does not apply to the consideration of business at a meeting, if the business:

(a) is already before, or directly relates to, a matter that is already before the council, or
(b) is the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting, or
(c) subject to clause 9.9, is a matter or topic put to the meeting by way of a mayoral minute, or
(d) is a motion for the adoption of recommendations of a committee, including, but not limited to, a committee of the council.

9.3 Despite clause 9.1, business may be considered at a meeting of the council even though due notice of the business has not been given to the councillors if:

(a) a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and
(b) the business to be considered is ruled by the chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.

9.4 A motion moved under clause 9.3(a) can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 9.3(a) can speak to the motion before it is put.

9.5 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 9.3(b).

Mayoral minutes

9.6 Subject to clause 9.9, if the mayor is the chairperson at a meeting of the council, the mayor may, by minute signed by the mayor, put to the meeting without notice any matter or topic that is within the jurisdiction of the council, or of which the council has official knowledge.

9.7 A mayoral minute, when put to a meeting, takes precedence over all business on the council's agenda for the meeting. The chairperson (but only if the chairperson is the mayor) may move the adoption of a mayoral minute without the motion being seconded.

9.8 A recommendation made in a mayoral minute put by the mayor is, so far as it is adopted by the council, a resolution of the council.

9.9 A mayoral minute must not be used to put without notice matters that are routine and not urgent or matters for which proper notice should be given because of their complexity. For the purpose of this clause, a matter will be urgent where it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.

9.10 Where a mayoral minute makes a recommendation which, if adopted, would require the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan, it must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the recommendation. If the mayoral minute does not identify a funding source, the council must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the general manager on the availability of funds for implementing the recommendation if adopted.

Staff reports

9.11 A recommendation made in a staff report is, so far as it is adopted by the council, a resolution of the council.

Reports of committees of council

9.12 The recommendations of a committee of the council are, so far as they are adopted by the council, resolutions of the council.

9.13 If in a report of a committee of the council distinct recommendations are made, the council may make separate decisions on each recommendation.

Questions

9.14 A question must not be asked at a meeting of the council unless it concerns a matter on the agenda of the meeting or notice has been given of the question in accordance with clauses 3.10 and 3.14.

9.15 A councillor may, through the chairperson, put a question to another councillor about a matter on the agenda.

9.16 A councillor may, through the general manager, put a question to a council employee about a matter on the agenda. Council employees are only obliged to answer a question put to them through the general manager at the direction of the general manager.

9.17 A councillor or council employee to whom a question is put is entitled to be given reasonable notice of the question and, in particular, sufficient notice to enable reference to be made to other persons or to information. Where a councillor or council employee to whom a question is put is unable to respond to the question at the meeting at which it is put, they may take it on notice and report the response to the next meeting of the council.

9.18 Councillors must put questions directly, succinctly, respectfully and without argument.

9.19 The chairperson must not permit discussion on any reply to, or refusal to reply to, a question put to a councillor or council employee.

10 RULES OF DEBATE

Motions to be seconded

10.1 Unless otherwise specified in this code, a motion or an amendment cannot be debated unless or until it has been seconded.

Notices of motion

10.2 A councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.10 is to move the motion the subject of the notice of motion at the meeting at which it is to be considered.

10.3 If a councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.10 wishes to withdraw it after the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered have been sent to councillors, the councillor may request the withdrawal of the motion when it is before the council.

10.4 In the absence of a councillor who has placed a notice of motion on the agenda for a meeting of the council:

(a) any other councillor may, with the leave of the chairperson, move the motion at the meeting, or
(b) the chairperson may defer consideration of the motion until the next meeting of the council.

Chairperson's duties with respect to motions

10.5 It is the duty of the chairperson at a meeting of the council to receive and put to the meeting any lawful motion that is brought before the meeting.

10.6 The chairperson must rule out of order any motion or amendment to a motion that is unlawful or the implementation of which would be unlawful.

10.7 Before ruling out of order a motion or an amendment to a motion under clause 10.6, the chairperson is to give the mover an opportunity to clarify or amend the motion or amendment.

10.8 Any motion, amendment, or other matter that the chairperson has ruled out of order is taken to have been lost.

Motions requiring the expenditure of funds

10.9 A motion or an amendment to a motion which if passed would require the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the motion. If the motion does not identify a funding source, the council must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the general manager on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted.

Amendments to motions

10.10 An amendment to a motion must be moved and seconded before it can be debated.

10.11 An amendment to a motion must relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion before the council and must not be a direct negative of the original motion. An amendment to a motion which does not relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion, or which is a direct negative of the original motion, must be ruled out of order by the chairperson.

10.12 The mover of an amendment is to be given the opportunity to explain any uncertainties in the proposed amendment before a seconder is called for.

10.13 If an amendment has been lost, a further amendment can be moved to the motion to which the lost amendment was moved, and so on, but no more than one (1) motion and one (1) proposed amendment can be before council at any one time.

10.14 While an amendment is being considered, debate must only occur in relation to the amendment and not the original motion. Debate on the original motion is to be suspended while the amendment to the original motion is being debated.

10.15 If the amendment is carried, it becomes the motion and is to be debated. If the amendment is lost, debate is to resume on the original motion.

10.16 An amendment may become the motion without debate or a vote where it is accepted by the councillor who moved the original motion.

Foreshadowed motions

10.17 A councillor may propose a foreshadowed motion in relation to the matter the subject of the original motion before the council, without a seconder during debate on the original motion. The foreshadowed motion is only to be considered if the original motion is lost or withdrawn and the foreshadowed motion is then moved and seconded. If the original motion is carried, the foreshadowed motion lapses.

10.18 Where an amendment has been moved and seconded, a councillor may, without a seconder, foreshadow a further amendment that they propose to move after the first amendment has been dealt with. There is no limit to the number of foreshadowed amendments that may be put before the council at any time. However, no discussion can take place on foreshadowed amendments until the previous amendment has been dealt with and the foreshadowed amendment has been moved and seconded.

10.19 Foreshadowed motions and foreshadowed amendments are to be considered in the order in which they are proposed. However, foreshadowed motions cannot be considered until all foreshadowed amendments have been dealt with.

Limitations on the number and duration of speeches

10.20 A councillor who, during a debate at a meeting of the council, moves an original motion, has the right to speak on each amendment to the motion and a right of general reply to all observations that are made during the debate in relation to the motion, and any amendment to it at the conclusion of the debate before the motion (whether amended or not) is finally put.

10.21 A councillor, other than the mover of an original motion, has the right to speak once on the motion and once on each amendment to it.

10.22 A councillor must not, without the consent of the council, speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, or for longer than five (5) minutes at any one time.

10.23 Despite clause 10.22, the chairperson may permit a councillor who claims to have been misrepresented or misunderstood to speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, and for longer than five (5) minutes on that motion or amendment to enable the councillor to make a statement limited to explaining the misrepresentation or misunderstanding.

10.24 Despite clause 10.22, the council may resolve to shorten the duration of speeches to expedite the consideration of business at a meeting.

10.25 Despite clauses 10.20 and 10.21, a councillor may move that a motion or an amendment be now put:

(a) if the mover of the motion or amendment has spoken in favour of it and no councillor expresses an intention to speak against it, or
(b) if at least two (2) councillors have spoken in favour of the motion or amendment and at least two (2) councillors have spoken against it.

10.26 The chairperson must immediately put to the vote, without debate, a motion moved under clause 10.25. A seconder is not required for such a motion.

10.27 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is passed, the chairperson must, without further debate, put the original motion or amendment to the vote immediately after the mover of the original motion has exercised their right of reply under clause 10.20.

10.28 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is lost, the chairperson must allow the debate on the original motion or the amendment to be resumed.

10.29 All councillors must be heard without interruption and all other councillors must, unless otherwise permitted under this code, remain silent while another councillor is speaking.

10.30 Once the debate on a matter has concluded and a matter has been dealt with, the chairperson must not allow further debate on the matter.

Participation by non-voting representatives in joint organisation board meetings

10.31 Removed – Relevant to Joint Organisations only.

11 VOTING

Voting entitlements of councillors

11.1 Each councillor is entitled to one (1) vote.

Note: Clause 11.1 reflects section 370(1) of the Act.

11.2 The person presiding at a meeting of the council has, in the event of an equality of votes, a second or casting vote.

Note: Clause 11.2 reflects section 370(2) of the Act.

11.3 Where the chairperson declines to exercise, or fails to exercise, their second or casting vote, in the event of an equality of votes, the motion being voted upon is lost.

11.4 Removed – Relevant to Joint Organisations only.

Voting at council meetings

11.5 A councillor who is present at a meeting of the council but who fails to vote on a motion put to the meeting is taken to have voted against the motion.

11.6 Removed – Clause 11.11 satisfies the Model Code of Meeting Practice.

11.7 Removed – Clause 11.11 satisfies the Model Code of Meeting Practice.

11.8 Removed – Clause 11.11 satisfies the Model Code of Meeting Practice.

11.9 Removed – Clause 11.11 satisfies the Model Code of Meeting Practice.

11.10 Voting at a meeting, including voting in an election at a meeting, is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system). However, the council may resolve that the voting in any election by councillors for mayor or deputy mayor is to be by secret ballot.

11.11 All voting at council meetings, (including meetings that are closed to the public), must be recorded in the minutes of meetings with the names of councillors who voted for and against each motion or amendment, (including the use of the casting vote), being recorded.

Note: If clause 11.11 is adopted, clauses 11.6 – 11.9 and clause 11.13 may be omitted.

Voting on planning decisions

11.12 The general manager must keep a register containing, for each planning decision made at a meeting of the council or a council committee (including, but not limited to a committee of the council), the names of the councillors who supported the decision and the names of any councillors who opposed (or are taken to have opposed) the decision.

11.13 Removed – Clause 11.11 satisfies the Model Code of Meeting Practice.

11.14 Each decision recorded in the register is to be described in the register or identified in a manner that enables the description to be obtained from another publicly available document.

11.15 Clauses 11.12–11.14 apply also to meetings that are closed to the public.

Note: Clauses 11.12–11.15 reflect section 375A of the Act.

Note: The requirements of clause 11.12 may be satisfied by maintaining a register of the minutes of each planning decision.

12 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

12.1 The council may resolve itself into a committee to consider any matter before the council.

Note: Clause 12.1 reflects section 373 of the Act.

12.2 All the provisions of this code relating to meetings of the council, so far as they are applicable, extend to and govern the proceedings of the council when in committee of the whole, except the provisions limiting the number and duration of speeches.

Note: Clauses 10.20–10.30 limit the number and duration of speeches.

12.3 The general manager or, in the absence of the general manager, an employee of the council designated by the general manager, is responsible for reporting to the council the proceedings of the committee of the whole. It is not necessary to report the proceedings in full, but any recommendations of the committee must be reported.

12.4 The council must ensure that a report of the proceedings (including any recommendations of the committee) is recorded in the council's minutes. However, the council is not taken to have

adopted the report until a motion for adoption has been made and passed.

13 DEALING WITH ITEMS BY EXCEPTION

13.1 The council or a committee of council may, at any time, resolve to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together by way of a single resolution.

13.2 Before the council or committee resolves to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together under clause 13.1, the chairperson must list the items of business to be adopted and ask councillors to identify any individual items of business listed by the chairperson that they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or that they wish to speak on.

13.3 The council or committee must not resolve to adopt any item of business under clause 13.1 that a councillor has identified as being one they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or to speak on.

13.4 Where the consideration of multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 involves a variation to the order of business for the meeting, the council or committee must resolve to alter the order of business in accordance with clause 8.3.

13.5 A motion to adopt multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 must identify each of the items of business to be adopted and state that they are to be adopted as recommended in the business paper.

13.6 Items of business adopted under clause 13.1 are to be taken to have been adopted unanimously.

13.7 Councillors must ensure that they declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to items of business considered together under clause 13.1 in accordance with the requirements of the council's code of conduct.

14 CLOSURE OF COUNCIL MEETINGS TO THE PUBLIC

Grounds on which meetings can be closed to the public

14.1 The council or a committee of the council may close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises the discussion or the receipt of any of the following types of matters:

(a) personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors),
(b) the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer,
(c) information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business,
(d) commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed:
    (i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, or
    (ii) confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the council, or
    (iii) reveal a trade secret,
(e) information that would, if disclosed, prejudice the maintenance of law,
(f) matters affecting the security of the council, councillors, council staff or council property,
(g) advice concerning litigation, or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege,
(h) information concerning the nature and location of a place or an item of Aboriginal significance on community land,
(i) alleged contraventions of the council's code of conduct.

Note: Clause 14.1 reflects section 10A(1) and (2) of the Act.

14.2 The council or a committee of the council may also close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public.

Note: Clause 14.2 reflects section 10A(3) of the Act.

Matters to be considered when closing meetings to the public

14.3 A meeting is not to remain closed during the discussion of anything referred to in clause 14.1:

(a) except for so much of the discussion as is necessary to preserve the relevant confidentiality, privilege or security, and
(b) if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret – unless the council or committee concerned is satisfied that discussion of the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest.

Note: Clause 14.3 reflects section 10B(1) of the Act.

14.4 A meeting is not to be closed during the receipt and consideration of information or advice referred to in clause 14.1(g) unless the advice concerns legal matters that:

(a) are substantial issues relating to a matter in which the council or committee is involved, and
(b) are clearly identified in the advice, and
(c) are fully discussed in that advice.

Note: Clause 14.4 reflects section 10B(2) of the Act.

14.5 If a meeting is closed during the discussion of a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public (as referred to in clause 14.2), the consideration of the motion must not include any consideration of the matter or information to be discussed in that other part of the meeting other than consideration of whether the matter concerned is a matter referred to in clause 14.1.

Note: Clause 14.5 reflects section 10B(3) of the Act.

14.6 For the purpose of determining whether the discussion of a matter in an open meeting would be contrary to the public interest, it is irrelevant that:

(a) a person may misinterpret or misunderstand the discussion, or
(b) the discussion of the matter may:
    (i) cause embarrassment to the council or committee concerned, or to councillors or to employees of the council, or
    (ii) cause a loss of confidence in the council or committee.

Note: Clause 14.6 reflects section 10B(4) of the Act.

14.7 In deciding whether part of a meeting is to be closed to the public, the council or committee concerned must consider any relevant guidelines issued by the Departmental Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government.

Note: Clause 14.7 reflects section 10B(5) of the Act.

Notice of likelihood of closure not required in urgent cases

14.8 Part of a meeting of the council, or of a committee of the council, may be closed to the public while the council or committee considers a matter that has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed, but only if:

(a) it becomes apparent during the discussion of a particular matter that the matter is a matter referred to in clause 14.1, and
(b) the council or committee, after considering any representations made under clause 14.9, resolves that further discussion of the matter:
    (i) should not be deferred (because of the urgency of the matter), and
    (ii) should take place in a part of the meeting that is closed to the public.

Note: Clause 14.8 reflects section 10C of the Act.

Representations by members of the public

14.9 The council, or a committee of the council, may allow members of the public to make representations to or at a meeting, before any part of the meeting is closed to the public, as to whether that part of the meeting should be closed.

Note: Clause 14.9 reflects section 10A(4) of the Act.

14.10 A representation under clause 14.9 is to be made after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded.

14.11 Where the matter has been identified in the agenda of the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, in order to make representations under clause 14.9, members of the public must first make an application to the council in the approved form. Applications must be received by 4pm on the Monday before the meeting at which the matter is to be considered.

14.12 The general manager (or their delegate) may refuse an application made under clause 14.11. The general manager or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.

14.13 No more than four speakers are to be permitted to make representations under clause 14.9.

14.14 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to make representations under clause 14.9, the general manager or their delegate may request the speakers to nominate from among themselves the persons who are to make representations to the council. If the speakers are not able to agree on whom to nominate to make representations under clause 14.9, the general manager or their delegate is to determine who will make representations to the council.

14.15 The general manager (or their delegate) is to determine the order of speakers.

14.16 Where the council or a committee of the council proposes to close a meeting or part of a meeting to the public in circumstances where the matter has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, the chairperson is to invite representations from the public under clause 14.9 after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded. The chairperson is to permit no more than four speakers to make representations in such order as determined by the

chairperson.

14.17 Each speaker will be allowed 3 minutes to make representations, and this time limit is to be strictly enforced by the chairperson. Speakers must confine their representations to whether the meeting should be closed to the public. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard.

Expulsion of non-councillors from meetings closed to the public

14.18 If a meeting or part of a meeting of the council or a committee of the council is closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act and this code, any person who is not a councillor and who fails to leave the meeting when requested, may be expelled from the meeting as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act.

14.19 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the first-mentioned person from that place and, if necessary restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

Obligations of councillors attending meetings by audio-visual link

14.20 Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link must ensure that no other person is within sight or hearing of the meeting at any time that the meeting is closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.

Information to be disclosed in resolutions closing meetings to the public

14.21 The grounds on which part of a meeting is closed must be stated in the decision to close that part of the meeting and must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The grounds must specify the following:

(a) the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act,
(b) the matter that is to be discussed during the closed part of the meeting,
(c) the reasons why the part of the meeting is being closed, including (if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret) an explanation of the way in which discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.

Note: Clause 14.21 reflects section 10D of the Act.

Resolutions passed at closed meetings to be made public

14.22 If the council passes a resolution during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public, the chairperson must make the resolution public as soon as practicable after the meeting, or the relevant part of the meeting, has ended, and the resolution must be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.

14.23 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public must be made public by the chairperson under clause 14.22 during a part of the meeting that is webcast.

15 KEEPING ORDER AT MEETINGS

Points of order

15.1 A councillor may draw the attention of the chairperson to an alleged breach of this code by raising a point of order. A point of order does not require a seconder.

15.2 A point of order cannot be made with respect to adherence to the principles contained in clause 2.1.

15.3 A point of order must be taken immediately it is raised. The chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting and permit the councillor raising the point of order to state the provision of this code they believe has been breached. The chairperson must then rule on the point of order – either by upholding it or by overruling it.

Questions of order

15.4 The chairperson, without the intervention of any other councillor, may call any councillor to order whenever, in the opinion of the chairperson, it is necessary to do so.

15.5 A councillor who claims that another councillor has committed an act of disorder, or is out of order, may call the attention of the chairperson to the matter.

15.6 The chairperson must rule on a question of order immediately after it is raised but, before doing so, may invite the opinion of the council.

15.7 The chairperson's ruling must be obeyed unless a motion dissenting from the ruling is passed.

Motions of dissent

15.8 A councillor can, without notice, move to dissent from a ruling of the chairperson on a point of order or a question of order. If that happens, the chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting until a decision is made on the motion of dissent.

15.9 If a motion of dissent is passed, the chairperson must proceed with the suspended business as though the ruling dissented from had not been given. If, as a result of the ruling, any motion or business has been rejected as out of order, the chairperson must restore the motion or business to the agenda and proceed with it in due course.

15.10 Despite any other provision of this code, only the mover of a motion of dissent and the chairperson can speak to the motion before it is put. The mover of the motion does not have a right of general reply.

Acts of disorder

15.11 A councillor commits an act of disorder if the councillor, at a meeting of the council or a committee of the council:

(a) contravenes the Act, the Regulation or this code, or
(b) assaults or threatens to assault another councillor or person present at the meeting, or
(c) moves or attempts to move a motion or an amendment that has an unlawful purpose or that deals with a matter that is outside the jurisdiction of the council or the committee, or addresses or attempts to address the council or the committee on such a motion, amendment or matter, or

(d) insults, makes unfavourable personal remarks about, or imputes improper motives to any other council official, or alleges a breach of the council's code of conduct, or
(e) says or does anything that is inconsistent with maintaining order at the meeting or is likely to bring the council or the committee into disrepute.

Note: Clause 15.11 reflects section 182 of the Regulation.

15.12 The chairperson may require a councillor:

(a) to apologise without reservation for an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.11(a), (b), or (e), or
(b) to withdraw a motion or an amendment referred to in clause 15.11(c) and, where appropriate, to apologise without reservation, or
(c) to retract and apologise without reservation for any statement that constitutes an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.11(d) and (e).

Note: Clause 15.12 reflects section 233 of the Regulation.

How disorder at a meeting may be dealt with

15.13 If disorder occurs at a meeting of the council, the chairperson may adjourn the meeting for a period of not more than fifteen (15) minutes and leave the chair. The council, on reassembling, must, on a question put from the chairperson, decide without debate whether the business is to be proceeded with or not. This clause applies to disorder arising from the conduct of members of the public as well as disorder arising from the conduct of councillors.

Expulsion from meetings

15.14 All chairpersons of meetings of the council and committees of the council are authorised under this code to expel any person, including any councillor, from a council or committee meeting, for the purposes of section 10(2)(b) of the Act.

15.15 Removed – Clause 15.14 satisfies the Model Code of Meeting Practice.
Note: Councils may use either clause 15.14 or clause 15.15.

15.16 Clause 15.14, does not limit the ability of the council or a committee of the council to resolve to expel a person, including a councillor, from a council or committee meeting, under section 10(2)(a) of the Act.

15.17 A councillor may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the council for having failed to comply with a requirement under clause 15.12. The expulsion of a councillor from the meeting for that reason does not prevent any other action from being taken against the councillor for the act of disorder concerned.

Note: Clause 15.17 reflects section 233(2) of the Regulation.

15.18 A member of the public may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the council for engaging in or having engaged in disorderly conduct at the meeting.

15.19 Where a councillor or a member of the public is expelled from a meeting, the expulsion and the name of the person expelled, if known, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

15.20 If a councillor or a member of the public fails to leave the place where a meeting of the council is being held immediately after they have been expelled, a police officer, or any person

authorised for the purpose by the council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the councillor or member of the public from that place and, if necessary, restrain the councillor or member of the public from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

How disorder by councillors attending meetings by audio-visual link may be dealt with

15.21 Where a councillor is attending a meeting by audio-visual link, the chairperson or a person authorised by the chairperson may mute the councillor's audio link to the meeting for the purposes of enforcing compliance with this code.

15.22 If a councillor attending a meeting by audio-visual link is expelled from a meeting for an act of disorder, the chairperson of the meeting or a person authorised by the chairperson, may terminate the councillor's audio-visual link to the meeting.

Use of mobile phones and the unauthorised recording of meetings

15.23 Councillors, council staff and members of the public must ensure that mobile phones are turned to silent during meetings of the council and committees of the council.

15.24 A person must not live stream or use an audio recorder, video camera, mobile phone or any other device to make a recording of the proceedings of a meeting of the council or a committee of the council without the prior authorisation of the council or the committee.

15.25 Without limiting clause 15.18, a contravention of clause 15.24 or an attempt to contravene that clause, constitutes disorderly conduct for the purposes of clause 15.18. Any person who contravenes or attempts to contravene clause 15.24, may be expelled from the meeting as provided for under section 10(2) of the Act.

15.26 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the first-mentioned person from that place and, if necessary, restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

16 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

16.1 All councillors and, where applicable, all other persons, must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at meetings of the council and committees of the council in accordance with the council's code of conduct. All declarations of conflicts of interest and how the conflict of interest was managed by the person who made the declaration must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the declaration was made.

16.2 Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at the meeting in accordance with the council's code of conduct. Where a councillor has declared a pecuniary or significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter being discussed at the meeting, the councillor's audio-visual link to the meeting must be suspended or terminated and the councillor must not be in sight or hearing of the meeting at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the council or committee, or at any time during which the council or committee is voting on the matter.

17 DECISIONS OF THE COUNCIL

Council decisions

17.1 A decision supported by a majority of the votes at a meeting of the council at which a quorum is present is a decision of the council.

Note: Clause 17.1 reflects section 371 of the Act in the case of councils and section 400T(8) in the case of joint organisations.

17.2 Decisions made by the council must be accurately recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the decision is made.

Rescinding or altering council decisions

17.3 A resolution passed by the council may not be altered or rescinded except by a motion to that effect of which notice has been given under clause 3.10.

Note: Clause 17.3 reflects section 372(1) of the Act.

17.4 If a notice of motion to rescind a resolution is given at the meeting at which the resolution is carried, the resolution must not be carried into effect until the motion of rescission has been dealt with.

Note: Clause 17.4 reflects section 372(2) of the Act.

17.5 If a motion has been lost, a motion having the same effect must not be considered unless notice of it has been duly given in accordance with clause 3.10.

Note: Clause 17.5 reflects section 372(3) of the Act.

17.6 A notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution, and a notice of motion which has the same effect as a motion which has been lost, must be signed by three (3) councillors if less than three (3) months has elapsed since the resolution was passed, or the motion was lost.

Note: Clause 17.6 reflects section 372(4) of the Act.

17.7 If a motion to alter or rescind a resolution has been lost, or if a motion which has the same effect as a previously lost motion is lost, no similar motion may be brought forward within three (3) months of the meeting at which it was lost. This clause may not be evaded by substituting a motion differently worded, but in principle the same.

Note: Clause 17.7 reflects section 372(5) of the Act.

17.8 The provisions of clauses 17.5–17.7 concerning lost motions do not apply to motions of adjournment.

Note: Clause 17.8 reflects section 372(7) of the Act.

17.9 A notice of motion submitted in accordance with clause 17.6 may only be withdrawn under clause 3.11 with the consent of all signatories to the notice of motion.

17.10 A notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution relating to a development application must be submitted to the general manager no later than 10am on the day after the meeting at which the resolution was adopted.

17.11 A motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the council may be moved on the report of a committee of the council and any such report must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting of the council.

Note: Clause 17.11 reflects section 372(6) of the Act.

17.12 Subject to clause 17.7, in cases of urgency, a motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the council may be moved at the same meeting at which the resolution was adopted, where:

(a) a notice of motion signed by three councillors is submitted to the chairperson, and
(b) a motion to have the motion considered at the meeting is passed, and
(c) the chairperson rules the business that is the subject of the motion is of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.

17.13 A motion moved under clause 17.12(b) can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.12(b) can speak to the motion before it is put.

17.14 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 17.12(c).

Recommitting resolutions to correct an error

17.15 Despite the provisions of this Part, a councillor may, with the leave of the chairperson, move to recommit a resolution adopted at the same meeting:

(a) to correct any error, ambiguity or imprecision in the council's resolution, or
(b) to confirm the voting on the resolution.

17.16 In seeking the leave of the chairperson to move to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.15(a), the councillor is to propose alternative wording for the resolution.

17.17 The chairperson must not grant leave to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.15(a), unless they are satisfied that the proposed alternative wording of the resolution would not alter the substance of the resolution previously adopted at the meeting.

17.18 A motion moved under clause 17.15 can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.15 can speak to the motion before it is put.

17.19 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 17.15.

17.20 A motion moved under clause 17.15 with the leave of the chairperson cannot be voted on unless or until it has been seconded.

18 TIME LIMITS ON COUNCIL MEETINGS

18.1 Meetings of the council and committees of the council are to conclude no later than 3 hours after the commencement of the meeting.

18.2 If the business of the meeting is unfinished within 3 hours of commencement , the council or the committee may, by resolution, extend the time of the meeting.

18.3 If the business of the meeting is unfinished at **[council to specify the time]**, and the council does not resolve to extend the meeting, the chairperson must either:

(a) defer consideration of the remaining items of business on the agenda to the next ordinary meeting of the council, or
(b) adjourn the meeting to a time, date and place fixed by the chairperson.

18.4 Clause 18.3 does not limit the ability of the council or a committee of the council to resolve to adjourn a meeting at any time. The resolution adjourning the meeting must fix the time, date and place that the meeting is to be adjourned to.

18.5 Where a meeting is adjourned under clause 18.3 or 18.4, the general manager must:

(a) individually notify each councillor of the time, date and place at which the meeting will reconvene, and
(b) publish the time, date and place at which the meeting will reconvene on the council's website and in such other manner that the general manager is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the time, date and place of the reconvened meeting to the attention of as many people as possible.

19 AFTER THE MEETING

Minutes of meetings

19.1 The council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of meetings of the council.

Note: Clause 19.1 reflects section 375(1) of the Act.

19.2 At a minimum, the general manager must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the council's minutes:

(a) the names of councillors attending a council meeting and whether they attended the meeting in person or by audio-visual link,
(b) details of each motion moved at a council meeting and of any amendments moved to it,
(c) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,
(d) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and
(e) such other matters specifically required under this code.

19.3 The minutes of a council meeting must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the council.

Note: Clause 19.3 reflects section 375(2) of the Act.

19.4 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.

19.5 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at the subsequent meeting.

Note: Clause 19.5 reflects section 375(2) of the Act.

19.6 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative

errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.

19.7 The confirmed minutes of a council meeting must be published on the council's website. This clause does not prevent the council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of its meetings on its website prior to their confirmation.

Access to correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, a meeting

19.8 The council and committees of the council must, during or at the close of a meeting, or during the business day following the meeting, give reasonable access to any person to inspect correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting.

Note: Clause 19.8 reflects section 11(1) of the Act.

19.9 Clause 19.8 does not apply if the correspondence or reports relate to a matter that was received or discussed or laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting when the meeting was closed to the public.

Note: Clause 19.9 reflects section 11(2) of the Act.

19.10 Clause 19.8 does not apply if the council or the committee resolves at the meeting, when open to the public, that the correspondence or reports are to be treated as confidential because they relate to a matter specified in section 10A(2) of the Act.

Note: Clause 19.10 reflects section 11(3) of the Act.

19.11 Correspondence or reports to which clauses 19.9 and 19.10 apply are to be marked with the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act that applies to the correspondence or report.

Implementation of decisions of the council

19.12 The general manager is to implement, without undue delay, lawful decisions of the council.

Note: Clause 19.12 reflects section 335(b) of the Act.

20 COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Application of this Part

20.1 This Part only applies to committees of the council whose members are all councillors.

Council committees whose members are all councillors

20.2 The council may, by resolution, establish such committees as it considers necessary.

20.3 A committee of the council is to consist of the mayor and such other councillors as are elected by the councillors or appointed by the council.

20.4 The quorum for a meeting of a committee of the council is to be:

(a) such number of members as the council decides, or
(b) if the council has not decided a number – a majority of the members of the committee.

Functions of committees

20.5 The council must specify the functions of each of its committees when the committee is established but may from time to time amend those functions.

Notice of committee meetings

20.6 The general manager must send to each councillor, regardless of whether they are a committee member, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the committee, a notice specifying:

(a) the time, date and place of the meeting, and
(b) the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.

20.7 Notice of less than three (3) days may be given of a committee meeting called in an emergency.

Attendance at committee meetings

20.8 A committee member (other than the mayor) ceases to be a member of a committee if the committee member:

(a) has been absent from three (3) consecutive meetings of the committee without having given reasons acceptable to the committee for the member's absences, or
(b) has been absent from at least half of the meetings of the committee held during the immediately preceding year without having given to the committee acceptable reasons for the member's absences.

20.9 Clause 20.8 does not apply if all of the members of the council are members of the committee.

Non-members entitled to attend committee meetings

20.10 A councillor who is not a member of a committee of the council is entitled to attend, and to speak at a meeting of the committee. However, the councillor is not entitled:

(a) to give notice of business for inclusion in the agenda for the meeting, or
(b) to move or second a motion at the meeting, or
(c) to vote at the meeting.

Chairperson and deputy chairperson of council committees

20.11 The chairperson of each committee of the council must be:

(a) the mayor, or
(b) if the mayor does not wish to be the chairperson of a committee, a member of the committee elected by the council, or
(c) if the council does not elect such a member, a member of the committee elected by the committee.

20.12 The council may elect a member of a committee of the council as deputy chairperson of the committee. If the council does not elect a deputy chairperson of such a committee, the committee may elect a deputy chairperson.

20.13 If neither the chairperson nor the deputy chairperson of a committee of the council is able or willing to preside at a meeting of the committee, the committee must elect a member of the committee to be acting chairperson of the committee.

20.14 The chairperson is to preside at a meeting of a committee of the council. If the chairperson is unable or unwilling to preside, the deputy chairperson (if any) is to preside at the meeting, but if neither the chairperson nor the deputy chairperson is able or willing to preside, the acting chairperson is to preside at the meeting.

Procedure in committee meetings

20.15 Subject to any specific requirements of this code, each committee of the council may regulate its own procedure. The provisions of this code are to be taken to apply to all committees of the council unless the council or the committee determines otherwise in accordance with this clause.

20.16 Whenever the voting on a motion put to a meeting of the committee is equal, the chairperson of the committee is to have a casting vote as well as an original vote unless the council or the committee determines otherwise in accordance with clause 20.15.

20.17 Removed – Relevant to Joint Organisations only.

20.18 Voting at a council committee meeting is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system).

Closure of committee meetings to the public

20.19 The provisions of the Act and Part 14 of this code apply to the closure of meetings of committees of the council to the public in the same way they apply to the closure of meetings of the council to the public.

20.20 If a committee of the council passes a resolution, or makes a recommendation, during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public, the chairperson must make the resolution or recommendation public as soon as practicable after the meeting or part of the meeting has ended, and report the resolution or recommendation to the next meeting of the council. The resolution or recommendation must also be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.

20.21 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public must be made public by the chairperson under clause 20.20 during a part of the meeting that is webcast.

Disorder in committee meetings

20.22 The provisions of the Act and this code relating to the maintenance of order in council meetings apply to meetings of committees of the council in the same way as they apply to meetings of the council.

Minutes of council committee meetings

20.23 Each committee of the council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of its meetings. At a minimum, a committee must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the committee's minutes:

(a) the names of councillors attending a meeting and whether they attended the meeting in person or by audio-visual link,
(b) details of each motion moved at a meeting and of any amendments moved to it,
(c) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,

(d) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and
(e) such other matters specifically required under this code.

20.24 All voting at meetings of committees of the council (including meetings that are closed to the public), must be recorded in the minutes of meetings with the names of councillors who voted for and against each motion or amendment, (including the use of the casting vote), being recorded.

20.25 The minutes of meetings of each committee of the council must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the committee.

20.26 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.

20.27 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at that subsequent meeting.

20.28 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.

20.29 The confirmed minutes of a meeting of a committee of the council must be published on the council's website. This clause does not prevent the council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of meetings of committees of the council on its website prior to their confirmation.

21 IRREGULARITES

21.1 Proceedings at a meeting of a council or a council committee are not invalidated because of:

(a) a vacancy in a civic office, or
(b) a failure to give notice of the meeting to any councillor or committee member, or
(c) any defect in the election or appointment of a councillor or committee member, or
(d) a failure of a councillor or a committee member to declare a conflict of interest, or to refrain from the consideration or discussion of, or vote on, the relevant matter, at a council or committee meeting in accordance with the council's code of conduct, or
(e) a failure to comply with this code.

Note: Clause 21.1 reflects section 374 of the Act.

22 DEFINITIONS

the Act	means the *Local Government Act 1993*
act of disorder	means an act of disorder as defined in clause 15.11 of this code
amendment	in relation to an original motion, means a motion moving an amendment to that motion
audio recorder	any device capable of recording speech
audio-visual link	means a facility that enables audio and visual communication between persons at different places
business day	means any day except Saturday or Sunday or any other day the whole or part of which is observed as a public holiday throughout New South Wales
chairperson	in relation to a meeting of the council – means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by section 369 of the Act and clauses 6.1 and 6.2 of this code, and in relation to a meeting of a committee – means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by clause 20.11 of this code
this code	means the council's adopted code of meeting practice
committee of the council	means a committee established by the council in accordance with clause 20.2 of this code (being a committee consisting only of councillors) or the council when it has resolved itself into committee of the whole under clause 12.1
council official	has the same meaning it has in the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW
day	means calendar day
division	means a request by two councillors under clause 11.7 of this code requiring the recording of the names of the councillors who voted both for and against a motion
foreshadowed amendment	means a proposed amendment foreshadowed by a councillor under clause 10.18 of this code during debate on the first amendment
foreshadowed motion	means a motion foreshadowed by a councillor under clause 10.17 of this code during debate on an original motion
open voting	means voting on the voices or by a show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system or similar means
planning decision	means a decision made in the exercise of a function of a council under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* including any decision relating to a development application, an environmental planning instrument, a development control plan or a development contribution plan under that Act, but not including the making of an order under Division 9.3 of Part 9 of that Act
performance improvement order	means an order issued under section 438A of the Act
quorum	means the minimum number of councillors or committee members necessary to conduct a meeting
the Regulation	means the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*
webcast	a video or audio broadcast of a meeting transmitted across the internet either concurrently with the meeting or at a later time
year	means the period beginning 1 July and ending the following 30 June

MODEL CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE

for Local Councils in NSW

2021

NSW GOVERNMENT

MODEL CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE FOR LOCAL COUNCILS IN NSW
2021

ACCESS TO SERVICES
The Office of Local Government is located at:
Street Address: Levels 1 & 2, 5 O'Keefe Avenue, NOWRA NSW 2541
Postal Address: Locked Bag 3015, Nowra, NSW 2541
Phone: 02 4428 4100
Fax: 02 4428 4199
TTY: 02 4428 4209
Email: olg@olg.nsw.gov.au
Website: www.olg.nsw.gov.au

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1 Introduction



This Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW (the Model Meeting Code) is prescribed under section 360 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (the Regulation).

The Model Meeting Code applies to all meetings of councils and committees of councils of which all the members are councillors (committees of council). Council committees whose members include persons other than councillors may adopt their own rules for meetings unless the council determines otherwise.

Councils must adopt a code of meeting practice that incorporates the mandatory provisions of the Model Meeting Code.

A council's adopted code of meeting practice may also incorporate the non-mandatory provisions of the Model Meeting Code and other supplementary provisions. However, a code of meeting practice adopted by a council must not contain provisions that are inconsistent with the mandatory provisions of this Model Meeting Code.

The provisions of the Model Meeting Code that are not mandatory are indicated in red font.

A council and a committee of the council of which all the members are councillors must conduct its meetings in accordance with the code of meeting practice adopted by the council.

The Model Meeting Code also applies to meetings of the boards of joint organisations and county councils. The provisions that are specific to meetings of boards of joint organisations are indicated in blue font.

In adopting the Model Meeting Code, joint organisations should adapt it to substitute the terms "board" for "council", "chairperson" for "mayor", "voting representative" for "councillor" and "executive officer" for "general manager".

In adopting the Model Meeting Code, county councils should adapt it to substitute the term "chairperson" for "mayor" and "member" for "councillor".

2 Meeting Principles



2.1 Council and committee meetings should be:

Transparent:	Decisions are made in a way that is open and accountable.
Informed:	Decisions are made based on relevant, quality information.
Inclusive:	Decisions respect the diverse needs and interests of the local community.
Principled:	Decisions are informed by the principles prescribed under Chapter 3 of the Act.
Trusted:	The community has confidence that councillors and staff act ethically and make decisions in the interests of the whole community.
Respectful:	Councillors, staff and meeting attendees treat each other with respect.
Effective:	Meetings are well organised, effectively run and skilfully chaired.
Orderly:	Councillors, staff and meeting attendees behave in a way that contributes to the orderly conduct of the meeting.

3 Before the Meeting



Timing of ordinary council meetings

3.1 Ordinary meetings of the council will be held on the following occasions: **[council to specify the frequency, time, date and place of its ordinary meetings].**

3.2 The council shall, by resolution, set the frequency, time, date and place of its ordinary meetings.

Note: Councils must use either clause 3.1 or 3.2.

Note: Under section 365 of the Act, councils are required to meet at least ten (10) times each year, each time in a different month unless the Minister for Local Government has approved a reduction in the number of times that a council is required to meet each year under section 365A.

Note: Under section 396 of the Act, county councils are required to meet at least four (4) times each year.

Note: Under section 400T of the Act, boards of joint organisations are required to meet at least four (4) times each year, each in a different quarter of the year.

Extraordinary meetings

3.3 If the mayor receives a request in writing, signed by at least two (2) councillors, the mayor must call an extraordinary meeting of the council to be held as soon as practicable, but in any event, no more than fourteen (14) days after receipt of the request. The mayor can be one of the two councillors requesting the meeting.

Note: Clause 3.3 reflects section 366 of the Act.

Notice to the public of council meetings

3.4 The council must give notice to the public of the time, date and place of each of its meetings, including extraordinary meetings and of each meeting of committees of the council.

Note: Clause 3.4 reflects section 9(1) of the Act.

3.5 For the purposes of clause 3.4, notice of a meeting of the council and of a committee of council is to be published before the meeting takes place. The notice must be published on the council's website, and in such other manner that the council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the meeting to the attention of as many people as possible.

3.6 For the purposes of clause 3.4, notice of more than one (1) meeting may be given in the same notice.

Notice to councillors of ordinary council meetings

3.7 The general manager must send to each councillor, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the council, a notice specifying the time, date and place at which the meeting is to be held, and the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.

Note: Clause 3.7 reflects section 367(1) of the Act.

3.8 The notice and the agenda for, and the business papers relating to, the meeting may be given to councillors in electronic form, but only if all councillors have facilities to access the notice, agenda and business papers in that form.

Note: Clause 3.8 reflects section 367(3) of the Act.

Notice to councillors of extraordinary meetings

3.9 Notice of less than three (3) days may be given to councillors of an extraordinary meeting of the council in cases of emergency.

Note: Clause 3.9 reflects section 367(2) of the Act.

Giving notice of business to be considered at council meetings

3.10 A councillor may give notice of any business they wish to be considered by the council at its next ordinary meeting by way of a notice of motion. To be included on the agenda of the meeting, the notice of motion must be in writing and must be submitted **[council to specify notice period required]** business days before the meeting is to be held.

3.11 A councillor may, in writing to the general manager, request the withdrawal of a notice of motion submitted by them prior to its inclusion in the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered.

3.12 If the general manager considers that a notice of motion submitted by a councillor for consideration at an ordinary meeting of the council has legal, strategic, financial or policy implications which should be taken into consideration by the meeting, the general manager may prepare a report in relation to the notice of motion for inclusion with the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the council.

3.13 A notice of motion for the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the notice of motion. If the notice of motion does not identify a funding source, the general manager must either:

(a) prepare a report on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted for inclusion in the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the council, or

(b) by written notice sent to all councillors with the business papers for the meeting for which the notice of motion has been submitted, defer consideration of the matter by the council to such a date specified in the notice, pending the preparation of such a report.

Questions with notice

3.14 A councillor may, by way of a notice submitted under clause 3.10, ask a question for response by the general manager about the performance or operations of the council.

3.15 A councillor is not permitted to ask a question with notice under clause 3.14 that comprises a complaint against the general manager or a member of staff of the council, or a question that implies wrongdoing by the general manager or a member of staff of the council.

3.16 The general manager or their nominee may respond to a question with notice submitted under clause 3.14 by way of a report included in the business papers for the relevant meeting of the council or orally at the meeting.

Agenda and business papers for ordinary meetings

3.17 The general manager must cause the agenda for a meeting of the council or a committee of the council to be prepared as soon as practicable before the meeting.

3.18 The general manager must ensure that the agenda for an ordinary meeting of the council states:

(a) all matters to be dealt with arising out of the proceedings of previous meetings of the council, and

(b) if the mayor is the chairperson – any matter or topic that the chairperson proposes, at the time when the agenda is prepared, to put to the meeting, and

(c) all matters, including matters that are the subject of staff reports and reports of committees, to be considered at the meeting, and

(d) any business of which due notice has been given under clause 3.10.

3.19 Nothing in clause 3.18 limits the powers of the mayor to put a mayoral minute to a meeting under clause 9.6.

3.20 The general manager must not include in the agenda for a meeting of the council any business of which due notice has been given if, in the opinion of the general manager, the business is, or the implementation of the business would be, unlawful. The general manager must report, without giving details of the item of business, any such exclusion to the next meeting of the council.

3.21 Where the agenda includes the receipt of information or discussion of other matters that, in the opinion of the general manager, is likely to take place when the meeting is closed to the public, the general manager must ensure that the agenda of the meeting:

(a) identifies the relevant item of business and indicates that it is of such a nature (without disclosing details of the information to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public), and

(b) states the grounds under section 10A(2) of the Act relevant to the item of business.

Note: Clause 3.21 reflects section 9(2A)(a) of the Act.

3.22 The general manager must ensure that the details of any item of business which, in the opinion of the general manager, is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, are included in a business paper provided to councillors for the meeting concerned. Such details must not be included in the business papers made available to the public and must not be disclosed by a councillor or by any other person to another person who is not authorised to have that information.

Statement of ethical obligations

3.23 Business papers for all ordinary and extraordinary meetings of the council and committees of the council must contain a statement reminding councillors of their oath or affirmation of office made under section 233A of the Act and their obligations under the council's code of conduct to disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest.

Availability of the agenda and business papers to the public

3.24 Copies of the agenda and the associated business papers, such as correspondence and reports for meetings of the council and committees of council, are to be published on the council's website, and must be made available to the public for inspection, or for taking away by any person free of charge at the offices of the council, at the relevant meeting and at such other venues determined by the council.

Note: Clause 3.24 reflects section 9(2) and (4) of the Act.

3.25 Clause 3.24 does not apply to the business papers for items of business that the general manager has identified under clause 3.21 as being likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public.

Note: Clause 3.25 reflects section 9(2A) (b) of the Act.

3.26 For the purposes of clause 3.24, copies of agendas and business papers must be published on the council's website and made available to the public at a time that is as close as possible to the time they are available to councillors.

Note: Clause 3.26 reflects section 9(3) of the Act.

3.27 A copy of an agenda, or of an associated business paper made available under clause 3.24, may in addition be given or made available in electronic form.

Note: Clause 3.27 reflects section 9(5) of the Act.

Agenda and business papers for extraordinary meetings

3.28 The general manager must ensure that the agenda for an extraordinary meeting of the council deals only with the matters stated in the notice of the meeting.

3.29 Despite clause 3.28, business may be considered at an extraordinary meeting of the council, even though due notice of the business has not been given, if:

(a) a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and

(b) the business to be considered is ruled by the chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.

3.30 A motion moved under clause 3.29(a) can be moved without notice but only after the business notified in the agenda for the extraordinary meeting has been dealt with.

3.31 Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion moved under clause 3.29(a) can speak to the motion before it is put.

3.32 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling of the chairperson under clause 3.29(b) on whether a matter is of great urgency.

Pre-meeting briefing sessions

3.33 Prior to each ordinary meeting of the council, the general manager may arrange a pre-meeting briefing session to brief councillors on business to be considered at the meeting. Pre-meeting briefing sessions may also be held for extraordinary meetings of the council and meetings of committees of the council.

3.34 Pre-meeting briefing sessions are to be held in the absence of the public.

3.35 Pre-meeting briefing sessions may be held by audio-visual link.

3.36 The general manager or a member of staff nominated by the general manager is to preside at pre-meeting briefing sessions.

3.37 Councillors must not use pre-meeting briefing sessions to debate or make preliminary decisions on items of business they are being briefed on, and any debate and decision-making must be left to the formal council or committee meeting at which the item of business is to be considered.

3.38 Councillors (including the mayor) must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to any item of business that is the subject of a briefing at a pre-meeting briefing session, in the same way that they are required to do so at a council or committee meeting. The council is to maintain a written record of all conflict of interest declarations made at pre-meeting briefing sessions and how the conflict of interest was managed by the councillor who made the declaration.

4 Public Forums



4.1 The council may hold a public forum prior to each ordinary meeting of the council for the purpose of hearing oral submissions from members of the public on items of business to be considered at the meeting. Public forums may also be held prior to extraordinary council meetings and meetings of committees of the council.

4.2 Public forums may be held by audio-visual link.

4.3 Public forums are to be chaired by the mayor or their nominee.

4.4 To speak at a public forum, a person must first make an application to the council in the approved form. Applications to speak at the public forum must be received by **[date and time to be specified by the council]** before the date on which the public forum is to be held, and must identify the item of business on the agenda of the council meeting the person wishes to speak on, and whether they wish to speak 'for' or 'against' the item.

4.5 A person may apply to speak on no more than **[number to be specified by the council]** items of business on the agenda of the council meeting.

4.6 Legal representatives acting on behalf of others are not to be permitted to speak at a public forum unless they identify their status as a legal representative when applying to speak at the public forum.

4.7 The general manager or their delegate may refuse an application to speak at a public forum. The general manager or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.

4.8 No more than **[number to be specified by the council]** speakers are to be permitted to speak 'for' or 'against' each item of business on the agenda for the council meeting.

4.9 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the general manager or their delegate may request the speakers to nominate from among themselves the persons who are to address the council on the item of business. If the speakers are not able to agree on whom to nominate to address the council, the general manager or their delegate is to determine who will address the council at the public forum.

4.10 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the general manager or their delegate may, in consultation with the mayor or the mayor's nominated chairperson, increase the number of speakers permitted to speak on an item of business, where they are satisfied that it is necessary to do so to allow the council to hear a fuller range of views on the relevant item of business.

4.11 Approved speakers at the public forum are to register with the council any written, visual or audio material to be presented in support of their address to the council at the public forum, and to identify any equipment needs no more than **[number to be specified by the council]** days before the public forum. The general manager or their delegate may refuse to allow such material to be presented.

4.12 The general manager or their delegate is to determine the order of speakers at the public forum.

4.13 Each speaker will be allowed **[number to be specified by the council]** minutes to address the council. This time is to be strictly enforced by the chairperson.

4.14 Speakers at public forums must not digress from the item on the agenda of the council meeting they have applied to address the council on. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard.

4.15 A councillor (including the chairperson) may, through the chairperson, ask questions of a speaker following their address at a public forum. Questions put to a speaker must be direct, succinct and without argument.

4.16 Speakers are under no obligation to answer a question put under clause 4.15. Answers by the speaker, to each question are to be limited to **[number to be specified by the council]** minutes.

4.17 Speakers at public forums cannot ask questions of the council, councillors, or council staff.

4.18 The general manager or their nominee may, with the concurrence of the chairperson, address the council for up to **[number to be specified by the council]** minutes in response to an address to the council at a public forum after the address and any subsequent questions and answers have been finalised.

4.19 Where an address made at a public forum raises matters that require further consideration by council staff, the general manager may recommend that the council defer consideration of the matter pending the preparation of a further report on the matters.

4.20 When addressing the council, speakers at public forums must comply with this code and all other relevant council codes, policies, and procedures. Speakers must refrain from engaging in disorderly conduct, publicly alleging breaches of the council's code of conduct or making other potentially defamatory statements.

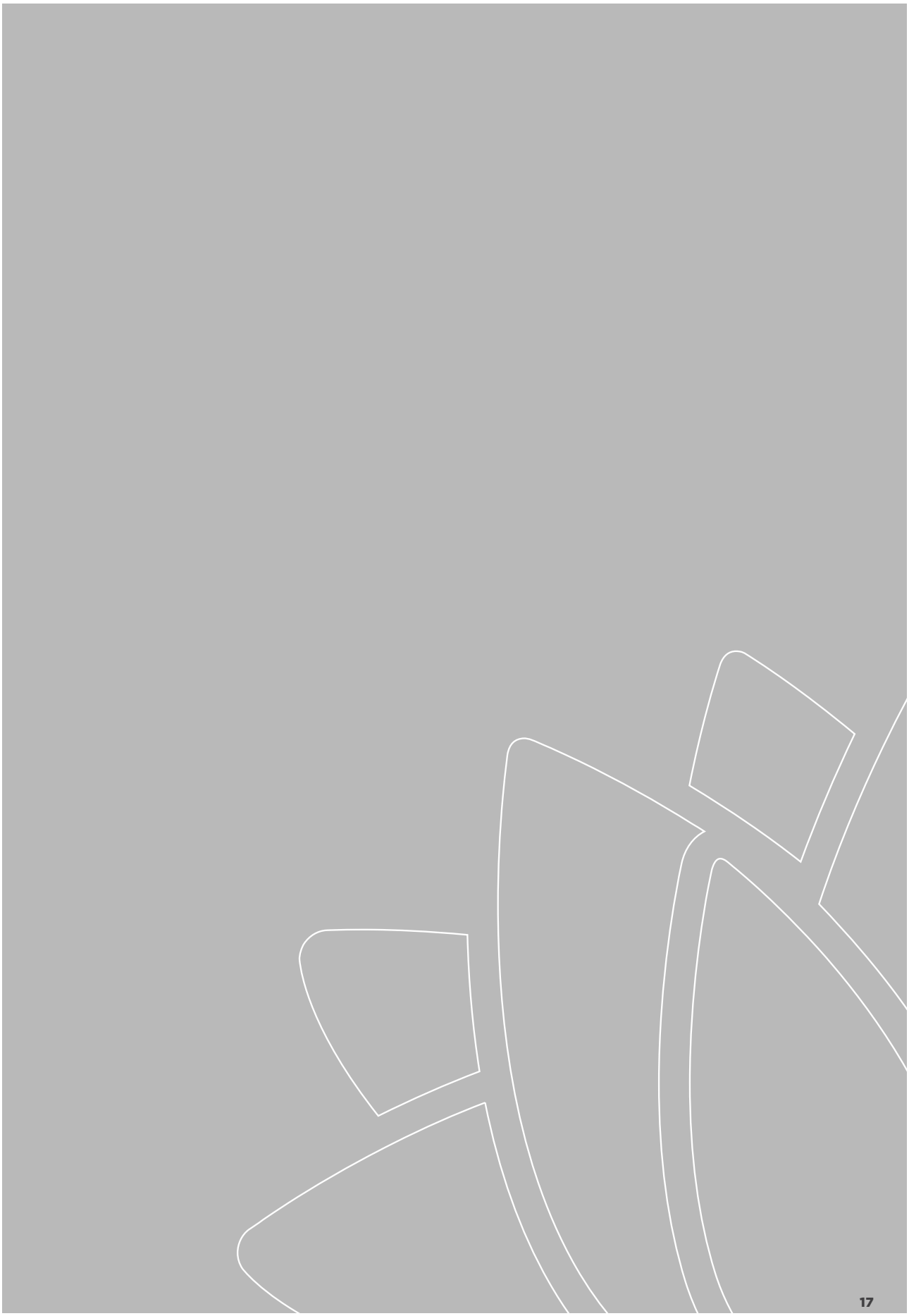
4.21 If the chairperson considers that a speaker at a public forum has engaged in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.20, the chairperson may request the person to refrain from the inappropriate behaviour and to withdraw and unreservedly apologise for any inappropriate comments. Where the speaker fails to comply with the chairperson's request, the chairperson may immediately require the person to stop speaking.

4.22 Clause 4.21 does not limit the ability of the chairperson to deal with disorderly conduct by speakers at public forums in accordance with the provisions of Part 15 of this code.

4.23 Where a speaker engages in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.20, the general manager or their delegate may refuse further applications from that person to speak at public forums for such a period as the general manager or their delegate considers appropriate.

4.24 Councillors (including the mayor) must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to any item of business that is the subject of an address at a public forum, in the same way that they are required to do so at a council or committee meeting. The council is to maintain a written record of all conflict of interest declarations made at public forums and how the conflict of interest was managed by the councillor who made the declaration.

Note: Public forums should not be held as part of a council or committee meeting. Council or committee meetings should be reserved for decision-making by the council or committee of council. Where a public forum is held as part of a council or committee meeting, it must be conducted in accordance with the other requirements of this code relating to the conduct of council and committee meetings.


17

5 Coming Together



Attendance by councillors at meetings

5.1 All councillors must make reasonable efforts to attend meetings of the council and of committees of the council of which they are members.

Note: A councillor may not attend a meeting as a councillor (other than the first meeting of the council after the councillor is elected or a meeting at which the councillor takes an oath or makes an affirmation of office) until they have taken an oath or made an affirmation of office in the form prescribed under section 233A of the Act.

5.2 A councillor cannot participate in a meeting of the council or of a committee of the council unless personally present at the meeting, unless permitted to attend the meeting by audio-visual link under this code.

5.3 The board of the joint organisation may, if it thinks fit, transact any of its business at a meeting at which representatives (or some representatives) participate by telephone or other electronic means, but only if any representative who speaks on a matter before the meeting can be heard by the other representatives. For the purposes of a meeting held in accordance with this clause, the chairperson and each other voting representative on the board have the same voting rights as they have at an ordinary meeting of the board.

Note: Clause 5.3 reflects section 397G of the Regulation. Joint organisations may adopt clause 5.3 and omit clause 5.2. Councils must not adopt clause 5.3.

5.4 Where a councillor is unable to attend one or more ordinary meetings of the council, the councillor should request that the council grant them a leave of absence from those meetings. This clause does not prevent a councillor from making an apology if they are unable to attend a meeting. However, the acceptance of such an apology does not constitute the granting of a leave of absence for the purposes of this code and the Act.

5.5 A councillor's request for leave of absence from council meetings should, if practicable, identify (by date) the meetings from which the councillor intends to be absent and the grounds upon which the leave of absence is being sought.

5.6 The council must act reasonably when considering whether to grant a councillor's request for a leave of absence.

5.7 A councillor's civic office will become vacant if the councillor is absent from three (3) consecutive ordinary meetings of the council without prior leave of the council, or leave granted by the council at any of the meetings concerned, unless the holder is absent because they have been suspended from office under the Act, or because the council has been suspended under the Act, or as a consequence of a compliance order under section 438HA.

Note: Clause 5.7 reflects section 234(1)(d) of the Act.

5.8 A councillor who intends to attend a meeting of the council despite having been granted a leave of absence should, if practicable, give the general manager at least two (2) days' notice of their intention to attend.

The quorum for a meeting

5.9 The quorum for a meeting of the council is a majority of the councillors of the council who hold office at that time and are not suspended from office.

Note: Clause 5.9 reflects section 368(1) of the Act.

5.10 Clause 5.9 does not apply if the quorum is required to be determined in accordance with directions of the Minister in a performance improvement order issued in respect of the council.

Note: Clause 5.10 reflects section 368(2) of the Act.

5.11 A meeting of the council must be adjourned if a quorum is not present:

(a) at the commencement of the meeting where the number of apologies received for the meeting indicates that there will not be a quorum for the meeting, or

(b) within half an hour after the time designated for the holding of the meeting, or

(c) at any time during the meeting.

5.12 In either case, the meeting must be adjourned to a time, date, and place fixed:

(a) by the chairperson, or

(b) in the chairperson's absence, by the majority of the councillors present, or

(c) failing that, by the general manager.

5.13 The general manager must record in the council's minutes the circumstances relating to the absence of a quorum (including the reasons for the absence of a quorum) at or arising during a meeting of the council, together with the names of the councillors present.

5.14 Where, prior to the commencement of a meeting, it becomes apparent that a quorum may not be present at the meeting, or that the health, safety or welfare of councillors, council staff and members of the public may be put at risk by attending the meeting because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency, the mayor may, in consultation with the general manager and, as far as is practicable, with each councillor, cancel the meeting. Where a meeting is cancelled, notice of the cancellation must be published on the council's website and in such other manner that the council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the cancellation to the attention of as many people as possible.

5.15 Where a meeting is cancelled under clause 5.14, the business to be considered at the meeting may instead be considered, where practicable, at the next ordinary meeting of the council or at an extraordinary meeting called under clause 3.3.

Meetings held by audio-visual link

5.16 A meeting of the council or a committee of the council may be held by audio-visual link where the mayor determines that the meeting should be held by audio-visual link because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency. The mayor may only make a determination under this clause where they are satisfied that attendance at the meeting may put the health and safety of councillors and staff at risk. The mayor must make a determination under this clause in consultation with the general manager and, as far as is practicable, with each councillor.

5.17 Where the mayor determines under clause 5.16 that a meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, the general manager must:

(a) give written notice to all councillors that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, and

(b) take all reasonable steps to ensure that all councillors can participate in the meeting by audio-visual link, and

(c) cause a notice to be published on the council's website and in such other manner the general manager is satisfied will bring it to the attention of as many people as possible, advising that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link and providing information about where members of the public may view the meeting.

5.18 This code applies to a meeting held by audio-visual link under clause 5.16 in the same way it would if the meeting was held in person.

Note: Where a council holds a meeting by audio-visual link under clause 5.16, it is still required under section 10 of the Act to provide a physical venue for members of the public to attend in person and observe the meeting.

Attendance by councillors at meetings by audio-visual link

5.19 Councillors may attend and participate in meetings of the council and committees of the council by audio-visual link with the approval of the council or the relevant committee.

5.20 A request by a councillor for approval to attend a meeting by audio-visual link must be made in writing to the general manager prior to the meeting in question and must provide reasons why the councillor will be prevented from attending the meeting in person.

5.21 Councillors may request approval to attend more than one meeting by audio-visual link. Where a councillor requests approval to attend more than one meeting by audio-visual link, the request must specify the meetings the request relates to in addition to the information required under clause 5.20.

5.22 The council must comply with the Health Privacy Principles prescribed under the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002* when collecting, holding, using and disclosing health information in connection with a request by a councillor to attend a meeting by audio-visual link.

5.23 A councillor who has requested approval to attend a meeting of the council or a committee of the council by audio-visual link may participate in the meeting by audio-visual link until the council or committee determines whether to approve their request and is to be taken as present at the meeting. The councillor may participate in a decision in relation to their request to attend the meeting by audio-visual link.

5.24 A decision whether to approve a request by a councillor to attend a meeting of the council or a committee of the council by audio-visual link must be made by a resolution of the council or the committee concerned. The resolution must state:

(a) the meetings the resolution applies to, and

(b) the reason why the councillor is being permitted to attend the meetings by audio-visual link where it is on grounds other than illness, disability, or caring responsibilities.

5.25 If the council or committee refuses a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link, their link to the meeting is to be terminated.

5.26 A decision whether to approve a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link is at the council's or the relevant committee's discretion. The council and committees of the council must act reasonably when considering requests by councillors to attend meetings by audio-visual link. However, the council and committees of the council are under no obligation to approve a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-

visual link where the technical capacity does not exist to allow the councillor to attend the meeting by these means.

5.27 The council and committees of the council may refuse a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link where the council or committee is satisfied that the councillor has failed to appropriately declare and manage conflicts of interest, observe confidentiality, or to comply with this code on one or more previous occasions they have attended a meeting of the council or a committee of the council by audio-visual link.

5.28 This code applies to a councillor attending a meeting by audio-visual link in the same way it would if the councillor was attending the meeting in person. Where a councillor is permitted to attend a meeting by audio-visual link under this code, they are to be taken as attending the meeting in person for the purposes of the code and will have the same voting rights as if they were attending the meeting in person.

5.29 A councillor must give their full attention to the business and proceedings of the meeting when attending a meeting by audio-visual link. The councillor's camera must be on at all times during the meeting except as may be otherwise provided for under this code.

5.30 A councillor must be appropriately dressed when attending a meeting by audio-visual link and must ensure that no items are within sight of the meeting that are inconsistent with the maintenance of order at the meeting or that are likely to bring the council or the committee into disrepute.

Entitlement of the public to attend council meetings

5.31 Everyone is entitled to attend a meeting of the council and committees of the council. The council must ensure that all meetings of the council and committees of the council are open to the public.

Note: Clause 5.31 reflects section 10(1) of the Act.

5.32 Clause 5.31 does not apply to parts of meetings that have been closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.

5.33 A person (whether a councillor or another person) is not entitled to be present at a meeting of the council or a committee of the council if expelled from the meeting:

(a) by a resolution of the meeting, or

(b) by the person presiding at the meeting if the council has, by resolution, authorised the person presiding to exercise the power of expulsion.

Note: Clause 5.33 reflects section 10(2) of the Act.

Note: If adopted, clauses 15.14 and 15.15 confer a standing authorisation on all chairpersons of meetings of the council and committees of the council to expel persons from meetings. If adopted, clause 15.14 authorises chairpersons to expel any person, including a councillor, from a council or committee meeting. Alternatively, if adopted, clause 15.15 authorises chairpersons to expel persons other than councillors from a council or committee meeting.

Webcasting of meetings

5.34 Each meeting of the council or a committee of the council is to be recorded by means of an audio or audio-visual device.

5.35 At the start of each meeting of the council or a committee of the council, the chairperson must inform the persons attending the meeting that:

(a) the meeting is being recorded and made publicly available on the council's website, and

(b) persons attending the meeting should refrain from making any defamatory statements.

5.36 The recording of a meeting is to be made publicly available on the council's website:

(a) at the same time as the meeting is taking place, or

(b) as soon as practicable after the meeting.

5.37 The recording of a meeting is to be made publicly available on the council's website for at least 12 months after the meeting.

5.38 Clauses 5.36 and 5.37 do not apply to any part of a meeting that has been closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act.

Note: Clauses 5.34 – 5.38 reflect section 236 of the Regulation.

5.39 Recordings of meetings may be disposed of in accordance with the *State Records Act 1998*.

Note: Joint organisations are not required to webcast meetings but may choose to do so by adopting clauses 5.34–5.39. Joint organisations that choose not to webcast meetings may omit clauses 5.34–5.39.

Attendance of the general manager and other staff at meetings

5.40 The general manager is entitled to attend, but not to vote at, a meeting of the council or a meeting of a committee of the council of which all of the members are councillors.

Note: Clause 5.40 reflects section 376(1) of the Act.

5.41 The general manager is entitled to attend a meeting of any other committee of the council and may, if a member of the committee, exercise a vote.

Note: Clause 5.41 reflects section 376(2) of the Act.

5.42 The general manager may be excluded from a meeting of the council or a committee while the council or committee deals with a matter relating to the standard of performance of the general manager or the terms of employment of the general manager.

Note: Clause 5.42 reflects section 376(3) of the Act.

5.43 The attendance of other council staff at a meeting, (other than as members of the public) shall be with the approval of the general manager.

5.44 The general manager and other council staff may attend meetings of the council and committees of the council by audio-visual link. Attendance by council staff at meetings by audio-visual link (other than as members of the public) shall be with the approval of the general manager.

6 The Chairperson



The chairperson at meetings

6.1 The mayor, or at the request of or in the absence of the mayor, the deputy mayor (if any) presides at meetings of the council.

Note: Clause 6.1 reflects section 369(1) of the Act.

6.2 If the mayor and the deputy mayor (if any) are absent, a councillor elected to chair the meeting by the councillors present presides at a meeting of the council.

Note: Clause 6.2 reflects section 369(2) of the Act.

Election of the chairperson in the absence of the mayor and deputy mayor

6.3 If no chairperson is present at a meeting of the council at the time designated for the holding of the meeting, the first business of the meeting must be the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting.

6.4 The election of a chairperson must be conducted:

(a) by the general manager or, in their absence, an employee of the council designated by the general manager to conduct the election, or

(b) by the person who called the meeting or a person acting on their behalf if neither the general manager nor a designated employee is present at the meeting, or if there is no general manager or designated employee.

6.5 If, at an election of a chairperson, two (2) or more candidates receive the same number of votes and no other candidate receives a greater number of votes, the chairperson is to be the candidate whose name is chosen by lot.

6.6 For the purposes of clause 6.5, the person conducting the election must:

(a) arrange for the names of the candidates who have equal numbers of votes to be written on similar slips, and

(b) then fold the slips so as to prevent the names from being seen, mix the slips and draw one of the slips at random.

6.7 The candidate whose name is on the drawn slip is the candidate who is to be the chairperson.

6.8 Any election conducted under clause 6.3, and the outcome of the vote, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Chairperson to have precedence

6.9 When the chairperson rises or speaks during a meeting of the council:

(a) any councillor then speaking or seeking to speak must cease speaking and, if standing, immediately resume their seat, and

(b) every councillor present must be silent to enable the chairperson to be heard without interruption.

7 Modes of Address



7.1 If the chairperson is the mayor, they are to be addressed as 'Mr Mayor' or 'Madam Mayor'.

7.2 Where the chairperson is not the mayor, they are to be addressed as either 'Mr Chairperson' or 'Madam Chairperson'.

7.3 A councillor is to be addressed as 'Councillor [surname]'.

7.4 A council officer is to be addressed by their official designation or as Mr/Ms [surname].

8 Order of Business for Ordinary Council Meetings



8.1 At a meeting of the council, the general order of business is as fixed by resolution of the council.

8.2 The general order of business for an ordinary meeting of the council shall be: **[councils may adapt the following order of business to meet their needs]**

01 Opening meeting
02 Acknowledgement of country
03 Apologies and applications for a leave of absence or attendance by audio-visual link by councillors
04 Confirmation of minutes
05 Disclosures of interests
06 Mayoral minute(s)
07 Reports of committees
08 Reports to council
09 Notices of motions/Questions with notice
10 Confidential matters
11 Conclusion of the meeting

Note: Councils must use either clause 8.1 or 8.2.

8.3 The order of business as fixed under [8.1/8.2] **[delete whichever is not applicable]** may be altered for a particular meeting of the council if a motion to that effect is passed at that meeting. Such a motion can be moved without notice.

Note: If adopted, Part 13 allows council to deal with items of business by exception.

8.4 Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 8.3 may speak to the motion before it is put.

9 Consideration of Business at Council Meetings



Business that can be dealt with at a council meeting

9.1 The council must not consider business at a meeting of the council:

(a) unless a councillor has given notice of the business, as required by clause 3.10, and

(b) unless notice of the business has been sent to the councillors in accordance with clause 3.7 in the case of an ordinary meeting or clause 3.9 in the case of an extraordinary meeting called in an emergency.

9.2 Clause 9.1 does not apply to the consideration of business at a meeting, if the business:

(a) is already before, or directly relates to, a matter that is already before the council, or

(b) is the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting, or

(c) subject to clause 9.9, is a matter or topic put to the meeting by way of a mayoral minute, or

(d) is a motion for the adoption of recommendations of a committee, including, but not limited to, a committee of the council.

9.3 Despite clause 9.1, business may be considered at a meeting of the council even though due notice of the business has not been given to the councillors if:

(a) a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and

(b) the business to be considered is ruled by the chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.

9.4 A motion moved under clause 9.3(a) can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 9.3(a) can speak to the motion before it is put.

9.5 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 9.3(b).

Mayoral minutes

9.6 Subject to clause 9.9, if the mayor is the chairperson at a meeting of the council, the mayor may, by minute signed by the mayor, put to the meeting without notice any matter or topic that is within the jurisdiction of the council, or of which the council has official knowledge.

9.7 A mayoral minute, when put to a meeting, takes precedence over all business on the council's agenda for the meeting. The chairperson (but only if the chairperson is the mayor) may move the adoption of a mayoral minute without the motion being seconded.

9.8 A recommendation made in a mayoral minute put by the mayor is, so far as it is adopted by the council, a resolution of the council.

9.9 A mayoral minute must not be used to put without notice matters that are routine and not urgent or matters for which proper notice should be given because of their complexity. For the purpose of this clause, a matter will be urgent where it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.

9.10 Where a mayoral minute makes a recommendation which, if adopted, would require the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan, it must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the recommendation. If the mayoral minute does not identify a funding source, the council must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the general manager on the availability of funds for implementing the recommendation if adopted.

Staff reports

9.11 A recommendation made in a staff report is, so far as it is adopted by the council, a resolution of the council.

Reports of committees of council

9.12 The recommendations of a committee of the council are, so far as they are adopted by the council, resolutions of the council.

9.13 If in a report of a committee of the council distinct recommendations are made, the council may make separate decisions on each recommendation.

Questions

9.14 A question must not be asked at a meeting of the council unless it concerns a matter on the agenda of the meeting or notice has been given of the question in accordance with clauses 3.10 and 3.14.

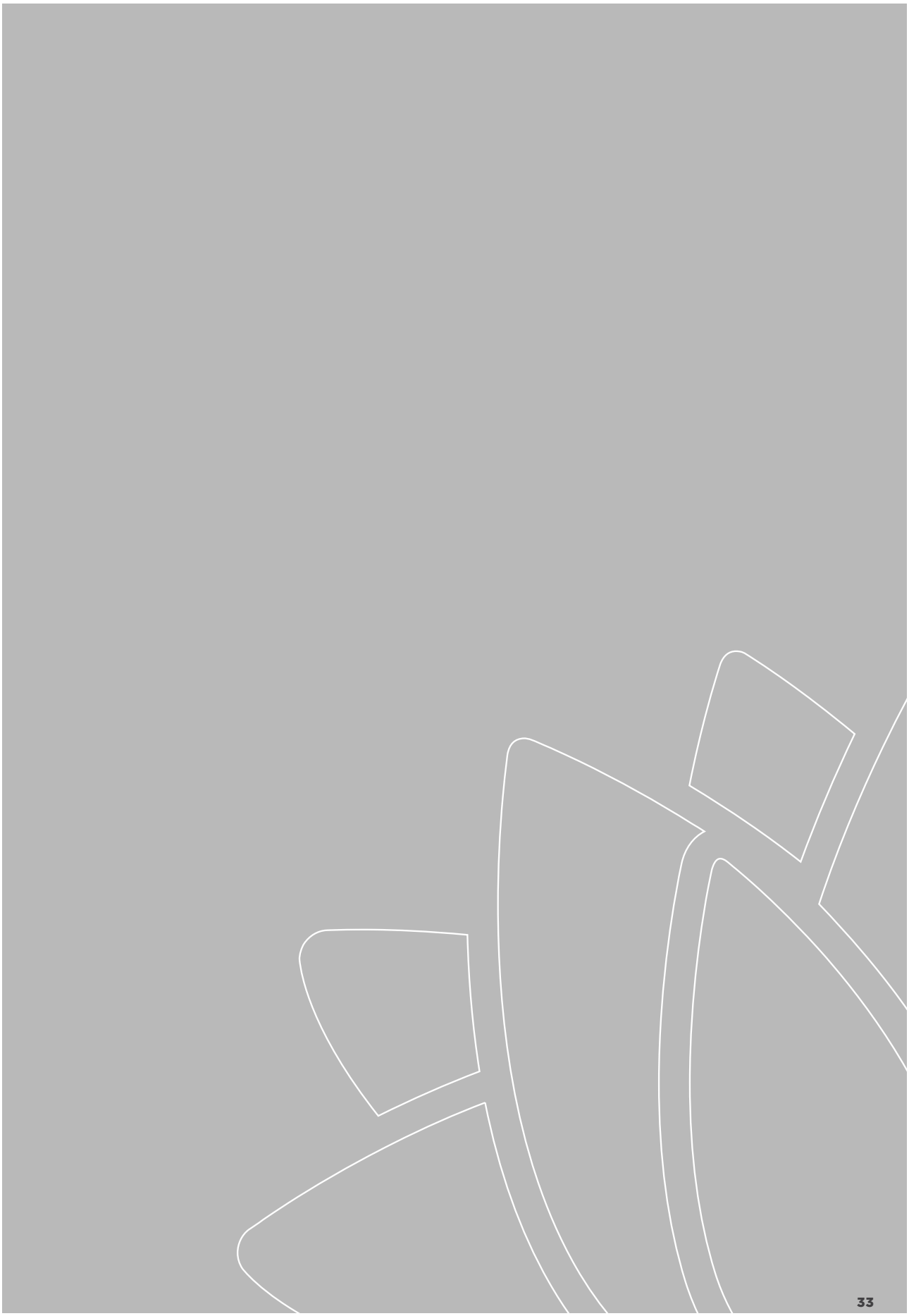
9.15 A councillor may, through the chairperson, put a question to another councillor about a matter on the agenda.

9.16 A councillor may, through the general manager, put a question to a council employee about a matter on the agenda. Council employees are only obliged to answer a question put to them through the general manager at the direction of the general manager.

9.17 A councillor or council employee to whom a question is put is entitled to be given reasonable notice of the question and, in particular, sufficient notice to enable reference to be made to other persons or to information. Where a councillor or council employee to whom a question is put is unable to respond to the question at the meeting at which it is put, they may take it on notice and report the response to the next meeting of the council.

9.18 Councillors must put questions directly, succinctly, respectfully and without argument.

9.19 The chairperson must not permit discussion on any reply to, or refusal to reply to, a question put to a councillor or council employee.


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10 Rules of Debate

Motions to be seconded

10.1 Unless otherwise specified in this code, a motion or an amendment cannot be debated unless or until it has been seconded.

Notices of motion

10.2 A councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.10 is to move the motion the subject of the notice of motion at the meeting at which it is to be considered.

10.3 If a councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.10 wishes to withdraw it after the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered have been sent to councillors, the councillor may request the withdrawal of the motion when it is before the council.

10.4 In the absence of a councillor who has placed a notice of motion on the agenda for a meeting of the council:

(a) any other councillor may, with the leave of the chairperson, move the motion at the meeting, or

(b) the chairperson may defer consideration of the motion until the next meeting of the council.

Chairperson's duties with respect to motions

10.5 It is the duty of the chairperson at a meeting of the council to receive and put to the meeting any lawful motion that is brought before the meeting.

10.6 The chairperson must rule out of order any motion or amendment to a motion that is unlawful or the implementation of which would be unlawful.

10.7 Before ruling out of order a motion or an amendment to a motion under clause 10.6, the chairperson is to give the mover an opportunity to clarify or amend the motion or amendment.

10.8 Any motion, amendment, or other matter that the chairperson has ruled out of order is taken to have been lost.

Motions requiring the expenditure of funds

10.9 A motion or an amendment to a motion which if passed would require the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the motion. If the motion does not identify a funding source, the council must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the general manager on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted.

Amendments to motions

10.10 An amendment to a motion must be moved and seconded before it can be debated.

10.11 An amendment to a motion must relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion before the council and must not be a direct negative of the original motion. An amendment to a motion which does not relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion, or which is a direct negative of the original motion, must be ruled out of order by the chairperson.

10.12 The mover of an amendment is to be given the opportunity to explain any uncertainties in the proposed amendment before a seconder is called for.

10.13 If an amendment has been lost, a further amendment can be moved to the motion to which the lost amendment was moved, and so on, but no more than one (1) motion and one (1) proposed amendment can be before council at any one time.

10.14 While an amendment is being considered, debate must only occur in relation to the amendment and not the original motion. Debate on the original motion is to be suspended while the amendment to the original motion is being debated.

10.15 If the amendment is carried, it becomes the motion and is to be debated. If the amendment is lost, debate is to resume on the original motion.

10.16 An amendment may become the motion without debate or a vote where it is accepted by the councillor who moved the original motion.

Foreshadowed motions

10.17 A councillor may propose a foreshadowed motion in relation to the matter the subject of the original motion before the council, without a seconder during debate on the original motion. The foreshadowed motion is only to be considered if the original motion is lost or withdrawn and the foreshadowed motion is then moved and seconded. If the original motion is carried, the foreshadowed motion lapses.

10.18 Where an amendment has been moved and seconded, a councillor may, without a seconder, foreshadow a further amendment that they propose to move after the first amendment has been dealt with. There is no limit to the number of foreshadowed amendments that may be put before the council at any time. However, no discussion can take place on foreshadowed amendments until the previous amendment has been dealt with and the foreshadowed amendment has been moved and seconded.

10.19 Foreshadowed motions and foreshadowed amendments are to be considered in the order in which they are proposed. However, foreshadowed motions cannot be considered until all foreshadowed amendments have been dealt with.

Limitations on the number and duration of speeches

10.20 A councillor who, during a debate at a meeting of the council, moves an original motion, has the right to speak on each amendment to the motion and a right of general reply to all observations that are made during the debate in relation to the motion, and any amendment to it at the conclusion of the debate before the motion (whether amended or not) is finally put.

10.21 A councillor, other than the mover of an original motion, has the right to speak once on the motion and once on each amendment to it.

10.22 A councillor must not, without the consent of the council, speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, or for longer than five (5) minutes at any one time.

10.23 Despite clause 10.22, the chairperson may permit a councillor who claims to have been misrepresented or misunderstood to speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, and for longer than five (5) minutes on that motion or amendment to enable the councillor to make a statement limited to explaining the misrepresentation or misunderstanding.

10.24 Despite clause 10.22, the council may resolve to shorten the duration of speeches to expedite the consideration of business at a meeting.

10.25 Despite clauses 10.20 and 10.21, a councillor may move that a motion or an amendment be now put:

(a) if the mover of the motion or amendment has spoken in favour of it and no councillor expresses an intention to speak against it, or

(b) if at least two (2) councillors have spoken in favour of the motion or amendment and at least two (2) councillors have spoken against it.

10.26 The chairperson must immediately put to the vote, without debate, a motion moved under clause 10.25. A seconder is not required for such a motion.

10.27 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is passed, the chairperson must, without further debate, put the original motion or amendment to the vote immediately after the mover of the original motion has exercised their right of reply under clause 10.20.

10.28 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is lost, the chairperson must allow the debate on the original motion or the amendment to be resumed.

10.29 All councillors must be heard without interruption and all other councillors must, unless otherwise permitted under this code, remain silent while another councillor is speaking.

10.30 Once the debate on a matter has concluded and a matter has been dealt with, the chairperson must not allow further debate on the matter.

Participation by non-voting representatives in joint organisation board meetings

10.31 Non-voting representatives of joint organisation boards may speak on but must not move, second or vote on any motion or an amendment to a motion.

Note: Under section 400T(1)(c) of the Act, non-voting representatives of joint organisation boards may attend but are not entitled to vote at a meeting of the board.

Note: Joint organisations must adopt clause 10.31. Councils must not adopt clause 10.31.

11 Voting



Voting entitlements of councillors

11.1 Each councillor is entitled to one (1) vote.

Note: Clause 11.1 reflects section 370(1) of the Act.

Note: Under section 400T(1) of the Act, voting representatives of joint organisation boards are entitled to one (1) vote each at meetings of the board.

11.2 The person presiding at a meeting of the council has, in the event of an equality of votes, a second or casting vote.

Note: Clause 11.2 reflects section 370(2) of the Act.

11.3 Where the chairperson declines to exercise, or fails to exercise, their second or casting vote, in the event of an equality of votes, the motion being voted upon is lost.

11.4 A motion at a meeting of the board of a joint organisation is taken to be lost in the event of an equality of votes.

Note: Clause 11.4 reflects section 397E of the Regulation. Joint organisations must adopt clause 11.4 and omit clauses 11.2 and 11.3. Councils must not adopt clause 11.4.

Note: Under section 400U(4) of the Act, joint organisations may specify more stringent voting requirements for decisions by the board such as a 75% majority or consensus decision making. Where a joint organisation's charter specifies more stringent voting requirements, clause 11.4 must be adapted to reflect those requirements.

Voting at council meetings

11.5 A councillor who is present at a meeting of the council but who fails to vote on a motion put to the meeting is taken to have voted against the motion

11.6 If a councillor who has voted against a motion put at a council meeting so requests, the general manager must ensure that the councillor's dissenting vote is recorded in the council's minutes.

11.7 The decision of the chairperson as to the result of a vote is final unless the decision is immediately challenged and not fewer than two (2) councillors rise and call for a division.

11.8 When a division on a motion is called, the chairperson must ensure that the division takes place immediately. The general manager must ensure that the names of those who vote for the motion and those who vote against it are recorded in the council's minutes for the meeting.

11.9 When a division on a motion is called, any councillor who fails to vote will be recorded as having voted against the motion in accordance with clause 11.5 of this code.

11.10 Voting at a meeting, including voting in an election at a meeting, is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system). However, the council may resolve that the voting in any election by councillors for mayor or deputy mayor is to be by secret ballot.

11.11 All voting at council meetings, (including meetings that are closed to the public), must be recorded in the minutes of meetings with the names of councillors who voted for and against each motion or amendment, (including the use of the casting vote), being recorded.

Note: If clause 11.11 is adopted, clauses 11.6 – 11.9 and clause 11.13 may be omitted.

Voting on planning decisions

11.12 The general manager must keep a register containing, for each planning decision made at a meeting of the council or a council committee (including, but not limited to a committee of the council), the names of the councillors who supported the decision and the names of any councillors who opposed (or are taken to have opposed) the decision.

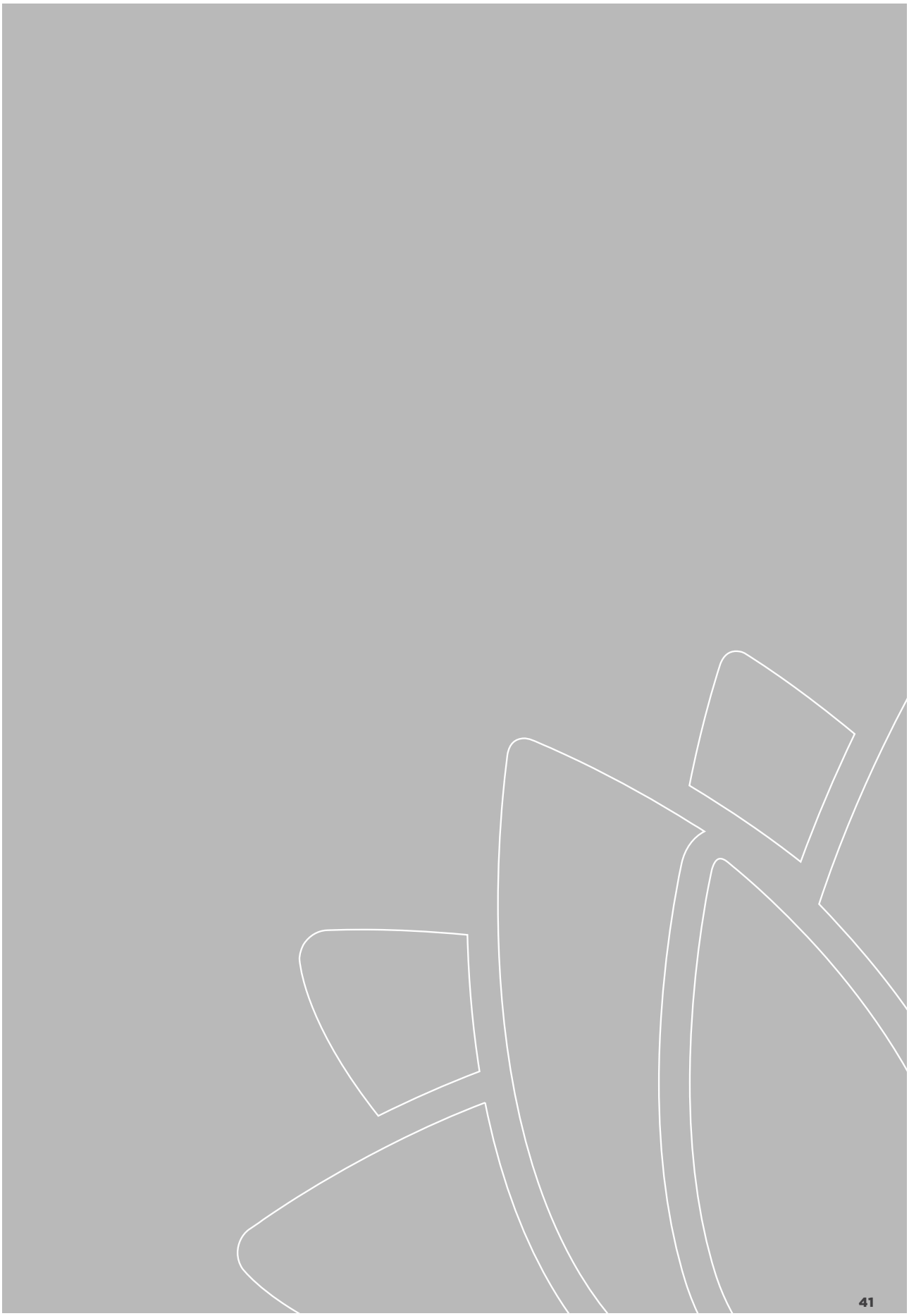
11.13 For the purpose of maintaining the register, a division is taken to have been called whenever a motion for a planning decision is put at a meeting of the council or a council committee.

11.14 Each decision recorded in the register is to be described in the register or identified in a manner that enables the description to be obtained from another publicly available document.

11.15 Clauses 11.12–11.14 apply also to meetings that are closed to the public.

Note: Clauses 11.12–11.15 reflect section 375A of the Act.

Note: The requirements of clause 11.12 may be satisfied by maintaining a register of the minutes of each planning decision.


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12 Committee of the Whole



12.1 The council may resolve itself into a committee to consider any matter before the council.

Note: Clause 12.1 reflects section 373 of the Act.

12.2 All the provisions of this code relating to meetings of the council, so far as they are applicable, extend to and govern the proceedings of the council when in committee of the whole, except the provisions limiting the number and duration of speeches.

Note: Clauses 10.20–10.30 limit the number and duration of speeches.

12.3 The general manager or, in the absence of the general manager, an employee of the council designated by the general manager, is responsible for reporting to the council the proceedings of the committee of the whole. It is not necessary to report the proceedings in full, but any recommendations of the committee must be reported.

12.4 The council must ensure that a report of the proceedings (including any recommendations of the committee) is recorded in the council's minutes. However, the council is not taken to have adopted the report until a motion for adoption has been made and passed.

13 Dealing with Items by Exception



13.1 The council or a committee of council may, at any time, resolve to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together by way of a single resolution.

13.2 Before the council or committee resolves to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together under clause 13.1, the chairperson must list the items of business to be adopted and ask councillors to identify any individual items of business listed by the chairperson that they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or that they wish to speak on.

13.3 The council or committee must not resolve to adopt any item of business under clause 13.1 that a councillor has identified as being one they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or to speak on.

13.4 Where the consideration of multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 involves a variation to the order of business for the meeting, the council or committee must resolve to alter the order of business in accordance with clause 8.3.

13.5 A motion to adopt multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 must identify each of the items of business to be adopted and state that they are to be adopted as recommended in the business paper.

13.6 Items of business adopted under clause 13.1 are to be taken to have been adopted unanimously.

13.7 Councillors must ensure that they declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to items of business considered together under clause 13.1 in accordance with the requirements of the council's code of conduct.

14 Closure of Council Meetings to the Public



Grounds on which meetings can be closed to the public

14.1 The council or a committee of the council may close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises the discussion or the receipt of any of the following types of matters:

(a) personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors),

(b) the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer,

(c) information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business,

(d) commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed:

(i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, or

(ii) confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the council, or

(iii) reveal a trade secret,

(e) information that would, if disclosed, prejudice the maintenance of law,

(f) matters affecting the security of the council, councillors, council staff or council property,

(g) advice concerning litigation, or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege,

(h) information concerning the nature and location of a place or an item of Aboriginal significance on community land,

(i) alleged contraventions of the council's code of conduct.

Note: Clause 14.1 reflects section 10A(1) and (2) of the Act.

14.2 The council or a committee of the council may also close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public.

Note: Clause 14.2 reflects section 10A(3) of the Act.

Matters to be considered when closing meetings to the public

14.3 A meeting is not to remain closed during the discussion of anything referred to in clause 14.1:

(a) except for so much of the discussion as is necessary to preserve the relevant confidentiality, privilege or security, and

(b) if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret – unless the council or committee concerned is satisfied that discussion of the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest.

Note: Clause 14.3 reflects section 10B(1) of the Act.

14.4 A meeting is not to be closed during the receipt and consideration of information or advice referred to in clause 14.1(g) unless the advice concerns legal matters that:

(a) are substantial issues relating to a matter in which the council or committee is involved, and

(b) are clearly identified in the advice, and

(c) are fully discussed in that advice.

Note: Clause 14.4 reflects section 10B(2) of the Act.

14.5 If a meeting is closed during the discussion of a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public (as referred to in clause 14.2), the consideration of the motion must not include any consideration of the matter or information to be discussed in that other part of the meeting other than consideration of whether the matter concerned is a matter referred to in clause 14.1.

Note: Clause 14.5 reflects section 10B(3) of the Act.

14.6 For the purpose of determining whether the discussion of a matter in an open meeting would be contrary to the public interest, it is irrelevant that:

(a) a person may misinterpret or misunderstand the discussion, or

(b) the discussion of the matter may:

(i) cause embarrassment to the council or committee concerned, or to councillors or to employees of the council, or

(ii) cause a loss of confidence in the council or committee.

Note: Clause 14.6 reflects section 10B(4) of the Act.

14.7 In deciding whether part of a meeting is to be closed to the public, the council or committee concerned must consider any relevant guidelines issued by the Departmental Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government.

Note: Clause 14.7 reflects section 10B(5) of the Act.

Notice of likelihood of closure not required in urgent cases

14.8 Part of a meeting of the council, or of a committee of the council, may be closed to the public while the council or committee considers a matter that has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed, but only if:

(a) it becomes apparent during the discussion of a particular matter that the matter is a matter referred to in clause 14.1, and

(b) the council or committee, after considering any representations made under clause 14.9, resolves that further discussion of the matter:

(i) should not be deferred (because of the urgency of the matter), and

(ii) should take place in a part of the meeting that is closed to the public.

Note: Clause 14.8 reflects section 10C of the Act.

Representations by members of the public

14.9 The council, or a committee of the council, may allow members of the public to make representations to or at a meeting, before any part of the meeting is closed to the public, as to whether that part of the meeting should be closed.

Note: Clause 14.9 reflects section 10A(4) of the Act.

14.10 A representation under clause 14.9 is to be made after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded.

14.11 Where the matter has been identified in the agenda of the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, in order to make representations under clause 14.9, members of the public must first make an application to the council in the approved form. Applications must be received by **[date and time to be specified by the council]** before the meeting at which the matter is to be considered.

14.12 The general manager (or their delegate) may refuse an application made under clause 14.11. The general manager or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.

14.13 No more than **[number to be specified by the council]** speakers are to be permitted to make representations under clause 14.9.

14.14 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to make representations under clause 14.9, the general manager or their delegate may request the speakers to nominate from among themselves the persons who are to make representations to the council. If the speakers are not able to agree on whom to nominate to make representations under clause 14.9, the general manager or their delegate is to determine who will make representations to the council.

14.15 The general manager (or their delegate) is to determine the order of speakers.

14.16 Where the council or a committee of the council proposes to close a meeting or part of a meeting to the public in circumstances where the matter has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, the chairperson is to invite representations from the public under clause 14.9 after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded. The chairperson is to permit no more than **[number to be specified by the council]** speakers to make representations in such order as determined by the chairperson.

14.17 Each speaker will be allowed **[number to be specified by the council]** minutes to make representations, and this time limit is to be strictly enforced by the chairperson. Speakers must confine their representations to whether the meeting should be closed to the public. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard.

Expulsion of non-councillors from meetings closed to the public

14.18 If a meeting or part of a meeting of the council or a committee of the council is closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act and this code, any person who is not a councillor and who fails to leave the meeting when requested, may be expelled from the meeting as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act.

14.19 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the first-mentioned person from that place and, if necessary restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

Obligations of councillors attending meetings by audio-visual link

14.20 Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link must ensure that no other person is within sight or hearing of the meeting at any time that the meeting is closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.

Information to be disclosed in resolutions closing meetings to the public

14.21 The grounds on which part of a meeting is closed must be stated in the decision to close that part of the meeting and must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The grounds must specify the following:

(a) the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act,

(b) the matter that is to be discussed during the closed part of the meeting,

(c) the reasons why the part of the meeting is being closed, including (if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret) an explanation of the way in which discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.

Note: Clause 14.21 reflects section 10D of the Act.

Resolutions passed at closed meetings to be made public

14.22 If the council passes a resolution during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public, the chairperson must make the resolution public as soon as practicable after the meeting, or the relevant part of the meeting, has ended, and the resolution must be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.

14.23 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public must be made public by the chairperson under clause 14.22 during a part of the meeting that is webcast.

15 Keeping Order at Meetings



Points of order

15.1 A councillor may draw the attention of the chairperson to an alleged breach of this code by raising a point of order. A point of order does not require a seconder.

15.2 A point of order cannot be made with respect to adherence to the principles contained in clause 2.1.

15.3 A point of order must be taken immediately it is raised. The chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting and permit the councillor raising the point of order to state the provision of this code they believe has been breached. The chairperson must then rule on the point of order – either by upholding it or by overruling it.

Questions of order

15.4 The chairperson, without the intervention of any other councillor, may call any councillor to order whenever, in the opinion of the chairperson, it is necessary to do so.

15.5 A councillor who claims that another councillor has committed an act of disorder, or is out of order, may call the attention of the chairperson to the matter.

15.6 The chairperson must rule on a question of order immediately after it is raised but, before doing so, may invite the opinion of the council.

15.7 The chairperson's ruling must be obeyed unless a motion dissenting from the ruling is passed.

Motions of dissent

15.8 A councillor can, without notice, move to dissent from a ruling of the chairperson on a point of order or a question of order. If that happens, the chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting until a decision is made on the motion of dissent.

15.9 If a motion of dissent is passed, the chairperson must proceed with the suspended business as though the ruling dissented from had not been given. If, as a result of the ruling, any motion or business has been rejected as out of order, the chairperson must restore the motion or business to the agenda and proceed with it in due course.

15.10 Despite any other provision of this code, only the mover of a motion of dissent and the chairperson can speak to the motion before it is put. The mover of the motion does not have a right of general reply.

Acts of disorder

15.11 A councillor commits an act of disorder if the councillor, at a meeting of the council or a committee of the council:

(a) contravenes the Act, the Regulation or this code, or

(b) assaults or threatens to assault another councillor or person present at the meeting, or

(c) moves or attempts to move a motion or an amendment that has an unlawful purpose or that deals with a matter that is outside the jurisdiction of the council or the committee, or addresses or attempts to address the council or the committee on such a motion, amendment or matter, or

(d) insults, makes unfavourable personal remarks about, or imputes improper motives to any other council official, or alleges a breach of the council's code of conduct, or

(e) says or does anything that is inconsistent with maintaining order at the meeting or is likely to bring the council or the committee into disrepute.

Note: Clause 15.11 reflects section 182 of the Regulation.

15.12 The chairperson may require a councillor:

(a) to apologise without reservation for an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.11(a), (b), or (e), or

(b) to withdraw a motion or an amendment referred to in clause 15.11(c) and, where appropriate, to apologise without reservation, or

(c) to retract and apologise without reservation for any statement that constitutes an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.11(d) and (e).

Note: Clause 15.12 reflects section 233 of the Regulation.

How disorder at a meeting may be dealt with

15.13 If disorder occurs at a meeting of the council, the chairperson may adjourn the meeting for a period of not more than fifteen (15) minutes and leave the chair. The council, on reassembling, must, on a question put from the chairperson, decide without debate whether the business is to be proceeded with or not. This clause applies to disorder arising from the conduct of members of the public as well as disorder arising from the conduct of councillors.

Expulsion from meetings

15.14 All chairpersons of meetings of the council and committees of the council are authorised under this code to expel any person, including any councillor, from a council or committee meeting, for the purposes of section 10(2)(b) of the Act.

15.15 All chairpersons of meetings of the council and committees of the council are authorised under this code to expel any person other than a councillor, from a council or committee meeting, for the purposes of section 10(2)(b) of the Act. Councillors may only be expelled by resolution of the council or the committee of the council.

Note: Councils may use either clause 15.14 or clause 15.15.

15.16 Clause [15.14/15.15] **[delete whichever is not applicable]**, does not limit the ability of the council or a committee of the council to resolve to expel a person, including a councillor, from a council or committee meeting, under section 10(2)(a) of the Act.

15.17 A councillor may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the council for having failed to comply with a requirement under clause 15.12. The expulsion of a councillor from the meeting for that reason does not prevent any other action from being taken against the councillor for the act of disorder concerned.

Note: Clause 15.17 reflects section 233(2) of the Regulation.

15.18 A member of the public may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the council for engaging in or having engaged in disorderly conduct at the meeting.

15.19 Where a councillor or a member of the public is expelled from a meeting, the expulsion and the name of the person expelled, if known, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

15.20 If a councillor or a member of the public fails to leave the place where a meeting of the council is being held immediately after they have been expelled, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the councillor or member of the public from that place and, if necessary, restrain the councillor or member of the public from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

How disorder by councillors attending meetings by audio-visual link may be dealt with

15.21 Where a councillor is attending a meeting by audio-visual link, the chairperson or a person authorised by the chairperson may mute the councillor's audio link to the meeting for the purposes of enforcing compliance with this code.

15.22 If a councillor attending a meeting by audio-visual link is expelled from a meeting for an act of disorder, the chairperson of the meeting or a person authorised by the chairperson, may terminate the councillor's audio-visual link to the meeting.

Use of mobile phones and the unauthorised recording of meetings

15.23 Councillors, council staff and members of the public must ensure that mobile phones are turned to silent during meetings of the council and committees of the council.

15.24 A person must not live stream or use an audio recorder, video camera, mobile phone or any other device to make a recording of the proceedings of a meeting of the council or a committee of the council without the prior authorisation of the council or the committee.

15.25 Without limiting clause 15.18, a contravention of clause 15.24 or an attempt to contravene that clause, constitutes disorderly conduct for the purposes of clause 15.18. Any person who contravenes or attempts to contravene clause 15.24, may be expelled from the meeting as provided for under section 10(2) of the Act.

15.26 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the first-mentioned person from that place and, if necessary, restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

16 Conflicts of Interest



16.1 All councillors and, where applicable, all other persons, must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at meetings of the council and committees of the council in accordance with the council's code of conduct. All declarations of conflicts of interest and how the conflict of interest was managed by the person who made the declaration must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the declaration was made.

16.2 Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at the meeting in accordance with the council's code of conduct. Where a councillor has declared a pecuniary or significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter being discussed at the meeting, the councillor's audio-visual link to the meeting must be suspended or terminated and the councillor must not be in sight or hearing of the meeting at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the council or committee, or at any time during which the council or committee is voting on the matter.

17 Decisions of the Council



Council decisions

17.1 A decision supported by a majority of the votes at a meeting of the council at which a quorum is present is a decision of the council.

Note: Clause 17.1 reflects section 371 of the Act in the case of councils and section 400T(8) in the case of joint organisations.

Note: Under section 400U(4) of the Act, joint organisations may specify more stringent voting requirements for decisions by the board such as a 75% majority or consensus decision making. Where a joint organisation's charter specifies more stringent voting requirements, clause 17.1 must be adapted to reflect those requirements.

17.2 Decisions made by the council must be accurately recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the decision is made.

Rescinding or altering council decisions

17.3 A resolution passed by the council may not be altered or rescinded except by a motion to that effect of which notice has been given under clause 3.10.

Note: Clause 17.3 reflects section 372(1) of the Act.

17.4 If a notice of motion to rescind a resolution is given at the meeting at which the resolution is carried, the resolution must not be carried into effect until the motion of rescission has been dealt with.

Note: Clause 17.4 reflects section 372(2) of the Act.

17.5 If a motion has been lost, a motion having the same effect must not be considered unless notice of it has been duly given in accordance with clause 3.10.

Note: Clause 17.5 reflects section 372(3) of the Act.

17.6 A notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution, and a notice of motion which has the same effect as a motion which has been lost, must be signed by three (3) councillors if less than three (3) months has elapsed since the resolution was passed, or the motion was lost.

Note: Clause 17.6 reflects section 372(4) of the Act.

17.7 If a motion to alter or rescind a resolution has been lost, or if a motion which has the same effect as a previously lost motion is lost, no similar motion may be brought forward within three (3) months of the meeting at which it was lost. This clause may not be evaded by substituting a motion differently worded, but in principle the same.

Note: Clause 17.7 reflects section 372(5) of the Act.

17.8 The provisions of clauses 17.5–17.7 concerning lost motions do not apply to motions of adjournment.

Note: Clause 17.8 reflects section 372(7) of the Act.

17.9 A notice of motion submitted in accordance with clause 17.6 may only be withdrawn under clause 3.11 with the consent of all signatories to the notice of motion.

17.10 A notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution relating to a development application must be submitted to the general manager no later than **[council to specify the period of time]** after the meeting at which the resolution was adopted.

17.11 A motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the council may be moved on the report of a committee of the council and any such report must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting of the council.

Note: Clause 17.11 reflects section 372(6) of the Act.

17.12 Subject to clause 17.7, in cases of urgency, a motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the council may be moved at the same meeting at which the resolution was adopted, where:

(a) a notice of motion signed by three councillors is submitted to the chairperson, and

(b) a motion to have the motion considered at the meeting is passed, and

(c) the chairperson rules the business that is the subject of the motion is of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.

17.13 A motion moved under clause 17.12(b) can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.12(b) can speak to the motion before it is put.

17.14 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 17.12(c).

Recommitting resolutions to correct an error

17.15 Despite the provisions of this Part, a councillor may, with the leave of the chairperson, move to recommit a resolution adopted at the same meeting:

(a) to correct any error, ambiguity or imprecision in the council's resolution, or

(b) to confirm the voting on the resolution.

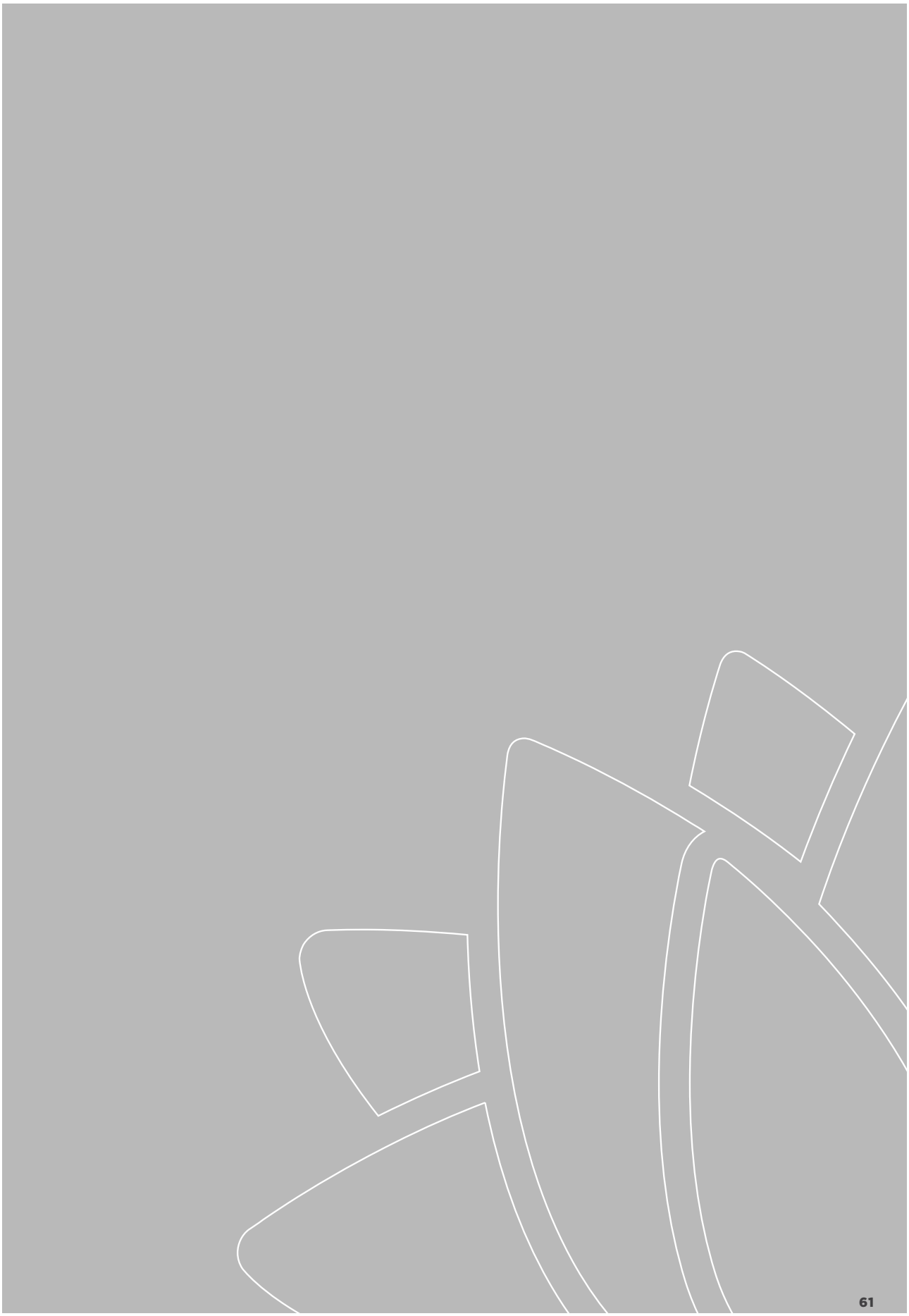
17.16 In seeking the leave of the chairperson to move to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.15(a), the councillor is to propose alternative wording for the resolution.

17.17 The chairperson must not grant leave to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.15(a), unless they are satisfied that the proposed alternative wording of the resolution would not alter the substance of the resolution previously adopted at the meeting.

17.18 A motion moved under clause 17.15 can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.15 can speak to the motion before it is put.

17.19 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 17.15.

17.20 A motion moved under clause 17.15 with the leave of the chairperson cannot be voted on unless or until it has been seconded.


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18 Time Limits on Council Meetings



18.1 Meetings of the council and committees of the council are to conclude no later than **[council to specify the time].**

18.2 If the business of the meeting is unfinished at **[council to specify the time]**, the council or the committee may, by resolution, extend the time of the meeting.

18.3 If the business of the meeting is unfinished at **[council to specify the time]**, and the council does not resolve to extend the meeting, the chairperson must either:

(a) defer consideration of the remaining items of business on the agenda to the next ordinary meeting of the council, or

(b) adjourn the meeting to a time, date and place fixed by the chairperson.

18.4 Clause 18.3 does not limit the ability of the council or a committee of the council to resolve to adjourn a meeting at any time. The resolution adjourning the meeting must fix the time, date and place that the meeting is to be adjourned to.

18.5 Where a meeting is adjourned under clause 18.3 or 18.4, the general manager must:

(a) individually notify each councillor of the time, date and place at which the meeting will reconvene, and

(b) publish the time, date and place at which the meeting will reconvene on the council's website and in such other manner that the general manager is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the time, date and place of the reconvened meeting to the attention of as many people as possible.

19 After the Meeting



Minutes of meetings

19.1 The council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of meetings of the council.

Note: Clause 19.1 reflects section 375(1) of the Act.

19.2 At a minimum, the general manager must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the council's minutes:

(a) the names of councillors attending a council meeting and whether they attended the meeting in person or by audio-visual link,

(b) details of each motion moved at a council meeting and of any amendments moved to it,

(c) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,

(d) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and

(e) such other matters specifically required under this code.

19.3 The minutes of a council meeting must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the council.

Note: Clause 19.3 reflects section 375(2) of the Act.

19.4 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.

19.5 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at the subsequent meeting.

Note: Clause 19.5 reflects section 375(2) of the Act.

19.6 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.

19.7 The confirmed minutes of a council meeting must be published on the council's website. This clause does not prevent the council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of its meetings on its website prior to their confirmation.

Access to correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, a meeting

19.8 The council and committees of the council must, during or at the close of a meeting, or during the business day following the meeting, give reasonable access to any person to inspect correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting.

Note: Clause 19.8 reflects section 11(1) of the Act.

19.9 Clause 19.8 does not apply if the correspondence or reports relate to a matter that was received or discussed or laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting when the meeting was closed to the public.

Note: Clause 19.9 reflects section 11(2) of the Act.

19.10 Clause 19.8 does not apply if the council or the committee resolves at the meeting, when open to the public, that the correspondence or reports are to be treated as confidential because they relate to a matter specified in section 10A(2) of the Act.

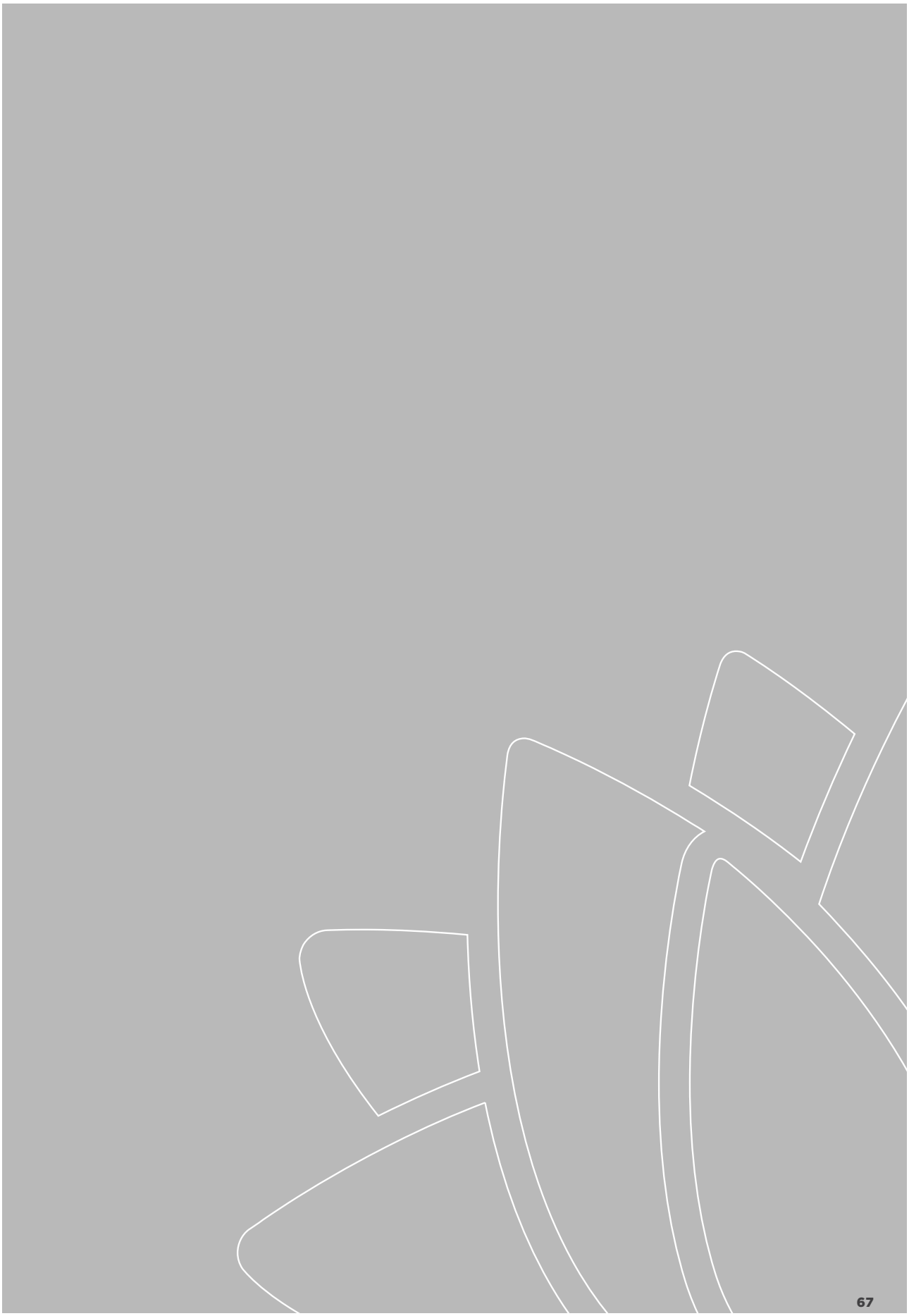
Note: Clause 19.10 reflects section 11(3) of the Act.

19.11 Correspondence or reports to which clauses 19.9 and 19.10 apply are to be marked with the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act that applies to the correspondence or report.

Implementation of decisions of the council

19.12 The general manager is to implement, without undue delay, lawful decisions of the council.

Note: Clause 19.12 reflects section 335(b) of the Act.


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20 Council Committees



Application of this Part

20.1 This Part only applies to committees of the council whose members are all councillors.

Council committees whose members are all councillors

20.2 The council may, by resolution, establish such committees as it considers necessary.

20.3 A committee of the council is to consist of the mayor and such other councillors as are elected by the councillors or appointed by the council.

20.4 The quorum for a meeting of a committee of the council is to be:

(a) such number of members as the council decides, or

(b) if the council has not decided a number – a majority of the members of the committee.

Functions of committees

20.5 The council must specify the functions of each of its committees when the committee is established but may from time to time amend those functions.

Notice of committee meetings

20.6 The general manager must send to each councillor, regardless of whether they are a committee member, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the committee, a notice specifying:

(a) the time, date and place of the meeting, and

(b) the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.

20.7 Notice of less than three (3) days may be given of a committee meeting called in an emergency.

Attendance at committee meetings

20.8 A committee member (other than the mayor) ceases to be a member of a committee if the committee member:

(a) has been absent from three (3) consecutive meetings of the committee without having given reasons acceptable to the committee for the member's absences, or

(b) has been absent from at least half of the meetings of the committee held during the immediately preceding year without having given to the committee acceptable reasons for the member's absences.

20.9 Clause 20.8 does not apply if all of the members of the council are members of the committee.

Non-members entitled to attend committee meetings

20.10 A councillor who is not a member of a committee of the council is entitled to attend, and to speak at a meeting of the committee. However, the councillor is not entitled:

(a) to give notice of business for inclusion in the agenda for the meeting, or

(b) to move or second a motion at the meeting, or

(c) to vote at the meeting.

Chairperson and deputy chairperson of council committees

20.11 The chairperson of each committee of the council must be:

(a) the mayor, or

(b) if the mayor does not wish to be the chairperson of a committee, a member of the committee elected by the council, or

(c) if the council does not elect such a member, a member of the committee elected by the committee.

20.12 The council may elect a member of a committee of the council as deputy chairperson of the committee. If the council does not elect a deputy chairperson of such a committee, the committee may elect a deputy chairperson.

20.13 If neither the chairperson nor the deputy chairperson of a committee of the council is able or willing to preside at a meeting of the committee, the committee must elect a member of the committee to be acting chairperson of the committee.

20.14 The chairperson is to preside at a meeting of a committee of the council. If the chairperson is unable or unwilling to preside, the deputy chairperson (if any) is to preside at the meeting, but if neither the chairperson nor the deputy chairperson is able or willing to preside, the acting chairperson is to preside at the meeting.

Procedure in committee meetings

20.15 Subject to any specific requirements of this code, each committee of the council may regulate its own procedure. The provisions of this code are to be taken to apply to all committees of the council unless the council or the committee determines otherwise in accordance with this clause.

20.16 Whenever the voting on a motion put to a meeting of the committee is equal, the chairperson of the committee is to have a casting vote as well as an original vote unless the council or the committee determines otherwise in accordance with clause 20.15.

20.17 A motion at a committee of a joint organisation is taken to be lost in the event of an equality of votes.

Note: Clause 20.17 reflects section 397E of the Regulation. Joint organisations must adopt clause 20.17 and omit clause 20.16. Councils must not adopt clause 20.17.

20.18 Voting at a council committee meeting is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system).

Closure of committee meetings to the public

20.19 The provisions of the Act and Part 14 of this code apply to the closure of meetings of committees of the council to the public in the same way they apply to the closure of meetings of the council to the public.

20.20 If a committee of the council passes a resolution, or makes a recommendation, during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public, the chairperson must make the resolution or recommendation public as soon as practicable after the meeting or part of the meeting has ended, and report the resolution or recommendation to the next meeting of the council. The resolution or recommendation must also be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.

20.21 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public must be made public by the chairperson under clause 20.20 during a part of the meeting that is webcast.

Disorder in committee meetings

20.22 The provisions of the Act and this code relating to the maintenance of order in council meetings apply to meetings of committees of the council in the same way as they apply to meetings of the council.

Minutes of council committee meetings

20.23 Each committee of the council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of its meetings. At a minimum, a committee must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the committee's minutes:

(a) the names of councillors attending a meeting and whether they attended the meeting in person or by audio-visual link,

(b) details of each motion moved at a meeting and of any amendments moved to it,

(c) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,

(d) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and

(e) such other matters specifically required under this code.

20.24 All voting at meetings of committees of the council (including meetings that are closed to the public), must be recorded in the minutes of meetings with the names of councillors who voted for and against each motion or amendment, (including the use of the casting vote), being recorded.

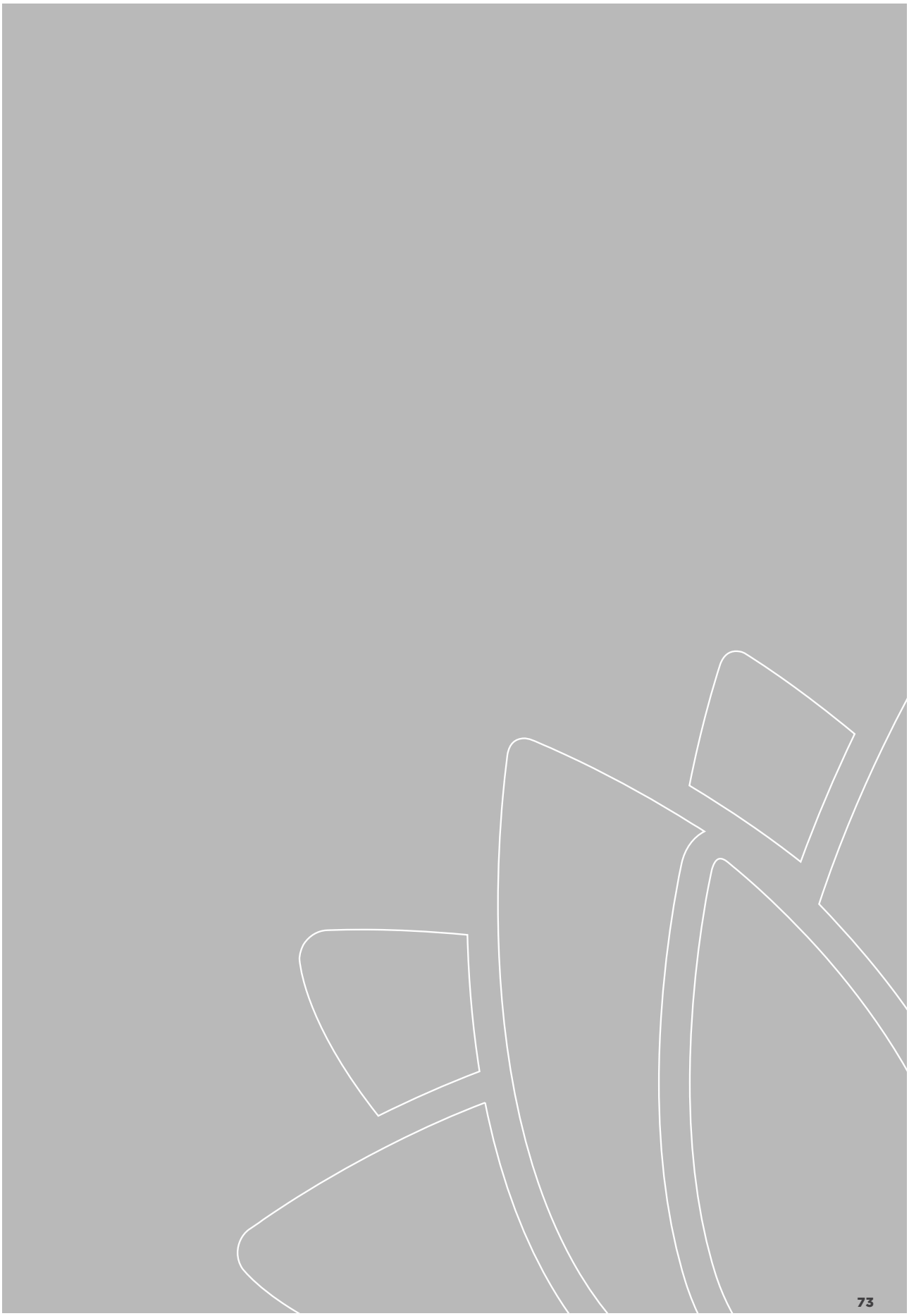
20.25 The minutes of meetings of each committee of the council must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the committee.

20.26 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.

20.27 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at that subsequent meeting.

20.28 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.

20.29 The confirmed minutes of a meeting of a committee of the council must be published on the council's website. This clause does not prevent the council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of meetings of committees of the council on its website prior to their confirmation.


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21 Irregularities



21.1 Proceedings at a meeting of a council or a council committee are not invalidated because of:

(a) a vacancy in a civic office, or

(b) a failure to give notice of the meeting to any councillor or committee member, or

(c) any defect in the election or appointment of a councillor or committee member, or

(d) a failure of a councillor or a committee member to declare a conflict of interest, or to refrain from the consideration or discussion of, or vote on, the relevant matter, at a council or committee meeting in accordance with the council's code of conduct, or

(e) a failure to comply with this code.

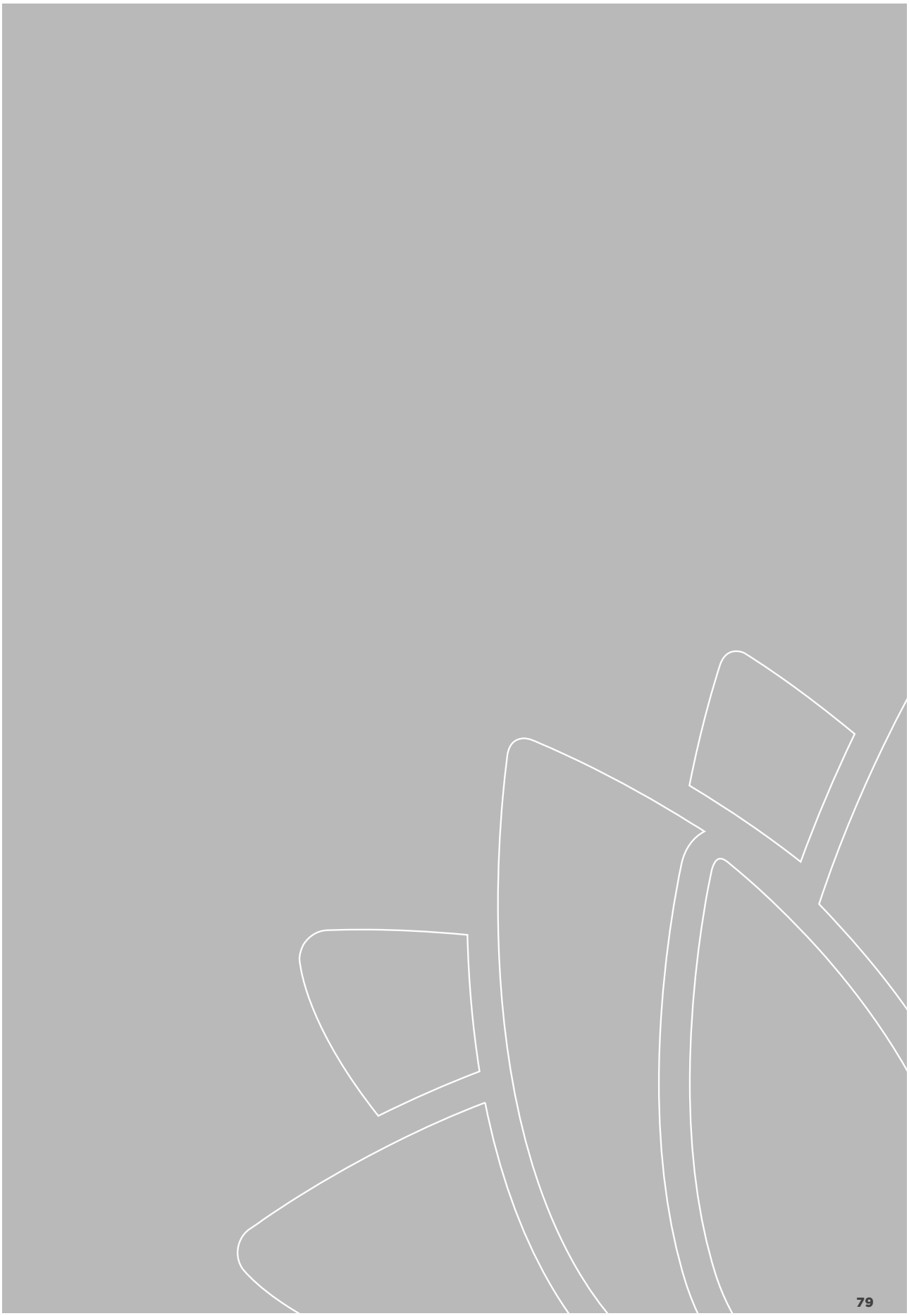
Note: Clause 21.1 reflects section 374 of the Act.

22 Definitions



the Act	means the *Local Government Act 1993*
act of disorder	means an act of disorder as defined in clause 15.11 of this code
amendment	in relation to an original motion, means a motion moving an amendment to that motion
audio recorder	any device capable of recording speech
audio-visual link	means a facility that enables audio and visual communication between persons at different places
business day	means any day except Saturday or Sunday or any other day the whole or part of which is observed as a public holiday throughout New South Wales
chairperson	in relation to a meeting of the council – means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by section 369 of the Act and clauses 6.1 and 6.2 of this code, and in relation to a meeting of a committee – means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by clause 20.11 of this code
this code	means the council's adopted code of meeting practice
committee of the council	means a committee established by the council in accordance with clause 20.2 of this code (being a committee consisting only of councillors) or the council when it has resolved itself into committee of the whole under clause 12.1
council official	has the same meaning it has in the *Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW*
day	means calendar day
division	means a request by two councillors under clause 11.7 of this code requiring the recording of the names of the councillors who voted both for and against a motion
foreshadowed amendment	means a proposed amendment foreshadowed by a councillor under clause 10.18 of this code during debate on the first amendment
foreshadowed motion	means a motion foreshadowed by a councillor under clause 10.17 of this code during debate on an original motion
open voting	means voting on the voices or by a show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system or similar means
planning decision	means a decision made in the exercise of a function of a council under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* including any decision relating to a development application, an environmental planning instrument, a development control plan or a development contribution plan under that Act, but not including the making of an order under Division 9.3 of Part 9 of that Act

performance improvement order	means an order issued under section 438A of the Act
quorum	means the minimum number of councillors or committee members necessary to conduct a meeting
the Regulation	means the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*
webcast	a video or audio broadcast of a meeting transmitted across the internet either concurrently with the meeting or at a later time
year	means the period beginning 1 July and ending the following 30 June


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NSW
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Model Code of Conduct

for Local Councils in NSW

2020

NSW GOVERNMENT

MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LOCAL COUNCILS IN NSW
2020

ACCESS TO SERVICES
The Office of Local Government is located at:
Street Address: Levels 1 & 2, 5 O'Keefe Avenue, NOWRA NSW 2541
Postal Address: Locked Bag 3015, Nowra, NSW 2541
Phone: 02 4428 4100
Fax: 02 4428 4199
TTY: 02 4428 4209
Email: olg@olg.nsw.gov.au
Website: www.olg.nsw.gov.au

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Part 1:
Introduction



This *Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW* ("the Model Code of Conduct") is made under section 440 of the *Local Government Act 1993* ("LGA") and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* ("the Regulation").

The Model Code of Conduct sets the minimum standards of conduct for council officials. It is prescribed by regulation to assist council officials to:

- understand and comply with the standards of conduct that are expected of them
- enable them to fulfil their statutory duty to act honestly and exercise a reasonable degree of care and diligence (section 439)
- act in a way that enhances public confidence in local government.

Section 440 of the LGA requires every council (including county councils) and joint organisation to adopt a code of conduct that incorporates the provisions of the Model Code of Conduct. A council's or joint organisation's adopted code of conduct may also include provisions that supplement the Model Code of Conduct and that extend its application to persons that are not "council officials" for the purposes of the Model Code of Conduct (eg volunteers, contractors and members of wholly advisory committees).

A council's or joint organisation's adopted code of conduct has no effect to the extent that it is inconsistent with the Model Code of Conduct. However, a council's or joint organisation's adopted code of conduct may prescribe requirements that are more onerous than those prescribed in the Model Code of Conduct.

Councillors, administrators, members of staff of councils, delegates of councils, (including members of council committees that are delegates of a council) and any other person a council's adopted code of conduct applies to, must comply with the applicable provisions of their council's code of conduct. It is the personal responsibility of council officials to comply with the standards in the code and to regularly review their personal circumstances and conduct with this in mind.

Failure by a councillor to comply with the standards of conduct prescribed under this code constitutes misconduct for the purposes of the LGA. The LGA provides for a range of penalties that may be imposed on councillors for misconduct, including suspension or disqualification from civic office. A councillor who has been suspended on three or more occasions for misconduct is automatically disqualified from holding civic office for five years.

Failure by a member of staff to comply with a council's code of conduct may give rise to disciplinary action.

Note: References in the Model Code of Conduct to councils are also to be taken as references to county councils and joint organisations.

Note: In adopting the Model Code of Conduct, joint organisations should adapt it to substitute the terms "board" for "council", "chairperson" for "mayor", "voting representative" for "councillor" and "executive officer" for "general manager".

Note: In adopting the Model Code of Conduct, county councils should adapt it to substitute the term "chairperson" for "mayor" and "member" for "councillor".

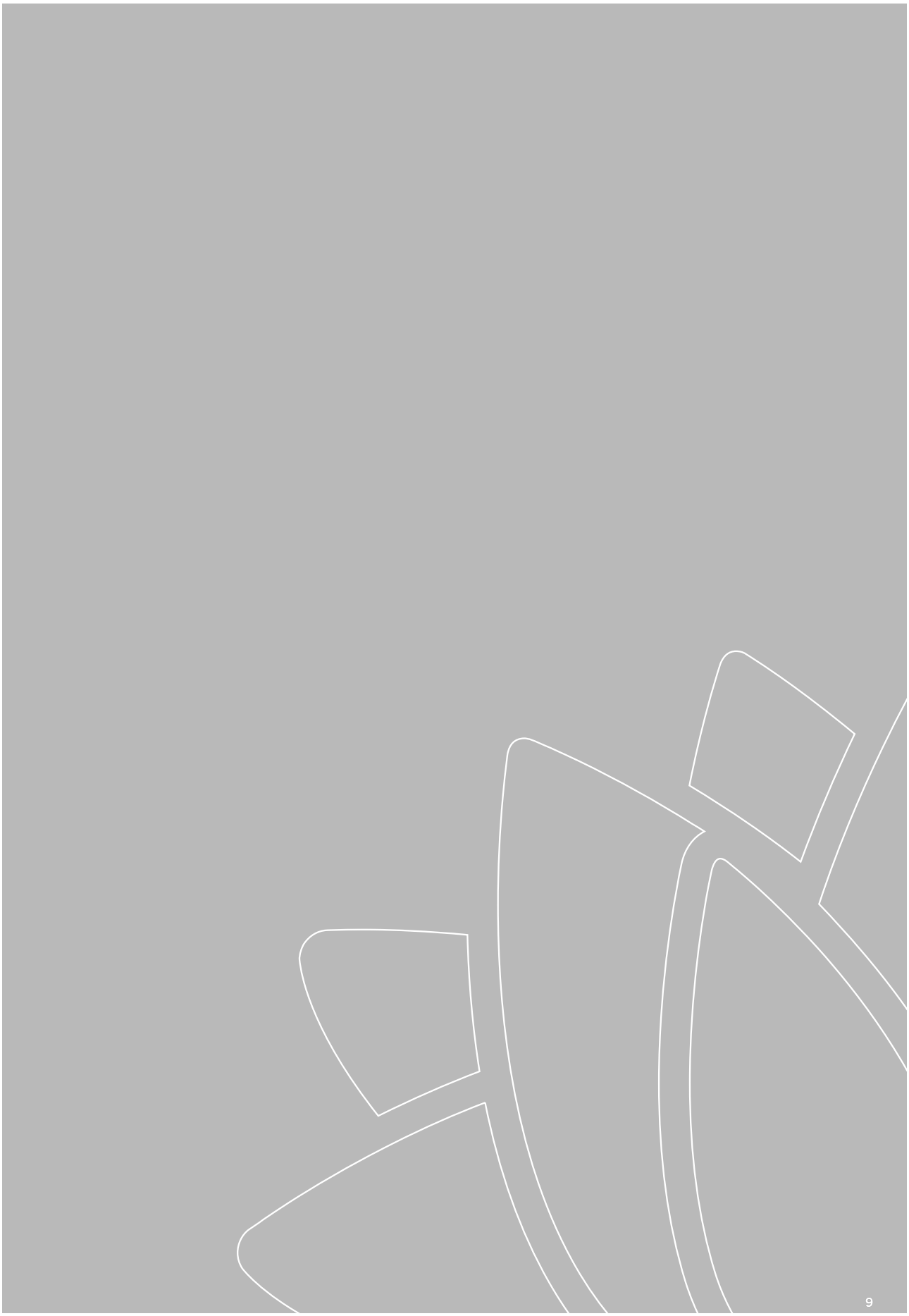
Part 2:
Definitions



In this code the following terms have the following meanings:

administrator	an administrator of a council appointed under the LGA other than an administrator appointed under section 66
committee	see the definition of "council committee"
complaint	a code of conduct complaint made for the purposes of clauses 4.1 and 4.2 of the Procedures.
conduct	includes acts and omissions
council	includes county councils and joint organisations
council committee	a committee established by a council comprising of councillors, staff or other persons that the council has delegated functions to and the council's audit, risk and improvement committee
council committee member	a person other than a councillor or member of staff of a council who is a member of a council committee other than a wholly advisory committee, and a person other than a councillor who is a member of the council's audit, risk and improvement committee
council official	includes councillors, members of staff of a council, administrators, council committee members, delegates of council and, for the purposes of clause 4.16, council advisers
councillor	any person elected or appointed to civic office, including the mayor and includes members and chairpersons of county councils and voting representatives of the boards of joint organisations and chairpersons of joint organisations
delegate of council	a person (other than a councillor or member of staff of a council) or body, and the individual members of that body, to whom a function of the council is delegated
designated person	a person referred to in clause 4.8
election campaign	includes council, state and federal election campaigns
environmental planning instrument	has the same meaning as it has in the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*
general manager	includes the executive officer of a joint organisation
joint organisation	a joint organisation established under section 400O of the LGA
LGA	*Local Government Act 1993*
local planning panel	a local planning panel constituted under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*
mayor	includes the chairperson of a county council or a joint organisation

members of staff of a council	includes members of staff of county councils and joint organisations
the Office	Office of Local Government
personal information	information or an opinion (including information or an opinion forming part of a database and whether or not recorded in a material form) about an individual whose identity is apparent or can reasonably be ascertained from the information or opinion
the Procedures	the *Procedures for the Administration of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW* prescribed under the Regulation
the Regulation	the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005*
voting representative	a voting representative of the board of a joint organisation
wholly advisory committee	a council committee that the council has not delegated any functions to



Part 3: General Conduct Obligations



General conduct

3.1 You must not conduct yourself in a manner that:

a) is likely to bring the council or other council officials into disrepute

b) is contrary to statutory requirements or the council's administrative requirements or policies

c) is improper or unethical

d) is an abuse of power

e) causes, comprises or involves intimidation or verbal abuse

f) involves the misuse of your position to obtain a private benefit

g) constitutes harassment or bullying behaviour under this code, or is unlawfully discriminatory.

3.2 You must act lawfully and honestly, and exercise a reasonable degree of care and diligence in carrying out your functions under the LGA or any other Act. (*section 439*).

Fairness and equity

3.3 You must consider issues consistently, promptly and fairly. You must deal with matters in accordance with established procedures, in a non-discriminatory manner.

3.4 You must take all relevant facts known to you, or that you should be reasonably aware of, into consideration and have regard to the particular merits of each case. You must not take irrelevant matters or circumstances into consideration when making decisions.

3.5 An act or omission in good faith, whether or not it involves error, will not constitute a breach of clauses 3.3 or 3.4.

Harassment and discrimination

3.6 You must not harass or unlawfully discriminate against others, or support others who harass or unlawfully discriminate against others, on the grounds of age, disability, race (including colour, national or ethnic origin or immigrant status), sex, pregnancy, marital or relationship status, family responsibilities or breastfeeding, sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status or political, religious or other affiliation.

3.7 For the purposes of this code, "harassment" is any form of behaviour towards a person that:

a) is not wanted by the person

b) offends, humiliates or intimidates the person, and

c) creates a hostile environment.

Bullying

3.8 You must not engage in bullying behaviour towards others.

3.9 For the purposes of this code, "bullying behaviour" is any behaviour in which:

a) a person or a group of people repeatedly behaves unreasonably towards another person or a group of persons, and

b) the behaviour creates a risk to health and safety.

3.10 Bullying behaviour may involve, but is not limited to, any of the following types of behaviour:

a) aggressive, threatening or intimidating conduct

b) belittling or humiliating comments

c) spreading malicious rumours

d) teasing, practical jokes or 'initiation ceremonies'

e) exclusion from work-related events

f) unreasonable work expectations, including too much or too little work, or work below or beyond a worker's skill level

g) displaying offensive material

h) pressure to behave in an inappropriate manner.

3.11 Reasonable management action carried out in a reasonable manner does not constitute bullying behaviour for the purposes of this code. Examples of reasonable management action may include, but are not limited to:

a) performance management processes

b) disciplinary action for misconduct

c) informing a worker about unsatisfactory work performance or inappropriate work behaviour

d) directing a worker to perform duties in keeping with their job

e) maintaining reasonable workplace goals and standards

f) legitimately exercising a regulatory function

g) legitimately implementing a council policy or administrative processes.

Work health and safety

3.12 All council officials, including councillors, owe statutory duties under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act). You must comply with your duties under the WHS Act and your responsibilities under any policies or procedures adopted by the council to ensure workplace health and safety. Specifically, you must:

a) take reasonable care for your own health and safety

b) take reasonable care that your acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons

c) comply, so far as you are reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given to ensure compliance with the WHS Act and any policies or procedures adopted by the council to ensure workplace health and safety

d) cooperate with any reasonable policy or procedure of the council relating to workplace health or safety that has been notified to council staff

e) report accidents, incidents, near misses, to the general manager or such other staff member nominated by the general manager, and take part in any incident investigations

f) so far as is reasonably practicable, consult, co-operate and coordinate with all others who have a duty under the WHS Act in relation to the same matter.

Land use planning, development assessment and other regulatory functions

3.13 You must ensure that land use planning, development assessment and other regulatory decisions are properly made, and that all parties are dealt with fairly. You must avoid any occasion for suspicion of improper conduct in the exercise of land use planning, development assessment and other regulatory functions.

3.14 In exercising land use planning, development assessment and other regulatory functions, you must ensure that no action, statement or communication between yourself and others conveys any suggestion of willingness to improperly provide concessions or preferential or unduly unfavourable treatment.

Binding caucus votes

3.15 You must not participate in binding caucus votes in relation to matters to be considered at a council or committee meeting.

3.16 For the purposes of clause 3.15, a binding caucus vote is a process whereby a group of councillors are compelled by a threat of disciplinary or other adverse action to comply with a predetermined position on a matter before the council or committee, irrespective of the personal views of individual members of the group on the merits of the matter before the council or committee.

3.17 Clause 3.15 does not prohibit councillors from discussing a matter before the council or committee prior to considering the matter in question at a council or committee meeting, or from voluntarily holding a shared view with other councillors on the merits of a matter.

3.18 Clause 3.15 does not apply to a decision to elect the mayor or deputy mayor, or to nominate a person to be a member of a council committee or a representative of the council on an external body.

Obligations in relation to meetings

3.19 You must comply with rulings by the chair at council and committee meetings or other proceedings of the council unless a motion dissenting from the ruling is passed.

3.20 You must not engage in bullying behaviour (as defined under this Part) towards the chair, other council officials or any members of the public present during council or committee meetings or other proceedings of the council (such as, but not limited to, workshops and briefing sessions).

3.21 You must not engage in conduct that disrupts council or committee meetings or other proceedings of the council (such as, but not limited to, workshops and briefing sessions), or that would otherwise be inconsistent with the orderly conduct of meetings.

3.22 If you are a councillor, you must not engage in any acts of disorder or other conduct that is intended to prevent the proper or effective functioning of the council, or of a committee of the council. Without limiting this clause, you must not:

a) leave a meeting of the council or a committee for the purposes of depriving the meeting of a quorum, or

b) submit a rescission motion with respect to a decision for the purposes of voting against it to prevent another councillor from submitting a rescission motion with respect to the same decision, or

c) deliberately seek to impede the consideration of business at a meeting.

Part 4:
Pecuniary Interests



What is a pecuniary interest?

4.1 A pecuniary interest is an interest that you have in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to you or a person referred to in clause 4.3.

4.2 You will not have a pecuniary interest in a matter if the interest is so remote or insignificant that it could not reasonably be regarded as likely to influence any decision you might make in relation to the matter, or if the interest is of a kind specified in clause 4.6.

4.3 For the purposes of this Part, you will have a pecuniary interest in a matter if the pecuniary interest is:

(a) your interest, or

(b) the interest of your spouse or de facto partner, your relative, or your partner or employer, or

(c) a company or other body of which you, or your nominee, partner or employer, is a shareholder or member.

4.4 For the purposes of clause 4.3:

(a) Your "relative" is any of the following:

i) your parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descendant or adopted child

ii) your spouse's or de facto partner's parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descendant or adopted child

iii) the spouse or de facto partner of a person referred to in paragraphs (i) and (ii).

(b) "de facto partner" has the same meaning as defined in section 21C of the *Interpretation Act 1987*.

4.5 You will not have a pecuniary interest in relation to a person referred to in subclauses 4.3(b) or (c):

(a) if you are unaware of the relevant pecuniary interest of your spouse, de facto partner, relative, partner, employer or company or other body, or

(b) just because the person is a member of, or is employed by, a council or a statutory body, or is employed by the Crown, or

(c) just because the person is a member of, or a delegate of a council to, a company or other body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter, so long as the person has no beneficial interest in any shares of the company or body.

What interests do not have to be disclosed?

4.6 You do not have to disclose the following interests for the purposes of this Part:

(a) your interest as an elector

(b) your interest as a ratepayer or person liable to pay a charge

(c) an interest you have in any matter relating to the terms on which the provision of a service or the supply of goods or commodities is offered to the public generally, or to a section of the public that includes persons who are not subject to this code

(d) an interest you have in any matter relating to the terms on which the provision of a service or the supply of goods or commodities is offered to your relative by the council in the same manner and subject to the same conditions as apply to persons who are not subject to this code

(e) an interest you have as a member of a club or other organisation or association, unless the interest is as the holder of an office in the club or organisation (whether remunerated or not)

(f) if you are a council committee member, an interest you have as a person chosen to represent the community, or as a member of a non-profit organisation or other community or special interest group, if you have been appointed to represent the organisation or group on the council committee

(g) an interest you have relating to a contract, proposed contract or other matter, if the interest arises only because of a beneficial interest in shares in a company that does not exceed 10 per cent of the voting rights in the company

(h) an interest you have arising from the proposed making by the council of an agreement between the council and a corporation, association or partnership, being a corporation, association or partnership that has more than 25 members, if the interest arises because your relative is a shareholder (but not a director) of the corporation, or is a member (but not a member of the committee) of the association, or is a partner of the partnership

(i) an interest you have arising from the making by the council of a contract or agreement with your relative for, or in relation to, any of the following, but only if the proposed contract or agreement is similar in terms and conditions to such contracts and agreements as have been made, or as are proposed to be made, by the council in respect of similar matters with other residents of the area:

i) the performance by the council at the expense of your relative of any work or service in connection with roads or sanitation

ii) security for damage to footpaths or roads

iii) any other service to be rendered, or act to be done, by the council by or under any Act conferring functions on the council, or by or under any contract

(j) an interest relating to the payment of fees to councillors (including the mayor and deputy mayor)

(k) an interest relating to the payment of expenses and the provision of facilities to councillors (including the mayor and deputy mayor) in accordance with a policy under section 252 of the LGA,

(l) an interest relating to an election to the office of mayor arising from the fact that a fee for the following 12 months has been determined for the office of mayor

(m) an interest of a person arising from the passing for payment of a regular account for the wages or salary of an employee who is a relative of the person

(n) an interest arising from being covered by, or a proposal to be covered by, indemnity insurance as a councillor or a council committee member

(o) an interest arising from the appointment of a councillor to a body as a representative or delegate of the council, whether or not a fee or other recompense is payable to the representative or delegate.

4.7 For the purposes of clause 4.6, "relative" has the same meaning as in clause 4.4, but includes your spouse or de facto partner.

What disclosures must be made by a designated person?

4.8 Designated persons include:

(a) the general manager

(b) other senior staff of the council for the purposes of section 332 of the LGA

(c) a person (other than a member of the senior staff of the council) who is a member of staff of the council or a delegate of the council and who holds a position identified by the council as the position of a designated person because it involves the exercise of functions (such as regulatory functions or contractual functions) that, in their exercise, could give rise to a conflict between the person's duty as a member of staff or delegate and the person's private interest

(d) a person (other than a member of the senior staff of the council) who is a member of a committee of the council identified by the council as a committee whose members are designated persons because the functions of the committee involve the exercise of the council's functions (such as regulatory functions or contractual functions) that, in their exercise, could give rise to a conflict between the member's duty as a member of the committee and the member's private interest.

4.9 A designated person:

(a) must prepare and submit written returns of interests in accordance with clauses 4.21, and

(b) must disclose pecuniary interests in accordance with clause 4.10.

4.10 A designated person must disclose in writing to the general manager (or if the person is the general manager, to the council) the nature of any pecuniary interest the person has in any council matter with which the person is dealing as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the interest.

4.11 Clause 4.10 does not require a designated person who is a member of staff of the council to disclose a pecuniary interest if the interest relates only to the person's salary as a member of staff, or to their other conditions of employment.

4.12 The general manager must, on receiving a disclosure from a designated person, deal with the matter to which the disclosure relates or refer it to another person to deal with.

4.13 A disclosure by the general manager must, as soon as practicable after the disclosure is made, be laid on the table at a meeting of the council and the council must deal with the matter to which the disclosure relates or refer it to another person to deal with.

What disclosures must be made by council staff other than designated persons?

4.14 A member of staff of council, other than a designated person, must disclose in writing to their manager or the general manager the nature of any pecuniary interest they have in a matter they are dealing with as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the interest.

4.15 The staff member's manager or the general manager must, on receiving a disclosure under clause 4.14, deal with the matter to which the disclosure relates or refer it to another person to deal with.

What disclosures must be made by council advisers?

4.16 A person who, at the request or with the consent of the council or a council committee, gives advice on any matter at any meeting of the council or committee, must disclose the nature of any pecuniary interest the person has in the matter to the meeting at the time the advice is given. The person is not required to disclose the person's interest as an adviser.

4.17 A person does not breach clause 4.16 if the person did not know, and could not reasonably be expected to have known, that the matter under consideration at the meeting was a matter in which they had a pecuniary interest.

What disclosures must be made by a council committee member?

4.18 A council committee member must disclose pecuniary interests in accordance with clause 4.28 and comply with clause 4.29.

4.19 For the purposes of clause 4.18, a "council committee member" includes a member of staff of council who is a member of the committee.

What disclosures must be made by a councillor?

4.20 A councillor:

(a) must prepare and submit written returns of interests in accordance with clause 4.21, and

(b) must disclose pecuniary interests in accordance with clause 4.28 and comply with clause 4.29 where it is applicable.

Disclosure of interests in written returns

4.21 A councillor or designated person must make and lodge with the general manager a return in the form set out in schedule 2 to this code, disclosing the councillor's or designated person's interests as specified in schedule 1 to this code within 3 months after:

(a) becoming a councillor or designated person, and

(b) 30 June of each year, and

(c) the councillor or designated person becoming aware of an interest they are required to disclose under schedule 1 that has not been previously disclosed in a return lodged under paragraphs (a) or (b).

4.22 A person need not make and lodge a return under clause 4.21, paragraphs (a) and (b) if:

(a) they made and lodged a return under that clause in the preceding 3 months, or

(b) they have ceased to be a councillor or designated person in the preceding 3 months.

4.23 A person must not make and lodge a return that the person knows or ought reasonably to know is false or misleading in a material particular.

4.24 The general manager must keep a register of returns required to be made and lodged with the general manager.

4.25 Returns required to be lodged with the general manager under clause 4.21(a) and (b) must be tabled at the first meeting of the council after the last day the return is required to be lodged.

4.26 Returns required to be lodged with the general manager under clause 4.21(c) must be tabled at the next council meeting after the return is lodged.

4.27 Information contained in returns made and lodged under clause 4.21 is to be made publicly available in accordance with the requirements of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009,* the *Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2009* and any guidelines issued by the Information Commissioner.

Disclosure of pecuniary interests at meetings

4.28 A councillor or a council committee member who has a pecuniary interest in any matter with which the council is concerned, and who is present at a meeting of the council or committee at which the matter is being considered, must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable.

4.29 The councillor or council committee member must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting of the council or committee:

(a) at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the council or committee, or

(b) at any time during which the council or committee is voting on any question in relation to the matter.

4.30 In the case of a meeting of a board of a joint organisation, a voting representative is taken to be present at the meeting for the purposes of clauses 4.28 and 4.29 where they participate in the meeting by telephone or other electronic means.

4.31 A disclosure made at a meeting of a council or council committee must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

4.32 A general notice may be given to the general manager in writing by a councillor or a council committee member to the effect that the councillor or council committee member, or the councillor's or council committee member's spouse, de facto partner or relative, is:

(a) a member of, or in the employment of, a specified company or other body, or

(b) a partner of, or in the employment of, a specified person.

Such a notice is, unless and until the notice is withdrawn or until the end of the term of the council in which it is given (whichever is the sooner), sufficient disclosure of the councillor's or council committee member's interest in a matter relating to the specified company, body or person that may be the subject of consideration by the council or council committee after the date of the notice.

4.33 A councillor or a council committee member is not prevented from being present at and taking part in a meeting at which a matter is being considered, or from voting on the matter, merely because the councillor or council committee member has an interest in the matter of a kind referred to in clause 4.6.

4.34 A person does not breach clauses 4.28 or 4.29 if the person did not know, and could not reasonably be expected to have known, that the matter under consideration at the meeting was a matter in which they had a pecuniary interest.

4.35 Despite clause 4.29, a councillor who has a pecuniary interest in a matter may participate in a decision to delegate consideration of the matter in question to another body or person.

4.36 Clause 4.29 does not apply to a councillor who has a pecuniary interest in a matter that is being considered at a meeting if:

(a) the matter is a proposal relating to:

(i) the making of a principal environmental planning instrument applying to the whole or a significant portion of the council's area, or

(ii) the amendment, alteration or repeal of an environmental planning instrument where the amendment, alteration or repeal applies to the whole or a significant portion of the council's area, and

(b) the pecuniary interest arises only because of an interest of the councillor in the councillor's principal place of residence or an interest of another person (whose interests are relevant under clause 4.3) in that person's principal place of residence, and

(c) the councillor made a special disclosure under clause 4.37 in relation to the interest before the commencement of the meeting.

4.37 A special disclosure of a pecuniary interest made for the purposes of clause 4.36(c) must:

(a) be in the form set out in schedule 3 of this code and contain the information required by that form, and

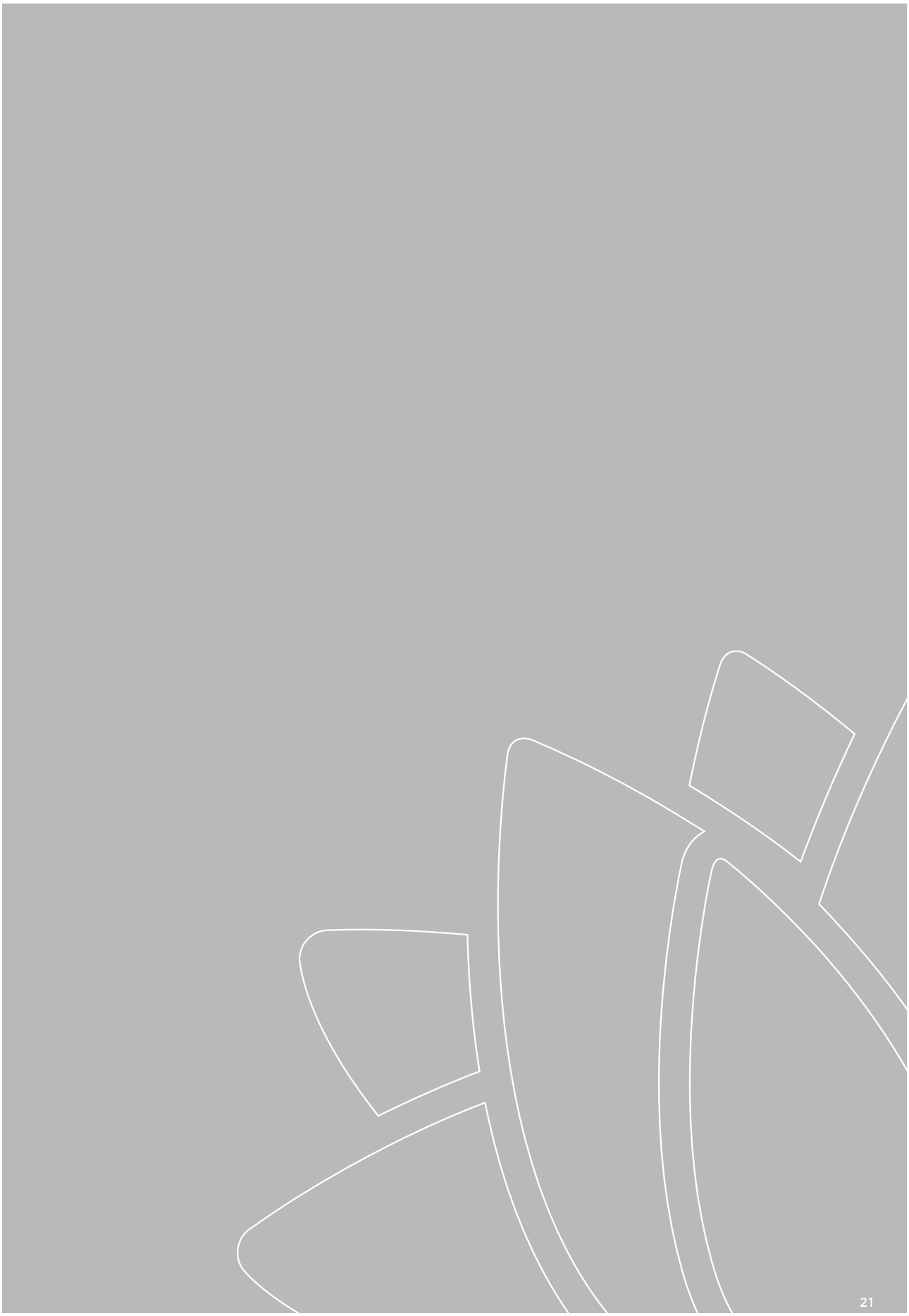
(b) be laid on the table at a meeting of the council as soon as practicable after the disclosure is made, and the information contained in the special disclosure is to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

4.38 The Minister for Local Government may, conditionally or unconditionally, allow a councillor or a council committee member who has a pecuniary interest in a matter with which the council is concerned to be present at a meeting of the council or committee, to take part in the consideration or discussion of the matter and to vote on the matter if the Minister is of the opinion:

(a) that the number of councillors prevented from voting would be so great a proportion of the whole as to impede the transaction of business, or

(b) that it is in the interests of the electors for the area to do so.

4.39 A councillor or a council committee member with a pecuniary interest in a matter who is permitted to be present at a meeting of the council or committee, to take part in the consideration or discussion of the matter and to vote on the matter under clause 4.38, must still disclose the interest they have in the matter in accordance with clause 4.28.


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Part 5:
Non-Pecuniary Conflicts of Interest



What is a non-pecuniary conflict of interest?

5.1 Non-pecuniary interests are private or personal interests a council official has that do not amount to a pecuniary interest as defined in clause 4.1 of this code. These commonly arise out of family or personal relationships, or out of involvement in sporting, social, religious or other cultural groups and associations, and may include an interest of a financial nature.

5.2 A non-pecuniary conflict of interest exists where a reasonable and informed person would perceive that you could be influenced by a private interest when carrying out your official functions in relation to a matter.

5.3 The personal or political views of a council official do not constitute a private interest for the purposes of clause 5.2.

5.4 Non-pecuniary conflicts of interest must be identified and appropriately managed to uphold community confidence in the probity of council decision-making. The onus is on you to identify any non-pecuniary conflict of interest you may have in matters that you deal with, to disclose the interest fully and in writing, and to take appropriate action to manage the conflict in accordance with this code.

5.5 When considering whether or not you have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter you are dealing with, it is always important to think about how others would view your situation.

Managing non-pecuniary conflicts of interest

5.6 Where you have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter for the purposes of clause 5.2, you must disclose the relevant private interest you have in relation to the matter fully and in writing as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the non-pecuniary conflict of interest and on each occasion on which the non-pecuniary conflict of interest arises in relation to the matter. In the case of members of council staff other than the general manager, such a disclosure is to be made to the staff member's manager. In the case of the general manager, such a disclosure is to be made to the mayor.

5.7 If a disclosure is made at a council or committee meeting, both the disclosure and the nature of the interest must be recorded in the minutes on each occasion on which the non-pecuniary conflict of interest arises. This disclosure constitutes disclosure in writing for the purposes of clause 5.6.

5.8 How you manage a non-pecuniary conflict of interest will depend on whether or not it is significant.

5.9 As a general rule, a non-pecuniary conflict of interest will be significant where it does not involve a pecuniary interest for the purposes of clause 4.1, but it involves:

a) a relationship between a council official and another person who is affected by a decision or a matter under consideration that is particularly close, such as a current or former spouse or de facto partner, a relative for the purposes of clause 4.4 or another person from the council official's extended family that the council official has a close personal relationship with, or another person living in the same household

b) other relationships with persons who are affected by a decision or a matter under consideration that are particularly close, such as friendships and business relationships. Closeness is defined by the nature of the friendship or business relationship, the frequency of contact and the duration of the friendship or relationship.

c) an affiliation between the council official and an organisation (such as a sporting body, club, religious, cultural or charitable organisation, corporation or association) that is affected by a decision or a matter under consideration that is particularly strong. The strength of a council official's affiliation with an organisation is to be determined by the extent to which they actively participate in the management, administration or other activities of the organisation.

d) membership, as the council's representative, of the board or management committee of an organisation that is affected by a decision or a matter under consideration, in circumstances where the interests of the council and the organisation are potentially in conflict in relation to the particular matter

e) a financial interest (other than an interest of a type referred to in clause 4.6) that is not a pecuniary interest for the purposes of clause 4.1

f) the conferral or loss of a personal benefit other than one conferred or lost as a member of the community or a broader class of people affected by a decision.

5.10 Significant non-pecuniary conflicts of interest must be managed in one of two ways:

a) by not participating in consideration of, or decision making in relation to, the matter in which you have the significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest and the matter being allocated to another person for consideration or determination, or

b) if the significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest arises in relation to a matter under consideration at a council or committee meeting, by managing the conflict of interest as if you had a pecuniary interest in the matter by complying with clauses 4.28 and 4.29.

5.11 If you determine that you have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter that is not significant and does not require further action, when disclosing the interest you must also explain in writing why you consider that the non-pecuniary conflict of interest is not significant and does not require further action in the circumstances.

5.12 If you are a member of staff of council other than the general manager, the decision on which option should be taken to manage a non-pecuniary conflict of interest must be made in consultation with and at the direction of your manager. In the case of the general manager, the decision on which option should be taken to manage a non-pecuniary conflict of interest must be made in consultation with and at the direction of the mayor.

5.13 Despite clause 5.10(b), a councillor who has a significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter, may participate in a decision to delegate consideration of the matter in question to another body or person.

5.14 Council committee members are not required to declare and manage a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in accordance with the requirements of this Part where it arises from an interest they have as a person chosen to represent the community, or as a member of a non-profit organisation or other community or special interest group, if they have been appointed to represent the organisation or group on the council committee.

Political donations

5.15 Councillors should be aware that matters before council or committee meetings involving their political donors may also give rise to a non-pecuniary conflict of interest.

5.16 Where you are a councillor and have received or knowingly benefitted from a reportable political donation:

a) made by a major political donor in the previous four years, and

b) the major political donor has a matter before council,

you must declare a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in the matter, disclose the nature of the interest, and manage the conflict of interest as if you had a pecuniary interest in the matter by complying with clauses 4.28 and 4.29. A disclosure made under this clause must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

5.17 For the purposes of this Part:

a) a "reportable political donation" has the same meaning as it has in section 6 of the *Electoral Funding Act 2018*

b) "major political donor" has the same meaning as it has in the *Electoral Funding Act 2018*.

5.18 Councillors should note that political donations that are not a "reportable political donation", or political donations to a registered political party or group by which a councillor is endorsed, may still give rise to a non-pecuniary conflict of interest. Councillors should determine whether or not such conflicts are significant for the purposes of clause 5.9 and take the appropriate action to manage them.

5.19 Despite clause 5.16, a councillor who has received or knowingly benefitted from a reportable political donation of the kind referred to in that clause, may participate in a decision to delegate consideration of the matter in question to another body or person.

Loss of quorum as a result of compliance with this Part

5.20 A councillor who would otherwise be precluded from participating in the consideration of a matter under this Part because they have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in the matter is permitted to participate in consideration of the matter if:

a) the matter is a proposal relating to:

i) the making of a principal environmental planning instrument applying to the whole or a significant portion of the council's area, or

ii) the amendment, alteration or repeal of an environmental planning instrument where the amendment, alteration or repeal applies to the whole or a significant portion of the council's area, and

b) the non-pecuniary conflict of interest arises only because of an interest that a person has in that person's principal place of residence, and

c) the councillor discloses the interest they have in the matter that would otherwise have precluded their participation in consideration of the matter under this Part in accordance with clause 5.6.

5.21 The Minister for Local Government may, conditionally or unconditionally, allow a councillor or a council committee member who is precluded under this Part from participating in the consideration of a matter to be present at a meeting of the council or committee, to take part in the consideration or discussion of the matter and to vote on the matter if the Minister is of the opinion:

a) that the number of councillors prevented from voting would be so great a proportion of the whole as to impede the transaction of business, or

b) that it is in the interests of the electors for the area to do so.

5.22 Where the Minister exempts a councillor or committee member from complying with a requirement under this Part under clause 5.21, the councillor or committee member must still disclose any interests they have in the matter the exemption applies to, in accordance with clause 5.6.

Other business or employment

5.23 The general manager must not engage, for remuneration, in private employment, contract work or other business outside the service of the council without the approval of the council.

5.24 A member of staff must not engage, for remuneration, in private employment, contract work or other business outside the service of the council that relates to the business of the council or that might conflict with the staff member's council duties unless they have notified the general manager in writing of the employment, work or business and the general manager has given their written approval for the staff member to engage in the employment, work or business.

5.25 The general manager may at any time prohibit a member of staff from engaging, for remuneration, in private employment, contract work or other business outside the service of the council that relates to the business of the council, or that might conflict with the staff member's council duties.

5.26 A member of staff must not engage, for remuneration, in private employment, contract work or other business outside the service of the council if prohibited from doing so.

5.27 Members of staff must ensure that any outside employment, work or business they engage in will not:

a) conflict with their official duties

b) involve using confidential information or council resources obtained through their work with the council including where private use is permitted

c) require them to work while on council duty

d) discredit or disadvantage the council

e) pose, due to fatigue, a risk to their health or safety, or to the health and safety of their co-workers.

Personal dealings with council

5.28 You may have reason to deal with your council in your personal capacity (for example, as a ratepayer, recipient of a council service or applicant for a development consent granted by council). You must not expect or request preferential treatment in relation to any matter in which you have a private interest because of your position. You must avoid any action that could lead members of the public to believe that you are seeking preferential treatment.

5.29 You must undertake any personal dealings you have with the council in a manner that is consistent with the way other members of the community deal with the council. You must also ensure that you disclose and appropriately manage any conflict of interest you may have in any matter in accordance with the requirements of this code.

Part 6:
Personal Benefit

6.1 For the purposes of this Part, a gift or a benefit is something offered to or received by a council official or someone personally associated with them for their personal use and enjoyment.

6.2 A reference to a gift or benefit in this Part does not include:

a) items with a value of $10 or less

b) a political donation for the purposes of the *Electoral Funding Act 2018*

c) a gift provided to the council as part of a cultural exchange or sister-city relationship that is not converted for the personal use or enjoyment of any individual council official or someone personally associated with them

d) a benefit or facility provided by the council to an employee or councillor

e) attendance by a council official at a work-related event or function for the purposes of performing their official duties, or

f) free or subsidised meals, beverages or refreshments provided to council officials in conjunction with the performance of their official duties such as, but not limited to:

i) the discussion of official business

ii) work-related events such as council-sponsored or community events, training, education sessions or workshops

iii) conferences

iv) council functions or events

v) social functions organised by groups, such as council committees and community organisations.

Gifts and benefits

6.3 You must avoid situations that would give rise to the appearance that a person or body is attempting to secure favourable treatment from you or from the council, through the provision of gifts, benefits or hospitality of any kind to you or someone personally associated with you.

6.4 A gift or benefit is deemed to have been accepted by you for the purposes of this Part, where it is received by you or someone personally associated with you.

How are offers of gifts and benefits to be dealt with?

6.5 You must not:

a) seek or accept a bribe or other improper inducement

b) seek gifts or benefits of any kind

c) accept any gift or benefit that may create a sense of obligation on your part, or may be perceived to be intended or likely to influence you in carrying out your public duty

d) subject to clause 6.7, accept any gift or benefit of more than token value as defined by clause 6.9

e) accept an offer of cash or a cash-like gift as defined by clause 6.13, regardless of the amount

f) participate in competitions for prizes where eligibility is based on the council being in or entering into a customer–supplier relationship with the competition organiser

g) personally benefit from reward points programs when purchasing on behalf of the council.

6.6 Where you receive a gift or benefit of any value other than one referred to in clause 6.2, you must disclose this promptly to your manager or the general manager in writing. The recipient, manager, or general manager must ensure that, at a minimum, the following details are recorded in the council's gift register:

a) the nature of the gift or benefit

b) the estimated monetary value of the gift or benefit

c) the name of the person who provided the gift or benefit, and

d) the date on which the gift or benefit was received.

6.7 Where you receive a gift or benefit of more than token value that cannot reasonably be refused or returned, the gift or benefit must be surrendered to the council, unless the nature of the gift or benefit makes this impractical.

Gifts and benefits of token value

6.8 You may accept gifts and benefits of token value. Gifts and benefits of token value are one or more gifts or benefits received from a person or organisation over a 12-month period that, when aggregated, do not exceed a value of $100. They include, but are not limited to:

a) invitations to and attendance at local social, cultural or sporting events with a ticket value that does not exceed $100

b) gifts of alcohol that do not exceed a value of $100

c) ties, scarves, coasters, tie pins, diaries, chocolates or flowers or the like

d) prizes or awards that do not exceed $100 in value.

Gifts and benefits of more than token value

6.9 Gifts or benefits that exceed $100 in value are gifts or benefits of more than token value for the purposes of clause 6.5(d) and, subject to clause 6.7, must not be accepted.

6.10 Gifts and benefits of more than token value include, but are not limited to, tickets to major sporting events (such as international matches or matches in national sporting codes) with a ticket value that exceeds $100, corporate hospitality at a corporate facility at major sporting events, free or discounted products or services for personal use provided on terms that are not available to the general public or a broad class of persons, the use of holiday homes, artworks, free or discounted travel.

6.11 Where you have accepted a gift or benefit of token value from a person or organisation, you must not accept a further gift or benefit from the same person or organisation or another person associated with that person or organisation within a single 12-month period where the value of the gift, added to the value of earlier gifts received from the same person or organisation, or a person associated with that person or organisation, during the same 12-month period would exceed $100 in value.

6.12 For the purposes of this Part, the value of a gift or benefit is the monetary value of the gift or benefit inclusive of GST.

"Cash-like gifts"

6.13 For the purposes of clause 6.5(e), "cash-like gifts" include, but are not limited to, gift vouchers, credit cards, debit cards with credit on them, prepayments such as phone or internet credit, lottery tickets, memberships or entitlements to discounts that are not available to the general public or a broad class of persons.

Improper and undue influence

6.14 You must not use your position to influence other council officials in the performance of their official functions to obtain a private benefit for yourself or for somebody else. A councillor will not be in breach of this clause where they seek to influence other council officials through the proper exercise of their role as prescribed under the LGA.

6.15 You must not take advantage (or seek to take advantage) of your status or position with council, or of functions you perform for council, in order to obtain a private benefit for yourself or for any other person or body.

Part 7:
Relationships Between Council Officials



Obligations of councillors and administrators

7.1 Each council is a body politic. The councillors or administrator/s are the governing body of the council. Under section 223 of the LGA, the role of the governing body of the council includes the development and endorsement of the strategic plans, programs, strategies and policies of the council, including those relating to workforce policy, and to keep the performance of the council under review.

7.2 Councillors or administrators must not:

a) direct council staff other than by giving appropriate direction to the general manager by way of council or committee resolution, or by the mayor or administrator exercising their functions under section 226 of the LGA

b) in any public or private forum, direct or influence, or attempt to direct or influence, any other member of the staff of the council or a delegate of the council in the exercise of the functions of the staff member or delegate

c) contact a member of the staff of the council on council-related business unless in accordance with the policy and procedures governing the interaction of councillors and council staff that have been authorised by the council and the general manager

d) contact or issue instructions to any of the council's contractors, including the council's legal advisers, unless by the mayor or administrator exercising their functions under section 226 of the LGA.

7.3 Despite clause 7.2, councillors may contact the council's external auditor or the chair of the council's audit risk and improvement committee to provide information reasonably necessary for the external auditor or the audit, risk and improvement committee to effectively perform their functions.

Obligations of staff

7.4 Under section 335 of the LGA, the role of the general manager includes conducting the day-to-day management of the council in accordance with the strategic plans, programs, strategies and policies of the council, implementing without undue delay, lawful decisions of the council and ensuring that the mayor and other councillors are given timely information and advice and the administrative and professional support necessary to effectively discharge their official functions.

7.5 Members of staff of council must:

a) give their attention to the business of the council while on duty

b) ensure that their work is carried out ethically, efficiently, economically and effectively

c) carry out reasonable and lawful directions given by any person having authority to give such directions

d) give effect to the lawful decisions, policies and procedures of the council, whether or not the staff member agrees with or approves of them

e) ensure that any participation in political activities outside the service of the council does not interfere with the performance of their official duties.

Inappropriate interactions

7.6 You must not engage in any of the following inappropriate interactions:

a) councillors and administrators approaching staff and staff organisations to discuss individual or operational staff matters (other than matters relating to broader workforce policy), grievances, workplace investigations and disciplinary matters

b) council staff approaching councillors and administrators to discuss individual or operational staff matters (other than matters relating to broader workforce policy), grievances, workplace investigations and disciplinary matters

c) subject to clause 8.6, council staff refusing to give information that is available to other councillors to a particular councillor

d) councillors and administrators who have lodged an application with the council, discussing the matter with council staff in staff-only areas of the council

e) councillors and administrators approaching members of local planning panels or discussing any application that is either before the panel or that will come before the panel at some future time, except during a panel meeting where the application forms part of the agenda and the councillor or administrator has a right to be heard by the panel at the meeting

f) councillors and administrators being overbearing or threatening to council staff

g) council staff being overbearing or threatening to councillors or administrators

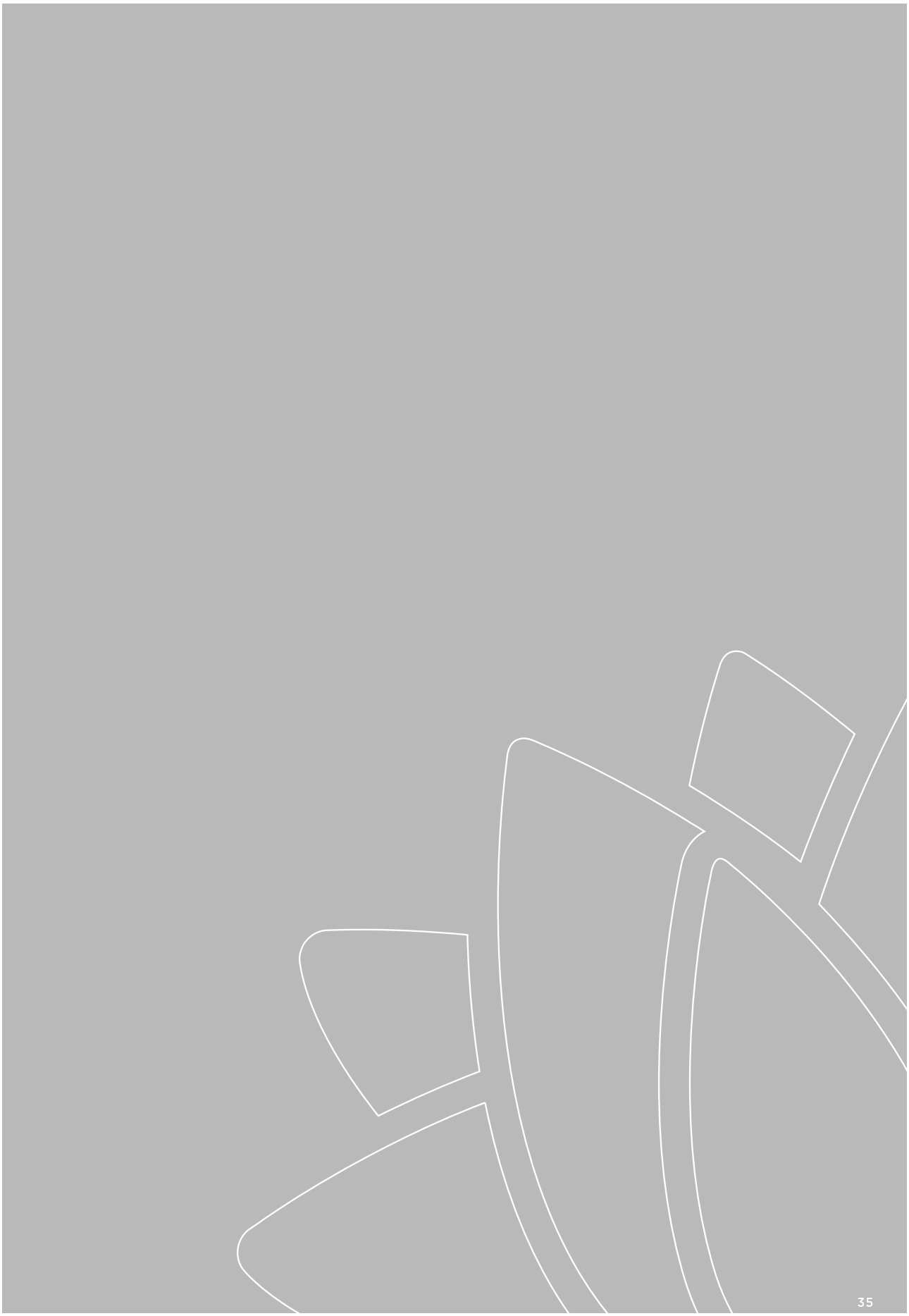
h) councillors and administrators making personal attacks on council staff or engaging in conduct towards staff that would be contrary to the general conduct provisions in Part 3 of this code in public forums including social media

i) councillors and administrators directing or pressuring council staff in the performance of their work, or recommendations they should make

j) council staff providing ad hoc advice to councillors and administrators without recording or documenting the interaction as they would if the advice was provided to a member of the community

k) council staff meeting with applicants or objectors alone AND outside office hours to discuss planning applications or proposals

l) councillors attending on-site inspection meetings with lawyers and/or consultants engaged by the council associated with current or proposed legal proceedings unless permitted to do so by the council's general manager or, in the case of the mayor or administrator, unless they are exercising their functions under section 226 of the LGA.


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Part 8:
Access to Information and Council Resources



Councillor and administrator access to information

8.1 The general manager is responsible for ensuring that councillors and administrators can access information necessary for the performance of their official functions. The general manager and public officer are also responsible for ensuring that members of the public can access publicly available council information under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (the GIPA Act).

8.2 The general manager must provide councillors and administrators with the information necessary to effectively discharge their official functions.

8.3 Members of staff of council must provide full and timely information to councillors and administrators sufficient to enable them to exercise their official functions and in accordance with council procedures.

8.4 Members of staff of council who provide any information to a particular councillor in the performance of their official functions must also make it available to any other councillor who requests it and in accordance with council procedures.

8.5 Councillors and administrators who have a private interest only in council information have the same rights of access as any member of the public.

8.6 Despite clause 8.4, councillors and administrators who are precluded from participating in the consideration of a matter under this code because they have a conflict of interest in the matter, are not entitled to request access to council information in relation to the matter unless the information is otherwise available to members of the public, or the council has determined to make the information available under the GIPA Act.

Councillors and administrators to properly examine and consider information

8.7 Councillors and administrators must ensure that they comply with their duty under section 439 of the LGA to act honestly and exercise a reasonable degree of care and diligence by properly examining and considering all the information provided to them relating to matters that they are required to make a decision on.

Refusal of access to information

8.8 Where the general manager or public officer determine to refuse access to information requested by a councillor or administrator, they must act reasonably. In reaching this decision they must take into account whether or not the information requested is necessary for the councillor or administrator to perform their official functions (see clause 8.2) and whether they have disclosed a conflict of interest in the matter the information relates to that would preclude their participation in consideration of the matter (see clause 8.6). The general manager or public officer must state the reasons for the decision if access is refused.

Use of certain council information

8.9 In regard to information obtained in your capacity as a council official, you must:

a) subject to clause 8.14, only access council information needed for council business

b) not use that council information for private purposes

c) not seek or obtain, either directly or indirectly, any financial benefit or other improper advantage for yourself, or any other person or body, from any information to which you have access by virtue of your office or position with council

d) only release council information in accordance with established council policies and procedures and in compliance with relevant legislation.

Use and security of confidential information

8.10 You must maintain the integrity and security of confidential information in your possession, or for which you are responsible.

8.11 In addition to your general obligations relating to the use of council information, you must:

a) only access confidential information that you have been authorised to access and only do so for the purposes of exercising your official functions

b) protect confidential information

c) only release confidential information if you have authority to do so

d) only use confidential information for the purpose for which it is intended to be used

e) not use confidential information gained through your official position for the purpose of securing a private benefit for yourself or for any other person

f) not use confidential information with the intention to cause harm or detriment to the council or any other person or body

g) not disclose any confidential information discussed during a confidential session of a council or committee meeting or any other confidential forum (such as, but not limited to, workshops or briefing sessions).

Personal information

8.12 When dealing with personal information you must comply with:

a) the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*

b) the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002*

c) the Information Protection Principles and Health Privacy Principles

d) the council's privacy management plan

e) the Privacy Code of Practice for Local Government

Use of council resources

8.13 You must use council resources ethically, effectively, efficiently and carefully in exercising your official functions, and must not use them for private purposes, except when supplied as part of a contract of employment (but not for private business purposes), unless this use is lawfully authorised and proper payment is made where appropriate.

8.14 Union delegates and consultative committee members may have reasonable access to council resources and information for the purposes of carrying out their industrial responsibilities, including but not limited to:

a) the representation of members with respect to disciplinary matters

b) the representation of employees with respect to grievances and disputes

c) functions associated with the role of the local consultative committee.

8.15 You must be scrupulous in your use of council property, including intellectual property, official services, facilities, technology and electronic devices and must not permit their misuse by any other person or body.

8.16 You must avoid any action or situation that could create the appearance that council property, official services or public facilities are being improperly used for your benefit or the benefit of any other person or body.

8.17 You must not use council resources (including council staff), property or facilities for the purpose of assisting your election campaign or the election campaigns of others unless the resources, property or facilities are otherwise available for use or hire by the public and any publicly advertised fee is paid for use of the resources, property or facility.

8.18 You must not use the council letterhead, council crests, council email or social media or other information that could give the appearance it is official council material:

a) for the purpose of assisting your election campaign or the election campaign of others, or

b) for other non-official purposes.

8.19 You must not convert any property of the council to your own use unless properly authorised.

Internet access

8.20 You must not use council's computer resources or mobile or other devices to search for, access, download or communicate any material of an offensive, obscene, pornographic, threatening, abusive or defamatory nature, or that could otherwise lead to criminal penalty or civil liability and/or damage the council's reputation.

Council record keeping

8.21 You must comply with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1998* and the council's records management policy.

8.22 All information created, sent and received in your official capacity is a council record and must be managed in accordance with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1998* and the council's approved records management policies and practices.

8.23 All information stored in either soft or hard copy on council supplied resources (including technology devices and email accounts) is deemed to be related to the business of the council and will be treated as council records, regardless of whether the original intention was to create the information for personal purposes.

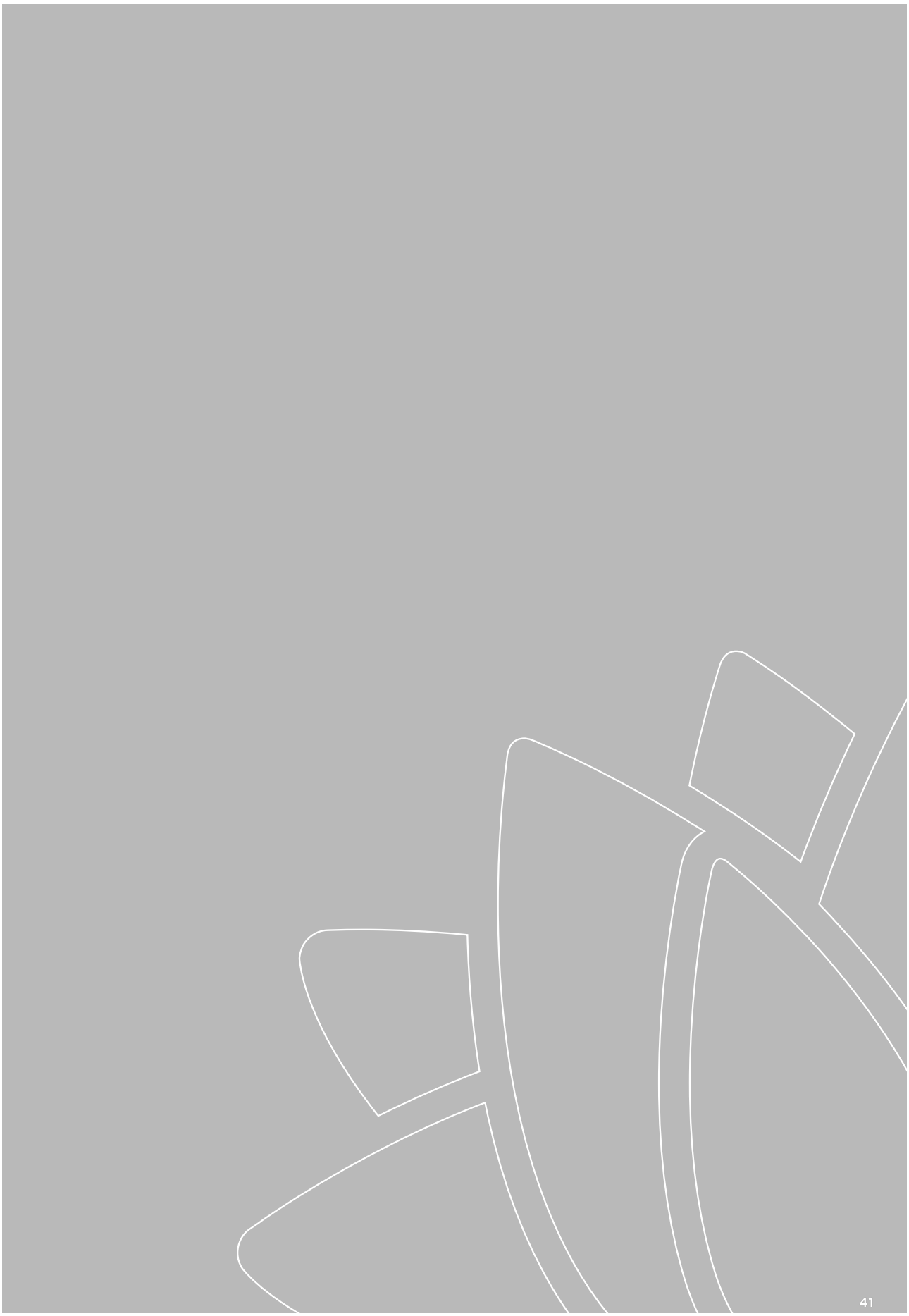
8.24 You must not destroy, alter, or dispose of council information or records, unless authorised to do so. If you need to alter or dispose of council information or records, you must do so in consultation with the council's records manager and comply with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1998*.

Councillor access to council buildings

8.25 Councillors and administrators are entitled to have access to the council chamber, committee room, mayor's office (subject to availability), councillors' rooms, and public areas of council's buildings during normal business hours and for meetings. Councillors and administrators needing access to these facilities at other times must obtain authority from the general manager.

8.26 Councillors and administrators must not enter staff-only areas of council buildings without the approval of the general manager (or their delegate) or as provided for in the procedures governing the interaction of councillors and council staff.

8.27 Councillors and administrators must ensure that when they are within a staff only area they refrain from conduct that could be perceived to improperly influence council staff decisions.


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Part 9: Maintaining the Integrity of this Code



Complaints made for an improper purpose

9.1 You must not make or threaten to make a complaint or cause a complaint to be made alleging a breach of this code for an improper purpose.

9.2 For the purposes of clause 9.1, a complaint is made for an improper purpose where it is trivial, frivolous, vexatious or not made in good faith, or where it otherwise lacks merit and has been made substantially for one or more of the following purposes:

a) to bully, intimidate or harass another council official

b) to damage another council official's reputation

c) to obtain a political advantage

d) to influence a council official in the exercise of their official functions or to prevent or disrupt the exercise of those functions

e) to influence the council in the exercise of its functions or to prevent or disrupt the exercise of those functions

f) to avoid disciplinary action under the Procedures

g) to take reprisal action against a person for making a complaint alleging a breach of this code

h) to take reprisal action against a person for exercising a function prescribed under the Procedures

i) to prevent or disrupt the effective administration of this code under the Procedures.

Detrimental action

9.3 You must not take detrimental action or cause detrimental action to be taken against a person substantially in reprisal for a complaint they have made alleging a breach of this code.

9.4 You must not take detrimental action or cause detrimental action to be taken against a person substantially in reprisal for any function they have exercised under the Procedures.

9.5 For the purposes of clauses 9.3 and 9.4, a detrimental action is an action causing, comprising or involving any of the following:

a) injury, damage or loss

b) intimidation or harassment

c) discrimination, disadvantage or adverse treatment in relation to employment

d) dismissal from, or prejudice in, employment

e) disciplinary proceedings.

Compliance with requirements under the Procedures

9.6 You must not engage in conduct that is calculated to impede or disrupt the consideration of a matter under the Procedures.

9.7 You must comply with a reasonable and lawful request made by a person exercising a function under the Procedures. A failure to make a written or oral submission invited under the Procedures will not constitute a breach of this clause.

9.8 You must comply with a practice ruling made by the Office under the Procedures.

Disclosure of information about the consideration of a matter under the Procedures

9.9 All allegations of breaches of this code must be dealt with under and in accordance with the Procedures.

9.10 You must not allege breaches of this code other than by way of a complaint made or initiated under the Procedures.

9.11 You must not make allegations about, or disclose information about, suspected breaches of this code at council, committee or other meetings, whether open to the public or not, or in any other forum, whether public or not.

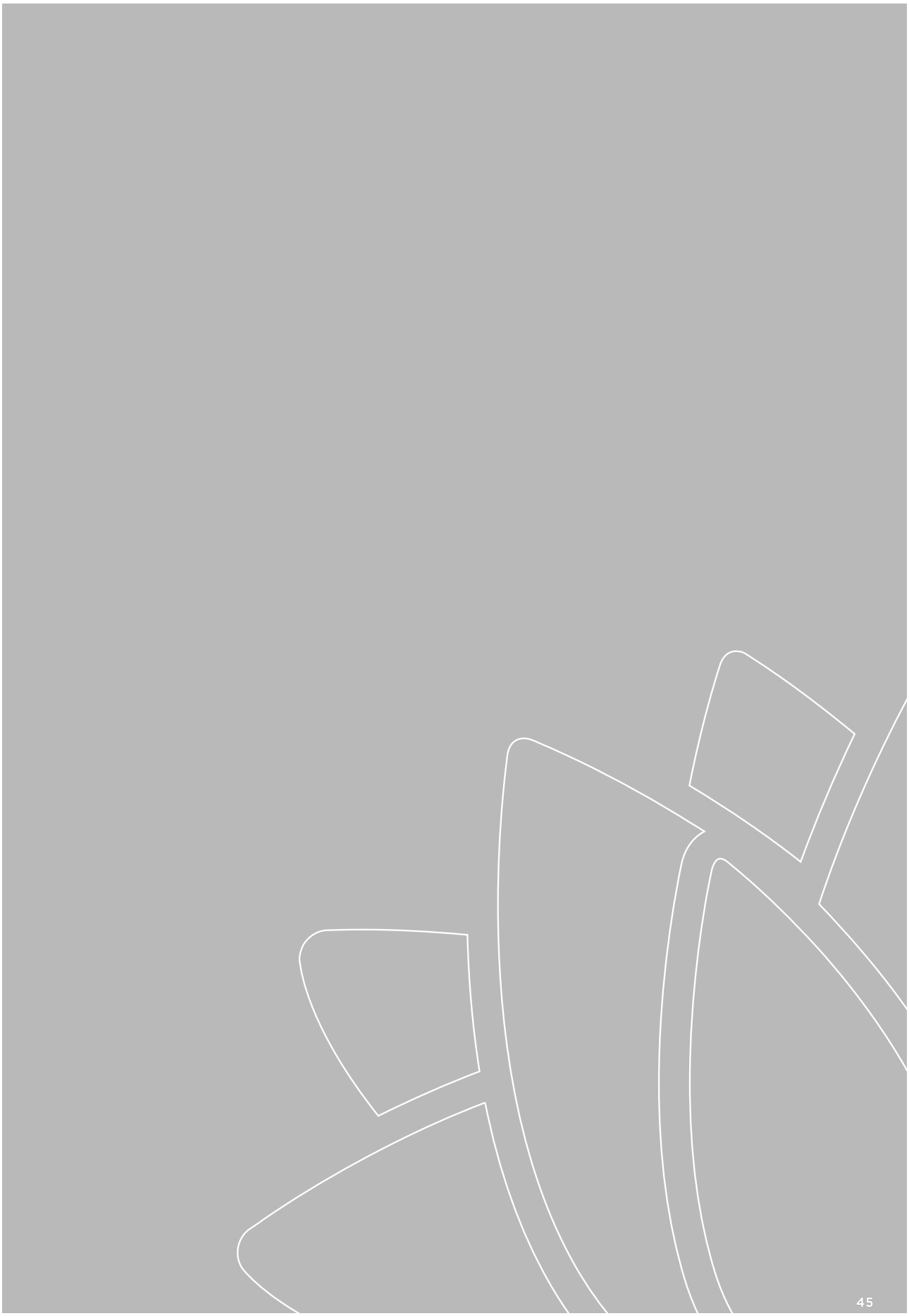
9.12 You must not disclose information about a complaint you have made alleging a breach of this code or any other matter being considered under the Procedures except for the purposes of seeking legal advice, unless the disclosure is otherwise permitted under the Procedures.

9.13 Nothing under this Part prevents a person from making a public interest disclosure to an appropriate public authority or investigative authority under the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994*.

Complaints alleging a breach of this Part

9.14 Complaints alleging a breach of this Part by a councillor, the general manager or an administrator are to be managed by the Office. This clause does not prevent the Office from referring an alleged breach of this Part back to the council for consideration in accordance with the Procedures.

9.15 Complaints alleging a breach of this Part by other council officials are to be managed by the general manager in accordance with the Procedures.


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Schedule 1:
Disclosures of Interest and Other Matters in Written Returns Submitted Under Clause 4.21

Part 1: Preliminary

Definitions

1. For the purposes of the schedules to this code, the following definitions apply:

address means:

a) in relation to a person other than a corporation, the last residential or business address of the person known to the councillor or designated person disclosing the address, or

b) in relation to a corporation, the address of the registered office of the corporation in New South Wales or, if there is no such office, the address of the principal office of the corporation in the place where it is registered, or

c) in relation to any real property, the street address of the property.

de facto partner has the same meaning as defined in section 21C of the *Interpretation Act 1987*.

disposition of property means a conveyance, transfer, assignment, settlement, delivery, payment or other alienation of property, including the following:

a) the allotment of shares in a company

b) the creation of a trust in respect of property

c) the grant or creation of a lease, mortgage, charge, easement, licence, power, partnership or interest in respect of property

d) the release, discharge, surrender, forfeiture or abandonment, at law or in equity, of a debt, contract or chose in action, or of an interest in respect of property

e) the exercise by a person of a general power of appointment over property in favour of another person

f) a transaction entered into by a person who intends by the transaction to diminish, directly or indirectly, the value of the person's own property and to increase the value of the property of another person.

gift means a disposition of property made otherwise than by will (whether or not by instrument in writing) without consideration, or with inadequate consideration, in money or money's worth passing from the person to whom the disposition was made to the person who made the disposition, but does not include a financial or other contribution to travel.

interest means:

a) in relation to property, an estate, interest, right or power, at law or in equity, in or over the property, or

b) in relation to a corporation, a relevant interest (within the meaning of section 9 of the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth) in securities issued or made available by the corporation.

listed company means a company that is listed within the meaning of section 9 of the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth.

occupation includes trade, profession and vocation.

professional or business association means an incorporated or unincorporated body or organisation having as one of its objects or activities the promotion of the economic interests of its members in any occupation.

property includes money.

return date means:

a) in the case of a return made under clause 4.21(a), the date on which a person became a councillor or designated person

b) in the case of a return made under clause 4.21(b), 30 June of the year in which the return is made

c) in the case of a return made under clause 4.21(c), the date on which the councillor or designated person became aware of the interest to be disclosed.

relative includes any of the following:

a) a person's spouse or de facto partner

b) a person's parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descendant or adopted child

c) a person's spouse's or de facto partner's parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descendant or adopted child

d) the spouse or de factor partner of a person referred to in paragraphs (b) and (c).

travel includes accommodation incidental to a journey.

Matters relating to the interests that must be included in returns

2. *Interests etc. outside New South Wales*: A reference in this schedule or in schedule 2 to a disclosure concerning a corporation or other thing includes any reference to a disclosure concerning a corporation registered, or other thing arising or received, outside New South Wales.

3. *References to interests in real property*: A reference in this schedule or in schedule 2 to real property in which a councillor or designated person has an interest includes a reference to any real property situated in Australia in which the councillor or designated person has an interest.

4. *Gifts, loans etc. from related corporations*: For the purposes of this schedule and schedule 2, gifts or contributions to travel given, loans made, or goods or services supplied, to a councillor or designated person by two or more corporations that are related to each other for the purposes of section 50 of the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth are all given, made or supplied by a single corporation.

Part 2: Pecuniary interests to be disclosed in returns

Real property

5. A person making a return under clause 4.21 of this code must disclose:

   a) the street address of each parcel of real property in which they had an interest on the return date, and

   b) the street address of each parcel of real property in which they had an interest in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, and

   c) the nature of the interest.

6. An interest in a parcel of real property need not be disclosed in a return if the person making the return had the interest only:

   a) as executor of the will, or administrator of the estate, of a deceased person and not as a beneficiary under the will or intestacy, or

   b) as a trustee, if the interest was acquired in the ordinary course of an occupation not related to their duties as the holder of a position required to make a return.

7. An interest in a parcel of real property need not be disclosed in a return if the person ceased to hold the interest prior to becoming a councillor or designated person.

8. For the purposes of clause 5 of this schedule, "interest" includes an option to purchase.

Gifts

9. A person making a return under clause 4.21 of this code must disclose:

   a) a description of each gift received in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, and

   b) the name and address of the donor of each of the gifts.

10. A gift need not be included in a return if:

   a) it did not exceed $500, unless it was among gifts totalling more than $500 made by the same person during a period of 12 months or less, or

   b) it was a political donation disclosed, or required to be disclosed, under Part 3 of the *Electoral Funding Act 2018*, or

   c) the donor was a relative of the donee, or

   d) subject to paragraph (a), it was received prior to the person becoming a councillor or designated person.

11. For the purposes of clause 10 of this schedule, the amount of a gift other than money is an amount equal to the value of the property given.

Contributions to travel

12. A person making a return under clause 4.21 of this code must disclose:

   a) the name and address of each person who made any financial or other contribution to the expenses of any travel undertaken by the person in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, and

b) the dates on which the travel was undertaken, and

c) the names of the states and territories, and of the overseas countries, in which the travel was undertaken.

13. A financial or other contribution to any travel need not be disclosed under this clause if it:

a) was made from public funds (including a contribution arising from travel on free passes issued under an Act or from travel in government or council vehicles), or

b) was made by a relative of the traveller, or

c) was made in the ordinary course of an occupation of the traveller that is not related to their functions as the holder of a position requiring the making of a return, or

d) did not exceed $250, unless it was among gifts totalling more than $250 made by the same person during a 12-month period or less, or

e) was a political donation disclosed, or required to be disclosed, under Part 3 of the *Electoral Funding Act 2018*, or

f) was made by a political party of which the traveller was a member and the travel was undertaken for the purpose of political activity of the party in New South Wales, or to enable the traveller to represent the party within Australia, or

g) subject to paragraph (d) it was received prior to the person becoming a councillor or designated person.

14. For the purposes of clause 13 of this schedule, the amount of a contribution (other than a financial contribution) is an amount equal to the value of the contribution.

Interests and positions in corporations

15. A person making a return under clause 4.21 of this code must disclose:

a) the name and address of each corporation in which they had an interest or held a position (whether remunerated or not) on the return date, and

b) the name and address of each corporation in which they had an interest or held a position in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, and

c) the nature of the interest, or the position held, in each of the corporations, and

d) a description of the principal objects (if any) of each of the corporations, except in the case of a listed company.

16. An interest in, or a position held in, a corporation need not be disclosed if the corporation is:

a) formed for the purpose of providing recreation or amusement, or for promoting commerce, industry, art, science, religion or charity, or for any other community purpose, and

b) required to apply its profits or other income in promoting its objects, and

c) prohibited from paying any dividend to its members.

17. An interest in a corporation need not be disclosed if the interest is a beneficial interest in shares in a company that does not exceed 10 per cent of the voting rights in the company.

18. An interest or a position in a corporation need not be disclosed if the person ceased to hold the interest or position prior to becoming a councillor or designated person.

Interests as a property developer or a close associate of a property developer

19. A person making a return under clause 4.21 of this code must disclose whether they were a property developer, or a close associate of a corporation that, or an individual who, is a property developer, on the return date.

20. For the purposes of clause 19 of this schedule:

    close associate, in relation to a corporation or an individual, has the same meaning as it has in section 53 of the *Electoral Funding Act 2018*.

    property developer has the same meaning as it has in Division 7 of Part 3 of the *Electoral Funding Act 2018*.

Positions in trade unions and professional or business associations

21. A person making a return under clause 4.21 of the code must disclose:

    a) the name of each trade union, and of each professional or business association, in which they held any position (whether remunerated or not) on the return date, and

    b) the name of each trade union, and of each professional or business association, in which they have held any position (whether remunerated or not) in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, and

    c) a description of the position held in each of the unions and associations.

22. A position held in a trade union or a professional or business association need not be disclosed if the person ceased to hold the position prior to becoming a councillor or designated person.

Dispositions of real property

23. A person making a return under clause 4.21 of this code must disclose particulars of each disposition of real property by the person (including the street address of the affected property) in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, under which they wholly or partly retained the use and benefit of the property or the right to re-acquire the property.

24. A person making a return under clause 4.21 of this code must disclose particulars of each disposition of real property to another person (including the street address of the affected property) in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, that is made under arrangements with, but is not made by, the person making the return, being a disposition under which the person making the return obtained wholly or partly the use of the property.

25. A disposition of real property need not be disclosed if it was made prior to a person becoming a councillor or designated person.

Sources of income

26. A person making a return under clause 4.21 of this code must disclose:

    a) each source of income that the person reasonably expects to receive in the period commencing on the first day after the return date and ending on the following 30 June, and

    b) each source of income received by the person in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year.

27. A reference in clause 26 of this schedule to each source of income received, or reasonably expected to be received, by a person is a reference to:

    a) in relation to income from an occupation of the person:

        (i) a description of the occupation, and

        (ii) if the person is employed or the holder of an office, the name and address of their employer, or a description of the office, and

        (iii) if the person has entered into a partnership with other persons, the name (if any) under which the partnership is conducted, or

    b) in relation to income from a trust, the name and address of the settlor and the trustee, or

    c) in relation to any other income, a description sufficient to identify the person from whom, or the circumstances in which, the income was, or is reasonably expected to be, received.

28. The source of any income need not be disclosed by a person in a return if the amount of the income received, or reasonably expected to be received, by the person from that source did not exceed $500, or is not reasonably expected to exceed $500, as the case may be.

29. The source of any income received by the person that they ceased to receive prior to becoming a councillor or designated person need not be disclosed.

30. A fee paid to a councillor or to the mayor or deputy mayor under sections 248 or 249 of the LGA need not be disclosed.

Debts

31. A person making a return under clause 4.21 of this code must disclose the name and address of each person to whom the person was liable to pay any debt:

    a) on the return date, and

    b) at any time in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year.

32. A liability to pay a debt must be disclosed by a person in a return made under clause 4.21 whether or not the amount, or any part of the amount, to be paid was due and payable on the return date or at any time in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, as the case may be.

33. A liability to pay a debt need not be disclosed by a person in a return if:

    a) the amount to be paid did not exceed $500 on the return date or in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, as the case may be, unless:

(i) the debt was one of two or more debts that the person was liable to pay to one person on the return date, or at any time in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, as the case may be, and

(ii) the amounts to be paid exceeded, in the aggregate, $500, or

b) the person was liable to pay the debt to a relative, or

c) in the case of a debt arising from a loan of money the person was liable to pay the debt to an authorised deposit-taking institution or other person whose ordinary business includes the lending of money, and the loan was made in the ordinary course of business of the lender, or

d) in the case of a debt arising from the supply of goods or services:

(i) the goods or services were supplied in the period of 12 months immediately preceding the return date, or were supplied in the period since 30 June of the previous financial year, as the case may be, or

(ii) the goods or services were supplied in the ordinary course of any occupation of the person that is not related to their duties as the holder of a position required to make a return, or

e) subject to paragraph (a), the debt was discharged prior to the person becoming a councillor or designated person.

Discretionary disclosures

34. A person may voluntarily disclose in a return any interest, benefit, advantage or liability, whether pecuniary or not, that is not required to be disclosed under another provision of this Schedule.

Schedule 2: Form of Written Return of Interests Submitted Under Clause 4.21

'Disclosures by councillors and designated persons' return

1. The pecuniary interests and other matters to be disclosed in this return are prescribed by Schedule 1 of the *Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW* (the Model Code of Conduct).

2. If this is the first return you have been required to lodge with the general manager after becoming a councillor or designated person, do not complete Parts C, D and I of the return. All other parts of the return should be completed with appropriate information based on your circumstances at the return date, that is, the date on which you became a councillor or designated person.

3. If you have previously lodged a return with the general manager and you are completing this return for the purposes of disclosing a new interest that was not disclosed in the last return you lodged with the general manager, you must complete all parts of the return with appropriate information for the period from 30 June of the previous financial year or the date on which you became a councillor or designated person, (whichever is the later date), to the return date which is the date you became aware of the new interest to be disclosed in your updated return.

4. If you have previously lodged a return with the general manager and are submitting a new return for the new financial year, you must complete all parts of the return with appropriate information for the 12-month period commencing on 30 June of the previous year to 30 June this year.

5. This form must be completed using block letters or typed.

6. If there is insufficient space for all the information you are required to disclose, you must attach an appendix which is to be properly identified and signed by you.

7. If there are no pecuniary interests or other matters of the kind required to be disclosed under a heading in this form, the word "NIL" is to be placed in an appropriate space under that heading.

Important information

This information is being collected for the purpose of complying with clause 4.21 of the Model Code of Conduct.

You must not lodge a return that you know or ought reasonably to know is false or misleading in a material particular (see clause 4.23 of the Model Code of Conduct). Complaints about breaches of these requirements are to be referred to the Office of Local Government and may result in disciplinary action by the council, the Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government or the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

The information collected on this form will be kept by the general manager in a register of returns. The general manager is required to table all returns at a council meeting.

Information contained in returns made and lodged under clause 4.21 is to be made publicly available in accordance with the requirements of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*, the *Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2009* and any guidelines issued by the Information Commissioner.

You have an obligation to keep the information contained in this return up to date. If you become aware of a new interest that must be disclosed in this return, or an interest that you have previously failed to disclose, you must submit an updated return within three months of becoming aware of the previously undisclosed interest.

Disclosure of pecuniary interests and other matters by [*full name of councillor or designated person*]

as at [*return date*]

in respect of the period from [*date*] to [*date*]

[*councillor's or designated person's signature*]

[*date*]

A. Real Property	
Street address of each parcel of real property in which I had an interest at the return date/at any time since 30 June	Nature of interest

B. Sources of income		
1 Sources of income I reasonably expect to receive from an occupation in the period commencing on the first day after the return date and ending on the following 30 June		
Sources of income I received from an occupation at any time since 30 June		
Description of occupation	Name and address of employer or description of office held (if applicable)	Name under which partnership conducted (if applicable)
2 Sources of income I reasonably expect to receive from a trust in the period commencing on the first day after the return date and ending on the following 30 June		
Sources of income I received from a trust since 30 June		
Name and address of settlor	Name and address of trustee	
3 Sources of other income I reasonably expect to receive in the period commencing on the first day after the return date and ending on the following 30 June		
Sources of other income I received at any time since 30 June		
[*Include description sufficient to identify the person from whom, or the circumstances in which, that income was received*]		

C. Gifts	
Description of each gift I received at any time since 30 June	Name and address of donor

D. Contributions to travel		
Name and address of each person who made any financial or other contribution to any travel undertaken by me at any time since 30 June	Dates on which travel was undertaken	Name of States, Territories of the Commonwealth and overseas countries in which travel was undertaken

E. Interests and positions in corporations			
Name and address of each corporation in which I had an interest or held a position at the return date/at any time since 30 June	Nature of interest (if any)	Description of position (if any)	Description of principal objects (if any) of corporation (except in case of listed company)

F. Were you a property developer or a close associate of a property developer on the return date? (Y/N)

G. Positions in trade unions and professional or business associations	
Name of each trade union and each professional or business association in which I held any position (whether remunerated or not) at the return date/at any time since 30 June	Description of position

H. Debts
Name and address of each person to whom I was liable to pay any debt at the return date/at any time since 30 June

I. Dispositions of property
1 Particulars of each disposition of real property by me (including the street address of the affected property) at any time since 30 June as a result of which I retained, either wholly or in part, the use and benefit of the property or the right to re-acquire the property at a later time
2 Particulars of each disposition of property to a person by any other person under arrangements made by me (including the street address of the affected property), being dispositions made at any time since 30 June, as a result of which I obtained, either wholly or in part, the use and benefit of the property

J. Discretionary disclosures

Schedule 3:
Form of Special Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest Submitted Under Clause 4.37

1. This form must be completed using block letters or typed.
2. If there is insufficient space for all the information you are required to disclose, you must attach an appendix which is to be properly identified and signed by you.

Important information

This information is being collected for the purpose of making a special disclosure of pecuniary interests under clause 4.36(c) of the *Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW* (the Model Code of Conduct).

The special disclosure must relate only to a pecuniary interest that a councillor has in the councillor's principal place of residence, or an interest another person (whose interests are relevant under clause 4.3 of the Model Code of Conduct) has in that person's principal place of residence.

Clause 4.3 of the Model Code of Conduct states that you will have a pecuniary interest in a matter because of the pecuniary interest of your spouse or your de facto partner or your relative or because your business partner or employer has a pecuniary interest. You will also have a pecuniary interest in a matter because you, your nominee, your business partner or your employer is a member of a company or other body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter.

"Relative" is defined by clause 4.4 of the Model Code of Conduct as meaning your, your spouse's or your de facto partner's parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descendant or adopted child and the spouse or de facto partner of any of those persons.

You must not make a special disclosure that you know or ought reasonably to know is false or misleading in a material particular. Complaints about breaches of these requirements are to be referred to the Office of Local Government and may result in disciplinary action by the Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government or the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

This form must be completed by you before the commencement of the council or council committee meeting at which the special disclosure is being made. The completed form must be tabled at the meeting. Everyone is entitled to inspect it. The special disclosure must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Special disclosure of pecuniary interests by *[full name of councillor]*

in the matter of *[insert name of environmental planning instrument]*

which is to be considered at a meeting of the
[name of council or council committee (as the case requires)]

to be held on the day of 20 .

Pecuniary interest	
Address of the affected principal place of residence of the councillor or an associated person, company or body (the identified land)	
Relationship of identified land to councillor *[Tick or cross one box.]*	☐ The councillor has an interest in the land (e.g. is the owner or has another interest arising out of a mortgage, lease, trust, option or contract, or otherwise). ☐ An associated person of the councillor has an interest in the land. ☐ An associated company or body of the councillor has an interest in the land.
Matter giving rise to pecuniary interest[1]	
Nature of the land that is subject to a change in zone/planning control by the proposed LEP (the subject land)[2] *[Tick or cross one box]*	☐ The identified land. ☐ Land that adjoins or is adjacent to or is in proximity to the identified land.
Current zone/planning control *[Insert name of current planning instrument and identify relevant zone/planning control applying to the subject land]*	

1 Clause 4.1 of the Model Code of Conduct provides that a pecuniary interest is an interest that a person has in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to the person. A person does not have a pecuniary interest in a matter if the interest is so remote or insignificant that it could not reasonably be regarded as likely to influence any decision the person might make in relation to the matter, or if the interest is of a kind specified in clause 4.6 of the Model Code of Conduct.

2 A pecuniary interest may arise by way of a change of permissible use of land adjoining, adjacent to or in proximity to land in which a councillor or a person, company or body referred to in clause 4.3 of the Model Code of Conduct has a proprietary interest.

Proposed change of zone/planning control *[Insert name of proposed LEP and identify proposed change of zone/planning control applying to the subject land]*
Effect of proposed change of zone/planning control on councillor or associated person *[Insert one of the following: "Appreciable financial gain" or "Appreciable financial loss"]*

[If more than one pecuniary interest is to be declared, reprint the above box and fill in for each additional interest.]

Councillor's signature

Date

[This form is to be retained by the council's general manager and included in full in the minutes of the meeting]


NSW
GOVERNMENT

Procedures for the Administration of The Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW

2020

NSW GOVERNMENT

PROCEDURES FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LOCAL COUNCILS IN NSW

2020

ACCESS TO SERVICES

The Office of Local Government is located at:
Street Address: Levels 1 & 2, 5 O'Keefe Avenue, NOWRA NSW 2541
Postal Address: Locked Bag 3015, Nowra, NSW 2541
Phone: 02 4428 4100
Fax: 02 4428 4199
TTY: 02 4428 4209
Email: olg@olg.nsw.gov.au
Website: www.olg.nsw.gov.au

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Part 1:
Introduction



These procedures ("the Model Code Procedures") are prescribed for the administration of the *Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW* ("the Model Code of Conduct").

The Model Code of Conduct is made under section 440 of the *Local Government Act 1993* ("the LGA") and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* ("the Regulation"). Section 440 of the LGA requires every council (including county councils) and joint organisation to adopt a code of conduct that incorporates the provisions of the Model Code of Conduct.

The Model Code Procedures are made under section 440AA of the LGA and the Regulation. Section 440AA of the LGA requires every council (including county councils) and joint organisation to adopt procedures for the administration of their code of conduct that incorporate the provisions of the Model Code Procedures.

In adopting procedures for the administration of their adopted codes of conduct, councils and joint organisations may supplement the Model Code Procedures. However, provisions that are not consistent with those prescribed under the Model Code Procedures will have no effect.

Note: References in these procedures to councils are also to be taken as references to county councils and joint organisations.

Note: In adopting the Model Code Procedures, joint organisations should adapt them to substitute the terms "board" for "council", "chairperson" for "mayor", "voting representative" for "councillor" and "executive officer" for "general manager".

Note: In adopting the Model Code Procedures, county councils should adapt them to substitute the term "chairperson" for "mayor" and "member" for "councillor".

Note: Parts 6, 7, 8 and 11 of these procedures apply only to the management of code of conduct complaints about councillors (including the mayor) or the general manager.

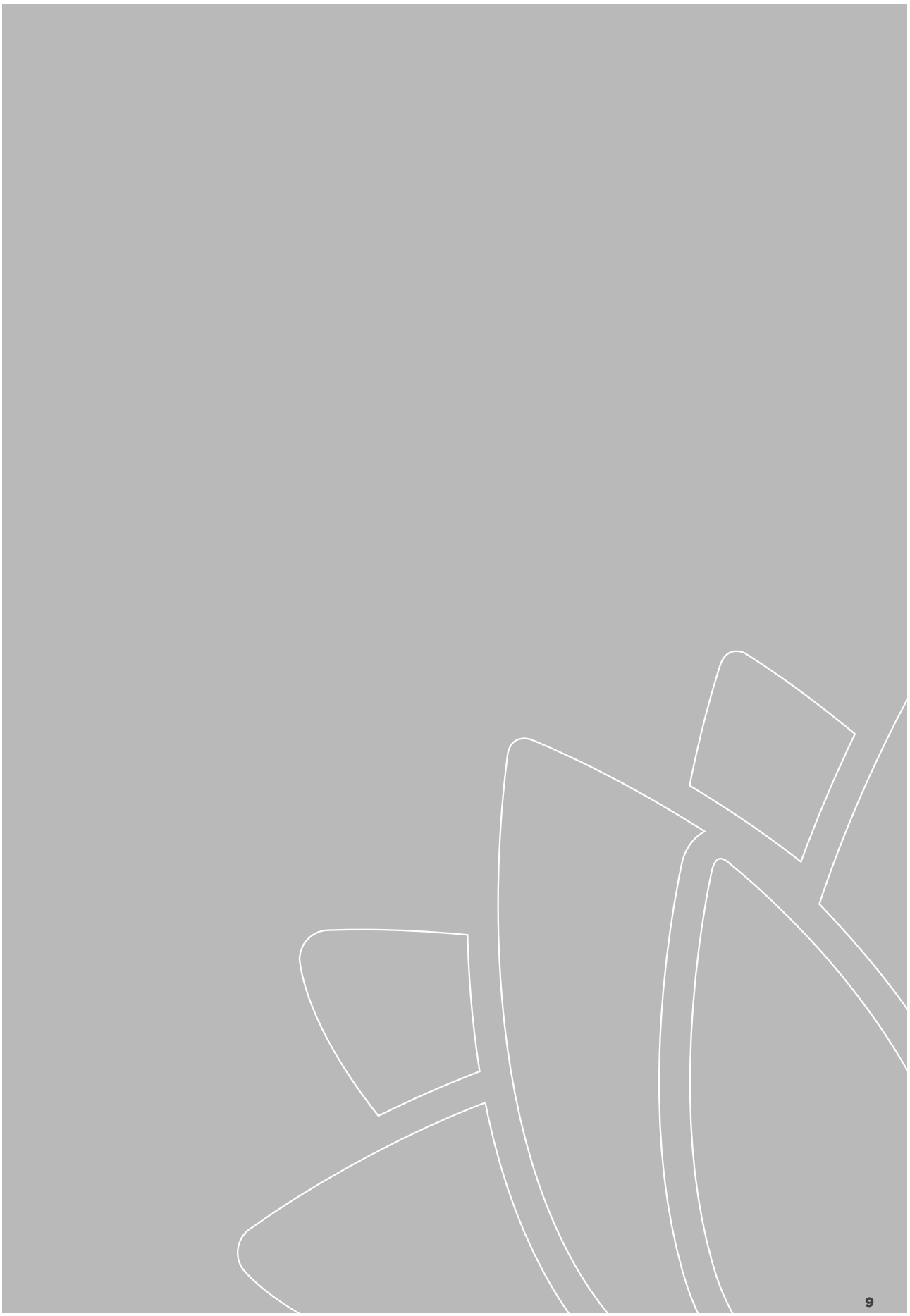
Part 2:
Definitions



In these procedures the following terms have the following meanings:

administrator	an administrator of a council appointed under the LGA other than an administrator appointed under section 66
code of conduct	a code of conduct adopted under section 440 of the LGA
code of conduct complaint	a complaint that is a code of conduct complaint for the purposes of clauses 4.1 and 4.2 of these procedures
complainant	a person who makes a code of conduct complaint
complainant councillor	a councillor who makes a code of conduct complaint
complaints coordinator	a person appointed by the general manager under these procedures as a complaints coordinator
conduct reviewer	a person appointed under these procedures to review allegations of breaches of the code of conduct by councillors or the general manager
council	includes county councils and joint organisations
council committee	a committee established by a council comprising of councillors, staff or other persons that the council has delegated functions to and the council's audit, risk and improvement committee
council committee member	a person other than a councillor or member of staff of a council who is a member of a council committee other than a wholly advisory committee, and a person other than a councillor who is a member of the council's audit, risk and improvement committee
councillor	any person elected or appointed to civic office, including the mayor, and includes members and chairpersons of county councils and voting representatives of the boards of joint organisations and chairpersons of joint organisations
council official	any councillor, member of staff of council, administrator, council committee member, delegate of council and, for the purposes of clause 4.16 of the Model Code of Conduct, council adviser
delegate of council	a person (other than a councillor or member of staff of a council) or body, and the individual members of that body, to whom a function of the council is delegated
external agency	a state government agency such as, but not limited to, the Office, the ICAC, the NSW Ombudsman or the police
general manager	includes the executive officer of a joint organisation

ICAC	the Independent Commission Against Corruption
joint organisation	a joint organisation established under section 400O of the LGA
LGA	the *Local Government Act 1993*
mayor	includes the chairperson of a county council or a joint organisation
members of staff of a council	includes members of staff of county councils and joint organisations
the Office	the Office of Local Government
investigator	a conduct reviewer
the Regulation	the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005*
respondent	a person whose conduct is the subject of investigation by a conduct reviewer under these procedures
wholly advisory committee	a council committee that the council has not delegated any functions to


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Part 3: Administrative Framework



The establishment of a panel of conduct reviewers

3.1 The council must establish a panel of conduct reviewers.

3.2 The council may enter into an arrangement with one or more other councils to share a panel of conduct reviewers including through a joint organisation or another regional body associated with the councils.

3.3 The panel of conduct reviewers is to be established following a public expression of interest process.

3.4 An expression of interest for members of the council's panel of conduct reviewers must, at a minimum, be advertised locally and in the Sydney metropolitan area.

3.5 To be eligible to be a conduct reviewer, a person must, at a minimum, meet the following requirements:

a) an understanding of local government, and

b) knowledge of investigative processes including but not limited to procedural fairness requirements and the requirements of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994*, and

c) knowledge and experience of one or more of the following:

i) investigations

ii) law

iii) public administration

iv) public sector ethics

v) alternative dispute resolution, and

d) meet the eligibility requirements for membership of a panel of conduct reviewers under clause 3.6.

3.6 A person is not eligible to be a conduct reviewer if they are:

a) a councillor, or

b) a nominee for election as a councillor, or

c) an administrator, or

d) an employee of a council, or

e) a member of the Commonwealth Parliament or any State Parliament or Territory Assembly, or

f) a nominee for election as a member of the Commonwealth Parliament or any State Parliament or Territory Assembly, or

g) a person who has a conviction for an indictable offence that is not an expired conviction.

3.7 A person is not precluded from being a member of the council's panel of conduct reviewers if they are a member of another council's panel of conduct reviewers.

3.8 An incorporated or other entity may be appointed to a council's panel of conduct reviewers where the council is satisfied that all the persons who will be undertaking the functions of a conduct reviewer on behalf of the entity meet the selection and eligibility criteria prescribed under this Part.

3.9 A panel of conduct reviewers established under this Part is to have a term of up to four years.

3.10 The council may terminate the panel of conduct reviewers at any time. Where a panel of conduct reviewers has been terminated, conduct reviewers who were members of the panel may continue to deal with any matter referred to them under these procedures prior to the termination of the panel until they have finalised their consideration of the matter.

3.11 When the term of the panel of conduct reviewers concludes or is terminated, the council must establish a new panel of conduct reviewers in accordance with the requirements of this Part.

3.12 A person who was a member of a previous panel of conduct reviewers established by the council may be a member of subsequent panels of conduct reviewers established by the council if they continue to meet the selection and eligibility criteria for membership of the panel.

The appointment of an internal ombudsman to a panel of conduct reviewers

3.13 Despite clause 3.6(d), an employee of a council who is the nominated internal ombudsman of one or more councils may be appointed to a council's panel of conduct reviewers with the Office's consent.

3.14 To be appointed to a council's panel of conduct reviewers, an internal ombudsman must meet the qualification requirements for conduct reviewers prescribed under clause 3.5 as modified by the operation of clause 3.13.

3.15 An internal ombudsman appointed to a council's panel of conduct reviewers may also exercise the functions of the council's complaints coordinator. For the purposes of clause 6.1, an internal ombudsman who is a council's complaints coordinator and has been appointed to the council's panel of conduct reviewers, may either undertake a preliminary assessment and investigation of a matter referred to them under clauses 5.26 or 5.33 or refer the matter to another conduct reviewer in accordance with clause 6.2.

3.16 Clause 6.4(c) does not apply to an internal ombudsman appointed to a council's panel of conduct reviewers.

The appointment of complaints coordinators

3.17 The general manager must appoint a member of staff of the council or another person (such as, but not limited to, a member of staff of another council or a member of staff of a joint organisation or other regional body associated with the council), to act as a complaints coordinator. Where the complaints coordinator is a member of staff of the council, the complaints coordinator should be a senior and suitably qualified member of staff.

3.18 The general manager may appoint other members of staff of the council or other persons (such as, but not limited to, members of staff of another council or members of staff of a joint organisation or other regional body associated with the council), to act as alternates to the complaints coordinator.

3.19 The general manager must not undertake the role of complaints coordinator.

3.20 The person appointed as complaints coordinator or alternate complaints coordinator must also be a nominated disclosures coordinator appointed for the purpose of receiving and managing reports of wrongdoing under the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994*.

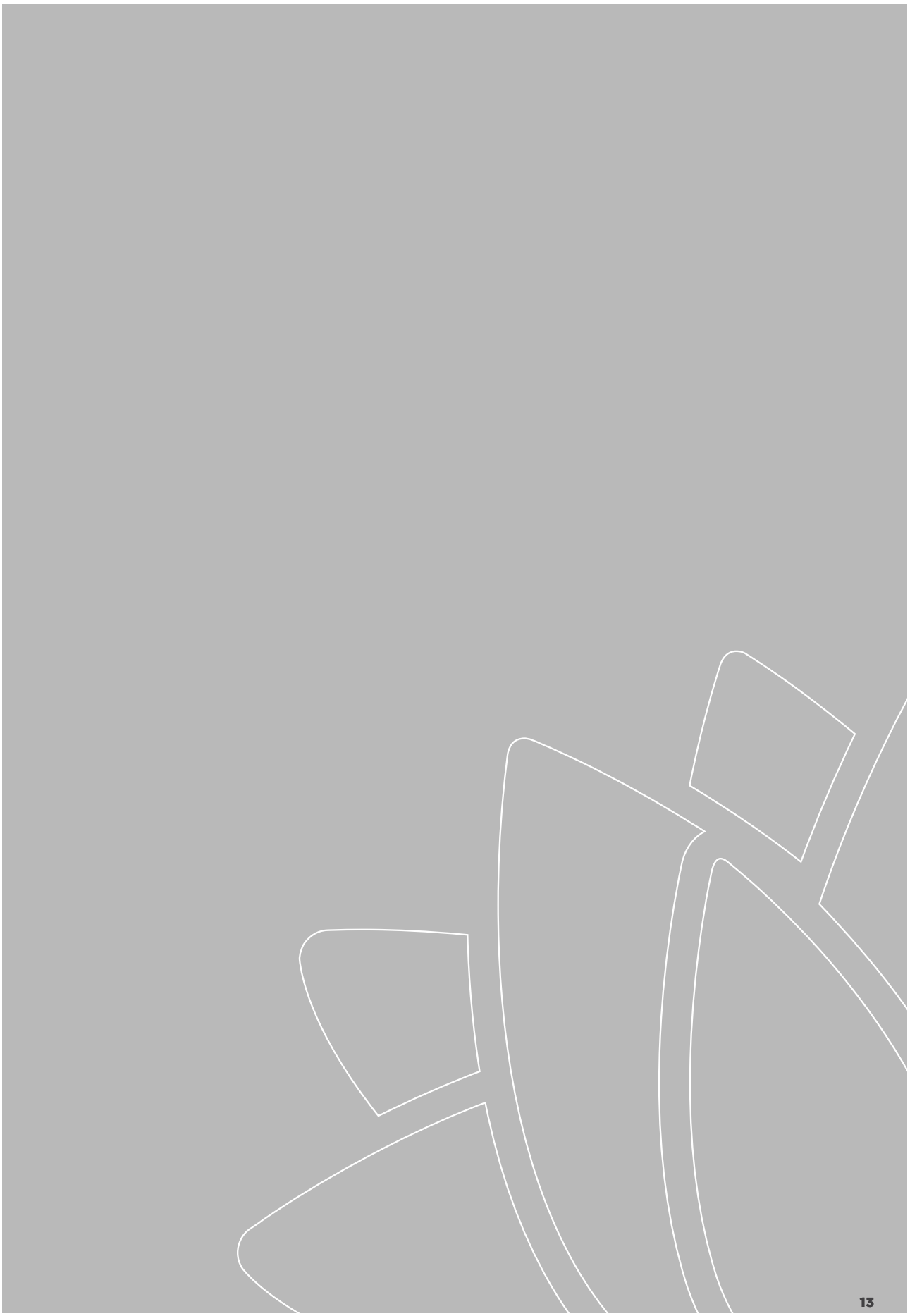
3.21 The role of the complaints coordinator is to:

a) coordinate the management of complaints made under the council's code of conduct

b) liaise with and provide administrative support to a conduct reviewer

c) liaise with the Office, and

d) arrange the annual reporting of code of conduct complaints statistics.


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Part 4:
How May Code of Conduct Complaints be Made?



What is a code of conduct complaint?

4.1 For the purpose of these procedures, a code of conduct complaint is a complaint that shows or tends to show conduct on the part of a council official in connection with their role as a council official or the exercise of their functions as a council official that would constitute a breach of the standards of conduct prescribed under the council's code of conduct if proven.

4.2 The following are not "code of conduct complaints" for the purposes of these procedures:

a) complaints about the standard or level of service provided by the council or a council official

b) complaints that relate solely to the merits of a decision made by the council or a council official or the exercise of a discretion by the council or a council official

c) complaints about the policies or procedures of the council

d) complaints about the conduct of a council official arising from the exercise of their functions in good faith, whether or not involving error, that would not otherwise constitute a breach of the standards of conduct prescribed under the council's code of conduct.

4.3 Only code of conduct complaints are to be dealt with under these procedures. Complaints that do not satisfy the definition of a code of conduct complaint are to be dealt with under the council's routine complaints management processes.

When must a code of conduct complaint be made?

4.4 A code of conduct complaint must be made within 3 months of the alleged conduct occurring or within 3 months of the complainant becoming aware of the alleged conduct.

4.5 A complaint made after 3 months may only be accepted if the general manager or their delegate, or, in the case of a complaint about the general manager, the mayor or their delegate, is satisfied that the allegations are serious and compelling grounds exist for the matter to be dealt with under the code of conduct.

How may a code of conduct complaint about a council official other than the general manager be made?

4.6 All code of conduct complaints other than those relating to the general manager are to be made to the general manager in writing. This clause does not operate to prevent a person from making a complaint to an external agency.

4.7 Where a code of conduct complaint about a council official other than the general manager cannot be made in writing, the complaint must be confirmed with the complainant in writing as soon as possible after the receipt of the complaint.

4.8 In making a code of conduct complaint about a council official other than the general manager, the complainant may nominate whether they want the complaint to be resolved by mediation or by other alternative means.

4.9 The general manager or their delegate, or, where the complaint is referred to a conduct reviewer, the conduct reviewer, must consider the complainant's preferences in deciding how to deal with the complaint.

4.10 Notwithstanding clauses 4.6 and 4.7, where the general manager becomes aware of a possible breach of the council's code of conduct, they may initiate the process for the consideration of the matter under these procedures without a written complaint.

How may a code of conduct complaint about the general manager be made?

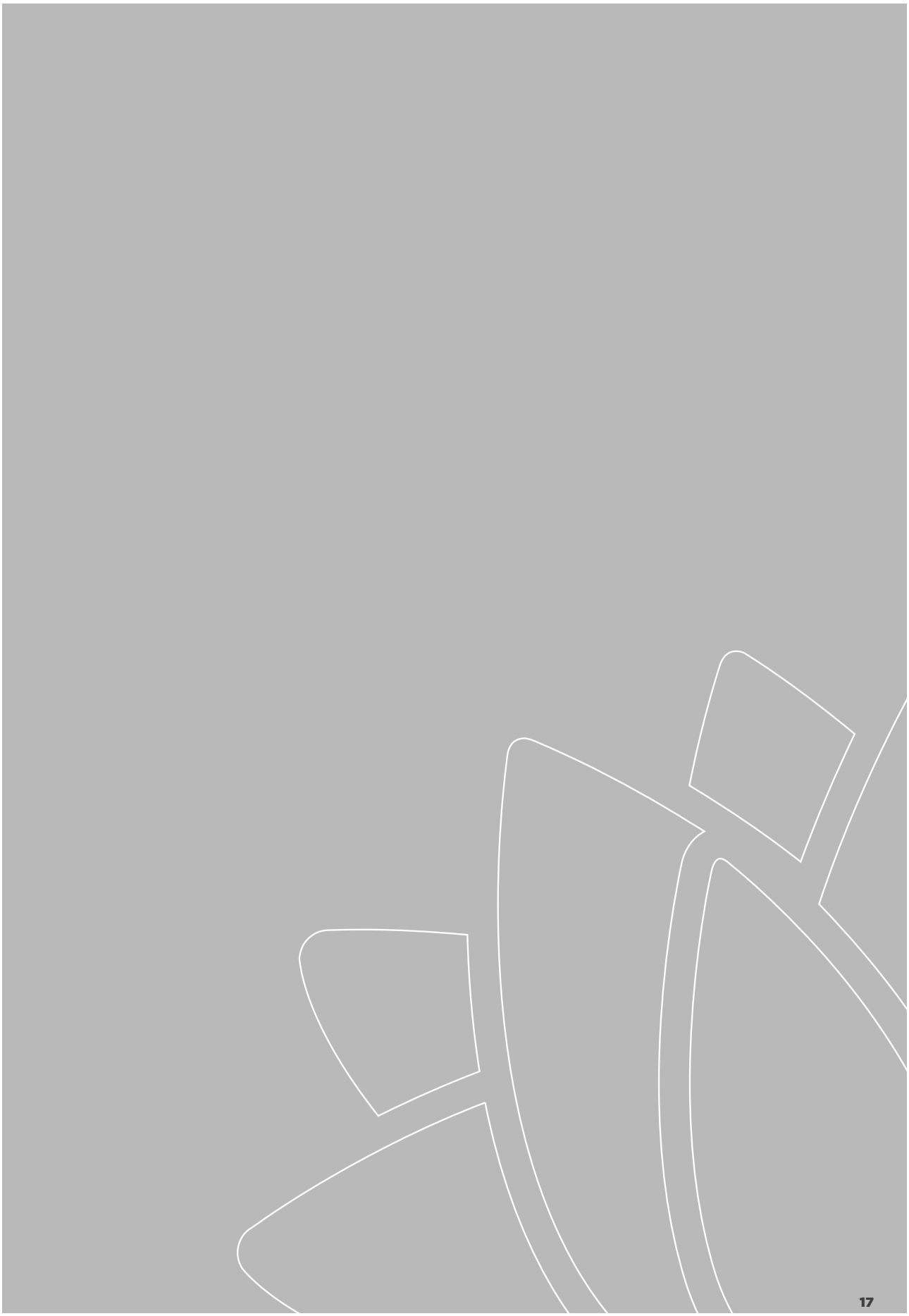
4.11 Code of conduct complaints about the general manager are to be made to the mayor in writing. This clause does not operate to prevent a person from making a complaint about the general manager to an external agency.

4.12 Where a code of conduct complaint about the general manager cannot be made in writing, the complaint must be confirmed with the complainant in writing as soon as possible after the receipt of the complaint.

4.13 In making a code of conduct complaint about the general manager, the complainant may nominate whether they want the complaint to be resolved by mediation or by other alternative means.

4.14 The mayor or their delegate, or, where the complaint is referred to a conduct reviewer, the conduct reviewer, must consider the complainant's preferences in deciding how to deal with the complaint.

4.15 Notwithstanding clauses 4.11 and 4.12, where the mayor becomes aware of a possible breach of the council's code of conduct by the general manager, they may initiate the process for the consideration of the matter under these procedures without a written complaint.


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Part 5:
How are Code of Conduct Complaints to be Managed?



Delegation by general managers and mayors of their functions under this Part

5.1 A general manager or mayor may delegate their functions under this Part to a member of staff of the council or to a person or persons external to the council other than an external agency. References in this Part to the general manager or mayor are also to be taken to be references to their delegates.

Consideration of complaints by general managers and mayors

5.2 In exercising their functions under this Part, general managers and mayors may consider the complaint assessment criteria prescribed under clause 6.31.

What complaints may be declined at the outset?

5.3 Without limiting any other provision in these procedures, the general manager or, in the case of a complaint about the general manager, the mayor, may decline to deal with a complaint under these procedures where they are satisfied that the complaint:

a) is not a code of conduct complaint, or

b) subject to clause 4.5, is not made within 3 months of the alleged conduct occurring or the complainant becoming aware of the alleged conduct, or

c) is trivial, frivolous, vexatious or not made in good faith, or

d) relates to a matter the substance of which has previously been considered and addressed by the council and does not warrant further action, or

e) is not made in a way that would allow the alleged conduct and any alleged breaches of the council's code of conduct to be readily identified.

How are code of conduct complaints about staff (other than the general manager) to be dealt with?

5.4 The general manager is responsible for the management of code of conduct complaints about members of staff of council (other than complaints alleging a breach of the pecuniary interest provisions contained in Part 4 of the code of conduct) and for determining the outcome of such complaints.

5.5 The general manager must refer code of conduct complaints about members of staff of council alleging a breach of the pecuniary interest provisions contained in Part 4 of the code of conduct to the Office.

5.6 The general manager may decide to take no action in relation to a code of conduct complaint about a member of staff of council other than one requiring referral to the Office under clause 5.5 where they consider that no action is warranted in relation to the complaint.

5.7 Where the general manager decides to take no action in relation to a code of conduct complaint about a member of staff of council, the general manager must give the complainant reasons in writing for their decision and this shall finalise the consideration of the matter under these procedures.

5.8 Code of conduct complaints about members of staff of council must be managed in accordance with the relevant industrial instrument or employment contract and make provision for procedural fairness including the right of an employee to be represented by their union.

5.9 Sanctions for breaches of the code of conduct by staff depend on the severity, scale and importance of the breach and must be determined in accordance with any relevant industrial instruments or contracts.

How are code of conduct complaints about delegates of council, council advisers and council committee members to be dealt with?

5.10 The general manager is responsible for the management of code of conduct complaints about delegates of council and council committee members (other than complaints alleging a breach of the pecuniary interest provisions contained in Part 4 of the code of conduct) and for determining the outcome of such complaints.

5.11 The general manager must refer code of conduct complaints about council advisers, delegates of council and council committee members alleging a breach of the pecuniary interest provisions contained in Part 4 of the code of conduct to the Office.

5.12 The general manager may decide to take no action in relation to a code of conduct complaint about a delegate of council or a council committee member other than one requiring referral to the Office under clause 5.11 where they consider that no action is warranted in relation to the complaint.

5.13 Where the general manager decides to take no action in relation to a code of conduct complaint about a delegate of council or a council committee member, the general manager must give the complainant reasons in writing for their decision and this shall finalise the consideration of the matter under these procedures.

5.14 Where the general manager considers it to be practicable and appropriate to do so, the general manager may seek to resolve code of conduct complaints about delegates of council or council committee members, by alternative means such as, but not limited to, explanation, counselling, training, mediation, informal discussion, negotiation, a voluntary apology or an undertaking not to repeat the offending behaviour. The resolution of a code of conduct complaint under this clause is not to be taken as a determination that there has been a breach of the council's code of conduct.

5.15 Where the general manager resolves a code of conduct complaint under clause 5.14 to the general manager's satisfaction, the general manager must notify the complainant in writing of the steps taken to resolve the complaint and this shall finalise the consideration of the matter under these procedures.

5.16 Sanctions for breaches of the code of conduct by delegates of council and/or council committee members depend on the severity, scale and importance of the breach and may include one or more of the following:

a) censure

b) requiring the person to apologise to any person or organisation adversely affected by the breach in such a time and form specified by the general manager

c) prosecution for any breach of the law

d) removing or restricting the person's delegation

e) removing the person from membership of the relevant council committee.

5.17 Prior to imposing a sanction against a delegate of council or a council committee member under clause 5.16, the general manager or any person making enquiries on behalf of the general manager must comply with the requirements of procedural fairness. In particular:

a) the substance of the allegation (including the relevant provision/s of the council's code of conduct that the alleged conduct is in breach of) must be put to the person who is the subject of the allegation, and

b) the person must be given an opportunity to respond to the allegation, and

c) the general manager must consider the person's response in deciding whether to impose a sanction under clause 5.16.

How are code of conduct complaints about administrators to be dealt with?

5.18 The general manager must refer all code of conduct complaints about administrators to the Office for its consideration.

5.19 The general manager must notify the complainant of the referral of their complaint in writing.

How are code of conduct complaints about councillors to be dealt with?

5.20 The general manager must refer the following code of conduct complaints about councillors to the Office:

a) complaints alleging a breach of the pecuniary interest provisions contained in Part 4 of the code of conduct

b) complaints alleging a failure to comply with a requirement under the code of conduct to disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest arising from political donations (see section 328B of the LGA)

c) complaints alleging a breach of the provisions relating to the maintenance of the integrity of the code of conduct contained in Part 9 of the code of conduct

d) complaints that are the subject of a special complaints management arrangement with the Office under clause 5.49.

5.21 Where the general manager refers a complaint to the Office under clause 5.20, the general manager must notify the complainant of the referral in writing.

5.22 The general manager may decide to take no action in relation to a code of conduct complaint about a councillor, other than one requiring referral to the Office under clause 5.20, where they consider that no action is warranted in relation to the complaint.

5.23 Where the general manager decides to take no action in relation to a code of conduct complaint about a councillor, the general manager must give the complainant reasons in writing for their decision within 21 days of receipt of the complaint and this shall finalise the consideration of the matter under these procedures.

5.24 Where the general manager considers it to be practicable and appropriate to do so, the general manager may seek to resolve code of conduct complaints about councillors, other than those requiring referral to the Office under clause 5.20, by alternative means such as, but not limited to, explanation, counselling, training, mediation, informal discussion, negotiation, a voluntary apology or an undertaking not to repeat the offending behaviour. The resolution of a code of conduct complaint under this clause is not to be taken as a determination that there has been a breach of the council's code of conduct.

5.25 Where the general manager resolves a code of conduct complaint under clause 5.24 to the general manager's satisfaction, the general manager must notify the complainant in writing of the steps taken to resolve the complaint within 21 days of receipt of the complaint and this shall finalise the consideration of the matter under these procedures.

5.26 The general manager must refer all code of conduct complaints about councillors, other than those referred to the Office under clause 5.20 or finalised under clause 5.23 or resolved under clause 5.24, to the complaints coordinator.

How are code of conduct complaints about the general manager to be dealt with?

5.27 The mayor must refer the following code of conduct complaints about the general manager to the Office:

a) complaints alleging a breach of the pecuniary interest provisions contained in Part 4 of the code of conduct

b) complaints alleging a breach of the provisions relating to the maintenance of the integrity of the code of conduct contained in Part 9 of the code of conduct

c) complaints that are the subject of a special complaints management arrangement with the Office under clause 5.49.

5.28 Where the mayor refers a complaint to the Office under clause 5.27, the mayor must notify the complainant of the referral in writing.

5.29 The mayor may decide to take no action in relation to a code of conduct complaint about the general manager, other than one requiring referral to the Office under clause 5.27, where they consider that no action is warranted in relation to the complaint.

5.30 Where the mayor decides to take no action in relation to a code of conduct complaint about the general manager, the mayor must give the complainant reasons in writing for their decision within 21 days of receipt of the complaint and this shall finalise the consideration of the matter under these procedures.

5.31 Where the mayor considers it to be practicable and appropriate to do so, the mayor may seek to resolve code of conduct complaints about the general manager, other than those requiring referral to the Office under clause 5.27, by alternative means such as, but not limited to, explanation, counselling, training, mediation, informal discussion, negotiation, a voluntary apology or an undertaking not to repeat the offending behaviour. The resolution of a code of conduct complaint under this clause is not to be taken as a determination that there has been a breach of the council's code of conduct.

5.32 Where the mayor resolves a code of conduct complaint under clause 5.31 to the mayor's satisfaction, the mayor must notify the complainant in writing of the steps taken to resolve the complaint within 21 days of receipt of the complaint and this shall finalise the consideration of the matter under these procedures.

5.33 The mayor must refer all code of conduct complaints about the general manager, other than those referred to the Office under clause 5.27 or finalised under clause 5.30 or resolved under clause 5.31, to the complaints coordinator.

How are complaints about both the general manager and the mayor to be dealt with?

5.34 Where the general manager or mayor receives a code of conduct complaint that alleges a breach of the code of conduct by both the general manager and the mayor, the general manager or mayor must either:

a) delegate their functions under this part with respect to the complaint to a member of staff of the council other than the general manager where the allegation is not serious, or to a person external to the council, or

b) refer the matter to the complaints coordinator under clause 5.26 and clause 5.33.

Referral of code of conduct complaints to external agencies

5.35 The general manager, mayor or a conduct reviewer may, at any time, refer a code of conduct complaint to an external agency for its consideration, where they consider such a referral is warranted.

5.36 The general manager, mayor or a conduct reviewer must report to the ICAC any matter that they suspect on reasonable grounds concerns or may concern corrupt conduct.

5.37 Where the general manager, mayor or conduct reviewer refers a complaint to an external agency under clause 5.35, they must notify the complainant of the referral in writing unless they form the view, on the advice of the relevant agency, that it would not be appropriate for them to do so.

5.38 Referral of a matter to an external agency shall finalise consideration of the matter under these procedures unless the council is subsequently advised otherwise by the referral agency.

Disclosure of the identity of complainants

5.39 In dealing with matters under these procedures, information that identifies or tends to identify complainants is not to be disclosed unless:

a) the complainant consents in writing to the disclosure, or

b) it is generally known that the complainant has made the complaint as a result of the complainant having voluntarily identified themselves as the person who made the complaint, or

c) it is essential, having regard to procedural fairness requirements, that the identifying information be disclosed, or

d) a conduct reviewer is of the opinion that disclosure of the information is necessary to investigate the matter effectively, or

e) it is otherwise in the public interest to do so.

5.40 Clause 5.39 does not apply to code of conduct complaints made by councillors about other councillors or the general manager.

5.41 Where a councillor makes a code of conduct complaint about another councillor or the general manager, and the complainant councillor considers that compelling grounds exist that would warrant information that identifies or tends to identify them as the complainant not to be disclosed, they may request in writing that such information not be disclosed.

5.42 A request made by a complainant councillor under clause 5.41 must be made at the time they make a code of conduct complaint and must state the grounds upon which the request is made.

5.43 The general manager or mayor, and where the matter is referred to a conduct reviewer, the conduct reviewer, must consider a request made under clause 5.41 before disclosing information that identifies or tends to identify the complainant councillor, but they are not obliged to comply with the request.

5.44 Where a complainant councillor makes a request under clause 5.41, the general manager or mayor or, where the matter is referred to a conduct reviewer, the conduct reviewer, shall notify the councillor in writing of their intention to disclose information that identifies or tends to identify them prior to disclosing the information.

Code of conduct complaints made as public interest disclosures

5.45 These procedures do not override the provisions of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994*. Code of conduct complaints that are made as public interest disclosures under that Act are to be managed in accordance with the requirements of that Act, the council's internal reporting policy, and any guidelines issued by the NSW Ombudsman that relate to the management of public interest disclosures.

5.46 Where a councillor makes a code of conduct complaint about another councillor or the general manager as a public interest disclosure, before the matter may be dealt with under these procedures, the complainant councillor must consent in writing to the disclosure of their identity as the complainant.

5.47 Where a complainant councillor declines to consent to the disclosure of their identity as the complainant under clause 5.46, the general manager or the mayor must refer the complaint to the Office for consideration. Such a referral must be made under section 26 of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994*.

Special complaints management arrangements

5.48 The general manager may request in writing that the Office enter into a special complaints management arrangement with the council in relation to code of conduct complaints made by or about a person or persons.

5.49 Where the Office receives a request under clause 5.48, it may agree to enter into a special complaints management arrangement if it is satisfied that the number or nature of code of conduct complaints made by or about a person or persons has:

a) imposed an undue and disproportionate cost burden on the council's administration of its code of conduct, or

b) impeded or disrupted the effective administration by the council of its code of conduct, or

c) impeded or disrupted the effective functioning of the council.

5.50 A special complaints management arrangement must be in writing and must specify the following:

a) the code of conduct complaints the arrangement relates to, and

b) the period that the arrangement will be in force.

5.51 The Office may, by notice in writing, amend or terminate a special complaints management arrangement at any time.

5.52 While a special complaints management arrangement is in force, an officer of the Office (the assessing OLG officer) must undertake the preliminary assessment of the code of conduct complaints specified in the arrangement in accordance with the requirements of Part 6 of these procedures.

5.53 Where, following a preliminary assessment, the assessing OLG officer determines that a code of conduct complaint warrants investigation by a conduct reviewer, the assessing OLG officer shall notify the complaints coordinator in writing of their determination and the reasons for their determination. The complaints coordinator must comply with the recommendation of the assessing OLG officer.

5.54 Prior to the expiry of a special complaints management arrangement, the Office may, at the request of the general manager, review the arrangement to determine whether it should be renewed or amended.

5.55 A special complaints management arrangement shall expire on the date specified in the arrangement unless renewed under clause 5.54.

Part 6:
Preliminary Assessment of Code of Conduct Complaints About Councillors or the General Manager by Conduct Reviewers



Referral of code of conduct complaints about councillors or the general manager to conduct reviewers

6.1 The complaints coordinator must refer all code of conduct complaints about councillors or the general manager that have not been referred to an external agency or declined or resolved by the general manager, mayor or their delegate and that have been referred to them under clauses 5.26 or 5.33, to a conduct reviewer within 21 days of receipt of the complaint by the general manager or the mayor.

6.2 For the purposes of clause 6.1, the complaints coordinator will refer a complaint to a conduct reviewer selected from:

a) a panel of conduct reviewers established by the council, or

b) a panel of conduct reviewers established by an organisation approved by the Office.

6.3 In selecting a suitable conduct reviewer, the complaints coordinator may have regard to the qualifications and experience of members of the panel of conduct reviewers. Where the conduct reviewer is an incorporated or other entity, the complaints coordinator must also ensure that the person assigned to receive the referral on behalf of the entity meets the selection and eligibility criteria for conduct reviewers prescribed under Part 3 of these procedures.

6.4 A conduct reviewer must not accept the referral of a code of conduct complaint where:

a) they have a conflict of interest in relation to the matter referred to them, or

b) a reasonable apprehension of bias arises in relation to their consideration of the matter, or

c) they or their employer has entered into one or more contracts with the council (other than contracts relating to the exercise of their functions as a conduct reviewer) in the 2 years preceding the referral, and they or their employer have received or expect to receive payments under the contract or contracts of a value that, when aggregated, exceeds $100,000, or

d) at the time of the referral, they or their employer are the council's legal service provider or are a member of a panel of legal service providers appointed by the council.

6.5 For the purposes of clause 6.4(a), a conduct reviewer will have a conflict of interest in a matter where a reasonable and informed person would perceive that they could be influenced by a private interest when carrying out their public duty (see clause 5.2 of the Model Code of Conduct).

6.6 For the purposes of clause 6.4(b), a reasonable apprehension of bias arises where a fair-minded observer might reasonably apprehend that the conduct reviewer might not bring an impartial and unprejudiced mind to the matter referred to the conduct reviewer.

6.7 Where the complaints coordinator refers a matter to a conduct reviewer, they will provide the conduct reviewer with a copy of the code of conduct complaint and any other information relevant to the matter held by the council, including any information about previous proven breaches and any information that would indicate that the alleged conduct forms part of an ongoing pattern of behaviour.

6.8 The complaints coordinator must notify the complainant in writing that the matter has been referred to a conduct reviewer, and advise which conduct reviewer the matter has been referred to.

6.9 Conduct reviewers must comply with these procedures in their consideration of matters that have been referred to them and exercise their functions in a diligent and timely manner.

6.10 The complaints coordinator may at any time terminate the referral of a matter to a conduct reviewer and refer the matter to another conduct reviewer where the complaints coordinator is satisfied that the conduct reviewer has failed to:

a) comply with these procedures in their consideration of the matter, or

b) comply with a lawful and reasonable request by the complaints coordinator, or

c) exercise their functions in a timely or satisfactory manner.

6.11 Where the complaints coordinator terminates a referral to a conduct reviewer under clause 6.10, they must notify the complainant and any other affected person in writing of their decision and the reasons for it and advise them which conduct reviewer the matter has been referred to instead.

Preliminary assessment of code of conduct complaints about councillors or the general manager by a conduct reviewer

6.12 The conduct reviewer is to undertake a preliminary assessment of a complaint referred to them by the complaints coordinator for the purposes of determining how the complaint is to be managed.

6.13 The conduct reviewer may determine to do one or more of the following in relation to a complaint referred to them by the complaints coordinator:

a) to take no action

b) to resolve the complaint by alternative and appropriate strategies such as, but not limited to, explanation, counselling, training, mediation, informal discussion, negotiation, a voluntary apology or an undertaking not to repeat the offending behaviour

c) to refer the matter back to the general manager or, in the case of a complaint about the general manager, the mayor, for resolution by alternative and appropriate strategies such as, but not limited to, explanation, counselling, training, mediation, informal discussion, negotiation, a voluntary apology or an undertaking not to repeat the offending behaviour

d) to refer the matter to an external agency

e) to investigate the matter.

6.14 In determining how to deal with a matter under clause 6.13, the conduct reviewer must have regard to the complaint assessment criteria prescribed under clause 6.31.

6.15 The conduct reviewer may make such enquiries the conduct reviewer considers to be reasonably necessary to determine what options to exercise under clause 6.13.

6.16 The conduct reviewer may request the complaints coordinator to provide such additional information the conduct reviewer considers to be reasonably necessary to determine what options to exercise in relation to the matter under clause 6.13. The complaints coordinator will, as far as is reasonably practicable, supply any information requested by the conduct reviewer.

6.17 The conduct reviewer must refer to the Office any complaints referred to them that should have been referred to the Office under clauses 5.20 and 5.27.

6.18 The conduct reviewer must determine to take no action on a complaint that is not a code of conduct complaint for the purposes of these procedures.

6.19 The resolution of a code of conduct complaint under clause 6.13, paragraphs (b) or (c) is not to be taken as a determination that there has been a breach of the council's code of conduct.

6.20 Where the conduct reviewer completes their preliminary assessment of a complaint by determining to exercise an option under clause 6.13, paragraphs (a), (b) or (c), they must provide the complainant with written notice of their determination and provide reasons for it, and this will finalise consideration of the matter under these procedures.

6.21 Where the conduct reviewer refers a complaint to an external agency, they must notify the complainant of the referral in writing unless they form the view, on the advice of the relevant agency, that it would not be appropriate for them to do so.

6.22 The conduct reviewer may only determine to investigate a matter where they are satisfied as to the following:

a) that the complaint is a code of conduct complaint for the purposes of these procedures, and

b) that the alleged conduct is sufficiently serious to warrant the formal censure of a councillor under section 440G of the LGA or disciplinary action against the general manager under their contract of employment if it were to be proven, and

c) that the matter is one that could not or should not be resolved by alternative means.

6.23 In determining whether a matter is sufficiently serious to warrant formal censure of a councillor under section 440G of the LGA or disciplinary action against the general manager under their contract of employment, the conduct reviewer is to consider the following:

a) the harm or cost that the alleged conduct has caused to any affected individuals and/or the council

b) the likely impact of the alleged conduct on the reputation of the council and public confidence in it

c) whether the alleged conduct was deliberate or undertaken with reckless intent or negligence

d) any previous proven breaches by the person whose alleged conduct is the subject of the complaint and/or whether the alleged conduct forms part of an ongoing pattern of behaviour.

6.24 The conduct reviewer must complete their preliminary assessment of the complaint within 28 days of referral of the matter to them by the complaints coordinator and notify the complaints coordinator in writing of the outcome of their assessment.

6.25 The conduct reviewer is not obliged to give prior notice to or to consult with any person before making a determination in relation to their preliminary assessment of a complaint, except as may be specifically required under these procedures.

Referral back to the general manager or mayor for resolution

6.26 Where the conduct reviewer determines to refer a matter back to the general manager or to the mayor to be resolved by alternative and appropriate means, they must write to the general manager or, in the case of a complaint about the general manager, to the mayor, recommending the means by which the complaint may be resolved.

6.27 The conduct reviewer must consult with the general manager or mayor prior to referring a matter back to them under clause 6.13(c).

6.28 The general manager or mayor may decline to accept the conduct reviewer's recommendation. In such cases, the conduct reviewer may determine to deal with the complaint by other means under clause 6.13.

6.29 Where the conduct reviewer refers a matter back to the general manager or mayor under clause 6.13(c), the general manager or, in the case of a complaint about the general manager, the mayor, is responsible for implementing or overseeing the implementation of the conduct reviewer's recommendation.

6.30 Where the conduct reviewer refers a matter back to the general manager or mayor under clause 6.13(c), the general manager, or, in the case of a complaint about the general manager, the mayor, must advise the complainant in writing of the steps taken to implement the conduct reviewer's recommendation once these steps have been completed.

Complaints assessment criteria

6.31 In undertaking the preliminary assessment of a complaint, the conduct reviewer must have regard to the following considerations:

a) whether the complaint is a code of conduct complaint for the purpose of these procedures

b) whether the complaint has been made in a timely manner in accordance with clause 4.4, and if not, whether the allegations are sufficiently serious for compelling grounds to exist for the matter to be dealt with under the council's code of conduct

c) whether the complaint is trivial, frivolous, vexatious or not made in good faith

d) whether the complaint discloses prima facie evidence of conduct that, if proven, would constitute a breach of the code of conduct

e) whether the complaint raises issues that would be more appropriately dealt with by an external agency

f) whether there is or was an alternative and satisfactory means of redress available in relation to the conduct complained of

g) whether the complaint is one that can be resolved by alternative and appropriate strategies such as, but not limited to, explanation, counselling, training, informal discussion, negotiation, a voluntary apology or an undertaking not to repeat the offending behaviour

h) whether the issue/s giving rise to the complaint have previously been addressed or resolved

i) any previous proven breaches of the council's code of conduct

j) whether the conduct complained of forms part of an ongoing pattern of behaviour

k) whether there were mitigating circumstances giving rise to the conduct complained of

l) the seriousness of the alleged conduct (having regard to the criteria specified in clause 6.23)

m) the significance of the conduct or the impact of the conduct for the council

n) how much time has passed since the alleged conduct occurred

o) such other considerations that the conduct reviewer considers may be relevant to the assessment of the complaint.

Part 7: Investigations of Code of Conduct Complaints About Councillors or the General Manager



What matters may a conduct reviewer investigate?

7.1 A conduct reviewer (hereafter referred to as an "investigator") may investigate a code of conduct complaint that has been referred to them by the complaints coordinator and any matters related to or arising from that complaint.

7.2 Where an investigator identifies further separate possible breaches of the code of conduct that are not related to or do not arise from the code of conduct complaint that has been referred to them, they are to report the matters separately in writing to the general manager, or, in the case of alleged conduct on the part of the general manager, to the mayor.

7.3 The general manager or the mayor or their delegate is to deal with a matter reported to them by an investigator under clause 7.2 as if it were a new code of conduct complaint in accordance with these procedures.

How are investigations to be commenced?

7.4 The investigator must at the outset of their investigation provide a written notice of investigation to the respondent. The notice of investigation must:

a) disclose the substance of the allegations against the respondent, and

b) advise of the relevant provisions of the code of conduct that apply to the alleged conduct, and

c) advise of the process to be followed in investigating the matter, and

d) advise the respondent of the requirement to maintain confidentiality, and

e) invite the respondent to make a written submission in relation to the matter within a period of not less than 14 days specified by the investigator in the notice, and

f) provide the respondent the opportunity to address the investigator on the matter within such reasonable time specified in the notice.

7.5 The respondent may, within 7 days of receipt of the notice of investigation, request in writing that the investigator provide them with such further information they consider necessary to assist them to identify the substance of the allegation against them. An investigator will only be obliged to provide such information that the investigator considers reasonably necessary for the respondent to identify the substance of the allegation against them.

7.6 An investigator may at any time prior to issuing a draft report, issue an amended notice of investigation to the respondent in relation to the matter referred to them.

7.7 Where an investigator issues an amended notice of investigation, they must provide the respondent with a further opportunity to make a written submission in response to the amended notice of investigation within a period of not less than 14 days specified by the investigator in the amended notice.

7.8 The investigator must also, at the outset of their investigation, provide written notice of the investigation to the complainant, the complaints coordinator and the general manager, or in the case of a complaint about the general manager, to the complainant, the complaints coordinator and the mayor. The notice must:

a) advise them of the matter the investigator is investigating, and

b) in the case of the notice to the complainant, advise them of the requirement to maintain confidentiality, and

c) invite the complainant to make a written submission in relation to the matter within a period of not less than 14 days specified by the investigator in the notice.

Written and oral submissions

7.9 Where the respondent or the complainant fails to make a written submission in relation to the matter within the period specified by the investigator in their notice of investigation or amended notice of investigation, the investigator may proceed to prepare their draft report without receiving such submissions.

7.10 The investigator may accept written submissions received outside the period specified in the notice of investigation or amended notice of investigation.

7.11 Prior to preparing a draft report, the investigator must give the respondent an opportunity to address the investigator on the matter being investigated. The respondent may do so in person or by telephone or other electronic means.

7.12 Where the respondent fails to accept the opportunity to address the investigator within the period specified by the investigator in the notice of investigation, the investigator may proceed to prepare a draft report without hearing from the respondent.

7.13 Where the respondent accepts the opportunity to address the investigator in person, they may have a support person or legal adviser in attendance. The support person or legal adviser will act in an advisory or support role to the respondent only. They must not speak on behalf of the respondent or otherwise interfere with or disrupt proceedings.

7.14 The investigator must consider all written and oral submissions made to them in relation to the matter.

How are investigations to be conducted?

7.15 Investigations are to be undertaken without undue delay.

7.16 Investigations are to be undertaken in the absence of the public and in confidence.

7.17 Investigators must make any such enquiries that may be reasonably necessary to establish the facts of the matter.

7.18 Investigators may seek such advice or expert guidance that may be reasonably necessary to assist them with their investigation or the conduct of their investigation.

7.19 An investigator may request that the complaints coordinator provide such further information that the investigator considers may be reasonably necessary for them to establish the facts of the matter. The complaints coordinator will, as far as is reasonably practicable, provide the information requested by the investigator.

Referral or resolution of a matter after the commencement of an investigation

7.20 At any time after an investigator has issued a notice of investigation and before they have issued their final report, an investigator may determine to:

a) resolve the matter by alternative and appropriate strategies such as, but not limited to, explanation, counselling, training, mediation, informal discussion, negotiation, a voluntary apology or an undertaking not to repeat the offending behaviour, or

b) refer the matter to the general manager, or, in the case of a complaint about the general manager, to the mayor, for resolution by alternative and appropriate strategies such as, but not limited to, explanation, counselling, training, mediation, informal discussion, negotiation, a voluntary apology or an undertaking not to repeat the offending behaviour, or

c) refer the matter to an external agency.

7.21 Where an investigator determines to exercise any of the options under clause 7.20 after the commencement of an investigation, they must do so in accordance with the requirements of Part 6 of these procedures relating to the exercise of these options at the preliminary assessment stage.

7.22 The resolution of a code of conduct complaint under clause 7.20, paragraphs (a) or (b) is not to be taken as a determination that there has been a breach of the council's code of conduct.

7.23 Where an investigator determines to exercise any of the options under clause 7.20 after the commencement of an investigation, they may by written notice to the respondent, the complainant, the complaints coordinator and the general manager, or in the case of a complaint about the general manager, to the respondent, the complainant, the complaints coordinator and the mayor, discontinue their investigation of the matter.

7.24 Where the investigator discontinues their investigation of a matter under clause 7.23, this shall finalise the consideration of the matter under these procedures.

7.25 An investigator is not obliged to give prior notice to or to consult with any person before making a determination to exercise any of the options under clause 7.20 or to discontinue their investigation except as may be specifically required under these procedures.

Draft investigation reports

7.26 When an investigator has completed their enquiries and considered any written or oral submissions made to them in relation to a matter, they must prepare a draft of their proposed report.

7.27 The investigator must provide their draft report to the respondent and invite them to make a written submission in relation to it within a period of not less than 14 days specified by the investigator.

7.28 Where the investigator proposes to make adverse comment about any other person (an affected person) in their report, they must also provide the affected person with relevant extracts of their draft report containing such comment and invite the affected person to make a written submission in relation to it within a period of not less than 14 days specified by the investigator.

7.29 The investigator must consider written submissions received in relation to the draft report prior to finalising their report in relation to the matter.

7.30 The investigator may, after consideration of all written submissions received in relation to their draft report, make further enquiries into the matter. If, as a result of making further enquiries, the investigator makes any material change to their proposed report that makes new adverse comment about the respondent or an affected person, they must provide the respondent or affected person as the case may be with a further opportunity to make a written submission in relation to the new adverse comment.

7.31 Where the respondent or an affected person fails to make a written submission in relation to the draft report within the period specified by the investigator, the investigator may proceed to prepare and issue their final report without receiving such submissions.

7.32 The investigator may accept written submissions in relation to the draft report received outside the period specified by the investigator at any time prior to issuing their final report.

Final investigation reports

7.33 Where an investigator issues a notice of investigation, they must prepare a final report in relation to the matter unless the investigation is discontinued under clause 7.23.

7.34 An investigator must not prepare a final report in relation to the matter at any time before they have finalised their consideration of the matter in accordance with the requirements of these procedures.

7.35 The investigator's final report must:

a) make findings of fact in relation to the matter investigated, and,

b) make a determination that the conduct investigated either,

i) constitutes a breach of the code of conduct, or

ii) does not constitute a breach of the code of conduct, and

c) provide reasons for the determination.

7.36 At a minimum, the investigator's final report must contain the following information:

a) a description of the allegations against the respondent

b) the relevant provisions of the code of conduct that apply to the alleged conduct investigated

c) a statement of reasons as to why the matter warranted investigation (having regard to the criteria specified in clause 6.23)

d) a statement of reasons as to why the matter was one that could not or should not be resolved by alternative means

e) a description of any attempts made to resolve the matter by use of alternative means

f) the steps taken to investigate the matter

g) the facts of the matter

h) the investigator's findings in relation to the facts of the matter and the reasons for those findings

i) the investigator's determination and the reasons for that determination

j) any recommendations.

7.37 Where the investigator determines that the conduct investigated constitutes a breach of the code of conduct, the investigator may recommend:

a) in the case of a breach by the general manager, that disciplinary action be taken under the general manager's contract of employment for the breach, or

b) in the case of a breach by a councillor, that the councillor be formally censured for the breach under section 440G of the LGA, or

c) in the case of a breach by a councillor, that the council resolves as follows:

i) that the councillor be formally censured for the breach under section 440G of the LGA, and

ii) that the matter be referred to the Office for further action under the misconduct provisions of the LGA.

7.38 Where the investigator proposes to make a recommendation under clause 7.37(c), the investigator must first consult with the Office on their proposed findings, determination and recommendation prior to finalising their report, and must take any comments by the Office into consideration when finalising their report.

7.39 Where the investigator has determined that there has been a breach of the code of conduct, the investigator may, in addition to making a recommendation under clause 7.37, recommend that the council revise any of its policies, practices or procedures.

7.40 Where the investigator determines that the conduct investigated does not constitute a breach of the code of conduct, the investigator may recommend:

a) that the council revise any of its policies, practices or procedures

b) that a person or persons undertake any training or other education.

7.41 The investigator must provide a copy of their report to the complaints coordinator and the respondent.

7.42 At the time the investigator provides a copy of their report to the complaints coordinator and the respondent, the investigator must provide the complainant with a written statement containing the following information:

a) the investigator's findings in relation to the facts of the matter and the reasons for those findings

b) the investigator's determination and the reasons for that determination

c) any recommendations, and

d) such other additional information that the investigator considers may be relevant.

7.43 Where the investigator has determined that there has not been a breach of the code of conduct, the complaints coordinator must provide a copy of the investigator's report to the general manager or, where the report relates to the general manager's conduct, to the mayor, and this will finalise consideration of the matter under these procedures.

7.44 Where the investigator has determined that there has been a breach of the code of conduct and makes a recommendation under clause 7.37, the complaints coordinator must, where practicable, arrange for the investigator's report to be reported to the next ordinary council meeting for the council's consideration, unless the meeting is to be held within the 4 weeks prior to an ordinary local government election, in which case the report must be reported to the first ordinary council meeting following the election.

7.45 Where it is apparent to the complaints coordinator that the council will not be able to form a quorum to consider the investigator's report, the complaints coordinator must refer the investigator's report to the Office for its consideration instead of reporting it to the council under clause 7.44.

Consideration of the final investigation report by council

7.46 The role of the council in relation to a final investigation report is to impose a sanction if the investigator has determined that there has been a breach of the code of conduct and has made a recommendation in their final report under clause 7.37.

7.47 The council is to close its meeting to the public to consider the final investigation report in cases where it is permitted to do so under section 10A of the LGA.

7.48 Where the complainant is a councillor, they must absent themselves from the meeting and take no part in any discussion or voting on the matter. The complainant councillor may absent themselves without making any disclosure of interest in relation to the matter unless otherwise required to do so under the code of conduct.

7.49 Prior to imposing a sanction, the council must provide the respondent with an opportunity to make a submission to the council. A submission may be made orally or in writing. The respondent is to confine their submission to addressing the investigator's recommendation.

7.50 Once the respondent has made their submission they must absent themselves from the meeting and, where they are a councillor, take no part in any discussion or voting on the matter.

7.51 The council must not invite submissions from other persons for the purpose of seeking to rehear evidence previously considered by the investigator.

7.52 Prior to imposing a sanction, the council may by resolution:

a) request that the investigator make additional enquiries and/or provide additional information to it in a supplementary report, or

b) seek an opinion from the Office in relation to the report.

7.53 The council may, by resolution, defer further consideration of the matter pending the receipt of a supplementary report from the investigator or an opinion from the Office.

7.54 The investigator may make additional enquiries for the purpose of preparing a supplementary report.

7.55 Where the investigator prepares a supplementary report, they must provide copies to the complaints coordinator who shall provide a copy each to the council and the respondent.

7.56 The investigator is not obliged to notify or consult with any person prior to submitting the supplementary report to the complaints coordinator.

7.57 The council is only required to provide the respondent a further opportunity to make an oral or written submission on a supplementary report if the supplementary report contains new information that is adverse to them.

7.58 A council may by resolution impose one of the following sanctions on a respondent:

a) in the case of a breach by the general manager, that disciplinary action be taken under the general manager's contract of employment for the breach, or

b) in the case of a breach by a councillor, that the councillor be formally censured for the breach under section 440G of the LGA, or

c) in the case of a breach by a councillor:

i) that the councillor be formally censured for the breach under section 440G of the LGA, and

ii) that the matter be referred to the Office for further action under the misconduct provisions of the LGA.

7.59 Where the council censures a councillor under section 440G of the LGA, the council must specify in the censure resolution the grounds on which it is satisfied that the councillor should be censured by disclosing in the resolution, the investigator's findings and determination and/or such other grounds that the council considers may be relevant or appropriate.

7.60 The council is not obliged to adopt the investigator's recommendation. Where the council proposes not to adopt the investigator's recommendation, the council must resolve not to adopt the recommendation and state in its resolution the reasons for its decision.

7.61 Where the council resolves not to adopt the investigator's recommendation, the complaints coordinator must notify the Office of the council's decision and the reasons for it.

Part 8:
Oversight and Rights of Review



The Office's powers of review

8.1 The Office may, at any time, whether or not in response to a request, review the consideration of a matter under a council's code of conduct where it is concerned that a person has failed to comply with a requirement prescribed under these procedures or has misinterpreted or misapplied the standards of conduct prescribed under the code of conduct in their consideration of a matter.

8.2 The Office may direct any person, including the council, to defer taking further action in relation to a matter under consideration under the council's code of conduct pending the completion of its review. Any person the subject of a direction must comply with the direction.

8.3 Where the Office undertakes a review of a matter under clause 8.1, it will notify the complaints coordinator and any other affected persons, of the outcome of the review.

Complaints about conduct reviewers

8.4 The general manager or their delegate must refer code of conduct complaints about conduct reviewers to the Office for its consideration.

8.5 The general manager must notify the complainant of the referral of their complaint about the conduct reviewer in writing.

8.6 The general manager must implement any recommendation made by the Office as a result of its consideration of a complaint about a conduct reviewer.

Practice rulings

8.7 Where a respondent and an investigator are in dispute over a requirement under these procedures, either person may make a request in writing to the Office to make a ruling on a question of procedure (a practice ruling).

8.8 Where the Office receives a request in writing for a practice ruling, the Office may provide notice in writing of its ruling and the reasons for it to the person who requested it and to the investigator, where that person is different.

8.9 Where the Office makes a practice ruling, all parties must comply with it.

8.10 The Office may decline to make a practice ruling. Where the Office declines to make a practice ruling, it will provide notice in writing of its decision and the reasons for it to the person who requested it and to the investigator, where that person is different.

Review of decisions to impose sanctions

8.11 A person who is the subject of a sanction imposed under Part 7 of these procedures other than one imposed under clause 7.58, paragraph (c), may, within 28 days of the sanction being imposed, seek a review of the investigator's determination and recommendation by the Office.

8.12 A review under clause 8.11 may be sought on the following grounds:

a) that the investigator has failed to comply with a requirement under these procedures, or

b) that the investigator has misinterpreted or misapplied the standards of conduct prescribed under the code of conduct, or

c) that in imposing its sanction, the council has failed to comply with a requirement under these procedures.

8.13 A request for a review made under clause 8.11 must be made in writing and must specify the grounds upon which the person believes the investigator or the council has erred.

8.14 The Office may decline to conduct a review, in cases where the grounds upon which the review is sought are not sufficiently specified.

8.15 The Office may undertake a review of a matter without receiving a request under clause 8.11.

8.16 The Office will undertake a review of the matter on the papers. However, the Office may request that the complaints coordinator provide such further information that the Office considers reasonably necessary for it to review the matter. The complaints coordinator must, as far as is reasonably practicable, provide the information requested by the Office.

8.17 Where a person requests a review under clause 8.11, the Office may direct the council to defer any action to implement a sanction. The council must comply with a direction to defer action by the Office.

8.18 The Office must notify the person who requested the review and the complaints coordinator of the outcome of the Office's review in writing and the reasons for its decision. In doing so, the Office may comment on any other matters the Office considers to be relevant.

8.19 Where the Office considers that the investigator or the council has erred, the Office may recommend that a decision to impose a sanction under these procedures be reviewed. Where the Office recommends that the decision to impose a sanction be reviewed:

a) the complaints coordinator must, where practicable, arrange for the Office's determination to be tabled at the next ordinary council meeting unless the meeting is to be held within the 4 weeks prior to an ordinary local government election, in which case it must be tabled at the first ordinary council meeting following the election, and

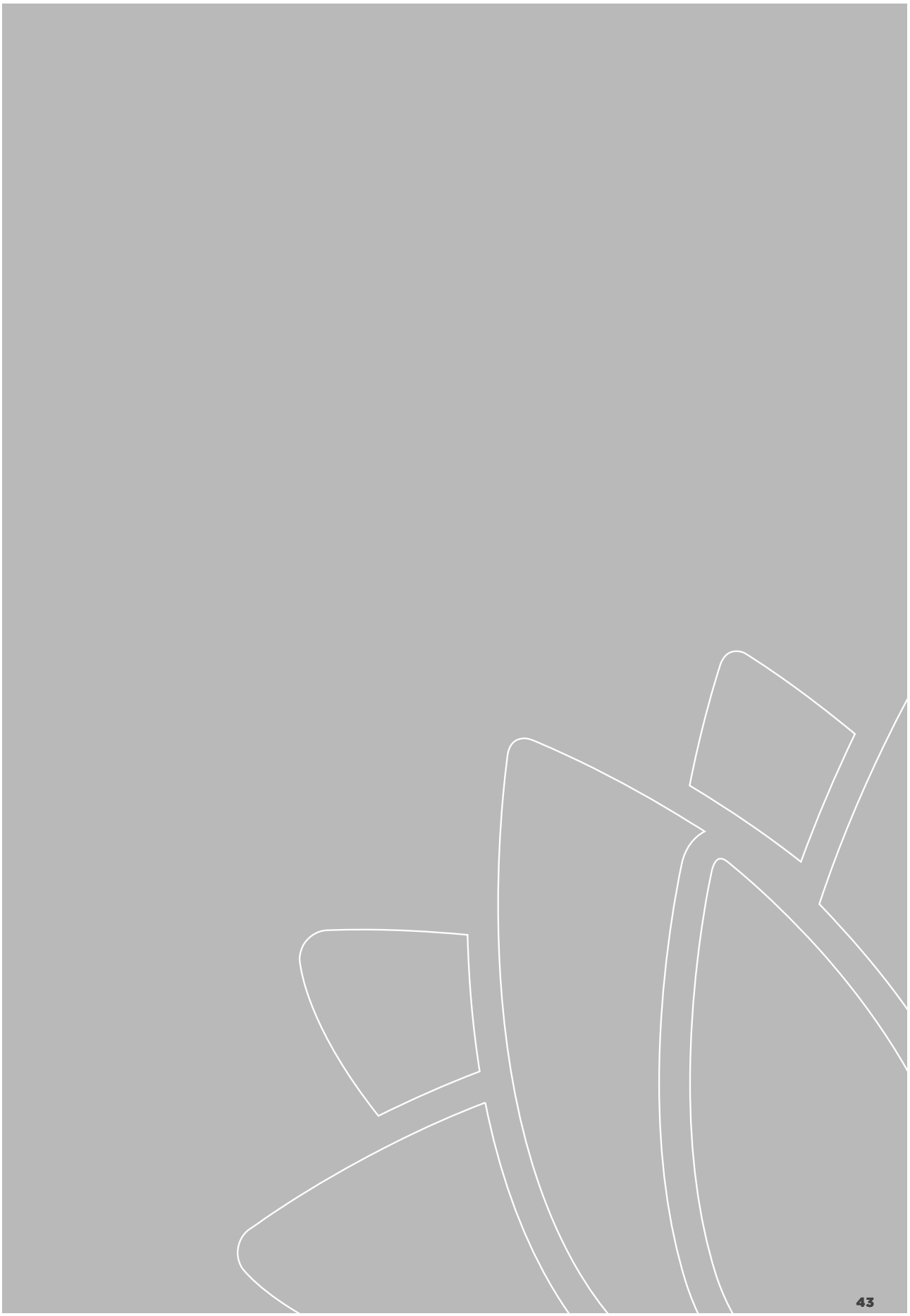
b) the council must:

i) review its decision to impose the sanction, and

ii) consider the Office's recommendation in doing so, and

iii) resolve to either rescind or reaffirm its previous resolution in relation to the matter.

8.20 Where, having reviewed its previous decision in relation to a matter under clause 8.19(b), the council resolves to reaffirm its previous decision, the council must state in its resolution its reasons for doing so.


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Part 9:
Procedural Irregularities



9.1 A failure to comply with these procedures does not, on its own, constitute a breach of the code of conduct, except as may be otherwise specifically provided under the code of conduct.

9.2 A failure to comply with these procedures will not render a decision made in relation to a matter invalid where:

a) the non-compliance is isolated and/or minor in nature, or

b) reasonable steps are taken to correct the non-compliance, or

c) reasonable steps are taken to address the consequences of the non-compliance.

Part 10:
Practice Directions



10.1 The Office may at any time issue a practice direction in relation to the application of these procedures.

10.2 The Office will issue practice directions in writing, by circular to all councils.

10.3 All persons performing a function prescribed under these procedures must consider the Office's practice directions when performing the function.

Part 11:
Reporting Statistics on Code of Conduct Complaints About Councillors and the General Manager



11.1 The complaints coordinator must arrange for the following statistics to be reported to the council within 3 months of the end of September of each year:

a) the total number of code of conduct complaints made about councillors and the general manager under the code of conduct in the year to September (the reporting period)

b) the number of code of conduct complaints referred to a conduct reviewer during the reporting period

c) the number of code of conduct complaints finalised by a conduct reviewer at the preliminary assessment stage during the reporting period and the outcome of those complaints

d) the number of code of conduct complaints investigated by a conduct reviewer during the reporting period

e) without identifying particular matters, the outcome of investigations completed under these procedures during the reporting period

f) the number of matters reviewed by the Office during the reporting period and, without identifying particular matters, the outcome of the reviews, and

g) the total cost of dealing with code of conduct complaints made about councillors and the general manager during the reporting period, including staff costs.

11.2 The council is to provide the Office with a report containing the statistics referred to in clause 11.1 within 3 months of the end of September of each year.

Part 12:
Confidentiality



12.1 Information about code of conduct complaints and the management and investigation of code of conduct complaints is to be treated as confidential and is not to be publicly disclosed except as may be otherwise specifically required or permitted under these procedures.

12.2 Where a complainant publicly discloses information on one or more occasions about a code of conduct complaint they have made or purported to make, the general manager or their delegate may, with the consent of the Office, determine that the complainant is to receive no further information about their complaint and any future code of conduct complaint they make or purport to make.

12.3 Prior to seeking the Office's consent under clause 12.2, the general manager or their delegate must give the complainant written notice of their intention to seek the Office's consent, invite them to make a written submission within a period of not less than 14 days specified by the general manager or their delegate, and consider any submission made by them.

12.4 In giving its consent under clause 12.2, the Office must consider any submission made by the complainant to the general manager or their delegate.

12.5 The general manager or their delegate must give written notice of a determination made under clause 12.2 to:

a) the complainant

b) the complaints coordinator

c) the Office, and

d) any other person the general manager or their delegate considers should be notified of the determination.

12.6 Any requirement under these procedures that a complainant is to be provided with information about a code of conduct complaint that they have made or purported to make, will not apply to a complainant the subject of a determination made by the general manager or their delegate under clause 12.2.

12.7 Clause 12.6 does not override any entitlement a person may have to access to council information under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* or to receive information under the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994* in relation to a complaint they have made.


NSW
GOVERNMENT

CANBERRA REGION
JOINT ORGANISATION
Regional leadership connecting our communities

BOARD MEETING

Friday, 7 March 2025
9am – 1pm
Snowy Hydro | Cabramurra, NSW

MINUTES

Meeting Minutes
Friday, 7 March 2025
9am – 1pm
Snowy Hydro | Cabramurra NSW

CRJO Board Members

COUNCIL	VOTING MEMBERS	NON-VOTING REPRESENTATIVES
Bega Valley Shire Council	Mayor, Cr Russell Fitzpatrick	Anthony McMahon, Chief Executive Officer
Eurobodalla Shire Council	Mayor, Cr Mathew Hatcher	Warwick Winn, General Manager
Goulburn Mulwaree Council	Mayor, Cr Nina Dillon	Marina Hollands, A/Chief Executive Officer
Hilltops Council	Mayor, Cr Brian Ingram	Anthony O'Reilly, General Manager
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council	Mayor, Cr Kenrick Winchester	Rebecca Ryan, General Manager
Snowy Monaro Regional Council	Mayor, Cr Chris Hanna	Stephen Dunshea, A/Chief Executive Officer
Snowy Valleys Council	Mayor, Cr Julia Ham	Jessica Quilty, A/General Manager
Upper Lachlan Shire Council	Mayor, Cr Paul Culhane	Alex Waldron, Chief Executive Officer
Wingecarribee Shire Council	Mayor, Cr Jesse Fitzpatrick	Lisa Miscamble, General Manager
Yass Valley Council	Mayor, Cr Jasmin Jones	Julie Costa, A/Chief Executive Officer

CRJO Board Attendees

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)		
Wagga Wagga City Council	Mayor, Cr Dallas Tout	Peter Thompson, General Manager
ACT Government	David Clapham, Executive Branch Manager, Regional, Infrastructure, Planning and Transport Branch	
NSW Government	Giles Butler, Director Regional Coordination – South, Delivery and Engagement Group, NSW Premier's Department	

AFFILIATE MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)		
Canberra Airport	Noel McCann, Director, Planning & Government Relations	Michael Thompson, Head of Aviation
	Jordan Fallon, Government Relations & Policy Advisor	

Meeting Minutes
Friday, 7 March 2025
9am – 1pm
Snowy Hydro | Cabramurra NSW

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
NSW Reconstruction Authority	Heidi Stratford, Director Illawarra and South East	
NSW Office of Cross Border Commissioner	Kalina Koloff, NSW Cross Border Commissioner	
Office of Local Government	Louise Taylor, Council Engagement Manager	
Regional Development Australia Southern NSW & ACT	Rowena Abbey, Chair	Olivia West, Chief Executive Officer

STAFF	
Canberra Region Joint Organisation	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer
	Hayley Chapman, Coordinator Corporate Services
Woolamai Consulting	Leanne Barnes, Project Manager (contractor)
Jennifer Lang Australia	Jennifer Lang, Chief Financial Officer (contractor)

Meeting Minutes
Friday, 7 March 2025
9am – 1pm
Snowy Hydro | Cabramurra NSW

1. Opening Meeting

The Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) Chairperson, Mayor Russell Fitzpatrick at 9:00 am.

2. Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country

The following acknowledgement was made by the meeting chair.

"I acknowledge and pay our respects to the Aboriginal Elders both past and present, as well as emerging leaders, and acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet today."

3. Apologies

The CRJO Executive Officer called for any apologies. The board resolved to accept the below apologies:

The following apologies have been received prior to the meeting:

- Mr Justin Clancy MP, Member for Albury (as local member for Cabramurra)
- Cr Mathew Hatcher, Mayor Eurobodalla Shire Council
- Warwick Winn, General Manager Eurobodalla Shire Council
- Stephanie Speedy, A/General Manager Eurobodalla Shire Council
- Noel McCann, Director, Planning & Government Relations, Canberra Airport
- Michael Thompson, Head of Aviation, Canberra Airport
- Jordan Fallon, Government Relations & Policy Advisor
- Rowena Abbey, Chair Regional Development Australia Southern NSW & ACT

4. Disclosure of Interests

With reference to Chapter 14 *Local Government Act 1993*, and CRJO's Code of Conduct, members are required to declare any conflicts of interest in the matters under consideration by the board at this meeting.

Mayor Jasmin Jones, Yass Valley Council

- Standing non-pecuniary, insignificant declaration as Editor in Chief of *This Week In Canberra*, as Councils in the CRJO advertise from time to time with this tourism magazine.
- Standing non-pecuniary, insignificant declaration as my spouse is the Chief Operating Officer of *Capital Radio Network*, as Councils in the CRJO advertise from time to time advertise with this broadcast network.

The above declarations were noted by the chair on 6 December 2024 and there was not considered to be any management action needed.

5. Notice of Rescission

Pursuant to Clause 372 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, a voting representative may lodge a notice to rescind a motion for the CRJO's consideration. No notices of motion to rescind a motion were lodged.

6. Notice of Motions

Pursuant to Clause 10.2 of the Code of Meeting Practice, a voting representative may lodge a notice of motion for the CRJO's consideration. No notices of motion were lodged.

7. Urgent Business

Pursuant to Clause 9.3 of the Code of Meeting Practice, the meeting chair called for any additional business. Any additional business to be discussed requires a board resolution or a ruling by the chair that the matter is of great urgency.

The CRJO board may resolve to accept any late item, information or urgent business to be discussed and/or determined at this meeting. No additional business items were requested.

8. Chair's Minute

Pursuant to Clause 9.6 of the Code of Meeting Practice, the chair, without notice, may put to the meeting a minute on any matter or topic that is within the jurisdiction of the CRJO. No chair's minutes were put.

9. Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLUTION 03/25 - 01

Moved: **Cr Brian Ingram**

Seconded: **Cr Julia Ham**

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board adopts the minutes and actions arising from the board meeting held 6 December 2024.

CARRIED

10. Presentations

10.1 Blueprint for a Resilient South East NSW project update and transitioning to the State Disaster Mitigation Plan and disaster adaptation planning

Presentation provided by Leanne Barnes, Woolamai Consulting (CRJO contractor project officer), Heidi Stratford, NSW Reconstruction Authority and Jillian Kilby, The Stable Group

10.2 Climate Mayors Initiative

Presentation provided by Cr Anna Reynolds, Lord Mayor Hobart City Council.

11. Briefings to CRJO Board

11.2 Agencies and Stakeholders Updates

The following agencies provided an update to the board:

- Kalina Koloff, NSW Cross Border Commissioner, NSW Office of Cross Border Commissioner
- Heidi Stratford, Director Illawarra and South East, NSW Reconstruction Authority

Meeting paused at 10:10 am for morning tea. Meeting resumed at 10:33 am.

Kalina Koloff, Heidi Stratford and David Clapham left the meeting at 10:35 am.

11.1 Associate and Affiliate Members Updates

The following members provided an update to the board:

- Giles Butler, Director Regional Coordination – South, Delivery and Engagement Group, NSW Premier's Department

Apology received from Noel McCann, Director of Planning and Government Relations, Canberra Airport and Dr David Clapham, Executive Branch Manager, Regional, Infrastructure, Planning and Transport Branch, ACT Government (left meeting early)

11.2 Agencies and Stakeholders Updates

The following agencies provided an update to the board:

- Louise Taylor, Council Engagement Manager, Office of Local Government

11.3 Regional Development Australia Southern NSW & ACT – Regional Vision

- Olivia West, Chief Executive Officer Regional Development Australia Southern NSW & ACT

Apology received from Rowena Abbey, Chair Regional Development Australia Southern NSW & ACT



12. Reports to CRJO Board: For Decision

12.1 Benefit-sharing Guidelines for Large-Scale Renewable Energy Project Developer Contributions Agreements

RESOLUTION 03/25 - 02

Moved: **Cr Jasmin Jones**

Seconded: **Cr Brian Ingram**

That Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board:

1. **notes the NSW Joint Organisations Chairs Forum request for chairs to ask joint organisations' member councils to consider adopting consistent benefit sharing policies in individual councils in NSW regions,**
2. **notes the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's *Benefit Sharing Guideline – Guidance for large-scale renewable energy projects* published in November 2024**
3. **notes the potential for a new or increased revenue stream for member councils via benefit sharing agreements**
4. **gives in-principle support to adopting consistent benefit sharing policies in individual councils in Canberra Regional Joint Organisation regions and**
5. **refers to the general managers advisory group, consideration of an approach to adopting consistent benefit-sharing frameworks in individual councils across the Canberra Region Joint Organisation region and planning joint working group for consideration as to operationalising frameworks, *for renewable energy developments and associated projects.**

CARRIED

***** text in italics added to recommendation to form part of final resolution

12.2 Statement of Strategic Priorities

RESOLUTION 03/25 - 03

Moved: **Cr Jasmin Jones**

Seconded: **Cr Julia Ham**

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board:

1. **reviews the refreshed Canberra Region Joint Organisation Statement of Strategic Priorities 2024-2028 and agrees the following changes to be made to the document:**
    a. **Amend wording for Transport for NSW South East & Tablelands Regional Transport Plan advocacy.**
    b. **Alter to have economy priority first-listed to indicate high priority and amend to incorporate business development**
    c. **Retain affordable housing priority**
2. **adopts the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Statement of Strategic Priorities 2024-2028, subject to incorporation of agreed changes.**

CARRIED

12.3 NSW Parliament House Meeting

RESOLUTION 03/24 - 04

Moved: **Cr Kenrick Winchester**

Seconded: **Cr Jasmin Jones**

That Canberra Region Joint Organisation board:

1. **agrees NSW ministers, shadow ministers and members of parliament for invitation to attend the annual NSW Parliament House board meeting on 5 June 2025, and**
2. **considers and advises topics and questions to be included in invitation letters to ministers, shadow ministers and members of parliament to the Chief Executive by 21 March.**

CARRIED

12.4 Peak NSW Local Government Body Memberships

RESOLUTION 03/24 - 05

Moved: **Cr Kenrick Winchester**

Seconded: **Cr Brian Ingram**

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation writes to Local Government NSW and NSW Country Mayors Association seeking a zero-fee category of membership for joint organisations where 100% of joint organisation member councils are already Local Government NSW and Country Mayors Association financial members.

CARRIED

12.5 Regional Australia Institute Membership

RESOLUTION 03/24 - 06

Moved: **Cr Russell Fitzpatrick**

Seconded: **Cr Julia Ham**

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board approves joining the Regional Australia Institute's Regional Activators Alliance for the current year and in future years, subject to availability of budget.

CARRIED

13. Reports to CRJO Board: For Noting

13.1 Governance and Compliance

RESOLUTION 03/25 - 07

Moved: **Cr Kenrick Winchester**

Seconded: **Cr Jasmin Jones**

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board notes the governance and compliance report.

CARRIED

13.2 Post Election Governance Requirements

RESOLUTION 03/25 - 08

Moved: **Cr Brian Ingram**

Seconded: **Cr Julia Ham**

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board notes the post-election governance requirements.

CARRIED

13.3 Finance Status Quarterly Report

RESOLUTION 03/25 - 09

Moved: **Cr Jasmin Jones**

Seconded: **Cr Kenrick Winchester**

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board:

1. **notes the finance report, management report and financial statements for the year to date ending 31 January 2025**
2. **notes the operating result as at the end of 31 January 2025; and**
3. **notes the forecasted end of year operating result compared to the adopted budget.**

CARRIED

13.4 Regional Programs Status Report

RESOLUTION 03/25 – 10

Moved: **Cr Brian Ingram**

Seconded: **Cr Julia Ham**

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board notes the Regional Programs Status Report March 2025.

CARRIED

14. Closed Session

CRJO must resolve to move into closed session to deal with any items under s10 of the *Local Government Act 1993*. No items were raised for closed session.

15. Close

Chairperson, Cr Russell Fitzpatrick, closed the meeting at 12:30 pm.

16. Next Meeting

The next Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board Meeting is scheduled to be held Thursday, 5 June 2025, hosted at NSW Parliament House.

CANBERRA REGION
JOINT ORGANISATION
Regional leadership connecting our communities

BOARD MEETING

Thursday, 5 June 2025
9am – 5pm
Preston Stanley Room | NSW Parliament House

MINUTES

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Meeting Minutes
Thursday, 5 June 2025
9am – 5pm
Preston Stanley Room | NSW Parliament House

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Meeting Minutes
Thursday, 5 June 2025
9am – 5pm
Preston Stanley Room | NSW Parliament House

1. Open Meeting

Chairperson, Mayor Russell Fitzpatrick opened the meeting at 10:55am.

2. Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country

The following acknowledgement was made by the chairperson.

"I begin this meeting by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land and waters of Gadigal country where we meet today and pay my respects to Elders past and present."

3. Apologies

The chairperson called for any apologies. The board resolved to accept any apology and grant leave of absence.

The following apologies have been received prior to the meeting:

- Cr Brian Ingram, Mayor Hilltops Council
- Michael Thompson, Head of Aviation, Canberra Airport
- Rowena Abbey, Chair, Regional Development Australia Committee Southern NSW & ACT
- Dr David Clapham, Executive Branch Manager Regional, Infrastructure, Planning and Transport Branch, ACT Government

4. Disclosure of Interests

With reference to Chapter 14 *Local Government Act 1993*, and CRJO's Code of Conduct, members are required to declare any conflicts of interest in the matters under consideration by the board at this meeting.

Mayor Jasmin Jones, Yass Valley Council

- Standing non-pecuniary, insignificant declaration as Editor in Chief of *This Week In Canberra*, as Councils in the CRJO advertise from time to time with this tourism magazine.
- Standing non-pecuniary, insignificant declaration as my spouse is the Chief Operating Officer of *Capital Radio Network*, as councils in the CRJO from time to time advertise with this broadcast network.

The above declarations were noted by the chair on 6 December 2024 and there was not considered to be any management action needed.

5. Notice of Rescission

Pursuant to Clause 372 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, a voting representative may lodge a notice to rescind a motion for the CRJO's consideration. No notices of motion to rescind a motion were lodged.

6. Notice of Motions

Pursuant to Clause 10.2 of the Code of Meeting Practice, a voting representative may lodge a notice of motion for the CRJO's consideration. No notices of motion were lodged.

7. Urgent Business

Pursuant to Clause 9.3 of the Code of Meeting Practice, the chair will call for any additional business. Any additional business to be discussed requires a board resolution or a ruling by the chair that the matter is of great urgency.

The CRJO board may resolve to accept any late item, information or urgent business to be discussed and/or determined at this meeting. No additional business items were requested.

8. Chair's Minute

Pursuant to Clause 9.6 of the Code of Meeting Practice, the chair, without notice, may put to the meeting a minute on any matter or topic that is within the jurisdiction of the CRJO. No chair's minutes were put.

9. Confirmation of Minutes & Actions Arising from Previous Meeting

RESOLUTION 06/25 - 01

Moved: **Cr Chris Hanna**

Seconded: **Cr Kenrick Winchester**

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board:

1. **adopts the minutes of the previous meeting the board meeting held 7 March 2025 and**
2. **notes the status of actions arising from previous board meetings.**

CARRIED

10. Presentations

No presentations were scheduled for this meeting due to ministerial and member of parliament meetings taking place on the same day.

11. Briefings to CRJO Board

11.1 Local Government NSW Update

Cr Claire Pontin, Vice President and David Reynolds, Chief Executive Officer of Local Government NSW provided a report to the board.

11.2 Associate and Affiliate Members Updates

The following members provided an update to the board:

- Giles Butler, Director Regional Coordination – South, Delivery and Engagement Group, NSW Premier's Department
- Jordan Fallon, Government Relations & Policy Advisor, Canberra Airport

noting Dr David Clapham, Executive Branch Manager, Regional, Infrastructure, Planning and Transport Branch, ACT Government is an apology

11.3 Agencies and Stakeholders Updates

The following agencies provided an update to the board:

- Heidi Stratford, Director Illawarra and South East, NSW Reconstruction Authority
- Kalina Koloff, NSW Cross Border Commissioner, NSW Office of Cross Border Commissioner
- Louise Taylor, Council Engagement Manager, Office of Local Government
- Olivia West, Chief Executive Officer, Regional Development Australia Southern NSW & ACT

noting Rowena Abbey, Chair Regional Development Australia Southern NSW & ACT is an apology

RESOLUTION 06/25 - 02

Moved: **Cr Chris Hanna**

Seconded: **Cr Mathew Hatcher**

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board receives and notes the report from Local Government New South Wales and verbal updates provided by associate and affiliate members and agencies and observers.

CARRIED

12. Reports to CRJO Board: For Decision

12.1 Statement of Revenue Policy and Budget 2025/26

RESOLUTION 06/25 - 03

Moved: **Cr Chris Hanna**

Seconded: **Cr Kenrick Winchester**

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board adopts the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Statement of Revenue Policy and Budget 2025/26.

CARRIED

12.2 Policy Review 2025/26

RESOLUTION 06/25 - 04

Moved: **Cr Nina Dillon**

Seconded: **Cr Mathew Hatcher**

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board:

1. **notes the outcomes of the recent policy review and proposed updates as outlined in this report, and**
2. **adopts the revised policies.**

CARRIED

12.3 Organisation Structure Review

RESOLUTION 06/25 - 05

Moved: **Cr Chris Hanna**

Seconded: **Cr Kenrick Winchester**

That Canberra Region Joint Organisation board:

1. **notes the legislative requirement to review the organisational structure within twelve months of a local government election; and**
2. **endorses the current CRJO organisational structure as fit for purpose and effective in delivering the strategic objectives of the organisation.**

CARRIED

13. Reports to CRJO Board: For Noting

13.1 Governance and Compliance

RESOLUTION 06/25 - 06

Moved: **Cr Paul Culhane**

Seconded: **Cr Kenrick Winchester**

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board notes the governance and compliance report.

CARRIED

13.2 Post Election Governance Requirements

RESOLUTION 06/25 - 07

Moved: **Cr Kenrick Winchester**

Seconded: **Cr Mathew Hatcher**

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board notes the status of completion of post-election governance requirements.

CARRIED

13.3 Finance Status Quarterly Report

RESOLUTION 06/25 - 08

Moved: **Cr Nina Dillon**

Seconded: **Cr Chris Hanna**

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board:

1. **notes the finance report, management report and financial statements for the year to date ending 30 April 2025,**
2. **notes the operating result as at the end of 30 April 2025; and**
3. **notes the forecasted end of year operating result compared to the adopted budget.**

CARRIED

13.4 Regional Programs Status Report

RESOLUTION 06/25 - 09

Moved: **Cr Kenrick Winchester**

Seconded: **Cr Mathew Hatcher**

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board notes the Regional Programs Status Report June 2025.

CARRIED

13.5 Audit Risk and Improvement Committee Meeting Minutes

RESOLUTION 06/25 - 10

Moved: **Cr Julia Ham**

Seconded: **Cr Jasmin Jones**

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board notes the minutes of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee meetings held on 27 November 2024 and 31 March 2025.

CARRIED

13.6 NSW JO Chairs Forum Minutes

RESOLUTION 06/25 - 11

Moved: **Cr Julia Ham**

Seconded: **Cr Jasmin Jones**

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation notes the minutes of the NSW Joint Organisations Chairs Forum held on 7 May 2025.

CARRIED

14. Advocacy and Correspondence

14.1 Transgrid HumeLink and Community Benefit Sharing Payment Scheme

14.2 Draft Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan

14.3 Outgoing Correspondence: Invitation Letters to NSW Ministers and Local Members of Parliament for NSW Board Meeting 5 June 2025

14.4 Outgoing Correspondence: Congratulations Letters to Federal Members of Parliament

RESOLUTION 06/25 - 12

Moved: **Cr Paul Culhane**

Seconded: **Cr Jasmin Jones**

That Canberra Region Joint Organisation board notes the advocacy submissions and correspondence.

CARRIED

15. Closed Session

CRJO board resolved to move into closed session to deal with any items under s10 Local Government Act 1993.

RESOLUTION 06/25 - 13

Moved: **Cr Mathew Hatcher**

Seconded: **Cr Julia Ham**

That Canberra Region Joint Organisation considers the confidential report(s) listed below in a meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 10A(2) of the Local Government Act 1993.

CARRIED

The CRJO board moved into closed session at 12:15pm.

15.1 Executive Officer 2024 Performance Review Outcome & 2025 Performance Plan

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2)(a) personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors). All persons who are not members of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board (or their representatives) were asked to leave the meeting.

The CRJO board moved into open session at 12:24pm

RESOLUTION 06/25 - 14

Moved: **Cr Mathew Hatcher**

Seconded: **Cr Jesse Fitzpatrick**

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board:

1. **endorses the 2024 mid-year review and end-of-year review outcomes of the executive officer's performance, as recommended by the executive officer performance review panel, and**
2. **endorses the executive officer's 2025 performance plan.**

CARRIED

16. Close

The chair closed the meeting at 12:31pm.

17. Next Meeting

The next Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board meeting is scheduled to be held Thursday, 4 September 2025, hosted at Australian Parliament House. Alternative date for the meeting is 28 August 2024 and the meeting date is subject to confirmation.



NGA 2025
National General Assembly

BUSINESS PAPERS

National Convention Centre, Canberra 24 - 27 June 2025

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Ph: (02) 6122 9400

Email: alga@alga.asn.au

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National General Assembly Debating Rules – 2025

1 - Interpretation

1.1 "Assembly" means: The National General Assembly of Local Government as constituted by the delegates present in person or attending virtually by the approved digital technology.
1.2 "Member" means: any local government council which is a financial member of, and recognised by, a state or territory local government association within the Commonwealth of Australia.
1.3 "Delegate" means: any person who has paid the registration fee, and is a representative of a Member.
1.4 "Voting Delegate" means: any person nominated as the delegate to speak on the behalf of a Member at the Assembly - each Member to be entitled to appoint one voting delegate only for each debate session.
1.5 "President" means: The current President of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) who will act as President of the Assembly, or in their absence the Vice Presidents of the Association or a person appointed by the President to preside over the Assembly.
1.6 "Debate on Motions" means: Plenary or concurrent debating sessions of the Assembly which are held in accordance with these rules.
1.7 "Meeting" means: Plenary or concurrent debating sessions, forums and symposia of the Assembly which are held in accordance with these rules.

2 - President to Preside

2.1 The President shall preside over the Assembly.
2.2 A delegate wishing to speak shall direct comments to the President.
2.3 A voting delegate moving or seconding a motion or amendment or delegate taking part in a discussion thereon shall address the President.

3 - Resolutions

3.1 Motions will become Resolutions when passed by a majority of voting delegates at the Assembly.
3.2 Resolutions shall be permanently recorded and forwarded to ALGA for consideration and action as deemed to be appropriate.
3.3 Resolutions will be recorded and will be considered by the ALGA Board and used by the President for any purpose in the interest of local government. NGA resolutions are not binding on ALGA.

4 - Priority of Speakers

If two or more delegates wish to speak at the same time the President shall decide who is entitled to priority.

5 - President to be Heard

Whenever the President signifies a desire to speak during the Assembly, any delegate speaking or offering to speak is to be silent so that the President may be heard without interruption.

6 - President may call to order

The President shall preserve order and may call any delegate to order when necessary.

7 - Ruling by President

The President shall decide all questions of order or practice and their decision shall be final and be accepted by the Assembly without argument or comment unless in any particular case the Assembly resolved that a different ruling shall be substituted for the ruling given by the President. Discussion shall be permitted on any motion of dissent from the President's ruling.

8 - Point of Order

A delegate who is addressing the President shall not be interrupted except on a point of order, in which event the delegate shall wait until the delegate raising the point of order has been heard and the point of order has been determined after which the delegate so interrupted may, if permitted, continue.

9 - Limitation of Debate

9.1 Except for a mover of a motion who may speak for two (2) minutes, a delegate shall not speak upon any motion or amendment or in reply for a period longer than one-and-a-half (1.5) minutes without the consent of the President.
9.2 No delegate shall speak more than once on any motion except for the mover who may exercise a right to speak in closing the debate.
9.3 Any delegate of the Assembly who has not already spoken on the motion or amendment under discussion may formally propose: 'That the question be now put'.
9.4 The President shall not accept the motion 'That the question be now put' until at least one delegate has spoken in favour and one delegate has spoken against the motion or amendment.
9.5 If formally seconded, the proposal shall be put without further discussion and, if carried by a simple majority of the voting delegates of the Assembly present, the mover of the question shall have the Right of Reply, after which the motion must be put to the vote.
9.6 The mover of a motion shall be entitled to a Right of Reply. At the conclusion of the reply, the debate shall be deemed to have closed, and the President shall put the question to the vote.
9.7 No delegate of the Assembly, other than the mover of a motion when exercising a Right of Reply, may speak more than once to each motion, amendment, or substantive motion unless with the permission of the Assembly and/or the President. A delegate may be invited to speak by the President to explain a matter of a personal nature, or to explain in regard to some material part of their speech which has been misquoted or misunderstood but shall not introduce any new matter or interrupt any delegate in possession of the floor.

10 - Resolutions

Except as otherwise provided in these Rules:
10.1 only voting delegates may move or second a motion or an amendment. (Refer 11: Moving an Amendment)
10.2 motions concerning the affairs of the Assembly shall be passed by a simple majority of those voting delegates present.
10.3 motions on which there is an equal division of votes will be declared lost.

11 - Moving an amendment

11.1 After a motion has been moved and seconded, any voting delegate of the Assembly representing a member may move an amendment. If such amendment is seconded, it shall become the subject of discussion. Councils are asked to advise the ALGA Secretariat of any proposed amendments at the earliest opportunity.

11.2 Limitations
Where the Assembly is conducted under a Covid Safety Plan, or other provisions or approved Plans required by the ACT Government that restrict voting delegate movement and access to microphones to be heard, members are required to submit amendments to motions in writing and in advance to the ALGA Secretariat at least 72 hours prior to the debate on the motion.

11.3 An amendment must be relevant to the motion, and so framed that it forms a sensible alternative proposal. It must not be a direct negation of the original motion.

11.4 No Right of Reply to Amendment
The mover of an amendment shall not have the Right of Reply to the debate on such amendment.

11.5 Substantive Motion
Should the amendment be carried, it then becomes a substantive motion upon which further amendments may be moved, always providing that there shall not be, at one time, more than one amendment before the Assembly.

11.6 Foreshadowed Amendment
Any delegate during their speech on an amendment shall have the right to foreshadow a further amendment but such foreshadowed amendment shall not formally come before the Assembly until the motion or amendment before the President has been dealt with. The President may request the substance of the foreshadowed amendment.

12 - Debate

Where there is no debate on a motion that has been moved and seconded the President may put the motion to the Assembly.

13 - Permissible motions during debate

When a motion is under debate, no further motion shall be moved except the following:

- that the motion be amended
- that the speaker no longer be heard
- that the question now be put
- that the Debate on Motions proceed with the next business.

14 - Method of taking votes

14.1 The President shall, in taking a vote on any motion or amendment, put the question first in the affirmative, and then in the negative. Voting will be by use of electronic keypads or by the approved technology. In the event of a technical failure of the electronic keypads manual voting cards will be issued to the holders of electronic keypads and a vote will be determined on a show of voting cards.

14.2 At the conclusion of a vote the President must declare the question resolved in the affirmative or the negative.

15 - Division

In the event of the use of voting cards, upon a vote being taken, a voting delegate may call for a division.

16 - Withdrawal of a motion

A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the mover, with the consent of the Assembly, which shall be determined without debate. No delegate shall speak on a motion after it has been withdrawn.

17 - Quorum

17.1 Determination of a Quorum - A quorum for debate on motion sessions at the 2025 National General Assembly will be set at half the number of voting delegates plus one. The quorum (number) will be declared by the President at the commencement of the debate on motions. This quorum will be determined by the ALGA Secretariat based on the number of councils registered by midnight Saturday immediately prior to the commencement of the NGA. It shall be equal to the number of eligible votes divided by 2 plus 1. For example, if there are X councils registered by midnight Saturday night immediately prior to the commencement of the NGA, the quorum will be set at x/2 plus one. A majority of the quorum will be required to pass a resolution.

17.2 A Quorum Present at Commencement - At the commencement of each debate on motions session the President will determine if the quorum is present. At the commencement of each debating session, the President will invite all voting delegates to record a 'test' vote. A total number of 'test' votes will be displayed by the system and the President will determine whether a quorum is present for that session. If the number of 'test' votes is equal to or more than x/2 plus one, a quorum will be declared, and voting will proceed.

17.3 Voting to Proceed - If a quorum is not present, a debate on motions will proceed at the discretion of the President. Outcomes of debate on motions when a quorum is not present will be considered as 'indicative only of the NGA' rather than a resolution of the NGA when the ALGA Board determine the action to be taken on Resolutions.

18 - President's right to vote

For the purposes of these Rules the President, subject to having been nominated as a voting delegate by a Member, shall have one deliberative vote only.

19 - Rescission of Resolution

The Assembly, by two thirds majority, may rescind or alter an adopted resolution.

20 - Special urgent business

At any time during Debate on Motions a voting delegate may, with the approval of a two-thirds majority of voting delegates present, introduce a motion relating to special urgent business which calls for an expression of opinion from the Assembly. In presenting an item of special urgent business a voting delegate shall have sufficient copies of the motion in writing for distribution to all voting delegates present at the Debate on Motions and give prior notice to the President of such intention.

21 - Suspension or amendment of rules

21.1 In case of urgent necessity any of the Rules may be suspended on a motion duly moved and seconded, but that motion shall not be declared carried unless a two-thirds majority of the delegates of the Assembly voting on the motion have voted in favour.

21.2 Any voting delegate moving the suspension of a Rule shall state the object of the motion, but discussion shall not otherwise take place thereon.

22 - Motions

Strategic Motions

For the purpose of efficient and effective debate, motions that have been submitted for debate by councils that are similar in subject matter have been compiled into composite motions. The strategic motions have either been drafted by ALGA or are based on a motion submitted by a council which best summarises the subject matter.

Debate will focus on the strategic motions numbered X. Motions numbered X.1, X.2 and so forth (that is, 1.1, 1.2 etc.) are associated motions and will be debated by exception only.

If the motion is carried, associated motions are considered to be redundant unless they have been highlighted in advance of the debate and debated by exception.

23 - Business Paper Notes

At the discretion of ALGA, the Business Papers shall be organized to expedite debate on motions. In some instance motions that are generally consistent with ALGA current policy may be grouped in a separate section of the business papers and may be voted upon en bloc to save time to focus debate on motions that re-affirm core ALGA policy or deal with new matters.

Voting Procedures

Electronic Keypads will be issued from a separate desk at the registration stand at the assembly at the following times:

Wednesday 25 June 8:00 am – 5:00 pm

Thursday 26 June 8:00 am – 6:00 pm

For debate on motions in debating sessions, councils must select one voting delegate, as only one keypad will be used per council. To facilitate issuing of keypads, councils should decide in advance who their voting delegate will be and appoint a representative to collect the keypad on behalf of the council.

Electronic keypads that are lost will incur a $100 charge.

Please note that only councils that are financial member of their relevant state or territory association are entitled to nominate voting delegates.

Virtual delegates will be forwarded a separate package of information which will include voting instructions prior to the event.

NOTES

Please note:

- All notices of motions submitted by councils have been considered and appear in these papers with the exception of motions that did not meet the criteria.
- To assist the Assembly deal with more than 190 motions in the time available, these Papers have been organised along the following lines:
    - Section A: includes motions that have been review by the ALGA Board's NGA Sub-committee and deemed to be consistent with current national policy and/or resolved by recent NGAs and are recommended to be moved en-bloc without further debate.
    - Section B: please refer to rule 22 of the National General Assembly Debating Rules – 2025 contained in these papers.
- Debate on motions is intended to focus on motions assigned with a whole number (strategic motions).
- Motions that appear with a decimal point are deemed to be an associated motion, i.e. the same or similar matters are substantially dealt with in the headline strategic motion.
- Associated motions will only be debated by exception.
- Once a strategic motion is passed, associated motions are considered to be consistent and therefore don't require separate debate.

Thank you for your cooperation.

2025 Motions

SECTION A
MOTIONS CONSISTENT WITH EXISTING ALGA POLICY

Motion number 1 Whitsunday Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to include the President of the Australian Local Government Association into the National Cabinet to reinstate the Local Government's representation into national decision making that existed in the Council of Australian Governments (COAG).

Motion number 2 South Burnett Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to increase the Financial Assistant Grant to local government to support sustainability.

Motion number 2.1 Snowy Valleys Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide an increase of Financial Assistance Grants (FA Grants) for all Local Government Areas across Australia.

Motion number 3 Narrabri Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to expedite the delivery of the nation-building Inland Rail project.

Motion number 4 Bega Valley Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to release the Government response to the Local Government sustainability inquiry and implement funding increases to better support the Local Government sector.

Motion number 4.1 Penrith City Council NSW

The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to bring the Federal Government Review into Financial Sustainability to its conclusion at its earliest convenience and set a timeline for the publication of the findings and recommendations of the report.

The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

- Bring the Federal Government Review into Financial Sustainability to its conclusion at its earliest convenience and set a timeline for the publication of the findings and recommendations of the report, and the Government's response to the recommendations; and
- Consider incorporating the recommendations from the NSW Government's review into the Ability of local governments to fund infrastructure and services, as they relate to the Federal Government, in the finalisation of the Federal Government's report.

Motion number 5 Newcastle City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to lead collaboration with state and local governments to review, simplify, and streamline the delivery and governance of grant funding to local government, ensuring a more efficient, equitable, and sustainable funding model. To achieve this, the Australian Government should:

1. Consolidate disparate funding programs delivered across multiple Commonwealth and State Government agencies into a "block funding" model, ensuring grant funding is delivered in a way that aligns with local government planning cycles. The current

fragmented system leads to inefficiencies, duplication, and short-term funding constraints that hinder long-term community planning and development.

2. Ensure equitable access to grant funding by identifying broader funding mechanisms beyond requiring direct co-contributions from councils. Many local governments, particularly in rural and regional areas, lack the financial and resource capacity to provide matching funds. Yet, they are among those most dependent on grants for critical infrastructure and service delivery. Alternative models, such as needs-based assessments or in-kind contributions, must be considered to ensure all councils have fair access to funding opportunities.
3. Reduce the administrative burden on local governments by harmonising governance frameworks, systems, and documentation requirements across funding programs and agencies. The complexity and inconsistency of grant processes create inefficiencies, divert resources away from service delivery, and disadvantage councils with limited administrative capacity. Standardising processes will improve transparency, accountability, and efficiency.
4. Strengthen intergovernmental collaboration to ensure that funding programs are better aligned with local and regional priorities. A more coordinated approach between the Australian Government, state governments, and local councils will enhance the strategic impact of grants, avoid duplication, and maximise the effectiveness of public investment.
5. Support long-term local economic development and resilience by ensuring funding models empower local governments to undertake sustainable, high-impact projects. A more predictable and accessible funding system will enable councils to invest in initiatives that foster economic growth, job creation, infrastructure development, and community well-being.

Motion number 5.1 Strathfield Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to streamline grant application and reporting processes to reduce administrative burden and ensure timely access to funding for local councils.

Motion number 5.2 Brisbane City Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to increase grant funding to local government by providing multi year allocative grant programs for delivery of infrastructure, major projects and transport. Programs should share project risks associated with cost escalation and cap council funding contributions. Programs should also be structured to provide local governments with sufficient time to respond and to align co-funding commitments with budgetary approval processes.

Motion number 5.3 Mitchell Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to implement reforms which ensure the long-term financial sustainability of local government including by providing long term funding security.

Motion number 6 Wyndham City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to renew the National Conversation on Local Government Financial Sustainability.

Motion number 7 Knox City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to explore and, where feasible, implement grant programs that address infrastructure needs, prioritising the renewal, upgrade, and maintenance of existing essential infrastructure.

Motion number 8 District Council of Grant SA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

- Increase targeted investment in operational aspects of regional airports to support ongoing usage of essential infrastructure and long-term viability.
- Introduce strategies which result in fairer airline pricing policies, encourage competition and reduce airfare disparities.
- Establish frameworks that safeguard regional flights, frequencies and reliability.
- Expand regional aviation support programs ensuring that communities reliant on air travel are not left behind.

Motion number 8.1 Narrabri Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide additional support to local government to retain local airline services, with a specific focus on smaller rural/regional airlines.

Motion number 8.2 District Council of Grant SA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to support the reinstatement of grant funding that provides full funding (i.e. does not require matching co-funding) for any security screening or technology upgrades that the Department of Home Affairs requires to be implemented at council-run regional and remote airports.

Motion number 8.3 City of Mount Gambier SA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

- Increase targeted investment in operational aspects of regional airports to support ongoing usage of essential infrastructure and long-term viability.
- Introduce strategies which result in fairer airline pricing policies, encourage competition and reduce airfare disparities.
- Establish frameworks that safeguard regional flights, frequencies and reliability.
- Expand regional aviation support programs ensuring that communities reliant on air travel are not left behind.

Motion number 9 South Burnett Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to continue the local roads and community infrastructure program at a minimum investment of previous programs

Motion number 9.1 East Gippsland Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to restore the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program to ensure local government can continue to provide infrastructure that meets a range of community resilience and economic needs.

Motion number 9.2 Berrigan Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish a Sustainable Roads and Community Infrastructure Fund, providing long term, indexed funding to address local road maintenance and infrastructure gaps. The fund should include specific allocations for capacity building programs to enhance councils' infrastructure management and integrate long term financial planning. The Assembly further urges the Australian Government to develop a Local Infrastructure Partnership to align council projects with national priorities such as decarbonisation, disaster resilience and regional development.

Motion number 9.3 North Burnett Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to continue the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program beyond Phase 4 as a recurrent funding program for local governments.

Motion number 9.4 City of Darwin NT

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to reinstate the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program, based on a national funding formula, to provide ongoing financial assistance for the delivery of community infrastructure that reduces the burden on resource limited local governments to prepare competitive grant applications

Motion number 9.5 Yarra City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to increase its investment in maintaining, upgrading and creating new community infrastructure, to ensure that communities in all municipalities have access to community infrastructure that is fit for purpose and has adequate capacity to meet the needs of the community now and into the future.

Motion number 9.6 Nillumbik Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish a joint initiative with all councils to develop a dedicated investment mechanism for refurbishing and developing community infrastructure, focussing on public libraries and aquatic centres.

Motion number 10 Lithgow City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to make improvements to better support local government in the context of an operating environment characterised by climate change and an increase in natural disasters.

Motion number 11 Mitchell Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide sufficient funding to enable preventative infrastructure works to support increased resilience to natural disasters.

Motion number 11.1 Douglas Shire Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to invest in increased and sustained infrastructure betterment funding to local government.

Motion number 11.2 East Gippsland Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to increase funding through the Disaster Ready Fund or other funding programs to allow infrastructure to be upgraded to meet changing climate and weather patterns and implement the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework National Action 13 and 24 in the Second National Action Plan.

Motion number 11.3 Loddon Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish a regional infrastructure resilience fund that will provide local councils with dedicated funding to identify and invest in resilient local infrastructure to ensure communities are better protected and connected even in the face of increasingly severe and frequent weather events.

Motion number 11.4 Wollongong City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish more efficient policy, procedures and funding to improve Local Government response and preparation for natural disaster.

Motion number 11.5 South Burnett Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to introduce infrastructure funding programs that specifically support regional, rural, and remote councils to upgrade water, wastewater, and waste infrastructure.

Motion number 12 Strathfield Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish a dedicated Local Government Resilience Fund to support councils in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from natural disasters.

Motion number 13 Maranoa Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly:

1. Thanks the Australian Government for commissioning the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding (Colvin Review) and acknowledges the importance of its focus on proactive disaster risk reduction and resilience investment, including reform of Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA);
2. Calls on the Australian Government to commit to co-designing reform initiatives with State and Local Governments to ensure they are practical, regionally responsive, and adequately resourced; and
3. Encourages the Australian Government to ensure that implementation of the review's recommendations does not result in additional administrative burden or cost-shifting to local governments, particularly in regional and remote areas with limited resourcing.

Motion number 13.1 City of Greater Dandenong VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to implement the recommendations pertaining to resourcing and capacity building of local governments to prepare for and respond to disaster recovery as detailed in the Final Report of the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding (The Colvin Review).

Motion number 13.2 Nillumbik Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to undertake a targeted approach to enhance their funding for improved mobile and internet connectivity in blackspot areas, particularly those that are impacted by natural disasters.

Motion number 14 City of Tea Tree Gully SA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Include a seat at the table for representation from ALGA as a Member of the Housing and Homelessness Ministerial Council,
2. Reduce the current funding shortfall of $5.7 billion enabling infrastructure required to bridge the gap between current constructions and Australia's housing targets,
3. Work with State and Local Government to ensure that the funding for housing is appropriately distributed among Local Government areas to address the needs for this infrastructure in our Local communities

Motion number 15 Singleton Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to substantially increase direct Australian Government investment to councils for the construction of local enabling transport and community infrastructure and utilities critical to supporting national housing targets by unlocking and accelerating the delivery of housing on existing development-ready land.

Motion number 15.1 Maitland City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to substantially increase direct Australian Government investment to councils for the construction of local enabling transport and community infrastructure and utilities critical to supporting national housing targets by unlocking and accelerating the delivery of housing on existing development-ready land.

Motion number 15.2 Dungog Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to substantially increase direct Australian Government investment to councils for the construction of local enabling transport and community infrastructure and utilities critical to supporting national housing targets by unlocking and accelerating the delivery of housing on existing development-ready land.

Motion number 15.3 Mid Coast Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to substantially increase direct Australian Government investment to councils for the construction of local enabling transport and community infrastructure and utilities critical to supporting national housing targets by unlocking and accelerating the delivery of housing on existing development-ready land.

Motion number 15.4 Cessnock City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to substantially increase direct Australian Government investment to councils for the construction of local enabling transport and community infrastructure and utilities critical to supporting national

housing targets by unlocking and accelerating the delivery of housing on existing development-ready land.

Motion number 15.5 Muswellbrook Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to substantially increase direct Australian Government investment to councils for the construction of local enabling transport and community infrastructure and utilities critical to supporting national housing targets by unlocking and accelerating the delivery of housing on existing development-ready land.

Motion number 15.6 Lake Macquarie City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to substantially increase direct Australian Government investment to councils for the construction of local enabling transport and community infrastructure and utilities critical to supporting national housing targets by unlocking and accelerating the delivery of housing on existing development-ready land.

Motion number 15.7 Port Macquarie-Hastings Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to ensure that any further Federal grant funding programs for enabling infrastructure that supports housing delivery apportions at least $500 million each year for which only Local Governments are eligible.

Motion number 15.8 Port Stephens Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish a national "Local Government Enabling Housing Infrastructure Fund" to deliver funds directly to councils to build the local enabling transport and community infrastructure needed to unlock housing on existing development ready land and directly support the national housing targets.

Motion number 15.9 Newcastle City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to substantially increase direct Australian Government investment to councils for the construction of local enabling transport and community infrastructure and utilities critical to supporting national housing targets by unlocking and accelerating the delivery of housing on existing development-ready land.

Motion number 15.10 Upper Hunter Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to substantially increase direct Australian Government investment to councils for the construction of local enabling transport and community infrastructure and utilities critical to supporting national housing targets by unlocking and accelerating the delivery of housing on existing development-ready land.

Motion number 16 Lake Macquarie City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish a local infrastructure fund for local councils to unlock housing supply and supplement affordability that is targeted to regional communities with demonstrated needs.

Motion number 16.1 Loddon Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide multi-year, regional housing development infrastructure funding for investment into essential trunk infrastructure such as sewerage, water, drainage, electricity, roads and communications, to facilitate residential housing development in regional and rural towns where the market is not delivering the needed housing opportunities.

Motion number 17 Brisbane City Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide more financial support to help councils build the infrastructure needed to enable new housing.

Motion number 18 Logan City Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide for full involvement of local government representatives as parties in decision making processes impacting on homelessness policy and funding including the Housing and Homelessness Ministerial Council and National Cabinet.

Motion number 18.1 Logan City Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to recognise local government as a critical partner and stakeholder when responding to homelessness and immediately resource local governments who are currently expending significant additional operational resources to respond to the homelessness crisis in their jurisdictions.

Motion number 18.2 Mount Alexander Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to update the Terms of Reference for the Housing and Homelessness Ministerial Council to include a Local Government Representative from each State and Territory as recommended by Equity Economics: Unlocking Local Government's Contribution to the Housing Crisis' report.

Motion number 19 Strathfield Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to advocate for targeted federal investment in local government workforce development programs, including apprenticeships, traineeships, and upskilling initiatives.

Motion number 20 Strathfield Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to commit to long-term, sustainable funding for local government community services, including seniors, disability and youth programs.

Motion number 21 Shire of Laverton WA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to review the effectiveness of the 4G network following the withdrawal of the 3G network and where there was coverage under 3G, there is no coverage under the 4G or 5G and the impacts on rural and remote communities.

Motion number 22 Strathfield Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish a Cybersecurity Resilience Fund to assist councils in strengthening digital security infrastructure and protecting community data.

Motion number 23 Moree Plains Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government take urgent and proactive action to provide an equitable level of services in communication and connectivity across all of Australia.

Motion number 23.1 Narrabri Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to introduce measures to improve telecommunications reliability and delivery standards, particularly in non-metropolitan areas by:

1. Requiring co-contributions by all major telecommunications service providers towards the construction and embellishment of new telecommunications infrastructure, including new towers and mobile base stations, to improve coverage;
2. Introducing new service standards in respect of acceptable telecommunications outage timeframes and associated penalties if providers are unable to comply with such standards;
3. Requiring telecommunications service providers to progressively install business continuity support infrastructure, including, but not limited to, generators and batteries at critical telecommunications infrastructure locations; and
4. Investing in additional research and development surrounding the reliability of telecommunications software and appliances (including the testing of mobile phones) within the Australian rural and regional context.

Motion number 23.2 Gwydir Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to urgently undertake a comprehensive review of the adequacy of the existing service charter obligations for the universal delivery of acceptable mobile and internet services to rural and remote communities

Motion number 23.3 East Gippsland Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to implement all recommendations in the Australian Government's Regional Telecommunications Independent Review Committee report to improve connectivity for regional, rural and remote communities.

Motion number 23.4 Western Downs Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to treat digital connectivity as critical infrastructure, not an afterthought. Without urgent action, the nation risks leaving the very people who drive our economy behind.

Motion number 23.5 Cabonne Council NSW

That this National General Assembly call on Australian and State and Territory Governments to deliver on their commitments to roll out a reliable digital and telecommunications network to regional & rural areas.

Motion number 23.6 Burdekin Shire Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to implement comprehensive reforms to improve telecommunications infrastructure and services nationwide, addressing mobile black spots in urban, regional, and rural areas. These reforms should include:

- Mandating timely responses to mobile black spot issues, with clearly defined timeframes for resolution and mandatory reporting on progress;
- Revising the Mobile Black Spot Program funding process to require formal input from
- local governments, ensuring infrastructure investments align with community needs and maximise social and economic benefits;
- Expanding federal funding for telecommunications infrastructure in regional and remote areas, prioritising projects that address critical service gaps affecting residents, businesses, and emergency services; and
- Ensuring that all publicly funded telecommunications infrastructure is maintained and upgraded to support ongoing service quality and coverage.

Motion number 24 Fraser Coast Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to increase funding to local governments for coastal protection and climate resilience in alignment with national climate adaptation strategies and emission reduction targets.

Motion number 24.1 Bass Coast Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish a National Coastal Adaptation Strategy and associated funding to develop and implement a national program to coordinate coastal adaptation planning, hazard data collection and analysis and disaster prevention projects, to mitigate the increasing risks associated with projected sea level rise and more frequent and severe extreme weather events. It is proposed the National Coastal Adaptation Strategy focusses on developing a collaborative approach to improving coastal resilience through the Australian Government, working in partnership with the States and Territories and local governments. This Strategy will be the mechanism by which an intergovernmental agreement defining the roles and responsibilities (including funding) of each tier of government in relation to coastal resilience and risk reduction, is achieved.

Motion number 24.2 Randwick City Council NSW

This National General Assembly of Local Government calls on the Australian Government to immediately establish a substantial dedicated Coastal Adaptation Fund to enable coastal councils to implement critical adaptation measures against accelerating sea level rise, severe coastal erosion and the documented increase in extreme weather events.

Motion number 24.3 City of Stirling WA

The National General Assembly calls for the Australian Government to:

1. Develop a National Coastal Hazards Adaptation Strategy which establishes a national approach to coastal hazard management and sets an agenda for integrated and coordinated national action to address and manage coastal hazards.
2. Develop a National funding program to support local and regional coastal hazard risk management including the areas of essential data, risk assessment, planning, adaptation actions, monitoring, education and communication.

Motion number 25 Break O'Day Council TAS

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish a dedicated Local Government Climate Action Fund to support councils in delivering place-based renewable energy initiatives and climate adaptation programs, including:

1. Financial incentives and grants for local councils to invest in community renewable energy projects, such as solar farms, battery storage, and microgrid solutions to enhance energy security and reduce reliance upon fossil fuels.
2. Supporting the development and implementation of local circular economy initiatives, including Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) programs, aimed at reducing to reduce landfill waste and lower emissions.
3. Funding energy efficiency retrofits for council-operated owned buildings, public infrastructure, low-income housing and local industries to reduce energy consumption and costs.
4. Facilitating sustainable transport initiatives, such as the expansion of electric vehicle charging networks and active transport infrastructure, to lower transport emissions. Initiatives to transition to sustainable transport and industry, such as electric vehicle charging networks, active transport infrastructure and opportunities for local economies to lower emissions and adapt to their climate futures.
5. Providing resources for climate risk assessments and adaptation planning to improve community resilience to extreme weather events. Providing resources for climate change adaptation, such as risk assessment and planning and risk reduction programs and infrastructure, to improve community and economic resilience to the impacts of climate change such as extreme weather events, sea level rise and drought.

Motion number 26 City of Mitcham SA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish a National Solar Panel and Battery Recycling System.

Motion number 27 Port Macquarie-Hastings Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to support Local Governments in addressing the need for Climate Adaptation initiatives, through formula-based funding that is provided to all Councils.

Motion number 27.1 Northern Midlands Council TAS

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide increased funding to, and improve ease of access to such funding for, local councils to address the effects of climate change and enhance asset replacement strategies.

Motion number 27.2 Strathfield Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish a dedicated Climate Adaptation Fund for councils to implement local climate resilience projects and infrastructure upgrades.

Motion number 28 Nillumbik Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to allocate funding for adaptation measures at the local government level to allow the proactive asset betterment to build back better after disaster events.

Motion number 29 Nillumbik Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to enhance cooperation between national and local governments, and allocate sufficient funding to help enable Australia's greenhouse gas emissions to be rapidly reduced.

Motion number 30 Strathfield Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide targeted funding and policy support to enable councils to transition to renewable energy sources in council operations and community services.

Motion number 30.1 Northern Midlands Council TAS

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide increased financial support to local councils through grant programs, low or no-interest loans, and other such mechanisms for the purpose of expediting the progression and completion of projects related to renewables and energy-efficient initiatives.

Motion number 31 Snowy Valleys Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to mandate that all energy projects of State and National significance (such as hydro power, transmission lines, batteries and solar/wind farms) leave a lasting legacy fund to the communities that are impacted by such developments.

Motion number 31.1 Blayney Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide regional councils that host mining and renewable energy projects with a proportion of company taxation payments as compensation to offset the cost and impact to community infrastructure from such projects.

Motion number 31.2 Loddon Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to ensure that communities hosting new energy generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure required for Australia's energy transition, directly benefit from new investment to support job growth and in infrastructure upgrades ensuring that the regional communities directly impacted by it are not left behind in the race to transition our energy grid.

Motion number 32 Fraser Coast Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to ban the importation and use of products containing PFAS-group chemicals by the end of 2026, rather than requiring local government and water service providers to upgrade treatment technology to protect community health and the environment from these chemicals. The ban should include products not covered by the Industrial Chemicals Environmental Management Standard (cosmetics, personal care products, food packaging, clothing).

Motion number 32.1 Lake Macquarie City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Urgently provide adequate funding for the increased establishment of collection points, logistics and processing solutions to manage the safe disposal of battery-powered products, including to those local government councils who voluntarily wish to undertake this.
2. In partnership with relevant stakeholders, fast-track the implementation and rollout of a mandatory national product stewardship scheme for lithium-ion battery powered devices that also supports the expansion of a regulated recycling industry for household batteries.

Motion number 33 Nillumbik Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to increase funding available to enable the recovery of all Threatened Species and Ecological Communities, and to support on-ground actions to track and inform priorities to support nationwide biodiversity.

Motion number 34 Strathfield Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to recognise and support local governments as key partners in biodiversity conservation efforts through dedicated funding and legislative frameworks.

Motion number 35 Northern Beaches Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government for legislative and policy reform to:

1. Develop a program to phase out the use of 'difficult to recycle' plastics such as soft plastics and polystyrene.
2. Develop and implement a national product stewardship scheme for plastics, where organisations that make and sell plastics also take responsibility for managing adverse impacts.
3. Support the plastic recycling sector by:
    a. providing an appropriate level of funding to help build infrastructure to recover valuable materials from recyclable plastics.
    b. developing sustainable markets for recovered plastics.

Motion number 35.1 City of Mitcham SA

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to ban polystyrene foam, as all the alternatives that we need to replace it are readily available in environmentally friendly, fully recyclable options, which are not derived from fossil fuels.

Motion number 35.2 Manningham City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to advocate for a national strategy addressing the growing issue of soft plastics waste, urging manufacturers of soft plastics to take greater responsibility for the end-of-life management of their products. Furthermore, this Assembly calls for increased industry collaboration to strengthen relationships with manufacturers and relevant industry bodies to develop long-term, viable processing solutions. There is a need for a disposal and processing solution that will not compromise the quality of other recyclable materials collected in residential kerbside services.

Motion number 35.3 Snowy Valleys Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to develop legislation to have all supermarkets and fresh produce sellers required to provide 100% compostable bags when selling fruit and/or vegetables.

Motion number 36 Maroondah City Council VIC

That this National General Assembly calls upon the Federal Government to:

- Lead the development of a nationally consistent Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) - in collaboration with all states and territories - to harmonise regulations, refund values, and operations across Australia, creating a uniform approach to container recycling; and
- Ensure that the National CDS is to include all glass beverage containers such as wine and spirit bottles, whilst exploring the expansion of the scheme to include glass jars used for food - thereby ensuring these containers are covered by deposit/refund incentives for recycling.

Motion number 36.1 Shire of Campaspe VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to support all states and territories to provide container deposit schemes and include glass containers for wine and spirits as refundable within the scheme.

Motion number 36.2 Knox City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to work with all States and Territories to implement a national framework for waste and recycling management, creating a harmonised approach, including but not limited to a nationally consistent Container Deposit Scheme (CDS).

Motion number 37 Gladstone Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to address the risks of battery disposal by:

1. Implementing appropriate battery product stewardship legislation, that includes extended producer responsibilities.
2. Moving to a mandatory national product stewardship scheme, to ensure all producers and importers of loose and embedded batteries are captured and contribute to the end-of-life risk mitigation and disposal and recovery costs.
3. Support local government efforts through funding, to manage and mitigate battery related risks to waste services and infrastructure.

Motion number 38 Moree Plains Shire Council NSW

That the Federal Government recognises the strategic national importance of increased investment in regional infrastructure to support local industry, jobs and regional economic and population growth, funding it accordingly.

Motion number 39 Isaac Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to expand the Net Zero Economy Authority (NZEA)'s remit to ensure all emissions intensive regions affected by the

transition to net zero are eligible for support by way of broader 'emissions-intensive project closure plans' and/or community transition plans.

SECTION B

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Motion number 40 Frankston City Council VIC

The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to work with States and Territories, in consultation with Local Government, to prioritise the decentralisation of government jobs and agencies beyond major cities.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Relocating government departments or establishing co-locations will provide access to public sector employment for those outside major cities, reducing barriers to education and job opportunities. This will help retain and grow diverse, skilled workforces within local communities.

Economic analysis supports this approach. A Greater South East Melbourne report, Unlocking the Potential: Promoting Investment in Greater South East Melbourne, found that modest decentralisation by government could deliver $27 billion in net benefits over 30 years, including:

- $22.44 billion in productivity gains
- $3.94 billion in transport cost savings
- $1.015 billion in place and amenity benefits

Decentralisation also strengthens 20-minute neighbourhoods, allowing people to live and work locally, enhancing community liveability, and driving economic growth across the country.

KEY ARGUMENTS

With more than seven million Australians living outside major cities, there is a growing demand for employment opportunities closer to home.

Decentralisation of government jobs and services supports would support this by strengthening communities, fostering stronger family connections, and enhancing social cohesion while also improving health outcomes.

Reduced commute times contribute to work-life balance and there is a link to increased economic activity, business growth, and private sector investment in key suburban and regional areas.

Government strategies already recognise the need for this shift. In Victoria, the State Government's focus on key activity centres aims to accommodate a 72% increase in housing across outer Melbourne LGAs, making it essential to expand employment opportunities alongside population growth.

The proven benefits of decentralisation are clear-Frankston City's experience with the relocation of 600 South East Water employees in 2015 resulted in an $850 million annual economic boost, with many employees now living locally or commuting shorter distances, reducing congestion and improving quality of life.

Additionally, further decentralisation could alleviate growing transport pressures, particularly for skilled professionals from the Mornington Peninsula and South East Melbourne who currently endure long commutes to the CBD.

Motion number 41 Bega Valley Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Include local government as a key stakeholder in the Intergovernmental Data Sharing Agreement (IGDSA) and to develop mechanisms that ensure the participation of local governments in the ongoing development and operation of this framework.
2. Provide greater support and resources to local councils to help them meet the expectations set by the Australian Government Data and Digital Strategy, enabling whole of government data framework adoption and development of the national data asset.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The IDGSA is a critical framework that facilitates data sharing between levels of government. The current IGDSA focuses on data sharing between the federal and state governments, with limited direct engagement of local governments. Councils are vital players in the governance ecosystem, managing essential services, infrastructure, and community engagement at the grassroots level. The data collected by local governments is crucial for local decision-making, policy development, and service delivery.

Local governments are also uniquely positioned to provide valuable insights into the daily lives and needs of residents, which can enrich and complement the data held by other levels of government. Excluding local government from the IGDSA limits the potential of a fully integrated data system that can address complex, multi-level governance issues in a holistic and responsive way.

KEY ARGUMENTS

By including local governments in the IGDSA, the data-sharing arrangement will:

- Enhance Service Delivery: Local governments manage a wide range of services including strategic land use planning, public health, community services, disaster response and transport to name a few. Access to shared data will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of these services, ensuring they are better tailored to the needs of the community.
- Strengthen Evidence-Based Policy Making: Data sharing will empower local governments to engage in improved evidence-based decision-making, resulting in policies and initiatives that better address local issues and challenges.
- Improve coordination across all levels of government: By involving local governments, the IGDSA will promote a more coordinated approach to data management, helping governments work together to solve complex, multi-layered issues such as climate change, housing affordability, and public health.
- Promote Transparency and Accountability: Inclusion in the data-sharing framework will enhance transparency and improve accountability between different levels of government, fostering trust among citizens.
- Enabling the achievement of the Australian Governments Data and Digital Strategy: Inclusion in the data-sharing framework will support the achievement of key data initiatives objective Improving information sharing to address national challenges.

Local Government entities are custodians of key data which can be used for informing national challenges, this is evident and demonstrated during natural disaster events which see local, state and federal government entities working together to address a challenge.

The Australian Data and Digital Strategy as does the NSW Digital Strategy sets an expectation that all levels of government are working towards data maturity.

"The Government expects entities to establish and invest in appropriate mechanisms, infrastructure and practices to support data curation, storage, protection and use. Treating data as an asset will require entities to recognise its value and importance to their operations, devote suitable resources to its collection, maintenance and use, and unlock its full potential, including by making data-driven decisions." Data and Digital Strategy, APS.

Local Government entities are keen to progress this agenda however this is not possible within current resourcing without compromise to another service. Additional resourcing and support for Local Government entities will be key in achieving our national vision.

Motion number 42 Berrigan Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls upon the Australian Government to formalise structured and ongoing engagement with local government through the inclusion of an Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) representative as a permanent participant in National Cabinet meetings and associated subcommittees. Additionally, the Assembly urges the establishment of a Local Government Advisory Council as a dedicated forum to strengthen co-operation on shared national priorities.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The motion aims to improve intergovernmental relations by creating a structured mechanism for local government input at the highest levels of decision making. By granting ALGA a permanent presence in National Cabinet, the proposal ensures local government's unique perspectives are integrated into policy development and national responses. The establishment of a Local Government Advisory Council complements this by providing a consistent platform for collaboration on shared priorities like infrastructure, disaster management and climate resilience. This approach fosters a co-ordinated effort across all levels of government, promoting efficient service delivery and reinforcing the principle of subsidiarity, where decisions are made at the most effective level. The proposed changes align with recommendations from the 2024 COVID-19 response review, which highlighted the critical role of councils in implementing national priorities.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Local government is integral to implementing national priorities, particularly in areas like disaster management, infrastructure development and community health. The COVID-19 pandemic underscored their importance, as councils were pivotal in translating National Cabinet decisions into localised actions. Despite this, the current structure limits local government input in decision making processes, creating inefficiencies and missed opportunities for informed policymaking.

The exclusion of local government from National Cabinet represents a governance gap. While ALGA's annual participation is valuable, it is insufficient to address the dynamic challenges requiring continuous collaboration. A permanent ALGA representative ensures local perspectives are consistently factored into deliberations, enabling polices that are not only effective, but also practical at the community level.

The establishment of a Local Government Advisory Council enhances collaboration by offering a dedicated space for dialogue and problem solving. This council would provide recommendations to National Cabinet and other intergovernmental forums, fostering alignment between federal initiatives and local implementation capabilities. It also supports

cohesive responses to cross-jurisdictional challenges such as housing affordability and environmental sustainability.

The motion reflects best practice in intergovernmental relations and aligns with the recommendations of the 2024 COVID-19 response review. Comparable federations like Canada and Germany incorporate local government representation in national decision making, demonstrating its feasibility and benefits. Implementing similar measures ensures Australia remains adaptive and inclusive in its governance structure.

Local governments often bear the brunt of implementing federal and state policies, especially in rural and remote areas. Providing them with a stronger voice ensures equitable resource allocation and policy design that considers the diverse needs of urban, rural and remote communities. This reduces policy misalignment and enhances efficiency in service delivery.

Challenges like climate change, infrastructure deficits and public health crises require co-ordinated responses across all levels of government. Formalised local government participation in National Cabinet fosters a whole of government approach, ensuring strategies are comprehensive, cohesive and locally implementable.

Increased local government engagement enhances transparency by ensuring decisions made at the national level are informed by local realities. It also fosters accountability by involving councils directly in discussions that affect their communities, building trust in intergovernmental processes.

Better integration of local government perspectives leads to policies that are not only effective but cost efficient. For example, aligning infrastructure investments with local priorities reduces duplication and maximises community impact. Similarly, local informed disaster preparedness plans improve resilience, reducing long term recovery costs and safeguarding livelihoods.

By adopting this motion, the National General Assembly underscores the necessity of integrating local government into Australia's intergovernmental architecture. This approach ensures decisions made at the national level are grounded in local realities, fostering stronger partnerships, more efficient governance and better outcomes for communities across the nation.

Motion number 43 Strathfield Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Renegotiate the 2006 Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations to prevent cost shifting of Commonwealth and state government responsibilities onto Councils.
2. Introduce stronger controls in all Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA) that restrict the ability of state governments to diverge from the intent of the Commonwealth on similar topics, when states form their own IGA's with their respective local government organisations.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

- Cost Shifting Affects Councils Across Australia: Cost shifting is a challenge for councils nationwide. It undermines the financial sustainability of local governments and compromises their ability to deliver services.

- Breakdown in Intergovernmental Consistency: When states form separate agreements with local government organisations that deviate from national intent, it leads to inconsistencies in service delivery, funding arrangements, and policy implementation. This can create confusion, inequity, and inefficiency across jurisdictions.
- Outdated Agreement Needs Reform: The 2006 Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations no longer reflects the current financial pressures and service expectations on local governments. It must be updated to clearly define responsibilities, protect councils from unfunded mandates, and ensure equitable funding flows.
- National Economic and Social Consequences: Local governments deliver essential services (e.g. childcare, libraries, community infrastructure, emergency management) that directly affect national outcomes. Weakening the sector through cost shifting or inconsistent agreements diminishes Australia's ability to meet broader policy goals.
- Councils across all states and territories face similar issues with cost shifting and fragmented agreements. A unified call from local governments through the NGA can place pressure on the Australian Government to initiate a review and renegotiation of the 2006 IGA. The motion aligns with long-standing ALGA advocacy on cost shifting.

KEY ARGUMENTS

- Cost Shifting is Undermining Local Government Sustainability.
- The 2006 IGA is Outdated and No Longer Fit for Purpose.
- Lack of Consistency Across Jurisdictions Causes Inequity.
- Stronger Controls are Needed in Intergovernmental Agreements.
- A National Issue Requiring National Coordination.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Motion number 44 City of Onkaparinga SA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to restore Financial Assistance Grants to at least one per cent of taxation revenue and for the provision of an additional once-off payment of $3 billion to address the historical practice of paying these grants in advance.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Councils are the level of government closest to the community and we deliver far more than the adage 'roads, rates and rubbish' suggests.

At times, we become the 'provider of last resort', required to deliver critical services that are relied upon by some of our most vulnerable residents but not funded by other levels of government or commercial interests.

This has resulted in councils increasingly assuming responsibility for services and infrastructure previously funded by other levels of government, without the necessary additional financial assistance to do so (cost shifting).

Left unchecked, cost shifting has a detrimental impact on the health, wellbeing, and liveability of local communities.

It also puts further pressure on councils at a time when the sustainability of the local government sector in Australia has never been more precarious.

Councils play a key role in delivering local solutions to national priorities. Every year, we are being required to do more with less. This is not sustainable.

In 2024/25, the funding provided to councils from Federal Assistance Grants will be approximately 0.5 per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue. This is half the amount it was in 1996.

Across the country, many councils are facing significant financial challenges and struggling to fund delivery of core community services.

In South Australia, a recent local government reform process and resulting ESCOSA assessment has placed additional scrutiny on councils' abilities to effectively manage their budgets.

Alongside a growing demand for services and infrastructure, increasing community expectations, a nationwide lack of housing, challenging economic conditions including a cost-of-living crisis and persistently high interest rates, increasing supply chain costs, and ongoing pressure to keep rates low, the sustainability of the local government sector in Australia has never been more precarious.

Local government needs to be properly funded to provide the essential services we are relied upon to deliver.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Cost shifting is a real and growing issue impacting the delivery of programs and services in local government.

Examples where the City of Onkaparinga has experienced cost shifting include:

- Decreases to government funding for community and neighbourhood centres
- The decision to abolish indexation of libraries funding
- Inadequate funding for animal management
- Inequitable immunisation program funding
- Administrative burdens relating to levy collection on behalf of the state government
- Insufficient funding for management of pest animal and plant species, asset, and infrastructure costs, and
- Increases to the Waste Levy.

Added to this is the increasing burden of growing demand for services and infrastructure while we are also being pressured to keep rates low.

Community expectations are outpacing councils' abilities to deliver, particularly in relation to new infrastructure such as sporting complexes.

The growing impacts of climate change and natural disasters are also affecting local government's ability to deliver projects and services in a financially sustainable way.

Cost of living challenges and a nationwide lack of housing are putting pressure on councils to step into areas which are not traditionally a local government responsibility.

While we understand the critical role we play in our communities and are committed to improving the lives of our residents, councils cannot continue to do more with less.

Consultation with our residents in developing our Community Vision shows that our community also understands that the value of what councils provide is not currently being equitably supported by other levels of government. They have told us that we must advocate for 'unlocking more federal and state government funding to enable council to address community needs'.

Motion number 44.1 Berrigan Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to increase Financial Assistance Grants (FA Grants) to local governments to at least 1% of Commonwealth taxation revenue, establish a dedicated Local Government Sustainability Fund to support councils facing acute financial challenges and implement reforms to ensure equitable and transparent distribution of federal funding. Additionally, the Assembly urges the adoption of a formal partnership agreement between federal, state and local governments to address cost shifting and enhance financial sustainability.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion seeks to address systemic financial sustainability challenges across local governments, ensuring their capacity to delivery critical services aligned with national priorities. Increasing FA Grants to 1% of Commonwealth taxation revenue restores historical funding levels, equipping councils to manage growing responsibilities. A dedicated Sustainability Fund offers targeted support to financially constrained councils, fostering equity without disadvantaging others. The proposed partnership agreement addresses cost shifting, ensuring fairer allocation of responsibilities and resources. Together, these measures strengthen intergovernmental relations by promoting collaboration, efficiency and shared accountability, aligning local, state and federal efforts to delivery sustainable outcomes for communities.

KEY ARGUMENTS

FA Grants currently represent only 0.5% of Commonwealth taxation revenue, a significant decline from 1% in 1996. This reduction has strained councils' ability to deliver essential services and maintain infrastructure. Restoring FA Grants to 1% provides councils with predictable, adequate funding to support their expanded roles, fostering local innovation and improving service delivery efficiency.

Increasing FA Grants and investing in local government capacity yields substantial economic and social returns. For instance, ALGA's analysis demonstrates that $350 million in additional funding for open space maintenance could increase GSP by $858.9 million annually. Similarly, enhancing regulatory capacity in planning and building services could save $859 million annually for development proponents, whilst boosting GSP by $1.67 billion. Thes outcomes highlight the multiplier effect of well funding local governments and national economic growth and community wellbeing.

A Local Government Sustainability Fund targets councils facing unique challenges, such as those in rural and remote areas for regions experiencing economic decline. This fund ensures equitable resource distribution, addressing financial gaps without disadvantaging other councils. By enabling all councils to meet community needs effectively, the fund promotes nationwide alignment with national priorities.

Cost shifting from state and federal governments to local councils exacerbates financial strain, undermining councils' capacity to fulfill their responsibilities. A formal partnership agreement among all levels of government can delineate roles, responsibilities and funding

mechanisms, reducing cost shifting and fostering collaborative governance. Such an agreement ensures councils are adequately resourced to meet community expectations while promoting transparency and accountability.

Current federal funding arrangements often lack flexibility and fail to account for varying regional needs. Reforms ensuring equitable and transparent distribution of funds enable councils to address local priorities effectively. Streamlining grant application processes reduces administrative burdens, freeing resources for service deliver and infrastructure maintenance.

High staff turnover in local government imposes significant costs. Reducing turnover through targeted investment in workforce development saves an estimated $425 million annually and contributes to a $619.9 million increase in GDP. Enhanced workforce stability ensures councils can deliver consistent, high quality services aligned with national goals.

Aligning federal, state and local funding priorities fosters a unified approach to addressing challenges like infrastructure deficits, climate change and housing. Enhanced collaboration ensures resources are utilised efficiently, minimising duplication and maximising community impact.

Investing an additional $1 billion annually in local road maintenance addresses critical infrastructure deficits, enhancing safety and accessibility. This investment not only improves regional connectivity but also contributes $354.6 million annually to GDP, underscoring the economic benefits of well maintained local infrastructure.

Adopting this motion demonstrates a commitment to empowering local governments as critical partners in achieving national priorities. By restoring adequate funding, promoting equity and fostering intergovernmental collaboration, these measures ensure sustainable and effective service delivery for all Australians.

Motion number 44.2 Goulburn Mulwaree Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide financial certainty to Local Government and restore the Financial Assistance Grants program to at least 1% of total Taxation Revenue.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Restoring the Financial Assistance Grants program would help address shortfalls in operating revenue and provide councils the ability to decide on the use of these funds at the local level.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Councils across Australia provide an important role in providing and delivering services and capital works at the local level. Recent Financial Sustainability reviews at both State and Federal level have recognised the enormous pressure on Local Government to raise funds to maintain an ever-increasing range of services and infrastructure. Local Government, like any business, needs certainty of financial resources to operate & address the needs of these community.

Motion number 44.3 Fraser Coast Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to increase untied funding for local government to at least 1% of Commonwealth taxation revenue and indexed annually.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The financial stability of local governments across Australian states and territories is crucial to achieving state and national priorities through effective service delivery. Without sustainable and equitable funding, local governments across Australia will continue to face deteriorating operating positions, forcing them to prioritise basic services and infrastructure over essential investments that improve community liveability and long-term sustainability.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Historically, local governments have received just 1% of federal tax revenue through financial assistance grants (FA Grants), which provide critical funding to support essential services and infrastructure. However, FA Grant funding has now dropped to just 0.51%. Despite this reduction, the cost shifting to local governments (in Queensland) has increased by 378% between 2002 and January 2024.

In addition, operating costs for councils grew by 29% between 2012-13 and 2021-22, while the grants supporting local governments only increased by 16% during the same period. As a result, councils (in Queensland) were forced to raise rate revenue by 46% to bridge the growing financial gap. This substantial rate increase directly affects housing affordability and the cost of living, placing additional financial strain on households and potentially worsening inequalities within communities.

Local governments are the lowest funded level of government, earning around 3 cents in every dollar of taxation revenue - compared to 80 cents for the Federal Government and almost 17 cents for the state governments. Despite this, local governments play a critical role in achieving national priorities such as boosting productivity, improving community wellbeing, reducing inequality, protecting the environment, supporting the circular economy, cutting emissions, managing emergencies, increasing secure, well-paid jobs, and building a skilled workforce.

To achieve these state and national priorities, local governments must be adequately resourced. Without sustainable funding, councils will continue to face deteriorating financial positions, impacting their ability to maintain essential services and infrastructure, and ultimately reducing the liveability of communities. A more equitable and sustainable funding model is crucial to support local governments in fulfilling these responsibilities effectively.

Motion number 44.4 Glen Innes Severn Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to restore the Financial Assistance Grants (FA Grants) to 1% of Commonwealth Taxation Revenue by 30 June 2025.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The 2025 National General Assembly (NGA) theme, "National Priorities Need Local Solutions," underscores the critical role of Australia's 537 local councils in delivering place-based solutions that meet local needs while supporting broader national priorities. However, for councils to effectively fulfill this role, they require a financially sustainable funding model that enables them to plan, invest, and respond flexibly to their communities' challenges. Currently, Financial Assistance Grants (FA Grants) have fallen from 1% of Commonwealth taxation revenue in 1996 to just 0.5% today, significantly weakening councils' ability to deliver essential services. In 2024/25, local governments will receive only $3.27 billion in FA Grants, despite rising costs, increasing service demands, and growing community expectations.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Restoring FA Grants to 1% of Commonwealth taxation revenue is not just about local government sustainability-it's a strategic national investment that ensures councils can continue delivering essential services without relying on unsustainable rate increases. The Australian Government must step up to secure the future of local communities and the national economy.

Key Arguments for Restoring Financial Assistance Grants (FA Grants) to 1% of Commonwealth Taxation Revenue:

1. Local Governments Are Essential to Delivering National Priorities
    a. Councils provide critical services and infrastructure that support community wellbeing, economic development, and livability.
    b. Local governments play a direct role in addressing housing, roads, childcare, aged care, tourism, waste management, and workforce development-all of which align with national priorities.
2. Current Funding Models Are Insufficient and Unsustainable
    a. FA Grants have fallen from 1% of Commonwealth taxation revenue in 1996 to just 0.5% today, leaving councils struggling to maintain services.
    b. In 2024/25, councils will receive only $3.27 billion in FA Grants, an amount that fails to keep pace with rising costs and growing service demands.
3. Special Rate Variations (SRVs) Are Increasing
    a. More councils are being forced to apply for SRVs just to fund core services, shifting the financial burden to ratepayers.
    b. This is unsustainable, particularly during a cost-of-living crisis, and places greater strain on already struggling households and businesses.
4. Investing in Local Government Benefits the National Economy
    a. Increased funding for local governments drives economic growth, job creation, and infrastructure development.
    b. Research shows that greater financial sustainability for councils leads to billions in GDP growth, cost efficiencies, and improved community outcomes.
5. Restoring FA Grants Ensures Equity for All Communities
    a. Rural and regional councils face higher service delivery costs due to large geographic areas, aging infrastructure, and limited local revenue sources.
    b. Increased Commonwealth funding would ensure that all Australians-regardless of location-have access to essential services and infrastructure.

Motion number 44.5 Wingecarribee Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to:

a. Gradually and sustainably move towards the allocation of 1% of total Federal tax revenue to Local Government by implementing an annual 12.25% compound increase in Financial Assistance Grants funding until the 1% level is achieved.
b. Once the 1% allocation is restored, enshrine this baseline funding level in perpetuity to ensure long-term financial stability for Local Government.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The issue of funding for Local Governments is a national one because it impacts communities across Australia, from cities to regional areas and affects the delivery of essential services like education and infrastructure. The Federal Government has a responsibility to ensure Local Governments can function effectively. Restoring a fair and

sustainable funding model is crucial for the economic and social stability of the entire nation, ensuring Local Councils can meet the needs of their communities and plan for the future.

KEY ARGUMENTS

In 2014, the indexation of Federal Assistant Grant was frozen, halving the Local Government sector's share of total tax revenue from its historic level of approximately 1% to the current 0.5%. Over the years, the sector has consistently advocated for the restoration of this allocation, but no substantial action has been taken.

Rather than calling for an immediate and significant increase, I propose a realistic, phased approach to restore the 1% allocation in a manner that is both measured and sustainable.

By securing this 1% allocation and maintaining it as a guaranteed baseline in perpetuity, Local Governments will gain the financial stability needed to plan and deliver essential services and infrastructure for communities across Australia.

Here are the key arguments for restoring Federal funding to Local Governments:

1. Essential Services: Local Governments deliver critical services like education, infrastructure and public safety, impacting all communities across Australia.
2. Equity and Fairness: Restoring funding ensures that all regions, especially disadvantaged and regional areas, receive fair financial support to meet their needs, reducing inequality.
3. National Responsibility: The Federal Government has a responsibility to ensure Local Governments have the resources to function effectively, as they are key to the wellbeing of citizens.
4. Long-Term Stability: A stable and predictable funding model ensures Local Governments can plan and deliver essential services and infrastructure now and in the future.
5. Economic and Social Impact: Adequate funding supports economic growth and social stability by enabling Local Governments to meet the demands of growing populations and changing needs.

Motion number 44.6 Sunshine Coast Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Restore funding of the Financial Assistance Grant program to at least 1% of Commonwealth Taxation revenue.
2. Reset the payment cycle to ensure a full year's Financial Assistance Grant is received in each year;
3. Compensate for the historical bringing forward of Financial Assistance Grant payments by making a one-off payment to local governments; and
4. Review the annual indexation methodology for Financial Assistance Grants to reflect all cost drivers.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

For many years, local governments have been on the receiving end of cost-shifting from successive State and Federal Governments. Local governments are not immune from the impacts of rising inflation and climate change, yet the rate of local government funding via Financial Assistance Grants has not kept pace with the range of services councils are required to deliver. Councils are chronically under-funded but must do more and more with

less. In a cost-of-living crisis, Councils cannot continue to burden communities with increasing rate rises.

Currently, Councils are not able to confidently budget each year without the certainty of the timing of the payment of Financial Assistance Grants. With financial stability and predictability, communities can better trust their Council's financial management and be assured services are delivered consistently in accordance with adopted budgets and projections.

This is an ongoing issue as identified on numerous occasions from Councils and local government associations across Australia. The proper and adequate funding of local government is of national significance and is critical to the delivery of the vital services relied upon by every Australian.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to address the critical shortfall in Financial Assistant Grants to local Government and to:

1. Restore funding of the Financial Assistant Grant program to at least 1% of Commonwealth Taxation Revenue.
    a. Historical Context: The Financial Assistance Grant program was initially designed to provide local governments with a stable and predictable source of funding. Over time, the proportion of Commonwealth Taxation Revenue allocated to this program has decreased, impacting the financial capacity of councils to deliver essential services.
    b. Equity and Fairness: Restoring funding to at least 1% of Commonwealth Taxation Revenue ensures that local governments receive a fair share of national resources, enabling them to address local needs effectively.
    c. Economic Impact: Increased funding would allow councils to invest in infrastructure projects, create jobs, and stimulate local economies, particularly in regional and rural areas.
2. Reset the payment cycle in to ensure a full year's Financial Assistance Grant is received in each year.
    a. Financial Stability: Delivering a full year's Financial Assistance Grant in each budget cycle would provide councils with greater financial stability and predictability, allowing for better long-term planning and budgeting.
    b. Transparency and Accountability: Resetting the payment cycle would enhance transparency and accountability in the allocation and use of Financial Assistance Grant funds, ensuring that councils can effectively plan and report on their expenditures.
3. Compensate for the historical bringing forward of Financial Assistance Grant payments by making a one-off payment to local governments will address cash flow issues. The practice of bringing forward payments can create cash flow challenges for councils. An additional one-off payment would help address these issues and ensure that councils have the necessary funds to meet their obligations.
4. Review the annual indexation methodology for Financial Assistance Grants to reflect all cost drivers
    a. Comprehensive Cost Coverage: The current indexation methodology does not fully account for all cost drivers faced by councils, such as inflation, population growth, and increased service demands. A review would ensure that the Financial Assistance Grant reflects the true cost of delivering services.

   b. Addressing Cost Shifting: Councils often bear the financial burden of services that were previously funded by state or federal governments. Revising the indexation methodology would help address this issue and ensure that councils are adequately compensated.
5. Climate Change Adaptation: Local governments are at the forefront of responding to climate change impacts. The revised methodology should consider the additional costs associated with climate resilience and adaptation measures.

These arguments highlight the importance of restoring and reviewing the Financial Assistance Grant program to ensure that local governments can continue to provide essential services and support their communities effectively.

Motion number 44.7 Loddon Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to increase the Financial Assistance Grants to Local Government in even increments over the next ten financial years until the total funding to Australian amount is restored to 1% of the Australian Government tax revenue by the 2035/36 financial year.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Councils, especially smaller regional and rural councils, are experiencing increasing financial pressures. The Australian Local Government sector is experiencing financial challenges that will ultimately result in the reduction of services and infrastructure investment for all communities. For many local problems, local solutions, designed and implemented by local councils are often better and more efficient than those imposed by other levels of government. Increasing untied funding to councils will reduce pressure on State and Federal budgets and can provide improved localised responsive services more cost effectively.

KEY ARGUMENTS

30 years ago, the total Financial Assistance Grants supplied to Local Government was the equivalent to 1% of the Commonwealth national tax take collected by the Federal Government. Now, it is half that.

All levels of Government are facing increasing financial pressures. The Victorian local government sector is experiencing significant financial challenges.

As reported by the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO) the number of Victorian councils reporting on underlying operating deficit in 2022-23 compared to the results in 2018-19 has increased from 29% to 46%. This is despite, as VAGO points out, the early payment of Financial Assistance Grants preventing more councils reporting a deficit.

Commonwealth and State Government revenue bases grow in line with economic growth. This is not the case for Local Government. Rates are subject to arbitrary capping by the Victorian Government. The amount of Financial Assistance Grants made available to Local Government continues to decrease as percentage of total Commonwealth Government taxation revenue.

This is inevitably resulting in councils taking difficult decisions to reduce spending on services and infrastructure investment for communities.

As well as being formally endorsed by Loddon Shire Council, this motion is supported by all six member councils of the Murray River Group of Councils.

Motion number 44.8 Moyne Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to dedicate the additional funding required to restore the quantum of the annual federal Financial Assistance Grants to local government to 1% of Commonwealth taxation revenue.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Across the country many councils are facing significant financial challenges and are struggling to fund the delivery of core community services.

Every year councils are being asked to do more with less as a result of cost shifting, inadequate state and federal funding and, in some jurisdictions, rate pegging.

In 2024/25 councils will receive Federal Financial Assistance Grants amounting to approximately 0.5% of Commonwealth taxation revenue, which is half the amount it was in 1996.

The financial sustainability of the Local Government sector nationally is under significant pressure. This is resulting in some Councils needing to wind back their service provision and asset maintenance activities, and to have limited scope for new and desirable services, facilities and upgrades.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Local Government provides core community services and maintains an extensive amount of community assets

Local councils (particularly in the regions) have responsibility for the greater proportion of the road network

Rate pegging where it is in place is limiting local government's revenue raising capacity to keep up with inflation (often felt more strongly in the regions)

Cost shifting from State (mainly) and Federal (to a lesser extent) Governments' have progressively made in-roads into councils' financial sustainability.

Motion number 44.9 North Burnett Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to negotiate and agree with the State and Territory governments, amendments to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Reform of Commonwealth-State Financial Relations to increase the rate of the goods and services tax (GST) to generate sufficient revenue to increase the total value of the Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grants to local governments to 1% of total Commonwealth taxation revenue.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion calls for the Australian Government, working with State and Territory Governments, to identify and secure a logical revenue stream that would provide the funding required to increase the value of the funding pool for the Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grants to 1% of total Commonwealth taxation revenue. This increased funding is critical for enabling local governments to meet growing demands for services, infrastructure, and community development, while addressing the increasing costs associated with the provision of essential local functions - recognising the limited revenue raising options available to most local governments.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Local governments play a pivotal role in delivering essential services to Australian communities, including roads, housing, public transport, and community infrastructure. However, they are currently constrained by insufficient funding and are heavily reliant on limited revenue sources. The 1% target for the funding pool for the Financial Assistance Grants would provide a more sustainable and predictable funding base, enabling local councils to plan and invest more effectively in services that benefit all Australians.

Currently, all local governments are facing an increasing demand for services in an environment of escalating supply chain and service delivery costs. At the same time, funding provided by both the Commonwealth and State governments - while welcomed - is not keeping pace with these dual challenges. Local governments' reliance on the relatively narrow revenue base of property rates and user charges places additional strain on communities, particularly in regional and rural areas. Faced with this challenge, a number of local governments are foregoing applying to grant programs as they cannot divert funding from high demand facilities and services to provide the contribution required under a number of programs.

It is recognised it is no easy task to effectively double the size of the revenue pool for the Financial Assistance Grants given the other demands on the Commonwealth. The GST is proposed as a revenue source given this is consistent with the intent of the Intergovernmental Agreement which seeks to return the GST revenue to the level of government that is involved in direct delivery of services to citizens and businesses who pay the GST. Increasing the GST percentage to cover the cost of the increase to the Financial Assistance Grants pool will not deliver any adverse impact to State governments but would address the current deterioration in the funding position of local government.

Local governments are in a unique position to directly improve the quality of life for their communities, but to do so, they require adequate and reliable financial resources.

Motion number 44.10 Western Downs Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to increase untied funding to at least 1 percent of Commonwealth taxation revenue, indexed annually and with payment timing certainty.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The Australia Local Government Association's 2024 State of the Assets Report shows that $8.3 billion worth of local government buildings and facilities are in poor condition and require attention. Local governments maintain more than one third of Australia's public infrastructure, including roads, community buildings, regional airports, parks and sport recreation facilities.

Over the last three decades, the value of Financial Assistance (FA) grants to local government has reduced from around 1 per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue to just over 0.5 percent. The annual FA grant pool is changed annually in line with changes in population and the Consumer Price Index, however the Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 allows the Treasurer discretion to alter the annual indexation.

Western Downs Regional Council supports the Local Government of Association of Queensland's advocacy to increase untied funding to all Councils to at least 1 per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue, indexed annually and with payment timing certainty.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The reducing rate of FA grants is impacting the ability of local governments to continue to provide their communities with essential services and maintain infrastructure. Further, local governments are assuming responsibility for more infrastructure and services without a commensurate increase in revenue which impacts on the services they can deliver and the communities liveability and sustainability. Restoring FA grants to 1 per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue will enable certainty of funding to support essential services and maintaining public infrastructure.

Financial sustainability in Queensland has been a key focus and concern in recent times, with financial sustainability risk assessments now a key component of Queensland Audit Office reporting to Parliament. The latest Queensland Audit Office (QAO) Auditor-General's 2023 Report to Parliament continues to raise concerns about local government financial sustainability, rating 48 out of 77 councils (62%) as having a moderate to higher risk of sustainability issues in the short to medium term.

While state and federal government offer additional grant programs aimed at local governments, these focus on new infrastructure. The evidence to support how a local government will fund the whole of life costs (including operations, maintenance and depreciation) for the new asset is not always a requirement of funding applications. This can impact on financial sustainability outcomes for councils over the longer term. Further, such programs may not align with the most critical needs of local communities, particularly in terms of maintaining and replacing existing asset bases. Untied FA grant funding allows local governments to direct funds to these activities.

Cost-shifting is another significant challenge, requiring local governments to take responsibility for service provision on behalf of the state and federal government. Commensurate funding to cover the additional services provided has not been forthcoming.

FA grants are not increasing at a rate to allow local government to maintain the services their communities need and expect. This forces local governments to increase it's rates revenue, change or cut services, or hope for short-term tied funding. Local governments' community infrastructure and services, such as libraries, pools, sporting facilities, arts and culture facilities, parks, and sports grounds, play a significant role in ensuring the well-being of local communities.

Local government roads also make up over three quarters of the national road network by length. Local governments with the largest road bases are those with the smallest population, and rates base. This limits their ability to raise sufficient "own source" revenue to maintain their assets.

Motion number 44.11 Strathfield Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to restore Financial Assistance Grants to at least 1% of Commonwealth taxation revenue to ensure the financial sustainability of local governments.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Why is this a national issue?

The adequacy of Financial Assistance Grants (FA Grants) affects every local government across Australia, regardless of size or location. Local governments are responsible for delivering essential services and infrastructure that directly impact community wellbeing-such as roads, waste management, libraries, parks, and local planning. However, their revenue-raising capacity is limited, relying heavily on rates and limited grants.

FA Grants are a key mechanism through which the Commonwealth supports local governments and restoring them is critical to ensuring sustainable, equitable service delivery across the country. Underfunding at the national level places pressure on councils and leads to disparities in outcomes.

Why should it be debated at the NGA?

Debating this motion at the NGA gives councils the opportunity to: Highlight the widespread impact of funding shortfalls on communities; Demonstrate collective support for increased funding to strengthen the sector; Influence the national agenda, reminding the Australian Government of its role in supporting local infrastructure and services.

Securing fair and sustainable funding through FA Grants is fundamental to the long-term viability of local governments nationwide. The NGA is the right forum to advocate for this essential reform.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Every local government across Australia relies on FA Grants to deliver essential services and infrastructure.

Underfunding affects councils in all states and territories, making it a national, not just local, issue.

Councils have limited revenue-raising capacity (mainly rates and fees) yet are responsible for a growing range of services.

Restoring FA Grants would help ensure councils can meet current and future community needs.

Local governments play a crucial role in national economic productivity, resilience, and wellbeing.

Investing in councils supports job creation, infrastructure renewal, and stronger local economies.

FA Grants have declined in real terms over several decades-from around 1% of Commonwealth revenue in the 1990s to around 0.5% today.

Reinstating the 1% level corrects this long-term erosion of support.

A united call through the NGA sends a strong, coordinated message to the Australian Government.

Motion number 44.12 Brisbane City Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to increase funding to local government to at least one percent of Australian taxation revenue.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The Australian Government provides critical ongoing funding to local governments through the Financial Assistance Grants and through a range of grant programs. Financial sustainability is now a major concern for every local government. Australian Government funding for local government has not kept up with growth in Australian taxation revenue or cost increases to the local government sector. Increases to funding are critical.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Local governments are heavily dependent on Australian Government grants to support operations and contribute towards construction of vital infrastructure. The value of these grants has failed to increase in line with increases in Australian taxation revenue.

Financial sustainability is now a major concern for all local governments. Revenue levers available to local government are very limited and local governments only collect 3% of taxation revenue compared to 80% by the Australian Government.

Local governments have faced significant increases, well above inflation, in the cost to develop infrastructure projects and deliver services within their communities.

There has also been an ongoing pattern of cost shifting between levels of government to local governments. Service delivery obligations placed on councils is only continuing to increase. This not only relates to core service delivery such as road and park maintenance, waste disposal and community services, but also extends to other areas of service delivery that were traditionally provided by other levels of government or the private sector.

Motion number 44.13 City of Greater Dandenong VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to restore Financial Assistance Grants to 1 per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion addresses that reality that the majority of Australian Local Governments are under severe financial strain with increased service demand through unfunded programs, increased costs mitigating and responding to climate related extreme weather events, increaseand aging infrastructure that needs renewal.

Financial Assistance Grants are untied, meaning that local governments can use this federal funding to address local issues and priorities.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grants have been a fixture of local government funding since 1974. The grant is paid to local governments via their state or territory grants commissions according to an agreed formula set by the Federal Government.

The last time Financial Assistance Grants were equal to one per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue was 1996. Since that time there has been a steady decrease in the percentage of revenue distributed and in 2023-24, Australian local governments received $3.1 billion in federal Financial Assistance Grants, which is approximately 0.5 per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue.

Motion number 44.14 Shoalhaven City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to restore the taxation revenue of Federal Assistance Grants to a full 2% and that this adjustment occur over a five-year period.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Over the past 40 years successive governments have reduced the percentage of taxation revenue being paid in favour of a CPI amount. This has meant that the Government has pocketed for its own purposes revenue which should've gone to Local Government. This has undoubtedly led to significant financial stress in the Local Government sector.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Federal Assistance Grants have been a fixture of Local Government funding since 1974. The grant is paid to Local Governments via their State or Territory Grants Commissions according to an agreed formula set by the Federal Government.

Over the past 40 years, successive governments have reduced the percentage of taxation revenue being paid in favour of a CPI amount. It is worth noting, the last time these grants were equal to 1% of Commonwealth taxation revenue was 1996.

This means the Government has received revenue for its own purposes, which should've been received by Local Government. This has undoubtedly led to significant financial stress in the Local Government sector.

Increasing the taxation revenue to 2%, would help address the financial stress currently faced by Local Governments ensuring they can continue to provide vital services to their communities. This is because these Grants are untied, meaning that Local Governments can use this funding to address local issues and priorities.

Motion number 44.15 Mornington Peninsula Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

- Restore FA Grants funding to a level equivalent to at least 1 per cent of Commonwealth Taxation Revenue, but preferably 2 per cent;
- Review the indexation methodology of FA Grants in consultation with councils, to ensure it reflects the real cost pressures across the sector;
- Directly allocate FA Grants to councils, rather than via state governments;
- Consult the sector before releasing new grant programs, to ensure they align with current community needs and strategic priorities;
- Provide longer-term grant commitments that provide certainty and enable councils to make long-term financial investment decisions and deliver funding more cost-effectively. The Roads to Recovery program is a good example;
- Engage in discussion between all levels of government so that critical infrastructure and service provision is in place where it's most needed;
- Ensure Federal grant programs include an ongoing contribution to whole-of-life costs for projects including aquatic centres and support asset renewal;
- Establish formal collaborative partnership with the local government sector, to address the ever-increasing complexity of community needs and expectations.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Councils are in a fraught funding position, facing pressures including reduced federal and state government grants, high inflation and rising costs that far exceed the revenue generating constraints imposed by state government rate caps.

Without substantial changes, the financial sustainability of council operations are at risk, with some services already being reduced or discontinued. The roles and core service responsibilities of councils lacks clear definition.

As the level of government that is most accessible, with direct impact on communities, cost pressures and cost shifting from federal and state governments is occurring at a critical time and reaching crisis point for those who depend on vital council services.

ALGA and the individual member Local Government Associations in each jurisdiction have long highlighted that FA Grants funding is too low, the indexation methodology does not sufficiently recognise the true cost pressures across the sector and grant commitments are too short term to provide certainty for the increasing responsibilities of councils.

Local government occupies a particularly unique space, with broad and deep levels of community participation. Community trust in government ultimately relies on governments working together to ensure critical infrastructure and service provision is in place where it's most needed for liveability.

KEY ARGUMENTS

FA Grants play a key role in supporting a sustainable local government sector and have been crucial in enabling the Shire to maintain essential community services such as local roads maintenance, community health programs and basic infrastructure projects.

Without these grants, the council would struggle to meet the minimum service levels expected by our community. Councils have repeatedly called for untied and non-competitive funding grants to be restored to at least 1 percent of Commonwealth taxation revenue with a direct allocation of FA Grants to councils.

This reform would provide the long-term certainty councils need to plan for their community's future and the flexibility to prioritise their spend on more resilient, productive and liveable communities. It is notable that many of these issues are referred to within the Victorian Government Local Government Funding and Services inquiry recommendations (1, 3, 12, 13 and 14), published in November 2024.

For example, receiving Disaster Recovery funding direct from the Federal government provides flexibility and is far more effective and empowering than having to bid via the state government. Non-competitive programs such as the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCI) have broad project criteria which provides crucial flexibility.

With increased FA Grants, councils would be able to:

- Enhance Service Delivery: improve and expand essential community services to better meet the needs of growing and changing populations;
- Invest in infrastructure: accelerate the renewal and development of delayed and underfunded critical infrastructure projects;
- Ensure Financial Stability: build a more sustainable financial model that reduces reliance on borrowing and prevents further deterioration of cash reserves;
- Support Long-term Planning: enable strategic planning and investment in projects that promote community well-being and economic growth.

Federal funding programs and arrangements need more investment. The Roads to Recovery and LRCI programs have not kept pace with inflation or the level of aging infrastructure across Australia.

The benefit to communities from other sources of federal funding grants would be improved by an allocation through non-competitive project nomination processes, rather than short-notice, competitive grants that require match funding and leave councils with responsibility for all delivery risks.

Clarity on federal funding levels over 4-year programs, broader priorities and longer-term commitments would help. Multi-year funding arrangements would afford greater certainty, so

councils are not left out of pocket and can conduct adequate project planning, as part of financial planning cycles.

Community needs are hard to meet if the available tied funding opportunities do not enable councils to address local priorities. Applying for grants is onerous and costly, including upfront design and scoping investment.

Evolving infrastructure needs, including changing environmental conditions, digital connectivity and service delivery obligations for councils, is marked by a shift towards more sustainable and technologically advanced solutions. This adds complexity to council responsibilities and additional demands on resources.

Motion number 44.16 Murray River Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to call on the Federal Government to restore the Financial Assistance Grants to 1 percent of Commonwealth taxation revenue immediately and to 1.5 percent of Commonwealth taxation revenue by 2030.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Create financial sustainability within Local Government and to enable Local Government to maintain, upgrade and renew vital community assets.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The value of Financial Assistance Grants provided to local government has declined over the past three decades from around 1 percent of Commonwealth taxation revenue to around 0.5 percent.

What this means for Murray River Council is a reduction in funding totaling $10 million each year.

A reduction in funding of this size cannot be recovered from ratepayers alone.

Council has trimmed services and significantly increased productivity over the years but still records an annual deficit of around $9 million which can only result in a huge underspend on infrastructure upgrades and replacement (Depreciation).

If the situation continues, the shortfall in infrastructure spend will snowball due to inflation and create the need, at some point, for a massive catch up, which is the reason for the recommended increase in local governments share of Commonwealth taxation revenue to 1.5% by 2030.

Failure to act now, will place an insurmountable financial burden on our children and future generations.

Motion number 44.17 Yass Valley Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

a. Restore funding of the Financial Assistance Grant program to at least 1% of Federal taxation revenue.
b. Reduce the population factor in the general-purpose component of the Federal Assistance Grant allocation from 30% to 10%.
c. Restore the Federal Assistance Grant funding lost in the 2014-15 to 2016-17 indexation freeze.

d. Review the Financial Assistance Grant National Principles

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The Interim Report from the Inquiry into local government sustainability outlined that a significant number of submitters to the inquiry called for a review of the Financial Assistance Grants program, and in particular the distribution formula, quantum of the funding pool, indexation methodology, and the national principles. Increasing the Federal Assistance Grant allocation is fundamental to the future financial sustainability of Councils across the country.

Source:
https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Regional_Development_Infrastructure_and_Transport/Localgovernmentsustaina/Interim_Report

KEY ARGUMENTS

Financial Assistance Grants have been a fixture of local government funding since 1974. The grant is paid to local governments via their state or territory grants commissions according to an agreed formula set by the Federal Government.

In 2023-24, Australian local governments received $3.1 billion in federal Financial Assistance Grants, which is approximately 0.5 percent of Federal taxation revenue. The last time Federal Assistance Grants were equal to one percent of Federal taxation revenue was 1996. Financial Assistance Grants are untied, meaning that local governments can use this federal funding to address local issues and priorities.

Motion number 44.18 Burdekin Shire Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to increase Financial Assistance Grant (FA Grants) funding to at least one per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue, indexed annually, and with certainty in the timing of payments. This will provide local governments with the financial security needed to plan and deliver essential services and infrastructure for their communities.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Financial Assistance Grants (FA Grants) are a critical funding source for Australian local governments, providing untied funding that allows councils to allocate resources where they are most needed. As the level of government closest to the community, local governments play a vital role in delivering essential services, maintaining infrastructure, and fostering economic development.

Unlike state and federal governments, local governments have limited revenueraising capacity, making them heavily reliant on Commonwealth support. However, the proportion of Commonwealth taxation revenue allocated to FA Grants has declined over time, reducing councils' ability to meet growing community needs.

Increasing FA Grant funding to at least one per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue, with annual indexation and timely payments, will ensure that councils across Australia have financial stability and long-term sustainability to serve their communities effectively.

KEY ARGUMENTS

1. Local Governments Provide Essential Services and Infrastructure

- Local governments are responsible for roads, waste management, libraries, parks, community facilities, public health, emergency management, and economic development.
- Councils also support local businesses, foster tourism, and provide social services, all of which contribute to national productivity and economic resilience.
- Without adequate funding, the ability of local governments to maintain infrastructure, invest in community projects, and respond to local challenges is severely constrained.

2. Declining Federal Support Weakens Local Government Capacity

- The proportion of Commonwealth taxation revenue allocated to FA Grants has steadily declined, limiting councils' ability to keep up with population growth, rising costs, and increasing service demands.
- Many councils, particularly in regional and remote areas, depend on FA Grants to maintain financial sustainability. Reduced funding places added pressure on ratepayers and forces difficult decisions about cutting essential services or delaying infrastructure projects.
- Increasing FA Grants to at least one per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue will restore an appropriate level of funding, ensuring councils can meet their responsibilities effectively.

3. Indexation and Payment Certainty Will Support Long-Term Planning

- Indexing FA Grants annually will prevent funding erosion due to inflation and rising costs, ensuring councils receive fair and sustainable support.
- Certainty in the timing of payments will enable councils to plan their budgets with confidence, ensuring efficient service delivery and responsible financial management.

4. A Stronger Partnership Between Federal and Local Government

- Local governments are integral to national economic and social outcomes, supporting regional development, emergency preparedness, climate resilience, and community well-being.
- A fair and sustainable FA Grant funding model demonstrates the Australian Government's commitment to strong local communities and acknowledges the essential role of local government in national governance.

Conclusion:

Restoring FA Grants to at least one per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue, with annual indexation and certainty in payment timing, will ensure local governments have the financial capacity to provide essential services, maintain infrastructure, and support liveable, vibrant, sustainable communities across Australia

Motion number 45 Hindmarsh Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish a funding stream targeting small towns (up to 2,500 residents) in regional Australia, focused on innovative renewal for a sustainable future.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion requests additional funding that supports innovation and sustainability in regional towns and will empower Councils to provide local solutions that respond to national problems.

The motion creates scope for solutions to include innovative and creative uses of vacant commercial and recreational buildings and spaces, social enterprise development, job and skills-based training to support local industries, streetscape improvements, business development and support and tourism initiatives.

KEY ARGUMENTS

As the closest level of government to communities, Councils understand local challenges and opportunities. They are a willing partner in government, and sustainably funded can provide place-based solutions to a range of national priorities including affordable housing, energy transition, road safety, increasing productivity, and improved health and wellbeing.

The proposed motion complements the 'financial sustainability' and 'community services' priorities in seeking to address the economic and financial sustainability of small rural and regional towns and the local Councils that service them, as well as enabling locally designed economic development activities.

As well as Councils requiring tangible support from the State and Federal Government through policy and financial assistance for local government administration, there is a mutual dependency between Councils and the community when it comes to economic wellbeing

and financial sustainability. Council must maintain roads, infrastructure and amenities to create safe and liveable spaces, and homeowners, business owners and workers need to drive economic development through investment in local communities.

Additionally, trades, business and Council in small towns are critical for providing services to key industries, including agriculture and food production, whose outputs contribute significantly to Australia's economy. In order to provide services, quality infrastructure, recreational spaces and job opportunities that attract and retain residents, an inter-governmental approach is required that centralises local government's knowledge and ability to deliver locally appropriate solutions.

Motion number 46 Shire of Lake Grace WA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to increase the Financial Assistance Grants to local governments and recalculate distributions to those local governments in remote and rural locations that are providing financial incentives to assist in funds associated with attracting and retaining general practitioners, therefore redirecting ratepayer funds to local government responsibilities.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The issue of attracting and retaining General Practitioners in remote locations is a national concern for several reasons:

1. Health Disparities: Rural and remote areas experience reduced access to healthcare services, leading to poorer health outcomes compared to urban areas. This disparity is a significant public health issue that affects the overall well-being of the population.
2. Workforce Distribution: GPs tend to prefer working in urban areas with better facilities, professional support, and personal amenities. Attracting GPs to remote

local governments that are geographically isolated with less amenities makes it difficult to maintain essential medical services.
3. Economic Impact: Local governments in remote areas are forced to allocate substantial portions of their rates to attract and retain GPs. This financial strain diverts funds from core services that local governments are responsible for and is unsustainable in the long term.
4. Policy Gaps: Current Commonwealth and State government policies and financial incentives are insufficient. This inadequacy necessitates a national debate to develop more effective strategies and support mechanisms for remote local governments.
5. Community Health: Ensuring that rural communities have access to quality healthcare is crucial for their sustainability and growth.

It is essential to raise awareness about this issue and develop tailored policies and programs that address GP attraction and retention in RM6 and RM7 local governments.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Many countries face the problem of shortages of health workers in rural and remote areas. Health workers generally prefer to be located close to major hospitals and health facilities where they trained and with good professional support and resources, and in areas with family and social support and access to schools for their children. According to the World Health Organisation, rural health workforce shortages are one of the major impediments to well-functioning health systems with a lack of General Practitioners (GPs) in rural communities associated with reduced access and inferior health outcomes.

A January 2025 position paper, Provision of Remote GP Services, released by the alliance of the Shires of Gnowangerup, Jerramungup, Kojonup, Lake Grace, Narembeen, and Ravensthorpe in Western Australia was created to raise awareness and suggest a solution to attract and retain GPs in their rural and remote communities. The six local governments have been required to step into the space of primary health care because the per capita expenditure by the Commonwealth and States on health is lower in the regions, the viability of practices is challenged due to remote geography, increased business costs and less patients.

There are minimum floor costs that exist to maintain basic medical services in any location. These include GPs, nursing and administration staff, premises, equipment and ongoing overheads. In remote communities, Medicare billing alone cannot cover these floor costs for a variety of reasons. The six local governments collectively contribute over $1.475 million cash (sourced through rates) annually to attract and retain resident GP services, plus housing, vehicles, and surgeries.

Additionally, there is a widely held view that telehealth may potentially mitigate the negative impact of health workforce shortages in rural areas and achieve early intervention in health problems. An overreliance and dependency on telehealth can [however] mask the need to invest long term to improve rural health, such as direct investment in infrastructure and the rural health workforce. By relying on metropolitan centres to provide care to rural Australians, telehealth essentially redirects rural resources to these centres, reducing future rural health care funding.

The current Commonwealth and State government policy settings are inadequate and are a broad brushed approach to general practitioner attraction and retention - meaning local governments are competing for a contestable resource (GPs), against each other and GPs still receive the same incentives whether they are in a rural location adjacent to the

metropolitan area or a very remote location - making the choice to work in a remote location unattractve unless a cash payment is made by an entity such as a local government.

The six remote local governments (RM6 and RM7 under the Modified Monash Model) are using a substantial portion of their ratepayer funds to attract and retain GPs (some up to 16% of their rates). This is unsustainable and yet this is the market rate. The six local governments have trialed multiple models and service delivery mechanisms for the past decade, all are exhausted.

Local governments are required to step into the space of primary health care because the per capita expenditure by the Commonwealth and States on health is lower in the regions. The current Medical Facilities Cost Adjustor within the Financial Assistance Grants paid to local governments is insufficient but is the ideal mechanism to address the issue.

Motion number 47 Narrabri Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to harmonise the disparate application and relevancy of accounting standards for Local Government to ensure the consistency of the measurement and management of depreciation and the approach to valuation of associated non-current assets.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion aligns with ALGA priorities 1 and 2. It will align with the national objective of addressing financial sustainability within local government and support commensurate arrangements to improve sustainability outcomes.

KEY ARGUMENTS

There has been an inconsistency of the application of the Accounting Standards across all States which has created disparities in financial management approaches and an inherent inability to appropriately measure financial sustainability on a national level. This creates impediments to the delivery of strategic solutions and an uneven playing field. NSW, for example, through the application of a state-specific Code has a focus on market valuation of all assets. Items that have no market relevance or realistic market value, such as roads, stormwater drainage, water supplies and sewerage treatment plants, are included as part of this process. By virtue of the current mandated standards, revaluation reserves and asset values are at record highs and are realistically unachievable in terms of replacements and future modelling predictors for these replacements are rendering asset management plans and replacement targets unsustainable.

Motion number 47.1 Logan City Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to request that the Australian Accounting Standards Review Board reviews the impact of AASB 116 and AASB138 on the financial sustainability of Local Governments.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

General purpose financial statements for both commercial entities and local government councils determine depreciation expenses in accordance with AASB 116. There are fundamental differences between the relevance of deprecation expenses in a commercial environment when compared to a local government environment and the current provisions being applied to local government are not fit for purpose. Consequently, we are seeing

negative impacts to the operating performance ratios of local governments across Australia, ultimately impacting the financial sustainability of the sector.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Unlike assets in commercial businesses, most of Council's assets are not intended to generate revenue or create a return on investment and despite this, depreciation is being treated the same way. Infrastructure costs for roads, drainage, water and sewer can make up 70% of a local government's budget. Depreciation expenses are attributable to the full range of these asset classes with the roads component often being the largest. As part of the recent inquiry into local government sustainability it was found that 20 per cent of local government expenditure is spent on maintaining depreciating assets. This is compared with less than 6 per cent for State Governments across Australia and less than 2 per cent for the Federal Government. Also as part of the inquiry into local government sustainability it was revealed that 27 per cent of local

governments are not considered financially sustainable. This report references the asset sustainability ratio which measures whether assets are being renewed relative to depreciation. Under 100 per cent could indicate underinvestment, leading to higher costs in the future. 74 per cent of Queensland councils and 52 per cent of New South Wales councils failed to meet this target. Further there are a range of external funding opportunities through grants and contributions for new assets, however there is limited financial support, is any, provided to maintain or depreciate assets. The current accounting standards that apply to local government with respect to depreciation and the limited financial support provided by other levels of government to maintain existing assets is impacting the financial sustainability of the local government sector. A review is needed to determine a fair and equitable way forward that ensures local governments can continue to deliver the infrastructure their growing communities need now and in the future.

Motion number 48 Narrabri Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish a National Royalties for Regions Framework to address current gaps and state-level inequities in the distribution of funding to mining-affected communities.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion aligns to both ALGA Priorities 2 and 7. It is consistent with the national objective in that mining is Australia's largest exporter and industry, the biggest company taxpayer and investor in infrastructure and equipment, and the world's largest exporter of minerals and metals.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Ernst & Young (EY) was engaged by the Minerals Council of Australia (MCA) to provide a report calculating royalties paid and provide estimates of net company tax payments for the minerals sector in 2021-22 and 2022-23. The report dated May 2024 estimates net company tax for the minerals sector to be approximately $40.8 billion in 2021-22 and $42.5 billion in 2022-23, bringing total royalties and company taxes paid by the minerals sector to $64.7 billion in 2021-22 and $74.0 billion in 2022-23. The sum of estimated royalties and company taxes paid in 2022-23 has increased by 94.7% since 2019-20 due to a rise of 67.4% in commodity prices over that period, as measured by Reserve Bank of Australia's (RBA) bulk commodity price index, combined with higher royalty rates and rising minerals sector production.

Of these extensive royalties, limited funds reach mining-affected communities. Each state delivers royalties for regions programs (or their equivalent) with varying levels of efficacy and levels of commitment. Drew et al in A square deal? Mining costs, mining royalties and local government in New South Wales, Australia (November 2017) found that mining operations are often controversial since they can impose significant external costs on the local municipalities and local inhabitants. They highlighted that under current legislative arrangements local governments are constrained from recouping costs directly from mines by means of increased property taxes on mines due to state-wide limitations on tax increases - known colloquially in NSW as the 'rate-cap'. Moreover, mining royalties are paid directly to government and not to affected councils. Local government authorities are placed in invidious circumstances whereby they are faced with ongoing additional operating expenditure directly associated with mining operations but are prevented by regulation from levying enduring additional rates to recoup at least some of the extra impost.

As detailed in the 2025 Methodology Review - Mining Revenue Consultation Paper as prepared by the Commonwealth Grants Commission (June 2023), the Commonwealth and each state and territory (state) share responsibility for imposing mining royalties. States are responsible for imposing mining royalties onshore and within state coastal waters. The Commonwealth is responsible for imposing mining royalties in Commonwealth waters. The Commonwealth and states also share royalties. The Commonwealth shares royalties with states under revenue sharing arrangements. Western Australia receives 2 payments, and the Northern Territory receives 1, noting that Western Australia receives a payment in relation to royalties from the North West Shelf project and a payment for the loss of royalty revenue as a result of the Commonwealth's removal of the exemption on condensate from crude oil excise. The Northern Territory receives a payment in relation to uranium.

A range of disparate approaches are pursued by each state and territory in the management, collection and disbursement of royalties resulting in vast inequities. Establishment of a National Royalties for Regions Framework to address current gaps and state-level inequities via a proportionate and transparent distribution of funding to mining-affected communities is therefore sought.

Motion number 49 Glen Innes Severn Council NSW

National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to adopt Place-Based, Needs-Based, and Outcome-Driven Funding Models, allocating a minimum of $1,000 per

person annually for 10 years to each Local Government Area to strengthen councils as enablers of essential community and social services.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Local governments provide critical services where market failure exists, including healthcare, aged care, childcare, homelessness support, economic development, and recreation. Despite this, councils are 83% self-funded, with only 17% of revenue coming from grants-much of it restricted. This funding inequity prevents councils from tailoring solutions to community needs and scaling impactful initiatives. The proposed shift to Place-Based, Needs-Based, and Outcome-Driven Funding Models would empower councils as key enablers of national priorities by: Ensuring fairer, needs-based allocations that reflect service demand and cost-ofdelivery realities. Glen Innes Severn Council - Annexures to Open Ordinary Meeting - 19 March 2025 Page 43 Annexure A Item 7.3

Providing long-term investment ($1,000 per person annually for 10 years) to enable sustainable, community-driven solutions. Driving accountability and impact by linking funding

to measurable social and economic outcomes. By adopting this model, the Australian Government can leverage local expertise to deliver national outcomes, ensuring communities receive the targeted support they need to thrive.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Implementing Place-Based, Needs-Based, and Outcome-Driven Funding Models will empower councils to close service gaps, enhance liveability, and ensure fair, transparent, and impactful funding. The proposed motion aligns with national priorities while strengthening local leadership and service delivery capacity, ensuring sustainable, community-driven solutions for all Australians.

1. Local Governments Are Key Service Providers
    a. Councils deliver critical services where market failure exists, often stepping in on behalf of other levels of government to ensure equitable access to healthcare, childcare, aged care, disability support, homelessness programs, recreation, arts, culture, and economic development.
    b. Without adequate funding, many communities face service gaps and declining liveability, particularly in regional and rural areas.
2. Current Funding Models Are Restrictive and Inequitable
    a. Local governments are 83% self-funded, relying on rates, fees, and charges, while only 17% of revenue comes from grants-most of which are tied, competitive, or require matching funds, limiting flexibility.
    b. Rigid funding models fail to reflect local needs, service demand, and cost-of-delivery realities, disproportionately disadvantaging regional councils.
3. Place-Based and Needs-Based Funding Ensures Fairer Resource Allocation
    a. A needs-based approach would ensure that funding is allocated where services are most required, reducing inequities between metropolitan, regional, and rural communities. (Glen Innes Severn Council - Annexures to Open Ordinary Meeting - 19 March 2025 Page 44Annexure A Item 7.3)
    b. Higher service delivery costs in regional areas (due to remoteness, workforce shortages, and low population density) must be factored into funding structures.
4. Outcome-Driven Funding Ensures Accountability and Impact
    a. Tying funding to measurable improvements in social, economic, and infrastructure outcomes ensures value-formoney investments and incentivizes innovation.
    b. Councils can track and report on key metrics, ensuring transparency and long-term community benefits.
5. Sustained, Long-Term Investment Supports Stability and Growth
    a. The motion's proposal-$1,000 per person annually for 10 years-provides certainty for councils to plan, invest, and scale solutions that address local and national priorities.
    b. Unlike short-term or project-based funding, this ensures strategic, sustainable community development and economic resilience.
6. Aligns with the 2025 NGA Theme: "National Priorities Need Local Solutions"
    a. Local governments are best placed to deliver tailored, place-based solutions that contribute to broader national priorities like economic recovery, social equity, and liveability.
    b. Empowering councils with flexible, needs-based funding enables national priorities to be implemented effectively at the local level.

Motion number 50 Logan City Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to investigate the need for the establishment of a National Local Government Funding Authority.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Local governments across Australia are facing significant challenges in funding the necessary infrastructure to support the needs of their rapidly growing communities. Often, councils must take out substantial loans to deliver infrastructure in advance of receiving rates revenue. While this allow Council's to spread the costs among future generations who will benefit from access to the infrastructure, these loans are accumulating high interest payments over time, impacting the financial sustainability of Councils. The establishment of a dedicated National Local Government Funding Authority has the potential to contribute towards improving ongoing financial sustainability of the local government sector while ensuring that infrastructure priorities are delivered more efficiently and at the time when they are needed.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Currently the local government sector issues debt in a fragmented way and in smaller quantities than other levels of government and the costs incurred are significantly greater than if there was the opportunity to operate collectively. National local government financing authorities have been effectively established in a number of countries and offer councils access to finance with lower servicing costs and a greater range of institutional investors offering low-risk credit products. This type of arrangement enables local governments to pool their finance needs and creditworthiness as a sector to create the critical mass required to issue financial instruments into the capital market. It also spreads the risk and supply of finance across a greater number of councils leading to more competitively priced debt. A National Local Government Funding Authority has the potential to influence the State Government bond market, responsible for determining the interest rate on councils debt. This could create greater competition in the market to the benefit of local government and ultimately the rate payer through decreased interest rates and lower debt repayments and therefore warrants further investigation at the national level.

Motion number 50.1 Woollahra Municipal Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to support the financial viability of Australian local governments by investigating options to support the creation of local government funding facilities. Which would:

1. Take the form and function of funding vehicles similar to NAB's Local Government Funding Vehicle (delivered in conjunction with the Municipal Association of Victoria), and New Zealand's Local Government Funding Agency;
2. Support local governments to unlock additional flexibility to utilise their balance sheets to invest in community assets that would diversify their income streams, deliver a boost to local their local economies, whilst increasing competitive pressure on the providers of municipal debt, which in turn would lower borrowing costs; and
3. Align with the recommendations of EY's 'Strong Foundations for Sustainable Local Infrastructure' report, which was commissioned by the Australian Government in 2012, as well as the National General Assembly's longstanding calls for additional financial support for local governments.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

To explore options for creating a local government funding facility to support councils' financial sustainability. This would provide cost-effective borrowing solutions, enabling councils to invest in essential infrastructure and diversify revenue streams.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Local governments nationwide (including Woollahra Council) have limited financial options to fund projects through debt finance, which has prevented the sector from providing the essential future- facing infrastructure needed to address the national housing crisis. In our own LGA, we are all well aware of the limitations to funding urgent infrastructure.

One possible solution to councils' infrastructure funding gap is through a well publicised and proven model, known as a local government funding vehicle. A local government funding vehicle is a type of special purpose vehicle (SPV) that could be created by a financial institution to raise capital through issuing bonds to institutional investors, which would in turn be used to offer structured financing facilities to councils. The structural diversification arising through this structure would lower the cost of debt for individual councils, while increasing flexibility to utilise financing features currently unavailable to them, as well as improving working capital management. The bonds would be attractive products for superannuation funds, particularly those with ESG mandates, and could also be structured in such a way which would comply with statutory restrictions on how councils invest (i.e. the Investment Order allows Councils to invest in municipal debt).

The benefits and feasibility of such a model has already been firmly established, with EY recommending to the Commonwealth Government in 2012 that it facilitate the creation of a national financing authority for local government. NAB has already implemented this model in Victoria, issuing $200m of AA+ rated bonds through its Local Government Funding Vehicle (LGFV). The New Zealand Government has similarly operated a collective funding vehicle through its Local Government Funding Agency since 2011.

Motion number 51 Balonne Shire Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to pay the Federal Assistance Grants to local governments in full at the beginning of each new financial year (in the year that they are due) to eliminate uncertainty and to mitigate significant surplus or deficit results caused by revenue recognition requirements.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The motion provides opportunity to address financial sustainability and certainty for local governments to support their capacity to deliver local solutions to national priorities.

The motion is a suggested improvement to be made to existing federal funding arrangements that support local government financial sustainability.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Over recent years there has been significant variation in timing of payment of annual Financial Assistance Grants. Accounting standards require that this general-purpose funding be recognised by councils as revenue at the time it is received.

Changes to the timing of payments can significantly impact councils' Financial Statements causing significant variations from year to year.

Federal Assistance Grants represent, on average, 20% of councils' revenue. Certainty on the timing would mitigate the impacts of these variances and provide certainty for planning and budgets.

In addition to the unpredictable payments have impacts on operating capability, cashflow and borrowings.

Certainty of the payments received at the beginning of the financial year in which they are due will enable councils to develop their annual budgets with more certainty and avoid impacts on operating capability.

Motion number 51.1 Whitsunday Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to confirm the payment of the Financial Assistance Grants will be paid in the financial year to which the funding applies and that it is resolved to allowed Council's to adequately plan and budget for these funds.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Timely payments of Financial Assistance Grants (FA Grants) directly impacts local governments' ability to provide essential services and infrastructure to their communities. Delays or uncertainties in funding can delay councils' planning and budgeting processes, ultimately affecting the quality of services.

The current inconsistency of pre-payments and in-year payments creates reporting challenges and does not allow for budget planning on the timing of the payment. As a result, Councils end up reporting deficit financial positions which impact community confidence in their long-term sustainability.

Debating this at the National General Assembly is important, as it highlights the need for reliable funding to support local governments.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Financial Assistance Grants (FA Grants) are crucial funding sources provided by the Australian Government to local councils, helping them deliver essential services and to maintain infrastructure.

However, uncertainties about when these grants will be paid can disrupt local governments' planning and budgeting processes. When councils lack clarity on funding timelines, it can lead to delays in important projects, reduced service, and challenges in meeting community needs.

- Confirming that FA Grants will be paid in the financial year they apply to provides local governments with the financial certainty they need
- to plan and allocate resources effectively. This stability is essential for maintaining essential services such as waste management,
- public safety, and community facilities.
- Local councils need timely funding to develop budgets and plan projects that meet community needs. Knowing when to expect Financial Assistance Grants.
- payments allows councils to align their financial strategies with local priorities, enhancing overall service delivery.
- Delays in FA Grant payments can lead to postponed projects and services, negatively impacting residents. Ensuring timely payments

- means that communities can benefit from necessary infrastructure improvements and services without unnecessary delays.
- Consistency in payments will allow Councils to plan financially as the changes in payment outside of reporting deadlines, can cause
- financial reporting issues which also impact community confidence in local governance. Last financial year some Queensland
- Councils recorded operating deficits due to the delays in payments across financial years.
- By confirming the payment schedule for FA Grants, the Australian Government promotes accountability and transparency in funding processes.

Motion number 51.2 Brisbane City Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to adopt consistent timing and quantum for payment of Financial Assistance Grants.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The Australian Government provides critical ongoing funding to local governments through the Financial Assistance Grants, however over recent years changes to the timing and quantum of payments late in the financial year has given rise to financial uncertainty in local government.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Over recent years there has been significant variation in both the timing and quantum of payment of annual Financial Assistance Grants.

Changes to the timing or quantum of payments can significantly impact council Financial Statements causing variations from year to year. Accounting standards require that this general-purpose funding be recognised by councils as revenue at the time it is received.

Significant variation of payments around the end of financial year causes problems both with end of year results and with forward year budgets which have already been approved by many councils.

These variations not only result in unpredictable impacts on operating capability but also impact cashflow and borrowings. Maintaining a consistent timing or having early confirmation of payment timing enables councils to develop their annual budgets with more certainty.

Motion number 52 Strathfield Council NSW

The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Remove the requirement on Councils to provide "co-contributions" to grant funded programs.
2. Mandate the provision of grant funding upfront, removing the need for Council to tie up already budgeted finances in anticipation of payment after program delivery.
3. Mandate that all Commonwealth and State government grant funded programs cannot exclude design related work from their eligible actions. Councils are not in the financial or operational position to develop considerable volumes of plans and designs, which then "sit on the shelf" waiting for an appropriate grant funding opportunity.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

1. Remove the requirement on Councils to provide "co-contributions" to grant funded programs

Alignment to National Political Objectives:

Equity and Access: Removing co-contribution requirements ensures smaller or financially constrained councils can access funding on the same terms as larger or wealthier councils, supporting equitable development across metropolitan, regional, and remote communities.

Regional Development & Closing the Gap: This supports broader Commonwealth objectives around Closing the Gap and boosting regional growth, as under-resourced councils-often in Indigenous or remote areas-can pursue vital projects without budgetary barriers.

Efficient Delivery of Services: By removing the need for co-contributions, councils can better prioritise service delivery and infrastructure investment, supporting national goals of responsive and sustainable public services.

2. Mandate the provision of grant funding upfront, removing the need for Councils to tie up already budgeted finances

Alignment to National Political Objectives:

Financial Sustainability of Local Governments: Upfront funding aligns with national objectives of ensuring councils remain financially viable and able to manage cash flow and deliver services without incurring unnecessary debt or compromising other critical services.

Accelerated Project Delivery: Immediate access to funds enables quicker project start times and delivery-supporting national infrastructure and stimulus goals, especially in times of economic recovery or targeted investment (e.g. disaster recovery, housing, or transport).

KEY ARGUMENTS

Remove the requirement for Council co-contributions to grant funded programs

Promotes equity: Ensures all councils, regardless of size or financial capacity, can access critical funding opportunities.

Supports disadvantaged regions: Enables rural, regional, and remote councils to compete fairly for grants-aligning with national equity and regional development goals.

Frees up council budgets: Removes financial barriers and allows councils to redirect funds towards essential community services and infrastructure.

Mandate upfront provision of grant funding

Improves cash flow and financial sustainability: Reduces pressure on council budgets and avoids the need for borrowing or deferring other priorities.

Enables faster project delivery: Councils can commence projects immediately without waiting for reimbursement, supporting timely delivery of national infrastructure and service goals.

Streamlines administration: Lessens the burden of financial reporting and acquittals, enabling councils to focus on effective project delivery.

Include design-related work as eligible for grant funding

Supports project readiness: Ensures councils can invest in quality planning and design, creating a pipeline of shovel-ready projects.

Reduces waste: Prevents councils from spending limited resources on plans that may not be used without grant support.

Builds local government capacity: Recognises the need to fund the early stages of project development, supporting national aims for better infrastructure planning and delivery at the local level.

Motion number 53 Shoalhaven City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide adequate financial assistance, via Services Australia, to eligible ratepayers (Pension and Low-Income earner's) to assist with payments of council and water rates.

Financial assistance should be provided at an amount, or percentage, that reflects current level of rates and should be delivered via a more efficient and cost-effective mechanism, than is currently used.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Currently, a rebate for council and water rates is available to eligible pensioners. Pensioners who hold a pensioner concession card, DVA Gold Card (TPI and EDA), and widow/ widowers who are entitled to income support, may apply for this rebate. The rebate does not extend to low-income earners.

This rebate has not increased in the last 13 years. The current cost of living crisis and an increase in rates over this period has seen the benefit of this rebate erode.

KEY ARGUMENTS

There is a need to provide additional financial support to seniors, pensioners, and low-income earners across our communities, particularly during the cost-of-living challenge currently facing our country.

Motion number 54 Shoalhaven City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to consider a percentage of Gross Regional Product collected as tax revenue from tourism industries to be distributed back to Local Government for the purposes of addressing asset maintenance.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Many local governments in Australia experience high levels of tourism influx throughout the year as travellers and visitors visit our country's beautiful natural areas. The contribution to the economy is significant, and it provides local areas with tourism related employment, contributing to the local, state and national economy.

KEY ARGUMENTS

This places additional strain on critical infrastructure including roads, parks, natural areas requiring management and other core asset classes. This additional asset cost is passed onto ratepayers at present, where tax collected from tourism related activities could be apportioned to assist in upkeep of assets that play a positive role in ensuring tourism continues its economic contributions

Motion number 55 Isaac Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to

a. Recognise full-time-equivalent (FTE) populations in funding models.
b. Acknowledge the additional demands they place on communities.
c. Ensure FTE data is considered when allocating grants.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

To ensure equitable and sustainable funding for local governments by advocating for the formal recognition of non-resident (full-time-equivalent) populations in federal funding models and grant programs. This includes acknowledging the additional pressure these populations place on community infrastructure and essential services and addressing the resulting financial burden on local governments through improved data integration and updated funding methodologies.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Full-time-equivalent (FTE) non-resident populations significantly affect community infrastructure and services and are directly impacting local government financial sustainability.

Specifically, FTE non-resident populations:

- Hasten the deterioration of road infrastructure
- Increase water and waste storage requirements
- Impact essential services including primary and allied health, police and emergency services.

In Queensland FTE non-resident populations are collected by the Queensland's Statisticians Office via their non-residential population reports e.g. Bowen Basin Population Report. In some cases, non-resident populations can make up to 66% of a region's total population.

The increasing trend towards transient workforce policies is only going to exacerbate local impacts and financial burden on local government.

Unfortunately, the current Federal funding methodology is based off permanent population and fails to account for non-resident figures. This combined with a Federal funding model that hasn't changed since the 70s means local governments are having to absorb the unfair financial implications.

Everyone, regardless of their residential status, relies on access to safe roads, essential services, and adequate infrastructure. Local governments are being expected to provide these without fair or accurate funding.

This motion calls on the Australian Government to recognise full-time-equivalent populations in funding models, acknowledge the additional demands they place on communities, and ensure FTE data is considered when allocating grants and core funding. Addressing this gap is essential to ensuring local governments can continue to meet the needs of all who live, work, and contribute to their regions.

Motion number 56 Strathfield Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to advocate to the state governments to review and reconsider rate capping policies, allowing councils to set rates based on local community needs and financial sustainability.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Widespread Application Across Multiple States

- Rate capping policies are imposed by several state governments meaning a large proportion of Australia's councils are affected.
- While the policy is set at the state level, its widespread application makes it a national concern for the local government sector.
- Limits Local Autonomy and Responsiveness
- Rate capping restricts councils from setting revenue levels that reflect the real needs and expectations of their local communities.
- Councils are best placed to understand and respond to local priorities, yet rate caps undermine the capacity to do so.
- Threatens Financial Sustainability of Councils
- With increasing costs, ageing infrastructure, and growing community expectations, councils need flexibility to raise sufficient revenue.
- Rate capping can result in long-term underinvestment in essential services and infrastructure renewal across the country.
- Creates Inequity and Funding Gaps
- Different rules in different states create uneven financial environments for councils nationally.
- Some councils are forced to defer critical works or cut services, while others can respond more flexibly to local pressures.
- National Interest in Strong Local Government
- Financially sustainable and empowered councils are essential to delivering services that support national objectives, including population growth, housing, climate resilience, and economic development.
- Weakening local government weakens the national system.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Undermines Local Autonomy

- Councils are closest to their communities and best placed to determine the appropriate level of rates to meet local needs.
- Rate capping imposed by state governments limits councils' ability to respond flexibly and strategically to community priorities.

Threatens Financial Sustainability

- With rising costs, growing service demands, and infrastructure renewal pressures, rate caps can restrict councils from raising adequate revenue. Over time, this can lead to service reductions, deferred maintenance, and long-term financial stress.

One-Size-Fits-All Approach is Ineffective

- Rate capping fails to consider the diversity of councils across Australia-what may be appropriate for one community may be harmful to another.
- Councils need the flexibility to tailor rates to their unique economic, social, and geographic circumstances.

Inconsistent Policy Across States

- Different rate-setting frameworks across jurisdictions lead to inequities between councils nationally.

- Councils in capped states are disadvantaged in comparison to those that can set rates more freely.

Impacts Long-Term Strategic Planning

- Artificial rate limits constrain councils' ability to plan for and invest in long-term infrastructure and community development.
- It restricts their capacity to support housing growth, climate resilience, economic development, and population change.

Weakens the Role of Elected Councils

- Rate capping shifts financial decision-making away from democratically elected local representatives.
- It reduces local accountability and transparency by limiting the discretion of councils to balance budgets based on informed local consultation.

Inhibits Economic and Community Outcomes

- Local governments are key enablers of local economies. Limiting their revenue can constrain their ability to support small businesses, activate precincts, and deliver programs that strengthen communities.

Motion number 57 Maranoa Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Review the current practice of applying variable funding contribution percentages within a single local government area under federal funding programs; and
2. Support a more equitable model that ensures consistent and higher percentage contributions (e.g. 80/20) from the Australian Government for regional, remote, and very remote areas, based on the broader classification of the local government area rather than the project's specific location within it.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The increasing reliance on the ABS Remoteness Classification to determine funding co-contribution rates has created inconsistencies within single local government areas, particularly those that span multiple remoteness categories. This undermines equitable access to funding and forces councils to prioritise projects based on funding eligibility, rather than community need or strategic alignment. A national review is required to ensure fairness, reduce complexity, and support sustainable investment in regional and remote communities.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The Australian Government's application of the ABS Remoteness Classification in programs such as the Growing Regions Program and the Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program has unintentionally resulted in inequities within local government areas. Councils such as Maranoa, Isaac, Charters Towers and Central Highlands are being allocated multiple funding contribution rates (e.g. 50%, 70%, 80%) depending on where a project falls within the remoteness classification zones. This approach disadvantages councils with large geographic footprints that include urban, regional, and remote communities.

Rather than supporting strategic planning and equitable development across an LGA, the current model incentivises councils to favour projects in higher-funded areas, effectively placing communities within the same LGA in competition with each other. This is contrary to

the intent of supporting remote and regional Australia and undermines community cohesion and long-term infrastructure planning.

In contrast, jurisdictions such as Western Australia have aligned remoteness classifications more closely with local government boundaries, reducing complexity and promoting fairness. A similar approach nationally would streamline funding processes, improve access and outcomes for remote communities, and better reflect the administrative and service delivery realities faced by local governments.

The desired outcome is a funding model that maintains higher co-contribution percentages for regional, remote and very remote areas, while also ensuring that a single local government area is not burdened with multiple funding categories that fragment its strategic delivery of services and infrastructure.

Motion number 58 City of Karratha WA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish a revenue-sharing model that allocates a fair proportion of Commonwealth taxation revenue back to local governments in high-contributing regional areas to support their role in enabling national productivity. Returned revenue would be directed toward the delivery of social and community infrastructure, which is essential to sustaining the workforce and liveability conditions that underpin economic performance.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Local governments in resource-intensive regions like the Pilbara are not only home to nationally significant industries but are fundamental enablers of Australia's economic performance. These high-output regions contribute billions in economic output and taxation revenue annually but receive minimal direct reinvestment to sustain the communities that support this economic activity.

Establishing a revenue-sharing model that returns a modest, fixed proportion of taxation revenue to local governments in these regions would incentivise continued economic contribution, strengthen local capacity, and enhance national productivity and resilience. It would ensure the long-term viability of these vital communities, improve infrastructure delivery, and reduce reliance on ad hoc funding. Supporting the sustainability of these regions is in the national interest, as investment in social and community infrastructure underpins liveability, attracts workforce and capital, and sustains economic activity in high-performing regions.

KEY ARGUMENTS

- Local governments in high-output regions are critical enablers of Australia's economy, often supporting industries that drive national GDP, exports, and taxation revenue.
- The Pilbara's GDP per hour worked is up to five times the national average ($375/hr in the Pilbara vs $56/hr elsewhere in Australia), reflecting exceptional economic intensity and productivity.
- These Local Governments face outsized infrastructure and service delivery pressures-due to workforce influx, population churn, and industrial impacts-but are underfunded through existing mechanisms like Financial Assistance Grants.
- Targeted revenue-sharing would reward economic contribution, support long-term planning, and help attract and retain the workforce needed to sustain national industries.

- With $258 billion of approved investment planned for the Pilbara, funding social and community infrastructure is not just a local issue-it is a national productivity imperative.

ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Motion number 59 Blacktown City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to harmonise the curfews for all major metropolitan airports across Australia.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The lack of a standardised curfew for Australia's major metropolitan airports is a matter of significant concern for all affected local governments and our communities.

KEY ARGUMENTS

An airport curfew is a legislated restriction on aircraft operations during a specified time period. While most aircraft operations are prohibited during this period, emergency aircraft, some small jets, propeller-driven aircraft and freight movements are allowed. The curfews limit what aircraft can land and take-off and, in some cases, the runways that can be used.

The curfews are legally enforceable and regulated by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, who can make a determination of a curfew violation and prosecute an airline or aircraft operator for breaching a curfew.

Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport will be the first new international airport commissioned in Australia in over 30 years, and the first purpose-built international airport in many decades. The airport is being built in one of Australia's fastest-growing population centres, adjacent to many established suburbs and the South West Growth Area of greater Sydney.

It is intended to operate without a curfew, unlike other major Australian Government owned airports which are leased to operating corporations. Adelaide, Essendon, Gold Coast and Sydney (Kingsford Smith International) airports have curfews between 11pm and 6am.

The absence of a planned curfew at Western Sydney International Airport is a grave community concern, raised by residents, community groups and local government throughout the Environmental Impact process, without response from Government.

Australia's second largest airport, Melbourne Tullamarine, operates without a curfew, as it was purposely built in a non-residential area. As Tullamrine has been in operation for 50 years, its community impacts should also be examined under the proposed curfew review.

The leased federal airports were granted on long-term leases to private entities between 1997 and 2003. Prior to this, the airports were owned and managed by the Federal Airports Corporation.

Airservices Australia monitors which aircraft operate during curfew periods and provide reports to the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications. It also provides advice to the community on aircraft movements during curfews through a Noise Complaints and Information Service (NCIS).

Motion number 60 Fraser Coast Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to reinstate the 80/20 Federal Funding Model for road infrastructure projects

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Local governments play a vital role in Australia's road network, managing 77% of the national road network (by length) and represent approximately 38% of total local government infrastructure assets. These roads are vital for ensuring Australians have access to essential services and the facilitation of the movement of goods and services.

A reduction in federal funding to local governments will lead to decreased financial capacity to construct and maintain local roads. This is likely to impact national connectivity and result in local road construction and maintenance being reduced. Poor roads compromise access to goods and services, create bottlenecks for freight and increase risk to road safety generally.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Previously, the Australian Government funded regional road infrastructure projects with an 80/20 funding model, where the Commonwealth covered 80% of the costs of eligible road infrastructure and local governments contributed the remaining 20%. This model supported the development and maintenance of critical road networks, especially in regional and remote areas. For example, the Roads of Strategic Importance initiative (ROSI) which operated under this funding arrangement, ensuring key freight routes and community connections were adequately supported.

Recent changes have seen the federal funding contribution reduce to 50%, requiring local governments to increase its contribution to 50% of the project costs.

The change in funding will significantly increase the financial burden on local governments which are already under financial pressure due to their limited revenue raising capacity and additional funding reductions such as the decrease in the financial assistance grant.

It is therefore difficult for many councils to meet the funding requirements for large-scale infrastructure projects.

The ALGA National State of the Assets Report (July 2024) identifies that sealed and unsealed roads in local government controlled areas have a replacement cost of $250bn and that despite ongoing investment from councils, $23.1bn are in poor condition, $18.7bn have poor function and $17.0bn have poor capacity.

Additional challenges faced by local governments in relation to road infrastructure includes:

- many rural roads were built decades ago and are not designed to handle modern traffic loads and require significant upgrades;
- rapid population growth, particularly in peri-urban and regional areas places additional pressure on existing road networks and requires new infrastructure investments;
- roads are becoming increasingly vulnerable to climate-related events such as flooding and heatwaves, necessitating more resilient infrastructure solutions.

Local road condition, function and capacity will further deteriorate without sufficient federal funding which will have significant impacts at both a local and national level including:

- compromised access to goods and services
- increased road safety risks
- negative impact on productivity

Given the critical nature of road networks, it is essential that local governments receive adequate funding from the Australian government including a return to the 80/20 funding contribution.

Motion number 61 City of Adelaide SA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to consider:

- Working with the Australian Local Government Association to develop a toolkit for local government areas to develop or update an active transport strategy.
- Working with the Australian Local Government Association to develop a framework and/or self-assessment tool for local government areas to audit their cycling/walking/active transport strategies.
- Providing federal funding support to develop these frameworks and tools.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

To have a framework and tool kit to assist all Australian local government bodies to develop an active transport strategy or undertake a review of and update an existing strategy.

KEY ARGUMENTS

1. The Australian Government supports measures to increase all aspects of active transport - Walking and Cycling - in Australian communities, noting the design, project deployment and funding of cycling and pedestrian facilities is primarily a matter for state, territory and local governments. (Active Transport-Walking and Cycling | Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts)
2. The Australian Government has committed $100m for a National Active Transport Fund from 2024-25 to 2028-29 to fund the design and construction of new or existing bicycle and walking pathways to encourage the use of active transport. Part of the application criteria for funding is that the project must address at least one or more focus areas ie road safety, reduce transport emissions or active and liveable communities and provide supporting evidence such as safety plans, or Active Transport Strategies.
3. Australian Government funding will assist the Australian Local Government Association to develop a consistent framework and toolkit that can be available to all local government areas.

Motion number 62 City of Adelaide SA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to consider:

1. Working with the Australian Local Government Association to commit 30 per cent of journeys to school by active transport by 2030 (30 by 30).
2. Working with the Australian Local Government Association to developing an overarching action plan to support local government areas who also commit to '30 by 30'.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

To have an action plan to support all local government areas who commit to working with educational facilities in their local government area to meet a target of 30 percent of journeys to and from school in 2030 being by active transport.

KEY ARGUMENTS

1. The Australian Transport Assessment and Planning website highlights the following observations and benefits of active travel:

- The 2007-2008 National Health Survey identified that physical inactivity is related to chronic health conditions including ischaemic heart disease, stroke, Type 2 diabetes, kidney disease, osteoarthritis, osteoporosis, colorectal cancer and depression (AIHW Cat No PHE 157, 2012).
- Active travellers tend to be healthier than people who are relatively inactive or sedentary and suffer less from medical conditions that reduce their life expectancy. Healthy individuals place less demand on the health system for diagnosis, surgery and recovery.
- An active travel initiative that has the effect of causing private motor vehicle users to walk or cycle rather than drive could reduce congestion depending on the time their trip is made.
- Diversion of motorised transport trips to active travel could allow the deferral of road initiatives aimed at reducing congestion by increasing capacity. Cost savings from deferral would partly offset the costs of any active travel initiatives that encouraged trip diversion.

2. Cancer Council's National Secondary Students' Diet and Activity (Push for teens to find their feet as daily active travel rates take a step back | Cancer Council) study surveyed teens on their diet and lifestyle habits. The survey found students were 29% less likely to actively travel every weekday in 2018 compared to 2009 - 10, with less than one in three Australian secondary students actively travelling to school each day.

3. The benefits of shifting from private car travel to active transport modes, such as walking and cycling, are well recognised and have been promoted by both national and state governments.1 Yet active transport rates in Australia remain low in comparison with many European and Asian countries. Especially concerning is the decline in active transport among children, with less than a third of Australian children ow regularly walking or cycling to school.

Motion number 62.1 Camden Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to work with the State and Territory Governments to prioritise the funding and delivery of drop-off/pick up areas, paths and crossings for schools, at no cost to local government, to help ensure safety for children and the community.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

A nationally coordinated approach and funding support for proactively planning and implementing road safety infrastructure for schools, especially for new school construction projects, will help to enhance safety for children and other community members.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The planning, funding and delivery of road safety infrastructure for schools is essential to ensure a safe environment around schools, especially during the busy periods associated

with school start and finish times. Local schools that have recently been established in the Camden LGA are impacting roads and open space infrastructure and causing frustrations for local residents. The size of these school sites means that most 'kiss and drop' locations are generally located on Council-owned roads, and staff and visitor parking spaces provided on-site do not meet demand. Visitors and some staff are having to park on surrounding streets, which creates congestion and impacts traffic flow along the local street network. Increasing traffic and safety issues are also being experienced on the approaches to school sites, which is putting children and other community members including school staff at risk. Children are also increasingly being required to travel to use off-site open spaces and sporting facilities.

It would be advantageous for nationally consistent standards to be developed for planning and delivering road safety infrastructure such as drop-off/pick up areas, paths and crossings for schools, including a requirement for comprehensive planning for such infrastructure to be integrated within new school construction projects. In particular, well-planned road safety infrastructure for schools would have the following benefits:

- Child Safety: The risk of accidents will be significantly reduced.
- Traffic Management: Traffic flow will be improved by reducing congestion and improving access for parents/carers, buses and emergency vehicles.
- Active Transport: Active transport options such as walking and cycling will be supported, thereby fostering healthier habits among children and reducing reliance on vehicles.
- Community Responsibility: It demonstrates a commitment to and prioritisation of the well-being and safety of children and the broader community.
- Legal and Liability Considerations: Potential legal liabilities for local governments and school authorities arising from accidents will be mitigated.

By working with the State and Territory Governments in relation to adequately funding and planning this road safety infrastructure, the Australian Government can ensure that a consistent approach to this matter is taken across all jurisdictions.

Motion number 63 City of Vincent WA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to work with the State and Territory Governments to reduce the default speed limit in Australia on Residential Local Roads from 50km/h to 40km/h.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

In 2024, there were 1,300 road crash deaths in Australia. In 2024, approximately 45% of the road crash deaths in Australia occurred in urban areas.

This means around 585 fatalities were in urban settings, reflecting the ongoing challenges of road safety in densely populated regions. 151 deaths occurred in 50km/h speed zones in 2024 and only 36 occurred in speed zones less than 40km/h.

Impact speed is the main determinant of injury outcome.

A 20% reduction in speed from 50km/h to 40km/h results in a 200% increase in the likelihood of surviving a collision.

Dropping the speed on all our local roads is the single most effective way to make our streets safer and the lowest cost. And it has a negligible impact on travel time across urban areas.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The default speed limit in built-up areas in Australia was progressively lowered from 60 km/h to 50 km/h during the late 1990s and early 2000s. This change was to improve road safety particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.

Since 2000, Australia's population has increased by nearly 8 million people from 19 million to 27 million and the number of registered vehicles has increased by 7 million from 12 million vehicles to 19 million vehicles. Nearly all this growth has occurred in major cities with increased traffic and vehicle related accidents.

In 2018 the City of Vincent proposed a 40km/h speed zone trial within Vincent's southern suburban residential areas to study the impact of slower speed limits. The objective was that the trial would make neighbourhood streets safer and provide a better street environment for all road users and residents living close by.

The trial was a success and in 2023 Main Roads WA (MRWA) approved permanent 40km/h speed limits in parts of North Perth, in addition to an existing trial area in Vincent's southern-most suburbs. This covered 40 per cent of City of Vincent's local access roads.

Community consultations by City of Vincent demonstrated significant support for the reduction of the speed limits, with almost 60 per cent of respondents showing they were in favour of the change.

MRWA has now granted approval for the speed to be permanently reduced on all local access roads within the City of Vincent. The 40km/h speed limits will apply to local access roads only. Suitable adjoining 50km/h distributer roads may be considered for 40km/h and subject to an application to MRWA for approval on a case-by-case basis.

The Perth Inner City Group are now collaborating on the expansion of the 40km/h zones to the City of Perth, City of Subiaco, City of South Perth and Town of Victoria Park.

Motion number 64 Maribyrnong City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Increase Roads to Recovery Funding for all States, beyond the current projections to reflect the increasing demand on local roads;
2. Introduce a specific road safety component within Roads to Recovery to prioritise projects that address high-risk areas and accident blackspots;
3. Reintroduce a Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program;
4. Expand Roads to Recovery Eligibility to Support Road Safety Technology and Innovation;
5. Introduce a Forward Funding Model for Long-Term Planning; and
6. Increase Funding for Bridge and Intersection Upgrades.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The national road toll remains a critical concern, with an upward trend of fatalities and serious injuries on our road network occurring over the past 5 years after decades of annual reductions.

The Australian Government is requested to consider this recommendation to ensure that local governments have the resources necessary to deliver safer roads for all Australians.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Regional and metropolitan road users continue to face safety risks due to aging infrastructure, inadequate funding for proactive road maintenance, and increasing congestion and safety challenges driven by growth and change.

With current Road to Recovery funding allocations set at $4.4B nationally between 2024-25 and 2028-29, this is insufficient to address the increasing backlog of periodic road maintenance projects and priority road safety upgrades. Construction cost escalations have also significantly impacted the ability of councils to address critical road works.

Motion number 65 Penrith City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Develop a dedicated national infrastructure investment framework that ensures equitable funding for transport, roads, and essential infrastructure in outer metropolitan growth areas. It should include:

- Recognising outer metropolitan growth areas as distinct regions requiring specific federal funding allocations.
- Prioritising transport infrastructure investment, including strategic road networks, public transport expansion, and active transport options, to improve connectivity and reduce congestion.
- Ensuring equitable access to social infrastructure, such as healthcare, education, and recreational facilities, to enhance liveability and economic participation.
- Aligning infrastructure funding with population growth projections, to prevent the cycle of underinvestment and service shortfalls in rapidly expanding communities.

2. Increased investment in transport, roads, and essential infrastructure, to address the current chronic infrastructure deficits in these regions.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

One in five Australians live in fast-growing outer metropolitan areas, yet these regions receive only 13% of infrastructure investment, despite producing 13% of Australia's jobs and 11% of GDP. The rapid growth of outer metropolitan regions has significantly outpaced infrastructure development, leading to congestion, accessibility barriers, and inadequate essential services. Despite these areas experiencing population growth rates double the national average, investment in critical infrastructure has lagged. This underinvestment limits social mobility, impacts business growth, and reduces overall economic productivity.

To achieve equitable access to infrastructure in growth areas, we need to ensure outer metropolitan communities receive the same level of investment as inner-city counterparts. Growth areas should not be forced to rely on retroactive infrastructure solutions that leave residents disconnected and underserved.

A dedicated national infrastructure fund is needed, with a commitment from the Australian Government to work with Councils to:

- Align infrastructure planning with population growth.
- Address the disparity in transport and services.
- Ensure public transport accessibility, reducing reliance on private vehicles.
- Support economic participation and regional resilience.

A comprehensive funding strategy will promote sustainable growth, enhance economic opportunities, and support Australia's long-term urban development goals as outlined in the

National Urban Policy. The Australian Government must bridge the infrastructure gap to create liveable, well-connected communities. Without this, housing development will continue without adequate roads, public transport, and essential services, leading to long-term urban inequalities and reduced quality of life outcomes.

The National Housing Accord commits to delivering 1.2 million new homes by 2029. However, without commensurate infrastructure investment, residents in growth areas will continue to experience substandard access to transport, healthcare, education, and employment opportunities. The lack of equitable infrastructure funding perpetuates social and economic inequalities, disproportionately affecting lower-income households and increasing car dependency due to insufficient public transport options.

A dedicated national funding model for infrastructure in growth areas is essential to ensure:

- Equitable access to public transport, roads, and essential services, aligning growth areas with inner metropolitan standards.
- Sustainable urban planning that prioritises liveability, connectivity, and resilience.
- Job creation and economic opportunities through investment in transport networks and digital infrastructure.

Failure to address this systemic funding disparity will further entrench social disadvantage, stifle economic growth, and limit access to essential services. The right level of investment in Australia's fastest-growing outer metropolitan regions is not just a local issue but a national priority.

KEY ARGUMENTS

These funding adjustments support the objectives of the National Housing Accord, which is focused on delivering 1.2 million new homes by 2029. Without parallel investment in transport, roads, and essential infrastructure, these rapidly expanding communities will face worsening congestion, poor access to critical services, and restricted economic opportunities.

This growing mismatch between housing supply and infrastructure investment creates urban inequities, where outer metropolitan residents are disadvantaged compared to those in established inner-city areas. This is a current issue, and the impacts are being felt now - residents in Australia's fastest growing outer suburban local government areas are rating liveability on average 6% lower than the rest of the country (NGAA, 2025).

Despite their significant economic contribution, outer metropolitan regions receive inadequate and inequitable government investment. These areas account for 21% of Australia's population, generate 13% of jobs and contribute 11% of GDP, yet they receive only 13% of federal infrastructure funding-a figure that does not align with their growth trajectory or pressing infrastructure needs. As a result, residents endure high travel costs, long and unreliable commutes, and inadequate access to healthcare, education, and employment hubs. This funding shortfall further entrenches social and economic inequalities, disproportionately affecting low-income, culturally diverse, and vulnerable communities, who have fewer resources to mitigate these challenges.

A critical issue is the lack of adequate public transport infrastructure in growth areas, which has failed to keep pace with population expansion. As a result, car dependency has intensified, worsening congestion, increasing household transport costs, and contributing to environmental impacts. 2021 Census data indicates that 57% of outer metropolitan residents rely on private vehicles for work, compared to just 4.5% using public transport. Limited

transport options restrict access to employment, education, and healthcare, particularly for those without private vehicle access. The absence of reliable and efficient public transport networks exacerbates social isolation, limits workforce participation, and disproportionately affects women, young people, and lower-income households.

Insufficient infrastructure investment limits employment access increases commuting times, and reduces workforce participation, impacting economic resilience. Poor transport and services in growth areas drive urban sprawl and social disadvantage. The high cost of commuting, particularly in regions with expensive toll roads and limited public transport options, further exacerbates financial strain on households already struggling with rising living costs.

To address these challenges, the Australian Government must implement a dedicated national infrastructure investment framework that ensures equitable funding for transport, roads, and essential infrastructure in outer metropolitan growth areas. This should include:

Recognising outer metropolitan growth areas as distinct regions requiring specific federal funding allocations.

Prioritising transport infrastructure investment, including strategic road networks, public transport expansion, and active transport options, to improve connectivity and reduce congestion.

Ensuring equitable access to social infrastructure; healthcare, education, and recreational facilities, to enhance liveability and economic participation.

Aligning infrastructure funding with population growth projections

Motion number 65.1 Hume City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to recognise outer metropolitan growth areas as regions requiring specific attention in Commonwealth funding programs across portfolios.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The majority of Australia's growth is being absorbed by Councils that represent over 5 million of the total population of Australia. As these residents call these growth areas home there is a significant funding gap developing between what is required and delivered. The Commonwealth have a role to play in ensuring that adequate provision of infrastructure funding is delivered so that the community's of our fastest growing areas aren't left behind.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Research by the National Growth Areas Alliance (NGAA) and RMIT's Australian Urban Observatory's 'City Liveability Scorecards for Growth Areas' (the Scorecards) make it clear that chronic underfunding has led to significant disparities between growth areas and non-growth areas in capital cities.

A 'liveable' place is defined as somewhere that is: safe, attractive, inclusive, and environmentally sustainable; with affordable and diverse types of housing, public open space, local shops, health and community services, leisure and cultural opportunities; with opportunities for employment and education all accessible by convenient public transport, walking and cycling.

The Scorecards show the distribution of measures of liveability by suburb within each capital city using data for 10 indicators, which include social infrastructure (health, education, arts and cultural facilities and community and sport facilities), walkability, public transport accessibility, access to public open space and housing affordability.

Furthermore, RMIT's report, 'The benefits and challenges of Australian Government investment in infrastructure in outer suburban growth areas', demonstrates that improving access in growth areas would deliver widespread benefits for communities. Notably, early provision of infrastructure and services maximises these benefits, highlighting the need to accelerate delivery alongside growth. Therefore, catching up on infrastructure and essential service delivery in growth areas must be a national priority.

Motion number 65.2 Hume City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to resource equitably through a national infrastructure investment framework for growth areas.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The majority of Australia's growth is being absorbed by Councils that represent over 5 million of the total population of Australia. As these residents call these growth areas home there is a significant funding gap developing between what is required and delivered. The Commonwealth have a role to play in ensuring that adequate provision of infrastructure funding is delivered so that the community's of our fastest growing areas aren't left behind.

KEY ARGUMENTS

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Motion number 65.3 Hume City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to prioritise funding from existing programs to fix the infrastructure deficits in growth areas.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The majority of Australia's growth is being absorbed by Councils that represent over 5 million of the total population of Australia. As these residents call these growth areas home there is a significant funding gap developing between what is required and delivered. The Commonwealth have a role to play in ensuring that adequate provision of infrastructure funding is delivered so that the community's of our fastest growing areas aren't left behind.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Research by the National Growth Areas Alliance (NGAA) and RMIT's Australian Urban Observatory's 'City Liveability Scorecards for Growth Areas' (the Scorecards) make it clear that chronic underfunding has led to significant disparities between growth areas and non-growth areas in capital cities.

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Motion number 66 Camden Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide funding to local councils to facilitate the acquisition of land and enable infrastructure development including social infrastructure and environmental protection.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Funding to councils to support land acquisition and the development of necessary infrastructure is essential to facilitate development and boost land availability for housing.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The requested funding would enable the early acquisition of riparian corridors and drainage land. The current framework for infrastructure delivery relies on development to occur for a council to collect funds through contributions plans. This results in a challenging situation whereby the only way to unlock and develop land is for a council to forward fund the acquisition of land to deliver infrastructure. The early acquisition of land in western Sydney, for example, will cost billions of dollars, which is beyond the financial capacity of most councils to forward fund.

In NSW, once a property is identified for acquisition on an Indicative Layout Plan (ILP) the landowners may submit a claim for hardship with a council for early acquisition of their land, and provided the land owners can demonstrate hardship in accordance with the Land

Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991 (NSW), a council is required to acquire the land within 90 days. This poses a major financial risk to councils which do not have the economy of scale to support these acquisitions through loans or cash reserves, particularly in greenfield areas with large land masses and their respective land values. A 'Growth facilitates Growth' approach is suggested, whereby the Australian Government could provide investment for the early acquisition of land for infrastructure. That initial funding can then be recouped via contributions plans. Once recouped by Government, the funds could then be reinvested in other areas to enable continued orderly development.

Early investment from Government is essential in unlocking fragmented land identified for future growth by allowing the early acquisition of land. A potential solution could be grants or interest-free loans to councils to acquire land to fast-track development and the delivery of housing in growth centres.

Motion number 67 Noosa Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to collaborate with local governments to mandate road user agreements with industry, ensuring fair cost distribution among road users, including those responsible for increased freight loads that damage local government roads.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The Australian Government collaborates with state and territory governments through the National Partnership Agreement (NPA) on Land Transport Infrastructure Projects to co-invest in nationally significant road and rail infrastructure. Programs like the Infrastructure Investment Program (IIP), Roads to Recovery (RTR), and Roads of Strategic Importance (ROSI) are essential to maintaining and improving road resilience.

With the NPA expired in June 2024, priorities are shifting to ensure transparent, evidence-based investments addressing national needs. Local councils, managing 75% of the national road network, face challenges from severe weather, freight loads from mining, and systemic underinvestment. Heavy vehicle damage, especially during heavy rain, exacerbates these pressures.

Equitable solutions, such as road user agreements, are vital to fairly distribute road maintenance costs, reduce financial burdens on councils, and ensure the resilience of critical infrastructure for rural and regional communities.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Address the impact of heavy vehicle usage and mining activities on unsealed roads, especially during and after heavy rain. Ensure fair cost distribution among road users to alleviate the financial burden on councils. Recognize that the transition to renewable energy and transportation of related infrastructure could strain rural and regional road networks.

Local councils manage vast and expensive road networks. Severe weather events and insufficient funding make it difficult to repair and maintain these assets.

Heavy vehicles, particularly those tied to mining and freight, disproportionately damage unsealed roads. Mandating road user agreements will ensure that costs are fairly shared.

The transportation of renewable energy infrastructure is placing additional pressure on rural road networks. Addressing these impacts is critical for long-term sustainability.

Implementing equitable cost-sharing through road user agreements will ease the financial strain on local councils while supporting the resilience and functionality of essential road networks.

This motion highlights the need for collaboration at all levels of government to address infrastructure challenges and build stronger, more sustainable roads for the future.

Motion number 68 Woollahra Municipal Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to better regulate the import, manufacture and classification of electronic powered cycle bikes (e-bikes) and other electronic mobility devices, some of which currently are able to travel at speeds equivalent to smaller motorbikes and mopeds. This measure is required to ensure e-bikes and electronic mobility devices are properly classified vehicles with national limits on their speed capacity and other restrictions necessary to protect the safety of users and the general public.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

A coordinated national approach is needed to regulate e-bikes and electric mobility devices, ensuring they are safe, properly classified, and subject to appropriate restrictions.

KEY ARGUMENTS

There has been a significant increase in sales of e-bikes and electric mobility devices in Australia. Many people in the community fear speeding e-bikes and mobility devices, particularly on footpaths and shared cycleways and are calling for stricter regulation and physical modifications to this equipment to improve safety for both riders and pedestrians. Whilst e-bikes and mobility devices have an important role in contributing to sustainable and efficient transport, national guidelines on the classification of e-bikes and mobility devices should be considered. If they are, for example, travelling at speeds equivalent to motorbikes, should they be classified as such with licensing requirements to operate them, as in the case with other vehicles travelling at similar speeds like cars and motorbikes?

Motion number 69 Woollahra Municipal Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to prioritise new and increased funding for councils in order to ensure that they are able to plan for and provide adequate green spaces and community facilities before higher density development is approved.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The Australian Government must increase funding to councils for green space and community facilities, ensuring infrastructure keeps pace with housing development. Without this investment, higher-density living will compromise public wellbeing, environmental sustainability, and long-term urban liveability. A proactive funding approach will create healthier, more resilient communities for future generations.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The Australian Government's ambitious plan to build 1.2 million new dwellings by 2029 hinges heavily on higher density living, particularly via high and mid-rise apartment buildings, more dual occupancy attached residences, and terraces in 'well located' areas. Evidence to date highlights that increased density in Australia's capital cities and regional centres can only be accommodated if it's adequately supported by the parks, schools, libraries, and

public spaces critical for ensuring new neighbourhoods remain liveable and resilient for generations to come.

Unfortunately, Australia has fostered an approach to new development that is either developer-led or too reliant on developer funding to provide essential amenities like parks and libraries. As a consequence, public green space and amenities are often shoehorned in later at state and local government expense, and without the benefit of a long-term funding commitment that is essential for allowing councils to plan effectively. Private open space in new dwellings is also shrinking.

Even in new low-rise housing developments on the urban fringe, houses are being built "right up to the boundary line" on rapidly shrinking block sizes with no room for trees - a 350 sqm lot size is becoming the norm. Typically, new apartment buildings also offer little in the way of shared community or green space. Not only has the trend towards diminishing backyards hampered opportunities for children to play outside, it is also contributing to the 'heat island effect', which has the potential to make many areas in Australia's capital cities and major regional centres unliveable as climate change accelerates.

Motion number 69.1 Whitehorse City Council VIC

The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Investigate the impact of urban densification on the availability and quality of public open spaces, particularly in areas with low open space per person.
2. Examine whether densification genuinely delivers affordable housing given high rates of population growth.
3. Review the implications of government acquisition powers on public open space, highlighting the effect of compulsory acquisitions for infrastructure projects and their impact on local communities.
4. Advocate for stronger protections and policies to preserve and expand public open spaces in middle and outer-ring suburbs, recognising the environmental, social, and health benefits these areas provide.
5. Examine the impact of urban densification on physical and community infrastructure, such as schools, health services, drainage, and congestion on roads.
6. Engage with relevant stakeholders, including community groups and planning bodies, to identify best practices and policy recommendations for maintaining and enhancing open spaces in the face of urban growth.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The national objective of this motion is to ensure that urban densification is implemented in a way that supports liveability, sustainability, and equitable access to public spaces. As population growth accelerates, the motion seeks to safeguard and enhance public open spaces, ensuring they remain available and of high quality, particularly in areas where space per person is limited.

A core objective is to assess whether urban densification truly delivers affordable housing or if it simply intensifies existing pressures without addressing affordability challenges. Additionally, the motion aims to review government acquisition powers to understand how compulsory land acquisitions for infrastructure projects impact public spaces and local communities.

Another key goal is to advocate for stronger policies and protections to preserve and expand green spaces, particularly in middle and outer suburbs, recognising their critical role in

community health, social cohesion, and environmental sustainability. The motion also seeks to evaluate the strain of densification on essential infrastructure, including schools, healthcare, drainage, and transport networks, to ensure communities remain functional and well-serviced.

By engaging with stakeholders such as community groups and planning bodies, the objective is to identify best practices and policy solutions that balance urban growth with the need for resilient, well-planned, and accessible public spaces.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The motion to the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) National General Assembly (NGA) 2025 presents a case for managing urban densification in a way that maintains liveability, sustainability, and equitable access to public spaces. The key arguments centre on the need for better urban planning policies, the protection of open spaces, and the assessment of densification's true impact on housing affordability and infrastructure.

Ensuring Liveability and Public Open Space

A major concern raised by the motion is the impact of urban densification on public open spaces. As cities grow and more high-density housing developments are introduced, there is a risk that open spaces will be diminished, reducing access to parks, recreational areas, and community green spaces. The motion highlights that such spaces are essential for physical and mental well-being, social cohesion, and environmental benefits. It calls for measures to ensure these areas remain available and of high quality, particularly in neighbourhoods where open space per person is already limited.

Assessing Housing Affordability Under Densification

Another key argument questions whether densification effectively delivers affordable housing. While increasing housing supply is often seen as a solution to affordability issues, rapid population growth may counteract these benefits by driving up demand and costs. The motion calls for a thorough evaluation of whether densification leads to genuinely affordable housing or if it simply exacerbates existing housing pressures.

Reviewing Government Acquisition Powers

The motion raises concerns about the government's ability to acquire land for infrastructure projects, often through compulsory acquisition. This process can result in the loss of public open spaces, which negatively impacts local communities. The argument is that such acquisitions should be carefully reviewed to ensure they do not disproportionately affect public spaces and community resources. Greater transparency and consideration of the long-term impact of these acquisitions are needed.

Stronger Policies for Protecting and Expanding Open Spaces

Recognising the importance of green spaces in middle and outer suburbs, the motion argues for stronger protections and policies to preserve and expand these areas. Parks and open spaces provide social, health, and environmental benefits, including improved air quality, reduced urban heat, and spaces for community activities. Without adequate safeguards, continued urban expansion could erode these benefits, negatively impacting residents.

Infrastructure Challenges and Community Well-Being

Urban densification places significant pressure on infrastructure such as schools, healthcare facilities, drainage systems, and road networks. The motion argues that increasing density without corresponding infrastructure improvements can lead to overcrowded schools, strained healthcare services, increased congestion, and inadequate drainage. Ensuring that urban growth is matched with necessary infrastructure investments is crucial to maintaining liveable communities.

Stakeholder Engagement and Policy Development

Finally, the motion emphasises the importance of engaging with stakeholders, including community groups and planning bodies, to identify best practices for balancing urban growth with the need for open spaces. Collaborative policymaking can help develop sustainable and well-planned urban environments.

In summary, the motion calls for a balanced approach to urban densification that prioritises liveability, public space protect

Motion number 70 Moyne Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish a permanent, indexed funding stream to close the $1 billion annual local road maintenance gap, enhance the Roads to Recovery program to provide greater support for rural and regional councils based on road length and need, and expand funding for community infrastructure projects that strengthen economic activity, service delivery, and resilience in rural areas.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Rural and regional councils in Victoria are responsible for vast road networks that are critical to freight movement, agricultural productivity, and community connectivity. These networks, comprising of roads and supporting infrastructure (bridges etc.) are being put under greater pressure as the road network grows nationally, and are impacted by external forces such as weather conditions and events, to the increase of heavier freight vehicles.

Many of these regional and rural councils have limited revenue sources and struggle to maintain roads to a safe and efficient standard due to a lack of adequate, ongoing funding.

Independent research has identified a $1 billion annual shortfall in local road maintenance funding. While recent increases in the Roads to Recovery program are welcome, they do not fully address the financial gap, particularly for councils managing extensive road networks, including bridge infrastructure across large geographic areas.

Beyond roads, rural councils also maintain vital community infrastructure such as halls, recreation facilities, and public amenities that serve dispersed populations. Programs such as the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCI) Program have played a crucial role in delivering these assets, but a long-term, sustainable funding model is needed to ensure ongoing investment.

This motion calls for sustained and equitable federal investment in local road networks and infrastructure to enhance economic development, safety, and liveability in rural and regional Victoria.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Funding Shortfall for Rural Roads: Large rural shires manage extensive road networks with limited rate revenue, making external funding essential for maintaining road safety and productivity.

Need for Equitable Funding Models: Current funding programs do not adequately reflect the road length and maintenance burden faced by rural and regional councils.

Capacity Challenges: Many rural councils lack dedicated asset management teams, making it difficult to plan for long-term road and infrastructure renewal. A national support program would improve local government capacity.

Community Infrastructure is Critical: Public halls, sporting facilities, and service hubs in rural communities require ongoing investment to support economic activity, health, and social wellbeing.

Alignment with National Priorities: Investing in rural infrastructure supports freight efficiency, economic development, disaster resilience, and decentralisation efforts.

Motion number 70.1 City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder WA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to lead a joint initiative with all levels of government to reduce barriers and red tape in accessing funding for local infrastructure projects, particularly in regional areas. This initiative should provide targeted support for pre-feasibility work, streamline processes, and foster collaboration between government and the private sector to ensure local governments can develop well-planned, sustainable projects that attract investment and drive regional development.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Local governments are at the forefront of delivering essential infrastructure and public services that form the backbone of communities, yet they are often hindered by a series of systemic challenges when it comes to accessing the government funding needed to initiate and complete projects.

KEY ARGUMENTS

While federal grant programs have been structured to prioritise shovel-ready projects, local governments frequently lack the resources, expertise, and capacity to undertake the necessary preliminary work-such as business modelling, concept planning, and prefeasibility studies-that would enable them to qualify for such grants in a competitive manner. Without the proper pre-feasibility studies, councils are left vulnerable to developing projects that may not align with the needs of their communities or with the funding priorities set by the government.

This issue is particularly pronounced in regional and rural areas, where councils face even greater challenges in accessing resources. These areas often require funding for essential public services and infrastructure projects, but the distance from metropolitan centres means that consultancy fees and other professional costs are disproportionately higher, further escalating the financial strain on already under-resourced local governments.

The disparity in access to expertise and resources creates an inequitable playing field for regional councils, placing them at a significant disadvantage when competing for government grants. This inequity is compounded by the difficulty regional councils face in developing business cases or securing the expert advice required to meet the complex criteria of federal funding programs.

To address these challenges and ensure that local governments, particularly those in regional areas, are not left behind, it is essential for the Federal Government to take a leading role in facilitating a coordinated, multi-tiered approach to reduce these barriers.

The government should foster collaboration between federal, state, and local governments, as well as the private sector, to create an environment that encourages investment. By reducing red tape, streamlining processes, and providing targeted support for the pre-feasibility work that local councils require, the Federal government would play a critical role in assisting councils move forward with well-planned, sustainable projects that can attract all levels of investment

Motion number 70.2 Loddon Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide an additional road maintenance and restoration fund that invests directly in Local Government to fund the road infrastructure repair deficit road and allow local councils to catch up on the road and bridge repair backlog facing councils across the Country.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Increased passenger and freight traffic is increasing road maintenance and funding needs and delayed repairs are compromising road safety and economic productivity nationally. This investment in the maintenance backlog would allow councils to address priority road repairs across the country, reducing road trauma and boosting economic activity and the productivity of the nation.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Local Councils are responsible for 87 per cent of Victoria's road network. MRGC councils maintain over 23,000 kms of roads which is similar to the length of road assets that the State of Victoria manages. In the regions, these council maintained roads are vital to keep our communities connected and provide access to health care, education, and other vital services. Regional roads are critical freight corridors relied upon for enabling produce to reach market here and for export. The freight task continues to increase, adding further pressure to the regional road network and impacting driver safety.

Despite increases in the Roads to Recovery federal funding, long term consistent underfunding of local government means that there is a significant backlog of road maintenance across the country.

Investing in a one off local road maintenance "blitz" would have direct safety and efficiency dividends for all Australians.

In Victoria despite only 1 in 5 people living in country Victoria, consistently between 50 and 60 per cent of road fatalities occur on regional roads. The majority of these are local people who die within 30kms of their homes.

As Infrastructure Australia has pointed out: Local governments in regional and remote Australia face the dual challenge of maintaining geographically extensive networks while having a relatively low revenue base from which to fund roadworks.

MAV identifies the maintenance backlog in Victoria alone as being around $4 billion.

As well as being formally endorsed by Loddon Shire Council, this motion is supported by all six member councils of the Murray River Group of Councils.

Motion number 70.3 Western Downs Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to allocate more funding to road and other structural infrastructure to sustainably manage state and federal transport infrastructure and complete the critical road maintenance backlog.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Regional Australia is home to more than nine million people and accounts for roughly one-third of the national workforce. The regions generate about 34 percent of the nation's economic output (RAI). The Western Downs region is a strong example of the significant economic contribution regions make. With a GRP of $5.9 Billion, the GRP per capita in the Western Downs LGA is over $168,614,more than double that of Toowoomba, and 45% higher than that of Brisbane.

National Highways in regional Australia service a significant, heavy and growing freight task and the freight system is vital for the competitiveness and growth of the national economy ensuring access to domestic and export markets. The large freight task significantly reduces the condition and the asset life of road infrastructure as opposed to light passenger vehicles. The current critically poor condition and aged infrastructure of the Warrego Highway presents an ongoing risk of property damage, injury or death to road users in the Western Downs region.

In addition to this, critical structural infrastructure such as bridges are not receiving required funding to maintain the asset or invest in structural upgrades required to support the heavy freight task of regional areas.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Regional Australia significantly contributes to the national economy, and this is expected to increase due to the assets and infrastructure constructed to support the nation's renewable energy transition. The road assets in the regional areas require investment to renew and update these critical assets as part of the larger freight network to accommodate the high percentage of heavy vehicles. A strong and modern national transport network is required to connect industries to supply chains and markets. The development of contemporary transportation and distribution networks supporting industry sectors is required for further development to support Australia.

Investment in road infrastructure should consider the heavy freight task in regional areas. The significant economic contribution of regional areas and the heavy freight task should be included a key criteria for the distribution of funds, in addition to the volume of road users. Regional areas in Australia rely on contemporary, safe and well-maintained state and federal road networks to enable industries' heavy freight task.

RACQ's Unroadworthy Roads Survey (2024) finds that 3 of the top 10 most unroadworthy roads are National Highways, with the remainder being state controlled roads. Whilst the Federal Government places focus on road infrastructure safety improvements, action must be taken on effective asset management, specifically asset renewals and strategic upgrades to reflect current industry standards

Deficiencies in the State and National Highway network are being borne by the local road network. For example, Dogwood Creek bridge on the Warrego Highway, a National Highway, has been found structurally deficient for certain vehicle combinations. These combinations are crucial to support the operation of the mining industry in central and western Queensland. These combinations have been detoured onto local roads since mid-

2022, with no plans from the State or Federal Government to address the deficiencies in the foreseeable future. This lack of management further compounds maintenance and asset condition issues on local government roads.

Recent funding programs have focused predominantly on metropolitan areas, with a lower proportion of funds spent in regional and remote communities. Further, the works completed in regional areas has focused on safety improvements such as wide centre line treatments and flattening of batter slopes, whilst the physical road infrastructure remains in poor asset condition with this issue remaining unaddressed, continuing to present a threat to road user safety.

The risk to road user safety is predominantly borne by Local Government as the Network Steward for the national highway road networks within their respective regions. This risk is compounded by a minimal maintenance funding in these regions and recorded defect backlogs to bridge the larger issue of a lack of asset renewals

In the Western Downs alone, the backlog of urgent maintenance works on the national highway network was $6.02 million, with available funding for maintenance in 2022/23 limited to $1.45 million.

The National Road Safety Strategy identifies that there are significantly more road deaths on regional and remote areas of Australia than major cities (10.0 (regional), 25.1 (remote) and 2.2. (major cities) per 100,000 people) and require investment to ensure roads in these areas are fit-for-purpose.

Motion number 70.4 Strathfield Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to call for a long-term, sustainable funding model for local road maintenance and upgrades, ensuring equitable distribution of funds across metropolitan, regional, and remote councils.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Local Roads Are a National Asset

- Local governments manage over 75% of Australia's road network.
- These roads are critical for national productivity, freight movement, tourism, and community connectivity.
- Ensuring their upkeep is not just a local concern, it is vital for the national economy and transport system.
- Current Funding is Fragmented and Inconsistent
- Road funding often comes through short-term grants and one-off programs, creating uncertainty and limiting councils' ability to plan long-term.

Equity Across Metropolitan, Regional, and Remote Councils

- Councils often face higher costs and more severe road maintenance challenges due to geography, weather, and use.
- Supports National Safety, Resilience and Accessibility Goals
- Well-maintained roads reduce accidents, improve emergency access, and community resilience in times of disaster or disruption.

Protects National Supply Chains and Freight Corridors

- Many local roads play a crucial role in freight and logistics, connecting farms, factories, and ports.

KEY ARGUMENTS

- Every council in Australia faces the burden of maintaining road infrastructure with limited revenue-raising capacity.
- The NGA is the ideal platform to present a united front and push for structural funding reform.
- A strong, sector-wide motion from the NGA sends a clear message to the Australian Government that road funding reform is a national local government priority
- Drives Long-Term Reform, Not Short-Term Solutions
- Arguing this motion at the NGA signals that councils want to pursue sustainable, strategic solutions to infrastructure challenges.

Motion number 70.5 Roper Gulf Regional Council NT

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to undertake an evaluation of roads in regional and remote areas.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Lack of roads infrastructure is a common concern across Local Government, especially in regional and remote areas where other transport options are unavailable.

In the case of regional and remote Aboriginal Communities, it is this lack of infrastructure that has significant detrimental effects on local residents and is a significant barrier to 'Closing the Gap'

KEY ARGUMENTS

Council notes the persistent inadequate design and lack of build quality (not to Australian Standards), uncoordinated repair and upgrades, and lack of funding for roads infrastructure creating significant access issues that pose danger to life of residents in event of emergency, as well as significant barriers to access of crucial services, education, economic opportunity (including significantly and disproportionately increased cost of living), and prosperity.

The Central Arnhem, Roper, and Carpentaria Highways are examples of this, and Council notes with particular concern that communities such as Hodgson Downs (Minyerri), Bulman / Weemol, and Numbulwar, are subject to regular roads access cut-off, and heavy damage on roads that leave residents with limited access, and also causes significant damage to motor vehicles who attempt to drive on those damaged roads surfaces for community and service access.

Motion number 70.6 Burdekin Shire Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to address disparities in the quality and maintenance of national highways across states and territories by enforcing national standards and increasing funding allocations. A consistent, high-quality road network is essential to prioritising the safety of all road users and ensuring equitable infrastructure investment nationwide.

To enhance cost-effectiveness and strengthen local capacity, the Australian Government should embed productivity-based, single-invitee arrangements with local governments into

long-term strategic road maintenance plans. This approach will ensure an appropriately skilled workforce, improve employment security in regional areas, and maximise value for money in highway maintenance and upgrades.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Australia's vast geography makes the national highway network a critical lifeline, supporting economic activity, essential services, and emergency response across urban, regional, and remote areas. However, the condition of national highways varies significantly between states, leading to inconsistencies in safety, efficiency, and reliability.

In Queensland and the Northern Territory, crash rates on national highways are higher than in the ACT, New South Wales, or Victoria. According to the Road Safety Australia Data Hub, the fatality rate for the Northern Territory reached 20.7 deaths per 100,000 people in the 12 months ending February 2025-more than triple the national average. Tasmania followed at 6.4 deaths per 100,000, with Queensland and Western Australia close behind at 6.3 and 5.2 respectively.

To improve safety and efficiency, a coordinated national approach is required to standardise treatment options for highway maintenance and upgrades. Additionally, embedding single-invitee arrangements with local governments in road maintenance planning will deliver cost-effective solutions, enhance workforce capability, and provide secure regional employment, ensuring long-term sustainability of Australia's national road network.

KEY ARGUMENTS

1. A Safe and Consistent National Highway System is Essential

- The national highway network is fundamental to economic growth, emergency response, and community connectivity.
- Inconsistent road conditions between states result in safety risks, reduced efficiency, and higher crash rates, particularly in Queensland, Western Australia, and the Northern Territory.
- A national approach to highway maintenance, with uniform standards and funding equity, is critical to improving road safety and ensuring reliability for all users.

2. Local Governments Play a Key Role in Cost-Effective Road Maintenance

- Local governments have local knowledge, skilled workforces, and established networks that make them well-positioned to manage highway maintenance efficiently.
- Embedding single-invitee arrangements in national road maintenance planning will:
    - Maximise value for money by reducing administrative and procurement costs.
    - Ensure an appropriately skilled workforce, improving project efficiency and long-term infrastructure outcomes.
    - Provide secure regional employment, strengthening local economies and reducing reliance on external contractors.

3. Increased Federal Investment and Coordination is Needed

- The disparity in national highway conditions demonstrates the need for increased and equitable federal funding to ensure all states receive appropriate investment.
- The Australian Government must enforce national construction and maintenance standards to eliminate inconsistencies that impact road safety and economic productivity.

- A strategic, long-term national road plan must be developed to ensure sustainable investment in infrastructure, workforce training, and safety improvements.

Motion number 71 West Arnhem Regional Council NT

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

a. Establish a dedicated Public Lighting Infrastructure Fund to support local governments in upgrading and modernising street lighting networks across Australia.
b. Provide financial incentives and low-interest loans to accelerate the transition to energy-efficient LED street lighting, particularly in regions that have made limited progress to date.
c. Develop national guidelines and standards for smart lighting technologies to ensure interoperability and maximise energy savings and safety benefits.
d. Fund research and pilot projects exploring innovative public lighting solutions that can enhance community safety, reduce energy consumption, and support smart city initiatives.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion aims to improve public safety, reduce energy consumption, and support the transition to smart city technologies by modernising public lighting infrastructure across Australia. A national approach will ensure consistent standards, economies of scale, and equitable access to funding for all local government areas.

KEY ARGUMENTS

1. Public safety: Modern, well-maintained street lighting is crucial for community safety and crime prevention.
2. Energy efficiency: LED street lighting can reduce energy consumption by up to 50-80% compared to traditional lighting technologies.
3. Climate action: Upgrading public lighting aligns with Australia's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and transition to a low-carbon economy.
4. Smart city enablement: Modern lighting infrastructure can serve as a platform for smart city technologies, improving urban services and quality of life.
5. Cost savings: While initial investment is required, modernized public lighting can lead to significant long-term cost savings for local governments through reduced energy and maintenance costs.
6. Economic stimulus: A national program to upgrade public lighting would create jobs in manufacturing, installation, and maintenance sectors across the country.
7. Equity: A dedicated fund would ensure that all councils, regardless of their financial capacity, can access resources to improve their public lighting infrastructure.

Motion number 72 West Arnhem Regional Council NT

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Establish a dedicated funding program specifically for the upgrade and ongoing maintenance of unsealed road networks in regional and remote Australia that provide essential access to critical infrastructure and services, including but not limited to: landfills, aerodromes, barge landings, health facilities, schools and emergency services.

2. Allocate a minimum of $200 million per annum for this program, indexed annually to account for inflation and construction cost increases.
3. Prioritise projects that demonstrate a clear link to improved community safety, enhanced economic opportunities, and increased access to essential services for residents in remote and isolated areas.
4. Work collaboratively with state and territory governments and local councils to develop streamlined application processes and reporting requirements for this funding program, minimising administrative burden and maximising the efficient use of resources.
5. Ensure that the funding allocation formula for this program takes into account the unique challenges faced by remote councils, including vast distances, low population densities, extreme weather conditions, and limited access to skilled labour and materials.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion seeks to improve the safety, reliability, and accessibility of unsealed road networks in regional and remote Australia, ensuring that residents have equitable access to essential services and economic opportunities. This will contribute to stronger, more resilient communities and reduce the disparities between urban and remote areas.

KEY ARGUMENTS

1. Critical Infrastructure Access: Unsealed roads are often the only means of access to critical infrastructure and services for remote communities. Their condition directly impacts residents' ability to access healthcare, education, waste disposal, transportation, and emergency services.
2. Economic Development: Reliable road access is essential for economic activity in regional and remote areas, supporting industries such as agriculture, tourism, and mining. Poor road conditions increase transportation costs, limit market access, and hinder economic growth.
3. Community Safety: Unsealed roads are inherently more dangerous than sealed roads, with higher rates of accidents and vehicle damage. Improving road surfaces, signage, and drainage can significantly reduce these risks.
4. Social Equity: Residents of regional and remote areas often face significant disadvantages compared to their urban counterparts. Investing in unsealed road infrastructure is a crucial step towards addressing these inequities and ensuring that all Australians have access to essential services and opportunities.
5. Environmental Protection: Properly maintained unsealed roads reduce dust pollution, soil erosion, and sedimentation of waterways, protecting the environment and preserving natural resources.
6. Cost Savings: While initial investment is required, well-maintained unsealed roads reduce vehicle maintenance costs, lower transportation expenses, and minimise the need for emergency repairs, resulting in long-term cost savings for residents and businesses.
7. Alignment with NGA Theme: This motion directly aligns with the NGA theme "National Priorities Need Local Solutions," as it addresses a critical infrastructure gap in remote communities and contributes to national objectives related to regional development, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability. The motion also aligns to the NGA priority area of "Roads and Infrastructure."

Motion number 73 Western Downs Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to allocate a dedicated funding program to support the redevelopment and/or remediation of aquatic facilities.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Australia is home to 1,300 public pools, with approximately 90% of the population residing within a 20-minute drive of one. These facilities attract 330 million visits annually and play a pivotal role in preventing drowning deaths, enhancing community cohesion, improving health outcomes and make ongoing, and substantial contributions to both local and the national economies.

The average lifespan of a pool in Australia is 50 years, with many public pools being constructed in 1968. By 2030, 500 (40%) of these public pools will reach the end of their operational lifespan, requiring $8 billion in replacement costs. Regional communities are most at risk of losing aquatic facilities, as 58% of public pools located in regional Australia. These facilities are essential for providing swimming lessons, water therapy, physical activity, and leisure activities to local communities, especially in regional towns where alternatives may be limited. Significant nationwide investment is required to replace, renew and upgrade public pools across Australia approaching the end of their operational lifespan.

The closure of community pools is highly unpopular and has been shown to adversely affect communities. Such closures of local pools often leads to increased community mobilisation and political engagement.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Public pools make a significant economic contribution to Australia. generating $9.18 billion in benefits annually. This includes $2.8 billion and 33,600 full time jobs, $2.5 billion through reduction of burden of disease, and $3.8 billion of individual and community surplus

Aquatic facilities are a key source of local employment. The public pools sector creates 67,000 jobs, 33,600 of which are full time, with women comprising about three-quarters of the total workforce. Aquatic facilities also provide casual or seasonal employment for high school and university students, supporting them through their studies. Most employees are casual staff who live locally and value working in a team environment.

In addition to this direct economic benefit, the social return on investment for public pools in regional Australia is $2.18 for every dollar invested in the operation of an aquatic centre

Aquatic facilities, and the swim schools which often operate from their premises, are critical for preparing the community, and particularly children, for safe interaction with the water. Public pools provide a safe environment for community members to learn to swim, especially in regional Australia. Without this critical infrastructure, community members lack the opportunity to develop water safety, swimming confidence, and competency, increasing the risk of drowning.

Aquatic facilities and facility programs are associated with improvements in physical, mental and functional health. Public pools provide opportunities for traditional forms of exercise, such as lap swimming and aqua aerobics. When appropriately designed, public pools play an essential role in offering a space for exercise suitable for all abilities. This includes older community members, those new or returning to exercise, individuals recovering from injury, and those unable to participate in land-based exercise.

A 2022 Royal Life Saving report indicated that approximately 500 (40%) council-owned pools in Australia will need to be replaced by 2030. It is estimated the capital expenditure required for this infrastructure replacement will be $8 billion. Additional aquatic facilities requiring replacement between 2030-2035 will necessitate a further $3 billion in capital expenditure. Based on this analysis, by 2035 a total capital expenditure of $11 billion will be required to maintain the operation of Australian aquatic facilities at current levels.

Turner and Townsend, a major Australian public pool building provider, estimate the minimum capital expenditure to replace a basic outdoor swimming pool is $10 million.

Communities across Australia are increasingly resistant to the closure of public pools, placing additional pressure on local governments to fund and maintain aquatic centres. The combination of ongoing operational expenditure and rising capital costs is creating significant financial pressure on local governments across Australia to keep these facilities open. Despite State and Federal funding schemes, many local governments either cannot secure funding or can only secure minimal funding for aquatic facility infrastructure projects. This often results in local governments needing to provide 60-70% of upfront capital costs for aquatic facility infrastructure projects, in addition to ongoing maintenance and operational costs. The financial pressure on local governments is exacerbated by many public pools incurring operating losses, which must then be underwritten by local government.

Motion number 73.1 Mount Alexander Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to commit to fund the capital works required to replace, repair and improve swimming pool and aquatic infrastructure, in partnership with respective state governments and local governments. This is particularly the case in regional and rural areas, where community swimming pools are often the primary summertime recreation facility and only option for swimming classes.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

It is a priority in the National Sport Strategy 2024-2034 to 'encourage participation and involvement' in sport and active recreation. The Strategy also recognises the 'benefits of inclusion' and 'increased participation' and encourages 'fun, safe and enriching experiences'.

It is a principle of the National Swimming and Water Safety Framework that 'Everyone should have the opportunity to a swimming and water safety education'.

Our public swimming pools are vital for our community's health, wellbeing and water safety. The renewal and replacement of aging facilities should be supported by the Australian Government.

Sources:

https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-03/national-sport-strategy-2024-2034.pdf

https://www.royallifesaving.com.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/32157/National-Swimming-and-Water-Safety-Framework_FINAL-2020.pdf

KEY ARGUMENTS

The Royal Life Saving Australia estimates: 'that 68% of community swimming pools are aged over 50 years, and that $8 billion is needed to refurbish, upgrade, or rebuild them.' '500 (40%) of public pools will reach the end of their functional lifespan by 2030.'

They also note that, in keeping these facilities open: 'Local government shoulders the greatest burden' and that '... many are now unable to meet the upgrade costs without financial assistance from State and Federal governments.'

Australian swimming pools are vital community recreation resources. This is especially the case in rural and regional communities where access to other recreation facilities, especially for young people, may be limited.

The Australian Government should play a vital role in keeping these facilities operational.

Source: https://www.royallifesaving.com.au/about/news-and-updates/news/2024/mar/500-public-pools-may-close-without-strategic-investment#:~:text=Royal%20Life%20Saving%20research%20estimates,%2C%20upgrade%2C%20or%20rebuild%20them.

Motion number 73.2 Loddon Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish a dedicated national fund to support Local Government to replace and upgrade public swimming pools by providing financial assistance to local councils for the repair, replacement, and upgrading of aging public swimming pool facilities.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Swimming pools are essential community facilities that all Australians should have easy access to. The majority of council pools were constructed in the mid 20th century and are nearing the end of their effective lives. These are assets which are highly valued by our communities and contribute to water safety, health outcomes and community wellbeing across the country.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The 1956 Olympics left a legacy of swimming pools across Australia that left an indelible impression on our national identity. Swimming pools provide essential opportunities for physical activity, contributing to the overall health and well-being of the community. With a strong culture of swimming in Australia, public pools are widely used for exercise, relaxation, and recreation, promoting a healthier lifestyle for all age groups. Swimming remains one of Australia's favourite sports according to Australian Government data.

These pools are reaching the end of their effective lives and many require urgent investment. Local Government has for many years now wrestled with unaffordable running costs and ongoing maintenance.

Many regional and rural councils have multiple outdoor concrete seasonal pools servicing widely spread, relatively small populations. The overall importance of these facilities means that closure is not an option for many.

It is estimated that $8 billion will be required over the next decade to meet the infrastructure demands of public swimming pools across Australia.

Safe, accessible swimming pools are crucial to public health, not just for recreational swimming, but also for essential life-saving skills such as swimming and water safety education. Access to well-maintained public pools is fundamental in teaching water safety and survival skills, and helps to prevent tragic accidents.

Swimming pools provide a social function offering a space for community gather, engage in activities, and connect, especially important in rural and regional areas. In these areas, pools can serve as a vital resource for social cohesion and physical activity, fundamental to community wellbeing.

A significant funding investment over the next 10 years by Federal Government in partnership with Local Councils would see Australian public swimming pools remain a key part of our communities for the next 50 years.

As well as being formally endorsed by Loddon Shire Council, this motion is supported by all six member councils of the Murray River Group of Councils.

Motion number 74 East Gippsland Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to expand access to the Roads of Strategic Importance Program to deliver vital road safety and industry transport links including food production for the south-east of Australia.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The program is designed to improve road safety for all road users and supports freight and logistics industries in moving essential goods across the country. This includes the movement of fresh produce and product for international markets, supporting regional economies.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The Roads of Strategic Importance program supports works on regional roads, inter-regional and interstate highways that address pinch points and other impediments to freight movements.

Strategic, longer-term investment in the key freight corridors that connects agricultural and other major industry to ports, airports and other transport hubs.

An expansion of the program would allow for greater opportunity to future proof major roads and bridges against climate impacts, and improve access to essential services in regional communities.

Upgrades funded through an increased funding pool for strategic roads will also support communities along the corridors and provide better access for tourists and other road users.

Motion number 75 Port Phillip City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to invest further in Australia's urban active and public transport infrastructure projects.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Investing in Australia's urban active and public transport infrastructure is of national importance. By prioritising these projects, the Australian government can develop a robust, environmentally friendly transport network matched with active transport that meets the needs of current and future generations. Such investment will stimulate economic growth, improve the quality of life for all Australians, enhance connectivity, and reduce carbon emissions. This approach not only addresses immediate transportation needs but also ensures sustainable development, making cities more livable and accessible for everyone.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Investing in urban active and public transport infrastructure is crucial for the future of Australia's cities and communities. As urban populations continue to grow, the demand for efficient, reliable transport options becomes increasingly important.

By prioritising these initiatives, the Australian Government can ensure the development of a robust, environmentally friendly transport network that meets the needs of current and future generations. Such investment will stimulate economic growth, improve the quality of life for all Australians, enhance connectivity and reduce carbon emissions.

The Australian Government can address the following items:

- Investing in active and public transport infrastructure will help shape urban development. This ensures that Australia's cities are prepared for future challenges, such as population growth, technological advancements, and environmental pressures. A robust transport network will be resilient and adaptable, capable of meeting the needs of future generations.
- Improved transport networks enhance connectivity within and between urban areas, making it easier for people to access jobs, education, healthcare, and recreational activities. This fosters social inclusion and ensures that all Australians can benefit from community opportunities.
- Investment in transport infrastructure stimulates economic activity by creating jobs, attracting businesses, and enhancing productivity. Improved transport networks reduce travel times and costs, making cities more attractive for investment and tourism.
- Reducing car dependency allows households to save on vehicle-related expenses such as fuel, maintenance, insurance, and parking. These savings can alleviate cost of living pressures, enabling families to allocate more income to other essential needs.
- Active and public transport options contribute to healthier lifestyles by promoting physical activity and reducing traffic congestion.
- Reducing reliance on fossil fuel-powered vehicles is essential for lowering carbon emissions and combating climate change. Active and public transport infrastructure supports the transition to greener alternatives, helping Australia meet its environmental targets and commitments.

Motion number 75.1 City of Stirling WA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish a new funding program, similar to the successful former Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCI) Program, dedicated to the maintenance, upgrade, and installation of pedestrian and cycle networks and associated facilities.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Establishing a new funding stream, similar to the successful former Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCI) Program, would ensure comprehensive coverage of all critical infrastructure needs, including the maintenance, upgrade, and installation of pedestrian and cycle networks as well as end of trip facilities that enable users to commute comfortably and have adequate change facilities.

KEY ARGUMENTS

1. Need: The Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program was incredibly successful and supported all Australian councils in delivering priority local road and

community infrastructure projects, creating jobs and providing long-lasting benefits for communities. The successful program has now ended, however, there is still an ongoing need for investment in infrastructure in local communities.

2. Economic Growth: Investing in infrastructure is a proven driver of economic growth. Improved pedestrian and cyclist movement facilitate the efficient movement of people and can help activate local areas, which is essential for businesses to operate effectively.
3. Safety: Well-maintained pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure are crucial for public safety. Poor infrastructure can lead to accidents, injuries, and fatalities. By investing in infrastructure improvements, local governments can reduce the risk of accidents and enhance the overall safety of their communities. Given the recent spike in the number of traffic accidents involving cars and cyclists, improved cycle networks will create further separation of vehicular and cycle traffic.
4. Quality of Life: Infrastructure plays a significant role in the quality of life for residents. Expanding and enhanced pedestrian and cyclist networks can help to provide equitable access to employment, education, healthcare, and recreational opportunities. Improved infrastructure also reduces travel time and congestion, contributing to a better living environment.
5. Addressing Maintenance Backlogs: Many local governments face significant maintenance backlogs due to limited funding. A national infrastructure improvement fund would provide the necessary resources to address these backlogs, ensuring that existing infrastructure is safe and functional.
6. Supporting New Projects: In addition to maintenance, there is a need for new infrastructure projects to meet the growing demands of communities. A dedicated fund would enable local governments to plan and implement new projects that support sustainable development and future growth.
7. National Consistency: A national infrastructure improvement fund would ensure a consistent approach to infrastructure development across the country. This would help bridge the gap between different regions and ensure that all communities have access to high-quality infrastructure.

Motion number 75.2 Wollongong City Council NSW

This National General Assembly acknowledges the value of the National Active Transport Fund and calls on the Australian Government to significantly increase the Fund to support Councils to deliver active transport infrastructure for their communities.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Local Councils and the communities they serve would greatly benefit from meaningful increases to the National Active Travel Fund to help meet rising costs in construction and increasing community demand for active transport infrastructure.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Local governments are prioritising the delivery of integrated and active transport networks to achieve significant social, health and environmental outcomes for communities. Active transport infrastructure projects demonstrate highly favorable cost benefit ratios, due mainly to health benefits.

Motion number 76 Brisbane City Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to enhance road safety through further driver education.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The National Road Safety Strategy 2021-30 (the strategy) represents commitment from all governments to deliver significant reductions in road trauma. The strategy puts Australia on a path to achieve 'Vision Zero' (zero deaths and serious injuries) on Australian roads by 2050, with fatalities reduced by 50% and serious injuries reduced by 30% by 2030.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics (BITRE) released its Monthly Bulletin on fatalities on Australian roads, on 17 February 2025, where it reported a 6% increase in deaths (75) in the 12 months ending January 2025, compared to the previous 12 months. The current annual total is 753 deaths above the strategy's target of 571 deaths in this period (total 1324).

Local governments are continuing to work with State and Australian Government agencies to ensure any identified safety risks are mitigated. Interventions include road and intersection upgrades, local traffic network improvements, area traffic management schemes, safe school travel infrastructure and upgrades and installation of mode separation treatments on streets.

There is a need for the Australian Government to provide driver education programs so that there is consistent messaging across all States and territories.

Motion number 77 Wyndham City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to join a unified call towards the development of Fast Trains Between Major Cities.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Studies by the Australian Government have found that fast rail can drive significant economic growth, support the movement of Australians, and reshape land use by enabling rezoning and development around both existing and new stations along the corridor.

Improved rail connections can deliver broader economic benefits to orbital and regional centres around Australia by increasing demand for local services and attracting businesses and industries to the area as populations grow.

KEY ARGUMENTS

In recent years, the Australian Government established the High-Speed Rail Authority (HSRA) to oversee the planning and development of the high-speed rail network.

The 2025-26 Federal Budget allocated additional funding to the High-Speed Rail Authority to explore the potential for fast rail between Sydney and Newcastle.

This followed work by the NSW Government this corridor, indicating that fast, reliable rail travel between major centres and growth areas supports housing and jobs growth.

Delivering fast rail is a major investment that requires collaboration between State, Federal, and local governments to ensure timely infrastructure delivery and maximize benefits for communities but could have a transformational impact on how many Australians live, work, and travel.

Motion number 78 South Burnett Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to conduct a review of the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) to extend the "Farm Gate Access Program" to allow ad-hoc use of B-Doubles on low volume roads where appropriate.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Increased productivity and a reduction of red tape.

KEY ARGUMENTS

For regional operators, transporting livestock and grain from first to last mile can be a frustrating experience.

Local road restrictions can limit the use of certain combinations and getting approval for access can be tough to attain. And for some, the only way to travel on local roads is by reducing loads or decoupling trailers, a physically taxing and time intensive diversion. It's a disheartening experience.

The NHVR Farm Gate Access Program, a conditional area-wide access program developed in collaboration with the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR), allows vehicles transporting grain or livestock to access areas that typically require permits, provided they meet specific criteria and use telematics.

Expansion of this program will allow for increased productivity.

Motion number 79 South Burnett Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide small and rural communities with no public transport with additional support to compensate.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Increased productivity and community equity

KEY ARGUMENTS

With the recent introduction of 50 cent fares by the Queensland State Government, commentary has noted the benefit to commuters and the assistance towards cost-of-living impacts.

For rural and smaller communities that do not have access to any or limited forms of public transport, these initiatives have not flowed through. There is an opportunity for the Australian Government to help in this area through additional support and this would provide some form of equity to the affected communities.

There is a transport disadvantage for these communities as that rely on private vehicles for daily activities. High fuel costs can disproportionately affect residents in rural areas, impacting their ability to work, access healthcare, and participate in the economy.

Motion number 80 Livingstone Shire Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to-

a. Review the Building Code of Australia for wheelchair accessibility to address new wheelchair technology and increased dimensions; and

b. Review the Australian Standards AS1428 Design for Access and Mobility to include wheelchair beach accessibility, technology and increased dimensions.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

By reviewing the Building Code of Australia we can identify areas within codes that whilst comply - do not always equal functionality. This is particularly important in the face of changing technology, aging population and members of our communities that are already placed at a disadvantage due to lack of functionality.

KEY ARGUMENTS

This proposed motion reflects our Council's and our Community's desire to advocate for more responsiveness and innovation when it comes to access and inclusion.

Feedback from various Community groups and individuals identified that compliance with respective codes does not always equal functionality.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Motion number 81 Strathfield Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide funding and resources to ensure every local council can develop and implement a comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The frequency and intensity of emergencies-such as bushfires, floods, storms, and heatwaves, is rising due to climate change and other risk factors. Effective local emergency planning is essential to national resilience and safety.

Councils are on the frontline during emergencies: maintaining infrastructure, supporting evacuation centres, communicating with residents, and coordinating local recovery. Yet not all councils have the funding, staff, or expertise to develop and maintain a comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (EMP).

This motion aligns with national strategies like the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience and the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework, which call for all levels of government to work together to reduce risk and improve preparedness.

Comprehensive EMPs reduce loss of life, protect property and infrastructure, and help communities recover more quickly. Planning also improves coordination with emergency services and state/federal agencies.

Federal support would ensure all councils can plan and respond effectively.

Every community is vulnerable to some type of emergency or natural disaster. This is a truly sector-wide issue requiring a unified voice at the NGA.

Councils are best placed to understand local risks, vulnerable populations, and community assets. With support, they can tailor EMPs to their specific context.

KEY ARGUMENTS

1. Natural disasters such as bushfires, floods, and extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and severe due to climate change, making preparedness a national priority.
2. Councils are at the forefront of managing emergencies, providing infrastructure support, local coordination, community communication, and recovery services.
3. Many smaller or under-resourced councils lack funding, expertise, or staff to develop and maintain a robust Emergency Management Plan.
4. Comprehensive planning improves response times, reduces risks, and strengthens community resilience before, during, and after emergencies.
5. This motion supports national strategies like the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework and the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience.
6. Federal funding ensures all councils, regardless of size or location, can protect their communities through high-quality emergency planning.
7. Formal support enables better coordination between local, state, and federal agencies during emergencies.
8. Residents expect their council to be ready for emergencies. This motion ensures councils have the tools to meet those expectations.

Motion number 82 Bathurst Regional Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Substantially increase investment in sovereign aerial firefighting assets and associated infrastructure in each state and territory to reduce reliance on leased international resources, ensuring year-round readiness to combat increasingly frequent and severe fire events.
2. Expand funding for the Disaster Ready Fund to address oversubscription and ensure councils have adequate resources to prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural disasters, particularly bushfires, which disproportionately impact local communities and council resources.
3. Establish a permanent national grant program for local governments to enhance fire resilience through preventative measures, such as vegetation management, firebreak creation, community education programs, and improved infrastructure for fire suppression.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Australia's bushfire seasons are becoming longer and more severe, posing growing risks to lives, property, and the environment. Recent events, such as the wildfires in Los Angeles during their winter season, serve as a stark warning of overlapping global fire seasons and the urgent need for preparedness.

The December 2024 Hill End Fire in our New South Wales LGA demonstrated the effectiveness of aerial firefighting, as sufficient aerial resources amplified on-the-ground efforts, allowing rapid containment and limited damage. However, Australia's reliance on leased international firefighting resources is unsustainable, highlighting the need for a sovereign aerial firefighting fleet.

The importance of Federal Government investment in firefighting infrastructure, capacity-building, and technological advancements cannot be understated. This motion aligns with the National Aerial Firefighting Strategy (NAFF) and the findings of the Colvin and Glasser Reviews, and aims to support ALGA Priority 4: Natural Disasters and Resilience, which

emphasises the critical role of local governments in managing disasters and building resilience.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Bushfires cause widespread devastation across communities, businesses, and natural environments. Homes are destroyed, displacing families and creating financial and emotional strain. Businesses face disruptions, job losses, and economic downturns, particularly in tourism-dependent areas.

Fires damage supply chains, infrastructure, and natural habitats, impacting biodiversity, water quality, and environmental health. Cultural heritage, including Indigenous sites and historical landmarks, is often lost, erasing vital aspects of Australia's identity.

Public infrastructure, such as schools and hospitals, is also severely affected, disrupting services and requiring costly rebuilding efforts. These impacts highlight the urgent need for stronger bushfire resilience and preparedness.

To address the increasing challenges posed by bushfires, the Australian Government must focus on:

1. Sovereign Fleet Expansion: Investing in large air tankers and multi-use aircraft reduces reliance on international leases and ensures year-round availability. A sovereign fleet would enable rapid responses to fires, protecting lives, homes, businesses, and cultural heritage.
2. Enhanced Infrastructure: Developing strategic air bases in regional hubs would support rapid deployment of aerial assets, improving operational efficiency and safeguarding critical services during emergencies.
3. Expanded Training Programs: Training Australian pilots and crews ensures operational readiness and safety, strengthening fire management capabilities and preserving infrastructure and cultural heritage sites.
4. Research and Development: Supporting innovation in firefighting technologies, such as drones and amphibious vehicles, enhances disaster response capabilities. Advanced technologies reduce fire impacts on ecosystems, biodiversity, and infrastructure while achieving long-term cost savings.
5. Decentralised Deployment of Aerial Assets: The National Aerial Firefighting Strategy emphasizes the need for decentralised deployment. Establishing regional hubs ensures faster response times and strengthens local coverage. Councils play a vital role in identifying suitable hubs and supporting their integration into national bushfire management strategies.

CONCLUSION:

Australia's local governments are on the frontline of natural disaster management but face increasing challenges from worsening bushfire seasons. Federal leadership is critical to enhancing sovereign aerial firefighting capabilities, building infrastructure, expanding training, and investing in innovative technologies. These measures will protect lives, property, and cultural heritage while strengthening the resilience of communities.

This motion directly aligns with the ALGA theme "National Priorities Need Local Solutions" and advocates for Federal and local governments to work collaboratively in addressing bushfire risks. By investing in preparedness and resilience, Australia can safeguard its people, environment, and future prosperity.

Motion number 83 Glen Eira City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Develop a National Urban Flood resilience strategy to coordinate federal, state and local governments and ensure a consistent, long-term approach to infrastructure renewal, especially in urban areas experiencing high growth.
2. Significantly increase funding to the Disaster Ready Fund to meet the growing demand from local governments for flood mitigation and resilience projects, acknowledging the significant oversubscription of the current program.
3. Establish a dedicated funding stream within the Disaster Ready Fund specifically for stormwater infrastructure upgrades and flood mitigation works in urban municipalities, ensuring equitable access to resilience funding beyond rural communities.
4. Promote nature-based solutions to improve water permeability in urban environments by investing in green infrastructure, permeable surfaces, and sustainable drainage systems to counteract the increased flood risk associated with increasing urban density and reduced natural infiltration.
5. Expand opportunities to improve the capacity and capability of local government to respond to the increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events due to climate change.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

With national disasters such as fires, floods and cyclones currently costing Australia $38bn a year, ALGA's federal election advocacy calls on the Australian government to dedicate $900m per year in funding for councils "to improve mitigation and resilience and build their capacity and capability to respond to emergencies in our communities".

Extreme weather events, including floods, are increasing in both frequency and severity due to climate change. Many urban areas, particularly those experiencing rapid population growth, lack the necessary infrastructure to manage flood risks effectively. Local councils need enhanced capacity and resources to respond to extreme weather events effectively.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Expanding federal support will enable local governments to implement best-practice flood resilience measures, protecting lives, property, and essential infrastructure. A National Urban Flood Resilience Strategy is needed to align federal, state, and local governments, ensuring a consistent and proactive approach to flood mitigation, infrastructure renewal, and long-term urban planning.

While the Australian Government's Disaster Ready Fund is a welcome addition to disaster resilience funding, it has been significantly oversubscribed, demonstrating the urgent need for greater investment. In Victoria, the Australian Government has invested $63 million in the Disaster Ready Fund over the past two years. Of this, $18.7 million has been directed toward emergency preparedness and awareness projects, which include some urban councils; however, no grant funding has been specifically allocated for stormwater infrastructure upgrades in urban areas.

Much of the stormwater infrastructure in urban municipalities has not received the necessary renewal investment and remains undersized for current and future climate conditions. In Glen Eira, for example, 48% of properties are at risk of significant flooding during major storms due to inadequate stormwater infrastructure. For example, the annual flood damage in the City of Glen Eira is currently estimated at $550,000 and is projected to exceed $1

million per year by 2100 due to the increasing frequency and severity of extreme weather events.

While Glen Eira City Council invests over $3 million annually in stormwater detention and drainage infrastructure, this remains inadequate without state and federal support. A specific funding stream for urban areas is critical for local governments to address significant challenges stemming from cost shifting and the increasing difficulty in delivering sustainable services long-term. Flood mitigation works in just one catchment area in Glen Eira have been assessed at $100 million, highlighting the need for urgent federal investment.

We also need measures to support increasing urban density. Impermeable surfaces increase flood risks by reducing natural water infiltration. Nature-based solutions - such as green infrastructure, permeable surfaces, and sustainable drainage - enhance water absorption, easing pressure on drainage systems. Investing in these strategies improves flood resilience, supports biodiversity, and promotes sustainable urban water management.

Investing in flood mitigation and resilience now will significantly reduce the social and economic costs of disasters in the future, safeguarding Australian communities against climate-driven weather extremes.

Motion number 83.1 Surf Coast Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to introduce a grant program for local government that is dedicated to drainage infrastructure.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The Commonwealth Government provides funding to local government for roads and bridges but there is currently no funding program dedicated to drainage infrastructure, which, as with the first two infrastructure categories, is often beyond the means of Councils to fund on their own.

A funding program that gives Councils flexibility to upgrade infrastructure based on local priorities would be of immense value. Pre-emptive investment can reduce the overall social and financial impacts of flooding, given the significant costs associated with post emergency recovery activities.

Climate change has led to an increased frequency and severity of extreme weather events, resulting in volumes of water beyond the capacity of existing drainage infrastructure.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Much of the drainage infrastructure within Council jurisdictions was designed and constructed to accommodate less extreme weather. Existing drainage infrastructure is now much less effective against more frequent and higher intensity rainfall, storm surge and river and coastal flooding.

A funding program that gives Councils flexibility to upgrade infrastructure based on local priorities would help ensure communities at highest risk can be supported in advance of an extreme weather event. Floods result in significant social and financial impacts and recovery is typically expensive and protracted.

A 2022 report commissioned by the Insurance Council of Australia found the cost of the 2022 floods on the east coast of Australia was more than $5 billion, making them the costliest floods in Australia's history and the second most expensive disaster overall.

According to the report, by 2050 direct costs associated with extreme weather events are estimated to reach $35.24 billion, meanwhile the ten-year rolling average of insurance claims Australia-wide has doubled from $1.5 billion to more than $3 billion.

The report notes that between 2005 and 2022 the federal government spent $23.99 billion on disaster recovery and relief compared to just $0.51 billion spent on disaster resilience.

The intent of this motion is to address this imbalance through the establishment of a fund that enables pre-emptive upgrades to drainage infrastructure.

Motion number 84 Maribyrnong City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Increase funding for research, development, and implementation of advanced Early Warning Systems across Australia to improve accuracy and timeliness of warnings;
2. Review and enhance the flood warning system with an emphasis on warning accuracy and timeliness;
3. Continue to promote the integration of early warning systems with emergency management frameworks and communication channels to enable stakeholder collaboration and seamless dissemination of warnings;
4. Consider the accessibility and needs of at-risk communities in system improvements, including the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse community; and
5. Invest in accessible public education campaigns to raise awareness about effectively responding to warnings.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion advocates to the Australian Government for the necessary resources and research to enhance Australia's Early Warning Systems, reducing the impacts of emergencies across the nation. Accessibility of systems is critical to meet the needs of communities that face barriers receiving and interpreting information. Public education is crucial to increase awareness of how to respond to warnings, promoting community resilience.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Early Warning Systems are critical for providing timely and effective information to enable communities and services to take appropriate action to prepare for emergencies. The Australian Warning System (AWS) has made improvements in consistency of emergency warnings, however there is a need for continuous improvement, Embedding a review of the flood warning system would provide an opportunity to enhance the accuracy and timeliness of flood warnings and mitigate the impacts of increasingly frequent and severe disasters on communities.

Integrating early warning systems with existing emergency management frameworks will ensure a coordinated and effective response to emergencies.

Motion number 84.1 Yass Valley Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to grant councils access to the National Messaging System being developed by the National Emergency Management Agency to assist councils in managing local emergencies.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Food insecurity, chronic disease, and social isolation are growing national challenges, Councils regularly manage local emergencies and face considerable challenges in rapidly and effectively community risks to residents. Facilitating rapid communications to a community during an emergency assist in protects communities, manages risks and building robust and resilient communities.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Councils typically communicate via media releases, social media, opt-in text messaging, electronic roadside displays and limited direct phone calls from council to institutions with known vulnerable users, such healthcare facilities, schools, preschools, aged care facilities. Allowing councils to access the National Messaging System would broaden its ability to inform its communities of emergencies such as boil water alerts, natural disasters affecting infrastructure e.g. floods cutting vehicle access etcetera.

Motion number 85 Western Downs Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to make home insurance accessible and affordable for all Australians, regardless of their postcode.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The objective of this motion is to ensure that home insurance is accessible and affordable to all Australians, regardless of their postcode.

9 News reported in 2023 that "Insurance premiums soared by 28 percent in the last year - the highest rise in more than two decades. The median annual price of home insurance jumped by more than $400 in the 12 months to March to $1894. In some cases, insurance for properties in high-risk flood prone areas rose by 50 percent due to changes in flood mapping."

Significant un- and under-insurance because of increasing costs and ineligibility based on considered high risk areas leaves Australians vulnerable, particularly following disaster events.

Insurance gaps are not only a risk for homeowners, but also for the Government as it will be required to provide significant financial assistance to affected people, rather than insurers assisting.

Many insurance companies operate on a postcode basis, without giving any weight to publicly available and highly rigorous information regarding flood hazard categorisation and other disaster resilience measures undertaken by homeowners and local governments.

The LGAQ and WDRC welcome the Federal Opposition Leaders' election commitment to make insurance more affordable, and call upon the Federal Government to do the same.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The vast majority of regional areas in Australia is susceptible to natural disasters like floods, fires and storms. Natural Disasters have a devastating social and economic impact on people in the region and it is catastrophic for the community, businesses, and visitors. Accessible and Affordable insurance helps residents rebuild and recover financially after such disasters.

Insurance helps individuals and families manage financial risk. In the event of an unexpected event, insurance can help cover the costs of repairs, replacements, or medical care. This prevents financial hardship and allows people to focus on recovery.

With the potential for higher risk of natural disasters, insurance companies might place Western Downs Region and similar regions in a higher risk category. The Western Downs Region has experienced many disasters in the last decade as a result, it has been identified that there is a significant level of a protection gap resulting from un- and under-insurance following these disaster events.

Identified issues are:

- Lack of insurance in place due to high premiums and reduced affordability
- Gap in cover due to the increased costs to rebuild
- A gap in local understanding and capability to arrange suitable insurance, particularly in lower socio-economic areas
- Above average reliance on third party support systems
- Gaps in eligibility, or perceptions thereof

In addition to accessible and affordable insurance, a proactive, permanently funded resilience program is an important consideration that further supports Australia's population in risk prone areas. This should be provided proactively, and not just as a response where a property has been impacted. This will significantly improve the risks associated with insuring existing properties in vulnerable areas.

The Western Downs Region has experienced many disasters in the last decade which have had a devastating social and economic impact on people in the region.

Following on from the floods in 2021/22 have been a string of tragic events and disaster throughout our region, including four (4) bushfires in the Western Downs region over the course of February 2023 resulting in 90,000ha of land impacted. These bushfires displaced 37 persons across three regional townships.

Unfortunately, further bushfires impacted the region in the Tara district in October 2023 impacting 46 homes and displaced over 800 persons in the area to evacuation centre at the time.

Late January 2024 the township of Warra was surrounded by floodwaters of three major creeks and this resulted in the overnight evacuation of 29 persons. A number of properties were damaged as a result.

A significant level of a protection gap resulting from un- and under-insurance has been identified following these disaster events.

Whilst the above disaster events have identified un- and under-insurance issues, these challenges are more widespread across the region with anecdotal feedback being received that residential insurance in some of our smaller towns have considerable increased premiums.

In addition to this, a significant proportion of townships are affected by considerably higher insurance premiums due to the properties being considered in a 'flood zone', regardless of the flood hazard categorisation. For example, some areas in the township of Dalby are high flood hazard, whilst others are assessed as nil hazard. Despite this, they are treated equally. This postcode discrimination significantly impacts residents, particularly in regional areas of Queensland.

Motion number 86 Whitsunday Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to emulate the community benefits and effectiveness of the National Cyclone Reinsurance Pool with a National Flood Reinsurance Pool.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Flooding poses a significant and increasing risk to many Australian communities, leading to substantial economic and social impacts. Without adequate insurance options, individuals and businesses may struggle to recover from flood events, resulting in long-term financial strain and disruption.

Debating this at the National General Assembly is important as firstly, it raises awareness of the need for effective flood risk management and insurance solutions that protect communities. Secondly, it allows local representatives to share their experiences and advocate for a national approach to flood insurance, similar to the successful model of the National Cyclone Reinsurance Pool.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Flooding is a common issue that impacts many businesses and communities. With more frequent and severe weather events, the need for effective flood risk management is more critical than ever.

The National Cyclone Reinsurance Pool has been effective in providing stability and security for cyclone-affected areas, demonstrating the benefits of a national reinsurance scheme.

- Extreme weather patterns are resulting in increased flooding events across Australia. A National Flood Reinsurance Pool would provide essential financial support for communities facing these heightened risks.
- Establishing a National Flood Reinsurance Pool would help communities recover more quickly after flooding. With access to affordable insurance, individuals and businesses would be better equipped to rebuild and restore their livelihoods.
- A National Flood Reinsurance Pool could help support local economies. It would reduce the financial burden on governments and taxpayers who often bear the costs of disaster recovery.
- The National Cyclone Reinsurance Pool has demonstrated the effectiveness of a government-backed reinsurance scheme. Using this model for flood insurance would provide a proven framework for managing flood risks and supporting affected communities.

Motion number 87 Brisbane City Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

- Simplify application and claims processes under DRFA to reduce the enormous administrative burden on Councils.
- Implement reasonable, fair and consistent assessment criteria for demonstration of damage to essential public assets such as roads and drainage.
- Accept substantiation documentation produced by existing local government asset and financial management systems (which are already subject to independent audit) rather than applying requirements which effectively mean the creation of inefficient and costly parallel processes and often manual records.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The Australian Government, with the States and Territories, jointly provides funding towards recovery and resilience activities as part of the DRFA. Whilst local governments lead disaster management and recovery within their local communities, they are heavily reliant on DRFA arrangements to meet the additional and substantial costs of disasters.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Disasters result in significant damage to a wide range of local government assets. In the event of a disaster, local governments are faced not only with managing the immediate impact on local communities but also with returning critical local infrastructure to use. Asset repairs and replacement are complex and time-consuming processes which place a heavy burden on local councils over and above their business as usual activities.

Current provisions under DRFA add significant time, cost and complexity to recovery processes.

Applications for funding or acquittals incorporate highly inflexible requirements for documentation of every hour worked and every location where work has occurred, down to the individual street level. Moreover, systems established for DRFA administration are often inflexible and include arbitrary requirements designed to reduce the burden on assessors, which create an enormous additional burden on councils.

Faced with enormous clean up activities, it is extremely difficult for operational staff on the ground to gather sufficiently detailed information concerning exact location of work and photographic evidence with metadata. This results in clean up costs being deemed ineligible under DRFA, leaving council to bear the cost. Councils do their best to comply with requirements, but the administrative burden is enormous and cannot be claimed under the guidelines, and often requirements do not work with existing council systems. For example, asset management systems may automatically remove all metadata on photographs when uploaded so photographs must be saved in parallel systems. Existing timesheet systems do not capture the level of detail required by DRFA resulting in all time recording needing to be duplicated by manual paper timesheets or other systems.

Australian Government requirements drive much of the excessively bureaucratic processes. Multiple Audit processes at both the State and Commonwealth levels are excessive and required further resource investment by councils.

Motion number 87.1 The Rural City of Murray Bridge SA

This National General Assembly Calls on the Australian Government to reassess its approach to determining eligibility, setting criteria, and distributing emergency response and recovery funds to Local Governments. The goal is to prevent communities from being left with unsustainable costs for both response and recovery, ensuring critical and recreational infrastructure remains serviceable.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

To urge the Australian Government to reassess and improve the process of determining eligibility, setting criteria, and distributing emergency response and recovery funds to local governments. It aims to highlight the financial burden on the Rural City of Murray Bridge following the 2022 Murray River flood and advocate for fairer, more efficient funding mechanisms to ensure communities are not left with unsustainable costs for disaster recovery and infrastructure restoration.

KEY ARGUMENTS

In December 2022, the Murray River flood in South Australia severely impacted Murraylands and Riverland Councils, damaging public and private assets, including reserves and road infrastructure. The Rural City of Murray Bridge spent approximately $3.026 million on response and recovery, expecting full reimbursement.

Funding Received and Financial Shortfall

- $514,000 was recovered through the Counter Disaster Operations Grant (CDOG) for initial response costs.
- $201,276 was reimbursed for constructing an emergency clay levee in Mypolonga.
- $1,068,238 was received under the Local Government Disaster Recovery Assistance Arrangements (LGDRAA) in June 2023.

Due to accounting standards, $450,000 was deferred for future recognition, with $244,000 still unallocated.

As of June 2024, $1.39 million in claims remains outstanding, leaving Council out-of-pocket by $864,000 in what it considers reasonable and necessary expenses.

Unfunded Recovery Projects

Several critical recovery projects remain unfunded, including:

- Heritage Wharf (Sturt Reserve): Severely damaged and fenced off, with state funding requests rejected.
- Riverbank Erosion and Stabilization: Flood damage has left riverfront reserves inaccessible, with no confirmed funding for repairs.
- Betterment Funding: Despite submitting proposals to mitigate future flood impacts, no financial support has been provided.

Challenges in Disaster Funding

Small councils face complex and excessive bureaucratic hurdles when applying for disaster recovery funds. Despite submitting detailed claims, many requests are denied or delayed, leaving communities to bear the financial burden.

Conclusion

Over two years since the flood, the Council remains financially strained, with $18 million in damaged infrastructure still unusable. The lack of accessible recovery funding continues to impact the community, highlighting the urgent need for funding reforms to support local governments in disaster recovery

Motion number 87.2 Narrabri Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to urgently review the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangement (DRFA) model with a focus on achieving greater transparency and equity of access to recovery funding along with an enhanced focus on

betterment principles.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion aligns to ALGA Priority 4 and it is consistent with the national objective in that it is consistent with the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience and aligns with the recommendations of both the Colvin and Glasser Reviews.

KEY ARGUMENTS

It is acknowledged that the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding (Colvin Review) in addition to the Independent Review of National Natural Disaster Governance Arrangements (Glasser Review) to improve disaster management arrangements were commissioned in 2023. Both reviews were in response to the increasing size, scale, intensity, cost and complexity of natural disasters. Unsurprisingly, both reviews found that the Australian disaster management framework and associated arrangements have not adequately evolved at the samerate as the changing nature of disasters. The systems are not fit for purpose and continue to create ongoing pressure on local government. Urgent action is needed in this space with appropriate liaison and engagement with councils as key stakeholders. The key recommendations of both the Colvin and Glasser Reviews must be dealt with expeditiously along with their associated identified interventions.

Motion number 87.3 Mornington Peninsula Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

- consider changes to eligibility criteria for events to be declared under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA);
- invest in equitable and recurrent funding for the delivery of resilience building projects and programs.

As the closest level of government to the community, councils are best placed to coordinate relief and recovery. However, the sector does not have the financial resources to adequately coordinate safety measures that fall outside current DRFA criteria.

DRFA should be more flexible in its operation, including being open to extraordinary applications and circumstances, so that councils can support and equip local communities affected by events that currently fall outside the scope of DRFA criteria.

This motion identifies three areas that requires the attention of Federal government:

1. The eligibility criteria for declaring an event under DRFA;
2. Local level 'all hazards' (storm, fire, landslide etc.) resilience building programs to equip and prepare communities for the response to emergencies and natural disasters;
3. Expansion of the Council Support Fund to include events such as the recent McCrae landslide on the Mornington Peninsula, to allow Federal and State governments to assist.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

DRFA criteria currently concentrates on the event type. The focus of disaster funding must be on people - communities affected by the disaster, regardless of whether it is tied to a specific geological or weather event.

The McCrae landslide causes are still being investigated and may have more than one single contributing factor. However, the community expects recovery to occur immediately and not when causes are established.

The McCrae landslide has brought attention to the inadequacy of disaster funding to deal with more complex events. For example, had the landslide been tied to a storm event it would be eligible for DRFA funding but given the cause is unclear, complex and under investigation, it is not eligible.

The Australian Institute Disaster Resilience definition of a disaster includes the serious disruption to a community 'at any scale' and leading to human impacts. Arguably, a disaster is people centered - without people the community impacts are lessened. The cause of the landslide in McCrae may not be determined for several months or more, but funding is required urgently for recovery efforts by local government to support affected residents.

KEY ARGUMENTS

On 5 and 14 January 2025, landslides occurred on private property in the coastal town of McCrae on the Mornington Peninsula, the latter causing the initial evacuation of 19 homes and the closure of Point Nepean Road, a major arterial road and gateway to the southern Peninsula.

Council worked closely with State Emergency Service and other agencies to respond to this event, which caused considerable disruption to the affected residents and local community. The emergency will require extensive investigation and ongoing recovery efforts at a significant cost.

While it will take time to investigate the causes of the landslide - disaster recovery funding has not been accessible to Council. The DRFA is the only mechanism available to councils to relieve some of the financial burden that may be experienced following a disaster. With current criteria, the McCrae landslide recovery efforts will not be considered for DRFA funding.

What this essentially meant was that once 'Transition to Recovery' was effected, handing responsibility of the incident to Council, there was no mechanism for support from the Federal or State governments.

Further, as this incident occurred on private property, only affecting other private property, this may be deemed a civil matter. It is noted that private residents typically do not have expertise in landslide management. The rectification of damage caused by the landslide may result in litigation that is likely to take several years to resolve, which may leave residents displaced for an indefinite period of time.

Should some minor changes to the DRFA eligibility criteria occur, it would enable councils to assist and provide support to their communities at a time of overwhelming distress.

Another option would be to expand the Council Support Fund, which can be used for fire and storm-related activities that are ineligible under the DRFA and other State or Federal funding, to include this event and allow other levels of government to assist.

In addition to recovery assistance from government, evidence shows the best defence against the impacts of an emergency event is the preparedness of the community. Equipping the community to safeguard their own properties has significant social and financial return on investment. Current investment in community preparedness is at the discretion of each municipal Council and often doesn't cover being prepared for natural disasters.

Drawing on the success of the Victorian Government Municipal Emergency Resourcing Program, which provides funds to councils to plan and prepare our communities for the response to emergencies, a similar investment from the Federal government would assist

councils to better support communities in their preparedness - giving communities capacity and tools to manage their own response.

Motion number 88 Shire of Campaspe VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to mandate a resilient homes program with all State Governments to raise or retrofit residential properties at risk of flood inundation or other natural disasters, and which prioritises homeowners affected by disaster events since 2022 to build back better.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Mandating state governments to provide a consistent approach to a co-contribution will offer the support that all Australians are seeking with options to rebuild, repair, raise or buyback homes.

KEY ARGUMENTS

In an article on 21 February 2022, the ABC obtained a letter from federal Emergency Services Minister Jenny McCallister that said unlike Queensland and New South Wales, the Victorian Government did not request a Resilient Homes Fund program through the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

The New South Wales government co-funded $920 million to establish its Build Back Better fund to rebuild, repair, raise or buyback homes across the Central West and Northern Rivers regions.

In Queensland, federal and state governments allocated $741 million to repair, retrofit or relocate homes after the 2022 floods.

The Victorian government has not offered any similar grants, and in a flood inquiry response released on January 30 it ruled out paying for residents to raise the height of their homes in areas worst affected by the 2022 floods that swept through much of the state.

Flood weary Victorians, particularly in townships like Rochester in Victoria say their state government has abandoned them by electing to not join with the federal government in an opportunity to future-proof their homes.

Mandating state governments to provide a consistent approach to a co-contribution will offer the support that all Australians are seeking with options to rebuild, repair, raise or buyback homes.

Motion number 89 Burdekin Shire Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to invest in incentive programs that address the steady decline of volunteer numbers and implement initiatives to attract emergency management volunteers, improve training offered to volunteers ensuring they are adequately skilled, including in areas of leadership and that qualifications are portable nationally, and embrace and encourage spontaneous volunteers who may already hold relevant skills and qualifications

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Volunteer involvement in disaster and emergency preparedness and response is essential to Australia's resilience and recovery efforts. However, the ability to mobilize and sustain a skilled volunteer workforce is under increasing strain due to declining participation rates,

growing demands on volunteers, and the increased frequency and severity of natural disasters.

The Australian Government has a critical role in strengthening the nation's capacity to respond to these challenges by investing in initiatives that attract, train, and retain emergency management volunteers. A nationally coordinated approach is needed to ensure volunteers are adequately supported through financial incentives, accessible and transferable training, and recognition of their skills and qualifications.

Local Governments are uniquely placed to foster volunteer engagement due to their deep-rooted community networks and firsthand understanding of local risks and needs. By working in partnership with all levels of government, we can enhance disaster preparedness and response capabilities while ensuring volunteer efforts are sustainable, effective, and valued.

KEY ARGUMENTS

1. Volunteers are integral to Australia's emergency response capacity

- Emergency management volunteers bolster the nation's ability to respond to and recover from disasters, providing critical support alongside emergency services.
- The decline in volunteer numbers threatens the resilience of communities, particularly in regional and disaster-prone areas.

2. Nationally recognised and transferable qualifications will improve training and retention

- Volunteers should have access to high-quality training that is standardised across jurisdictions, ensuring they are adequately skilled and prepared for their roles.
- Recognising volunteer training through nationally portable qualifications provides career and skills-based benefits, improving retention and incentivizing participation.

3. Financial and structural support is needed to encourage volunteerism

- Federal investment in targeted incentives, such as training subsidies, tax relief, or direct financial support, would reduce barriers to volunteer participation.
- Supporting local governments in volunteer recruitment and coordination efforts will strengthen place-based resilience and ensure that local knowledge informs disaster preparedness strategies.

4. Spontaneous volunteers with relevant skills should be embraced

- Many community members possess valuable expertise and are willing to assist during disasters but lack formal pathways to contribute effectively.
- A structured approach to integrating spontaneous volunteers into emergency responses will maximise community capacity and improve overall disaster preparedness.

a) By prioritising national support for emergency management volunteers, the Australian Government can strengthen disaster resilience, enhance local capacity, and ensure communities are better prepared for future emergencies.

HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

Motion number 90 Blacktown City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Establish standardised definitions for common policy terms used across all jurisdictions to ensure consistent application of housing policy and legislation.
2. Prioritise standardisation of terms relating to housing policy as part of the National Housing Accord, including affordable housing, social housing, seniors housing, essential worker housing, and community housing.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Clear and consistent application of policy and legislation in housing is a matter of critical concern to local government, and to all Australians.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The lack of standardised terminology across jurisdictions and levels of government creates significant challenges in policy implementation, legislative interpretation and service delivery. Different terms and definitions are used for the same concepts, complicating cross-government coordination and creating inequitable outcomes. The definition of 'essential workers' exemplifies this problem - some jurisdictions limit this to public sector workers (healthcare, education), while others include private sector workers (retail, logistics) as demonstrated during COVID-19. The terms 'essential worker', 'key worker' and 'frontline worker' are also used inconsistently.

Local workforce data shows these definitional variations impact policy effectiveness. For example, Blacktown City's higher employment in manufacturing (7.5%) and transport sectors (8.1%) compared to NSW averages highlights how varying definitions affect policy outcomes, and local communities. Standardised definitions would improve policy clarity, ensure equitable application of government initiatives, and enable more effective cross-jurisdictional cooperation.

The National Housing Accord seeks to create consistency in how housing is reported across all jurisdictions, and we suggest that this may be a useful tool to standardise policy definitions related to housing.

Motion number 91 Fraser Coast Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to work with state, territory, and local governments to ensure that social and community housing maintains at least its current proportion of the total housing stock, with new social and community homes being built at the same proportional rate as the broader housing stock.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Housing shortages and inequality are being experienced nationwide, with social and community housing failing to keep pace with demand. The decreasing availability of social and community housing exacerbates housing stress, deepens inequality and contributes to rising homelessness. This in turn, increases reliance on government support systems and places additional pressures on public services. By prioritising social and community housing at a national level, social, economic and environmental outcomes can be improved.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) notes that Australia's social housing has decreased in the past forty years and in 2021 comprised only 3.8% of the total housing stock, a figure lower than both the expressed demand and the combined existing potential demand (being 6.1% in 2021). This percentage is also low compared to countries with similar GDP per capita rankings.

Research conducted by AHURI has demonstrated that secure, affordable, and appropriate housing provides substantial economic, social and environmental benefits as outlined below:

1. Economic benefits:
    a. Reduces government spending on health, justice, and welfare services.
    b. Enhances productivity by improving access to jobs, increasing earning potential, and reducing commuting time.
    c. Increases household disposable income and financial stability.
    d. Supports employment by reducing job loss risks, absenteeism, and improving job-seeking opportunities.
2. Social benefits:
    a. Improves overall health and mental wellbeing, leading to lower healthcare costs
    b. Enhances safety by reducing domestic violence, homelessness, and criminal activity.
    c. Supports better educational outcomes by improving attendance, engagement and performance.
    d. Strengthens family stability, social participation and community engagement.
3. Environmental benefits:
    a. Reduces energy consumption and costs, leading to lower carbon emissions and better indoor living conditions
    b. Promotes sustainable urban development by reducing reliance on private transport and conserving natural resources
    c. Minimises waste and enhances air and water quality.

Ensuring proportional growth of social and community housing within the broader housing market is crucial to achieving these economic, social and environmental benefits.

Motion number 91.1 South Burnett Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to encourage investors back into the rental market to assist in the housing crisis as only 3% of housing is Community Housing with 90% being 'mum and dad' investors.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Homeless and housing Affordability

KEY ARGUMENTS

The upsurge in demand for housing and accommodation in recent years has exacerbated homelessness across our State. This issue requires a continued focus as a matter of priority.

To encourage "mum and dad" investors into the rental market, we believe we need to focus on simplifying regulations, offering financial incentives, and promoting education about affordable housing schemes, while also addressing misconceptions about their role in the rental market through a communications campaign.

Dedicated investment, which is stimulated through a programme to renew aging infrastructure is essential for the development of not only housing stock, but also the core infrastructure to support the development residential housing and investors developing new housing stock. This would not only serve as a stimulus for regional communities but would also assist in mitigating the current acute housing crisis.

Motion number 92 Camden Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to specifically fund social and affordable housing for women in poverty and young people by supporting councils to work with the community housing sector, relevant community groups and developers to create innovative solutions close to activity centres and community services to address housing affordability and homelessness for these cohorts.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Research has concluded that there are 400,000 women over the age of 45 who are at risk of becoming homeless due to their insecure housing. They live in a dwelling that is inadequate; or there is no tenure, or their initial tenure is short and not extendable; or they are unable to have control of, and access to, space for social relations.

Housing is important to meet the physical, social, cultural, economic and developmental needs of young people. Stable and appropriate accommodation enables young people to thrive. However, many young people are experiencing poor housing outcomes, and are one of the most at-risk groups of homelessness.

Adequate funding by the Australian Government and effective partnerships with relevant stakeholders including councils is essential to address these issues.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Across Australia, the biggest driver of women experiencing homelessness is family and domestic violence. Women are more likely to use homelessness services because they have lower incomes than men on average and so are more vulnerable to being unable to afford a home, and because more women and girls experience family and domestic violence. Some women are more likely to experience homelessness than others.

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander women, women with disability, women from migrant or refugee backgrounds and women with a mental illness are more vulnerable to homelessness.

Women are much more likely to be raising a child on their own, with 80% of Australia's one million one parent families being single mothers. Single mothers are also less likely to be working than single fathers - in one parent families with dependent children (i.e. aged 0 to 14, or 15 to 24 if the child is studying full time), just over two thirds (67%) of single mothers are employed compared with three quarters (75%) of single fathers.

Research also shows that almost 80% of single retired women who rent privately are living in poverty.

While expensive house rents and purchase prices are a concern for all Australians, for Australian women, particularly single women with children, the high costs are the cause of significant grief. Already high rental and purchase prices are made worse by the fact that, on average, women's weekly earnings are 14% less than men's. As a result, finding and paying

an affordable rent (i.e. paying no more than 30% of income) for a single woman is much more difficult. However, because of the typical demands of being a primary care giver to their children (and sometimes other family members such aged parents), women are much more likely to be working part time (69% of all part-time employees) or not be in the paid workforce (with a workforce participation rate of 76% compared to 83% for men) and therefore not earning a full-time income. In these cases, for a single woman, saving for a deposit is almost impossible.

The housing context for young people today is characterised by declining homeownership rates, decreasing housing and rental affordability, a decline in the availability of social housing, and rising youth homelessness. High rental costs, low incomes, insecure share housing and the lack of affordable housing and social housing stock all make independent living a challenge for many young people.

While some young people are staying at home for longer, for others this simply is not an option. This has increased the pressure across the housing spectrum. Young people must have access to a range of housing options and products that are both affordable and appropriate to their needs. For some young people, social housing is a very appropriate option.

Yet, despite the strong need for stable longer-term housing and a higher risk of homelessness than other segments of the population, the housing system is difficult for young people to gain access to.

Motion number 93 Camden Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Provide a national infrastructure strategy that supports its housing targets and includes a funded infrastructure plan that is aligned with the housing growth; and
2. Ensure that the strategy and plan include the timely delivery of infrastructure that supports the development of new and growing communities.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

A well-structured National Housing Infrastructure Strategy, supported by a fully funded plan, will provide certainty of planning and funding and enable councils and key stakeholders including relevant State and Territory government agencies to align their strategic plans effectively.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Forward funding of infrastructure is essential for accelerating housing delivery, minimising delays and attracting private investment. It ensures that critical services such as transport, education, healthcare, utilities, and public amenities are in place from the outset, creating more sustainable, affordable, and liveable communities. Without a clear, coordinated approach via a National Housing Infrastructure Strategy and a funded infrastructure plan, infrastructure delivery risks being inefficient, reactive and underfunded, ultimately constraining housing growth and community development.

Motion number 94 Glen Innes Severn Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to deliver a Land Development and Housing Construction Fund to Address the Housing Crisis.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The 2025 National General Assembly (NGA) theme, "National Priorities Need Local Solutions," recognises the critical role of Australia's 537 councils in addressing national challenges through place-based, locally led initiatives. Nowhere is this more urgent than in solving Australia's housing and homelessness crisis, where local governments are uniquely positioned to facilitate housing supply but lack adequate funding and infrastructure investment to do so effectively.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The housing and homelessness crisis cannot be solved without increasing housing supply, and that starts with unlocking land and investing in enabling infrastructure. A Federal-Backed Land Development and Housing Construction Fund would empower local councils to accelerate land release, remove infrastructure bottlenecks, and attract private and community sector investment in affordable housing.

This is not just about housing - it is about ensuring every Australian has access to a safe, stable, and affordable home. The Australian Government must act now to provide the funding councils need to make housing accessible and affordable for all.

1. Addressing Australia's Housing Crisis and Workforce Mobility Issues

Australia is facing an unprecedented housing crisis, with rising homelessness, housing insecurity, and a shortage of affordable homes. This crisis is not only affecting vulnerable populations but is also preventing worker movement across the country, impacting businesses, service delivery, and economic growth. Local governments do not build housing, but they play a critical role in facilitating housing supply through zoning, planning approvals, and infrastructure provision. However, many councils lack adequate resourcing and are forced to go above and beyond their core responsibilities to address the crisis. One of the biggest barriers is the lack of funding for enabling infrastructure-such as roads, water, and power connections-which are essential for new housing developments to proceed.

The National Housing Accord - which ALGA signed on behalf of local government - sets a target of 1.2 million new homes over five years, but research from Equity Economics has identified a $5.7 billion funding shortfall for the infrastructure required to achieve this goal. Without urgent federal investment in infrastructure, this target will not be met, further exacerbating the housing crisis.

2. Unlocking More Land for Housing Development

A Federal-Backed Land Development and Housing Construction Fund would provide direct investment in regional councils to prepare land for housing construction, ensuring more homes can be built where they are needed. By funding site preparation, subdivision, and enabling infrastructure (roads, utilities, water/sewer connections), the program would:

1. Increase the supply of developable land, reducing land scarcity and stabilizing housing prices.

2. Reduce infrastructure costs for developers, making it more viable to build affordable housing.

3. Ensure faster housing approvals, as councils will have shovel-ready sites in collaboration with developers and community housing providers.

Currently, local governments lack a formal role in housing policy at the state, territory, or federal level, despite their direct involvement in planning and infrastructure delivery. Providing funding and a seat at the table would empower councils to be part of the solution while ensuring new housing developments align with local infrastructure capacity and community needs.

3. Closing the Infrastructure Gap That Is Stalling Housing Supply

The biggest barrier to new housing developments is the lack of investment in supporting infrastructure-a major contributor to the current housing and homelessness crisis. Local governments cannot fund these essential infrastructure projects alone, particularly in regional and outer suburban areas where costs are higher.

Motion number 95 West Tamar Council TAS

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to develop and implement a National Property Disclosure Standard applicable to all real estate transactions across Australia.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

To ensure that all property buyers in Australia, whether residential, commercial, or industrial, are provided with a consistent, comprehensive, legally binding disclosure document at the time of sale, detailing essential property information, including but not limited to:

1. Council & Local Government Information: Zoning, planning restrictions, overlays, and development approvals.
2. Building & Compliance Records: Approved structures, outstanding notices, defects, or unauthorized works.
3. Environmental & Natural Hazard Risks: Flood zones, bushfire risks, contamination reports, and asbestos presence.
4. Utility & Infrastructure Disclosures: Easements, encumbrances, service connections, and shared infrastructure obligations.
5. Financial & Legal Matters: Strata levies, heritage listings, title defects, and any outstanding rates or levies.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Property disclosure requirements vary significantly between states and territories, a national standard would provide transparency and further consumer confidence.

Local governments frequently deal with disputes arising from inadequate disclosure, placing an administrative and financial burden on councils.

Aligning disclosure processes across Australia is far more efficient.

- ACT: Civil Law (Sale of Residential Property) Act 2003
- NSW: Conveyancing Act 1919
- NT: Law of Property Act 2000
- QLD: Property Law Act 1974 (The Property Law Act 2023)
- SA: Land and Business (Sale and Conveyancing) Act 1994

- TAS: Conveyancing and Law of Property Act 1884
- VIC: Sale of Land Act 1962
- WA: Transfer of Land Act 1893

Property disclosure requirements vary significantly across states and territories.

Australian Capital Territory (ACT):

Sellers are mandated to provide comprehensive disclosure documents, including:

- Energy Efficiency Rating Statement
- Building and Compliance Inspection
- Asbestos Advice and Assessment
- Pest Inspection
- The property's Crown Lease
- Certificate of title
- Deposited plan
- Lease Conveyancing Documents
- Building Conveyancing Document
- Information about the body corporate

New South Wales:

Sellers must attach a Section 149 certificate to the contract, detailing zoning and planning information. Mandatory disclosures include:

- Land diagrams from an accepted sewerage authority
- Property certificate and a copy of the land plan
- Copies of all deeds and dealings lodged or registered in LPMA

Victoria:

Sellers are required to provide a Section 32 statement (Vendor's Statement) before the contract is signed, which include:

- Statutory warnings to the purchaser
- Seller's details
- Title details
- Details of any building permits
- Owner-builder warranty insurance
- Written inspection report if building works were completed
- Any land mortgages, debts, or charges
- Information about any title restrictions
- Planning information
- Information about the property owner's expenses
- Notices or orders issued by authorities
- Access details to the property by road
- Information on services

Queensland:

With the introduction of the Property Law Act 2023, a new seller disclosure regime will commence on 1 August 2025. Under this regime, sellers will be required to provide:

- Disclosure statement in the approved form
- Applicable prescribed certificates

These documents must be given to the buyer before they sign the contract for the purchase of a lot.

South Australia:

Sellers are required to serve a Vendor's Statement to purchasers, which includes

- Volume and folio details
- Description of the land
- Name of the registered proprietor
- Encumbrances
- Property information statement
- Emergency services levy certificate
- Land tax certificate
- Water certificate

Tasmania:

There is no mandatory vendor disclosure statement required.

Western Australia:

There is no statutory requirement for a vendor disclosure statement.

Northern Territory:

Sellers are required to disclose:

- Report about the building's status
- Knowledge of contamination or a drug premises order
- Land Titles Office title search
- Details of registered and unregistered encumbrances
- Unit information
- Evidence of occupancy or tenancy
- Swimming pool fencing compliance certificate
- Rates notice

Motion number 96 City of Sydney NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to encourage and fund Australian Councils to implement Affordable Housing Contribution Schemes to ensure Councils can better contribute to tackling the national housing crisis.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The Australian Government can take a leadership role by developing a national framework to support the expansion of Affordable Housing Contribution Schemes across local governments.

The City of Sydney's scheme demonstrates what's possible when councils are empowered. Since its introduction, the scheme has delivered around 1,500 affordable homes, with nearly

2,000 more under assessment or in the development pipeline. Recent reforms to the City's scheme-including a new standard 20% contribution for rezoned residential floor space and a first-of-its-kind 2% non-residential floor space in the city centre-set a national benchmark for ambition and impact. However, such schemes require significant policy development, community consultation, and economic analysis-resources that many councils do not have.

Debating this motion at ALGA will highlight the urgent need for federal leadership and funding to enable councils across Australia to adopt affordable housing contribution schemes. It supports the NGA theme: "National Priorities Need Local Solutions"-and recognises the vital role of councils in delivering housing affordability, economic productivity, and social equity at the local level.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Australia's affordable housing crisis is a national challenge that requires local solutions. Councils are on the frontline of this crisis, but their ability to respond is constrained by limited resources, inconsistent policy frameworks, and a lack of access to dedicated funding mechanisms. One tool that has proven successful at the local level in NSW is a local Affordable Housing Contribution Scheme (AHCS)-a mechanism that enables councils to secure developer contributions for affordable housing through the planning system.

While some councils have pioneered the use of AHCSs, including the City of Sydney, this is not standard practice across jurisdictions. In fact, outside NSW-where the City's scheme operates under state planning framework-most councils lack the authority, policy backing, or resources to implement such schemes. Even within NSW, the use of AHCSs remains limited, and support from state governments is inconsistent.

Recent draft reforms to the City of Sydney's scheme illustrate the potential of this model. These changes include a standard 20% affordable housing contribution on the 'uplift' of rezoned residential sites, a first-of-its-kind 2% contribution on non-residential floor space in the city centre, and precinct-based monetary contribution rates that reflect actual construction costs. The scheme has already delivered over 1,500 affordable homes, with nearly 2,000 more in the pipeline. This is a powerful demonstration of what councils can achieve when given the tools and authority to act.

However, the City of Sydney's success is the exception-not the norm. It highlights a structural inequity: only a handful of councils, with unique planning powers or internal capacity, can implement contribution schemes. Most Australian councils do not have access to enabling legislation, technical resources, or state support required to establish similar initiatives. This limits the capacity of local government to contribute meaningfully to housing affordability at scale.

Furthermore, there is a need to establish clear, consistent standards for what constitutes affordable housing. The City of Sydney has advocated for a nationally consistent definition that includes affordability in perpetuity, delivery and management by not-for-profit registered Community Housing Providers, and rent capped at 30% of gross household income. Adopting this definition nationwide would ensure developer contributions are directed toward housing that meets the needs of low- and moderate-income earners and remains affordable over the long term.

- "National Priorities Need Local Solutions"-provides the perfect platform to call on the Australian Government to fund and encourage councils across the country to implement Affordable Housing Contribution Schemes. Such support should include legislative pathways, policy guidance, and funding for scheme development and implementation.

This motion recognises the critical role of local government in enabling housing supply and promoting affordability-and seeks to ensure that all councils, regardless of size or location, have access to the mechanisms needed to help address the housing crisis. It is a practical, proven solution that warrants national debate and federal support.

Motion number 97 Brisbane City Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide improved national information databases through increased funding that governments and the private sector rely on to plan for new housing across Australia.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Good strategic planning - which is critical to maintaining an adequate supply of new housing - is wholly reliant on reliable, accessible data on the factors influencing housing demand, capacity and delivery from national to very local geographies.

Much of this critical data must be collected at the national level.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The Australian Government has very mature capabilities in relation to the collection of population and housing data such as approvals, completions, migration and economic activity.

This data informs population assumptions, demographic analysis and supply forecasting at State and local levels and is fundamental to infrastructure, transport and land use planning in cities and regions.

However, as the housing affordability crisis has shown, ongoing improvements are required. The Australian Government - with its critical role in monitoring economic activity and demography across Australia - can enhance the strategic planning process significantly by ensuring that the data that informs land use and infrastructure planning is accurate and timely.

Therefore, greater provision and funding for improved, consistent, coordinated and frequently updated databases relating to housing demand and supply at a national level would be highly valuable for local and State governments when planning for new housing.

Motion number 98 Strathfield Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to call for the development of a National Homelessness Prevention Strategy, with local governments playing a key role in coordination, service provision, and community-based solutions.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Over 122,000 Australians experience homelessness on any given night, with increasing numbers of people at risk due to housing unaffordability, domestic and family violence, mental health challenges, and economic instability. This issue is a nation-wide concern.

Much of the national focus remains on crisis response rather than prevention. A national strategy would shift focus to early intervention, housing stability, and wraparound support, reducing long-term costs and harm.

Councils are often first to identify and respond to individuals at risk through community services, outreach, public facilities, and local partnerships. Their local knowledge and on-the-ground networks make them key partners in any effective prevention strategy.

Homelessness prevention reduces pressure on hospitals, policing, emergency accommodation, and social services. It also supports national objectives around mental health, family safety, and housing stability.

Preventing homelessness protects employment, education, and health outcomes, contributing to stronger, safer, and more inclusive communities.

With federal support, councils can expand local programs, partner with housing and service providers, and coordinate prevention initiatives tailored to local needs.

Local government is often overlooked in national housing and homelessness strategies. This motion calls for councils to be formally recognised as implementation partners.

Homelessness is highly visible in many communities and is a growing concern among residents. Councils need the tools, funding, and support to respond compassionately.

KEY ARGUMENTS

1. Rising housing stress, family violence, mental health issues, and economic insecurity are pushing more Australians into homelessness across urban, regional, and rural areas. Existing responses are largely focused on crisis management. A national prevention strategy would shift focus to early intervention and long-term housing stability.
2. Councils deliver or support key community services, facilities, and outreach programs that often provide the first point of contact for people at risk of homelessness. Local governments understand the unique needs of their communities and can coordinate targeted, place-based prevention efforts.
3. Effective prevention lowers long-term costs by reducing demand for crisis housing, health services, policing, and justice systems.
4. Stable housing improves health, education, employment, and community safety-key national policy priorities.
5. Local governments are currently underrepresented in national homelessness planning. This motion calls for formal recognition of their role.
6. Homelessness is a visible and urgent concern in many communities. Councils need support to respond compassionately and effectively.

Motion number 98.1 Mornington Peninsula Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to work closely with the local government sector, to address the impacts of the national homelessness crisis by providing increased funding towards:

1. Community Support Centres to ensure they can sufficiently deliver the emergency relief needs of communities.

2. Consider expanding and redeveloping existing Community Support Centres into community service hubs, which include co-located housing and homelessness support services.
3. Funding for outreach worker services to provide homeless people and rough sleepers in the community with the support they need to find housing and address social challenges in their lives.
4. Increased provision of crisis accommodation, because housing is a necessary first step to rebuild a life.
5. In addition, we request:
6. The Australian Government incorporates this motion into development of National Housing and Homelessness Plan priorities.
7. There is a seat for ALGA on the Housing and Homelessness Ministerial Council or National Cabinet.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The national homelessness crisis continues to worsen with a critical need for additional housing and homelessness support service funding, to assist those living through crisis. There is a major funding shortfall which is impacting the availability of emergency relief, outreach services, wrap around support services and crisis accommodation for those most in need. More than 700 people are homeless and more than 100 people sleep rough on any given night, along Victoria's Mornington Peninsula foreshore alone.

Across the local government sector nationally, municipalities are having to deal with the impacts of the homelessness crisis across local communities, due to the desperate need for adequate support services and accommodation.

As the level of government closest to the community, local government has specific knowledge of the complexities of the homelessness issue, the community affected, and services required. Local government also has valuable knowledge and established relationships with key local service providers and is therefore in a good position to be able to work in partnership with the federal government, to advise on the development of an effective model of national support.

KEY ARGUMENTS

1. Adequate funding for Community Support Centres

On Victoria's Mornington Peninsula, three Community Support Centres are providing the only safety net for those living through crisis. In addition to being the largest providers of emergency relief on the Peninsula, the Community Support Centres ensure those who do not fit the criteria of mainstream government funded services, have access to face-to-face, personalised specialist support from programs tailored to their specific needs.

In the past 12 months the increase in demand for services at Centres has been unprecedented. The Mornington Peninsula Shire provides $1 million funding to the Community Support Centers each year, yet our homeless community still do not have the range of essential and necessary support they need.

2. Community Support Centres transformed into community hubs

A sufficiently funded community hub would redevelop and expand Community Support Centres, beyond providing just emergency relief by offering counselling, legal, medical, allied health and employment support in the one location. This could be modeled around other

successful Federal government service hubs which have been successful, including the Medicare Mental Health Hubs service model or the National Child and Family Hubs.

When community members are in crisis or acutely homelessness, they require intensive support from multiple services which must be easily accessed.

3. Outreach services

Currently there are only two assertive Outreach workers, funded by donations, supporting the acutely homeless on the Mornington Peninsula, who support those sleeping rough. These workers are overwhelmed with clients needing housing and support. Additional workers are desperately required to keep up with demand. Someone experiencing acute homelessness requires a more intense, personalised level of care as they don't usually have access to a vehicle, phone and computer, and they are not able to access mainstream services.

4. Crisis accommodation

The only crisis accommodation facility on the Mornington Peninsula is located in a disused motel, located on a site due to be redeveloped and scheduled for imminent closure. Crisis accommodation is crucial to provide a temporary stop gap whilst long term housing solutions can be secured.

1. Community Support Centres are significantly under resourced and underfunded, at a time when the increase in demand is unprecedented. The difference between someone getting support and not getting support can be the difference between life and death.

2. A community hub that provides a range of necessary wrap around services in one location could include partnerships with hospitals, support agencies, housing providers, primary health care services and legal services. This is not a new idea and could draw on similar federal government services in Australia and housing models overseas that have been successful. It could expand on and redevelop existing Community Support Centres.

3. Outreach services are crucial to provide support to the acutely homeless or those people sleeping rough. Assertive outreach workers are overwhelmed with the number of clients needing housing and support and are in desperate need of additional staff to keep up with demand.

4. The federal government has already committed funding for transitional housing that prioritises women and children. Therefore, the timing is opportune to investigate the development of further crisis accommodation to support other groups of homeless people.

The Mornington Peninsula's temporary crisis accommodation, The Ranch, has provided 4040 nights of accommodation in the 2023-2024 financial year, which equates to around $750,000 at $185 per night.

Over 50 percent of The Ranch residents went into social or community housing and found long term housing solutions. This has been a hugely successful program run by Community Support Centres. It further demonstrates that secure and safe housing with additional wrap around services, is an extremely successful model of care for the acutely homeless and those individuals with complex needs.

Motion number 99 Central Coast Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to remove the double taxation on home insurance policies by working with the states to remove stamp duty or GST which are both charged making policies more affordable and equitable.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The cost of living is a key issue that affects millions of Australians, not just those on the Central Coast local government area. Where stamp duty and GST are applied, this makes home insurance policies more expensive, resulting in fewer people able or willing to take home and contents insurance. This, in turn, places a larger burden on local and state government to deal with disaster events due to the lack of insurance. If either stamp duty or GST did not apply to home insurance policies, this would make the policies more affordable and equitable and reduce the impact on the applicable governing bodies.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Remove either or both stamp duty and GST to home insurance policies, making insurance policies more affordable.

Motion number 100 North Burnett Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to work with the local government sector to review the Housing Australia Future Fund Act 2023 (HAFF) with a view to establishing a fixed portion of the HAFF to support investment in social and affordable housing in regional and rural local government areas where there is demonstrated evidence of unmet housing need.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion calls on the Australian government to work with local governments to proactively ensure that affordable housing needs in regional and rural areas are not overlooked in the management of the Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF) resources to address critical social and affordable housing shortages in regional and rural areas. This approach is not dissimilar to the action taken by the Queensland Government with its Residential Activation Fund.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Many communities across Australia, including some of those in the North Burnett, are grappling with severe housing supply challenges, resulting in lack of available and affordable accommodation stock for key workers, older persons no longer in full time work, people experiencing housing stress and people escaping domestic and family violence. This challenge is not limited to major urban population centres but is also a very real experience in rural and regional towns that have not enjoyed extended investment in new housing due to lower historical levels of population growth compared with the higher growth urban coastal localities.

The lack of available and affordable housing supply also places a handbrake on potential economic growth and diversification as it constrains the ability of rural and regional towns to attract and accommodate the essential labour force pipeline to support the attraction of new business and industry investment. Put simply, business and industry will not invest in (or expand their existing investment in) localities that cannot accommodate the workforce required to support that investment.

The absence of affordable housing stock also constrains the ability of those on fixed or limited incomes to remain living locally or necessitates their choice of alternative - and often, unsafe - housing choices.

For many rural and regional areas, availability of land supply is not the issue - it is more likely to be the availability of either serviced land (ie. trunk infrastructure) or the opportunity to invest in renewal sites to provide greater density is constrained making it non-viable for traditional developers to contemplate new investments in these areas.

A fixed percentage of the HAFF attributed to regions where there is evidence based unmet housing need would help to overcome the stalling or stagnation of investment required to elevate new affordable housing supply.

Without a dedicated regional and rural funding stream under the HAFF, there is a significant risk that investment will remain concentrated in metropolitan centres, leaving non-urban communities behind.

Local governments are uniquely positioned to identify opportunities to address affordable housing need within their communities, but financial constraints limit their ability to partner on large-scale projects - given the role of housing provider is not a function of local government and taking on that role would be at the expense of the provision of other essential local government services. Councils can, however, collaborate with community housing providers, state agencies, the private sector and other stakeholders to bring parties and investors together to deliver fit-for-purpose affordable housing solutions for their communities.

Addressing affordable housing challenges in rural and regional areas will help prevent further escalation of the housing crisis and contribute to achieving a more balanced, inclusive, national housing strategy.

Motion number 101 Mount Alexander Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to compel and encourage the National Cabinet to adopt common policy approaches and strategic plans to resolve our affordable housing crisis through a national vision for urban, regional and rural planning policy. These should include but not be limited to measures which will inform our National Planning Reform Blueprint and deliver adequate housing to all Australians including:

- Adequate housing diversity
- Genuinely affordable housing options
- Adequate social, public and community housing
- Support for innovative housing solutions including co-housing and community-led models.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

In relation to the National Housing and Homelessness Plan: 'The Australian Government understands that safe and affordable housing is central to the security and dignity of Australians.'

The National Housing Accord notes that: 'too many Australians do not have access to affordable housing' and notes record low rental vacancy rates.

The ABC notes that data from the Productivity Commission indicates that the number of Australians who are experiencing long-term homelessness has risen by at least 25 per cent since 2020.

The Federal Government is able to influence State Governments to better address our housing needs, as evidenced by the current National Planning Reform Blueprint and historically through the 1990s Building Better Cities and City Deals programs.

The Federal Government needs to be doing everything it can to fix our current housing crisis.

Source:

https://www.dss.gov.au/housing-and-homelessness-strategy/national-housing-and-homelessness-plan#:~:text=The%20Australian%20Government%20understands%20that,homelessness%20outcomes%20across%20the%20board.

https://ministers.treasury.gov.au/sites/ministers.treasury.gov.au/files/2022-10/national-housing-accord-2022.pdf

https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-01-31/grim-persistent-homelessness-figures-housing-crisis/104883838

KEY ARGUMENTS

Measures pursued by all tiers of government should be adequate and effective at resolving our housing crisis.

The Federal Government has agreed housing supply targets with state governments through the National Cabinet. However, the issues which underpin the housing crisis persist, and in many instances have increased, despite these targets.

The Australian Government should compel and encourage the National Cabinet to adopt common policy approaches and strategic plans to resolve our affordable housing crisis.

The Federal Government needs to be doing everything it can to fix our current housing crisis.

Motion number 101.1 Strathfield Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to introduce dedicated funding streams to support councils in delivering local affordable housing projects, including incentives for repurposing underutilised government land.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Across the country, communities are experiencing severe shortages of affordable and social housing, rising rental stress, and increasing homelessness. A national response is essential.

Councils play a central role in land-use planning, infrastructure provision, and community partnerships. With access to funding, they can activate underutilised land, fast-track development, and enable community housing delivery.

Underutilised or surplus land owned by all levels of government represents a major untapped opportunity for affordable housing. Incentivising its release and reuse reduces costs and accelerates supply in high-demand areas.

Affordable housing supports workforce participation, regional development, housing stability, and health outcomes.

This motion complements federal initiatives such as the Housing Australia Future Fund, National Housing Accord, and National Housing and Homelessness Agreement, by calling for dedicated, council-accessible funding.

Dedicated funding streams would allow councils to deliver place-based housing solutions tailored to community needs. With funding and access to surplus land, councils can partner with community housing providers and developers to scale up delivery quickly.

This motion encourages efficient, socially beneficial use of public land, which aligns with broader government goals of accountability and value for public investment.

Communities expect visible, local action on affordable housing, this motion helps councils meet that demand with federal support.

KEY ARGUMENTS

1. Rising housing costs and limited rental availability are impacting communities across metropolitan, regional, and rural areas.
2. Councils manage planning systems, identify land opportunities, and are best placed to lead place-based, community-informed housing projects.
3. Many councils have the will and opportunity to deliver affordable housing but lack the resources to initiate or scale projects.
4. Surplus or underused public land presents a practical opportunity to increase affordable housing supply quickly and affordably.
5. Affordable housing improves workforce mobility, health, and community stability, contributing to national productivity and equity goals.
6. This motion strengthens and operationalises national initiatives like the Housing Australia Future Fund and National Housing Accord by enabling council-led delivery.
7. With funding and land access, councils can collaborate effectively with community housing providers and developers to accelerate delivery.
8. Communities are calling for visible, local solutions to the housing crisis. Councils need federal support to meet these expectations.

Motion number 101.2 Strathfield Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Provide direct funding and financing support to local councils for the development of affordable and social housing.
2. Establish a national framework for local government-led affordable housing initiatives, including inclusionary zoning, incentives for affordable housing development, and planning reforms.
3. Expand the National Housing Infrastructure Facility (NHIF) to directly assist councils in delivering enabling infrastructure for housing projects.
4. Support local government partnerships with community housing providers, developers, and the private sector to accelerate the delivery of affordable housing.

5. Introduce tax and regulatory incentives for build-to-rent and mixed-income housing projects to encourage long-term affordable rental supply.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Rising rents, home prices, and homelessness are affecting communities across the country. Affordable and social housing shortfalls are putting pressure on families, local economies, and essential service workers.

Councils have the land, planning powers, and community insight needed to drive effective and place-based housing solutions. However, they lack sufficient funding, policy support, and access to infrastructure financing to unlock housing at the scale needed.

A clear national framework and partnership with local government is essential to drive consistent, equitable, and sustainable outcomes.

Affordable housing supports workforce stability, reduces social disadvantage, and contributes to local economic growth. Enabling more affordable homes helps deliver broader national goals, including productivity, equality, and wellbeing.

The motion complements initiatives under the National Housing Accord, Housing Australia Future Fund, and National Housing and Homelessness Agreement. With targeted funding, access to the NHIF, and supportive planning frameworks, councils can activate land, fast-track approvals, and deliver projects in partnership with community housing providers and developers.

Housing is one of the most visible and urgent issues for communities. Councils need federal support to meet community expectations and respond meaningfully.

KEY ARGUMENTS

1. Rising rents, housing shortages, and homelessness affect urban, regional, and rural communities nationwide.
2. Councils manage land use, planning approvals, and local infrastructure, putting them in a key position to drive local housing solutions.
3. Councils lack access to stable funding, dedicated financing, and clear national guidance to deliver affordable housing at scale.
4. A consistent national framework would enable councils to implement inclusionary zoning, planning reforms, and affordable housing incentives with confidence.
5. Affordable homes support essential workers, reduce inequality, strengthen communities, and promote local economic resilience.
6. Federal support empowers councils to work with community housing providers, developers, and the private sector to fast-track affordable housing delivery.
7. Giving councils direct access to the National Housing Infrastructure Facility would remove infrastructure barriers to new housing supply.
8. Federal incentives for these models can diversify housing supply and create more secure, affordable rental options.
9. With appropriate funding, policy support, and legislative tools, councils can accelerate delivery and respond to local housing pressures.

Motion number 102 City of Karratha WA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to reform Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) legislation to provide a 100% exemption for housing-related benefits-rent, home purchase costs, and mortgage interest-when paid from pre-tax income in designated mining-affected communities. The motion also calls for the creation of a new FBT category, “Remote Area - Mining Community,” recognising regions impacted by volatile housing markets, fly-in-fly-out workforces, and commodity price cycles.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This is a national issue because mining communities like those in the Pilbara underpin Australia's export economy and generate substantial taxation revenue. Yet the workforce and community face major challenges due to housing volatility and high costs. Current FBT concessions unfairly benefit large employers and discourage home ownership and undermines community cohesion and sustainability. Reforming FBT would support economic stability, regional development, and population retention-issues relevant across resource-based regions nationally.

KEY ARGUMENTS

- Current FBT settings favour company housing and disadvantage small businesses and individual workers.
- Housing affordability and ownership are key to stabilising regional populations and liveability.
- FBT reform would support multi-generational settlement, reduce turnover, and strengthen community cohesion.
- A new "Remote Area - Mining Community" classification would ensure tailored policy for regions with unique housing pressures.
- These changes would reduce pressure on government-funded housing programs and align tax settings with national productivity goals.

JOBS AND SKILLS

Motion number 103 Yarra Ranges Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to facilitate a national conversation about strategic satellite university campuses or tertiary learning hubs that leverage available LGA Infrastructure in outer urban and regional areas.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

With a focus on increasing housing options in regional and outer urban areas there also needs to be the services, employment opportunities and skills development to allow people to live in those communities at all life stages. Technological change has made studying from home with support of online learning communities or the opportunity for support through learning hubs, opening higher education options for young people and people seeking to upskill or postgraduate education without moving or travelling into central cities. Councils are in a position to support these services through existing libraries and community infrastructure.

KEY ARGUMENTS

University operating models are under pressure from financial sustainability threats and historical models of centralised education delivery are under transformation.

The digital transformation landscape offers many options for remote and offsite learning and satellite models of education delivery and university student connectedness. This new age of satellite universities offers outer metropolitan and regional areas an opportunity to explore shared future infrastructure partnership models such as libraries and study hubs to enhance offerings to a broader range of students and learning models in a broader geographical area.

Local Government as a sector is rich in community connection and infrastructure such as libraries. The ALGA could connect the two sectors together through a working group, summit or event to drive partnerships that are mutually beneficial.

Motion number 104 Camden Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to work with local councils and businesses to facilitate job ready skills and re-training opportunities for young people, women and older workers to positively contribute to the local economy.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Australia's labour market has evolved over the past six decades. Australia's labour force participation rate has risen markedly, with women and mature age people driving this growth. However, not all Australians are experiencing the same increases in participation. More needs to be done to boost employment opportunities and overcome entrenched and intergenerational disadvantage.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Too many people are still unable to work the number of hours they want and need, and are not able to fully access the benefits of work. Disadvantage is associated with complex structural and systemic inequalities beyond a person's control, including their access to material and social resources, and their ability to participate in society. Joblessness and poverty affect health outcomes, housing security, social participation and a person's capacity to engage in education and training. Disadvantage is about 'impoverished lives, not just depleted wallets' (San, 2000).

Employment through skills development is the main route out of disadvantage for most working age people, but it needs to be secure work, otherwise people risk falling back into disadvantage again.

Youth unemployment is the single factor most frequently associated with homelessness and is strongly interrelated with the other two major contributing factors of family conflict and youth's lack of income. Unemployment is often interrelated with family conflicts in situations where youth are unable to contribute to family income, where youth's lack of activity produces tension in the home and where lack of income constrains youth to stay at home when they prefer independence. It is further noted that:

- Young people who are not engaged in any education, training or paid employment by the age of 24 are most at risk of experiencing future long-term unemployment.
- One in three Australians aged 24 and from the lowest socio-economic backgrounds are not in education, employment or training, compared to one in 15 from the highest socio-economic backgrounds.

- Young people experiencing disadvantage may benefit from receiving multiple or complementary supports at the same time, including access to industry-specific and transferable skill development programs as well as more personalised supports.
- Providing early intervention support while young people are still in school can promote work-based skills and knowledge before students encounter problems finding employment.

Motion number 105 City of Greater Dandenong VIC

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Recognise the critical role of local government in supporting Australia's manufacturing sector, particularly in regions like Greater Dandenong, which is home to significant industrial and advanced manufacturing precincts.
2. Partner with local government to implement the “A Future Made in Australia” plan by investing in local infrastructure, innovation hubs, and workforce development initiatives that directly support manufacturing precincts.
3. Support local government-led initiatives to strengthen supply chain resilience, including the development of regional logistics, warehousing, and digital infrastructure that enable efficient and sustainable manufacturing operations.
4. Ensure government procurement policies at all levels prioritise Australian-made products, particularly for infrastructure, health, energy, and defence projects, to strengthen sovereign manufacturing capability and protect jobs.
5. Support the transition to, and fund local government programs that facilitate the transition to, advanced and sustainable manufacturing, including clean energy technologies, automation, and digital innovation.
6. Collaborate with local government to deliver place-based workforce development strategies, including apprenticeships, TAFE partnerships, and upskilling programs tailored to the needs of local manufacturers.
7. Review and implement competitive tax settings and policy incentives to ensure Australian manufacturers can compete on a global scale.
8. Strengthen anti-dumping enforcement and trade protections in consultation with local government and industry stakeholders to safeguard local jobs and manufacturing competitiveness.
9. Establish a national-local government manufacturing taskforce to coordinate policy, funding, and planning efforts that support the long-term viability of manufacturing in local communities.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

To ensure the long-term viability, growth, and competitiveness of Australian manufacturing, enabling the sector to remain a key driver of economic resilience, employment, and sovereign manufacturing capability. This requires coordinated Federal Government action to support domestic manufacturers, strengthen sovereign supply chains, and ensure Australia retains the ability to produce essential goods domestically.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Greater Dandenong is home to one of Australia's most significant manufacturing bases, contributing substantially to national economic output, employment, and innovation. As the level of government closest to businesses and communities, local government is uniquely positioned to support the growth, resilience, and transformation of the manufacturing sector.

This motion seeks to ensure that local government is recognised as an essential partner in delivering national manufacturing priorities, particularly those outlined in the "A Future Made in Australia" plan.

Councils play a critical role in:

- Planning and zoning for industrial land use;
- Facilitating infrastructure and logistics that support supply chains;
- Delivering local economic development programs;
- Partnering with education and training providers to build a skilled workforce;
- Supporting sustainability initiatives in industrial areas;
- Supporting local procurement and business engagement.

By aligning federal manufacturing policy with local government capabilities and needs, we can ensure that national strategies are grounded in place-based action, delivering real outcomes for businesses and communities alike.

This motion calls for a collaborative, multi-level governance approach to manufacturing that empowers local government to be active contributors to Australia's industrial future.

Motion number 106 Leeton Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to implement streamlined and expedited visa processes to attract and retain international health professionals, including doctors, nurses, and allied health workers, in regional areas to address critical workforce shortages.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Many regional and rural communities in NSW are facing an acute shortage of health professionals, particularly doctors, which is leading to reduced healthcare access, longer wait times, and increased pressure on existing medical staff. Simplifying visa pathways and expediting the approval process for international health workers is essential to ensuring equitable healthcare access across regional areas.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Regional healthcare facilities continue to struggle with recruitment and retention of qualified medical professionals, impacting the provision of essential health services. While international recruitment is a viable solution, the current visa process is complex, slow, and often discouraging for both employers and prospective health workers.

Addressing this issue will strengthen healthcare service delivery in regional communities.

This motion calls for:

- Faster visa processing for internationally trained doctors, nurses, and allied health professionals committed to working in regional NSW.
- Simplified visa pathways to reduce bureaucratic delays and administrative burdens for healthcare workers and employers.
- Incentives and priority processing for medical professionals choosing to work in areas with critical shortages.
- Concierge services for full medical registration to ensure immigrant doctors are supported to efficiently navigate application processes.

- A long-term strategy to improve international recruitment, retention, and permanent residency pathways for regional health workers.

By improving visa and registration processes, the Australian Government can support regional communities to have access to the healthcare professionals needed to maintain quality medical services and community well-being.

Motion number 107 Leeton Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide local Councils with both the mandate and direct financial resourcing to provide local oversight to the PALM Scheme Program and provide contextual partner-based representation to employers (and workers) and provide temporary work rights for workers disengaged from the PALM Scheme who are residing and working in regional areas.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Regional and rural areas across Australia, particularly in sectors such as agriculture, aged care, and hospitality, rely on the PALM Scheme to meet essential workforce needs. However, inefficiencies in its administration, and limitations in worker support mechanisms hinder its effectiveness. Reforming the scheme will strengthen regional economies and ensure better outcomes for workers and employers alike.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The PALM Scheme provides an important labour source for industries that struggle to attract local workers. Several Councils under the aegis of Welcoming Australia formed the Mayoral Alliance for the Pacific (MAP) in 2024, to have a unified voice in advocating for PALM scheme reforms.

This motion aligns with the PALM Scheme Position Paper and calls for:

- A consultative framework to be established to facilitate collaboration between local, state, and federal governments. Engagement with Welcoming Cities and the Mayoral Alliance for the Pacific should be strengthened to enhance support networks for PALM workers.
- Mandating employers to undergo culturally responsive training and Australian labour law education. PALM Approved Employers must be certified as "Employers of Choice" through the Welcoming Workplaces initiative.
- Visa conditions should be revised to support worker retention, integration, and job mobility. The presence of Departmental officers in regional areas should be increased to address local challenges.
- Funding should be provided to local organisations to establish regional migrant support hubs. Employers should be connected with community services to facilitate social participation for PALM workers.
- Minimum accommodation standards for PALM workers should be clearly defined and enforced. Local Governments should be empowered to monitor and ensure safe housing conditions.
- PALM workers should have seamless access to Medicare and necessary healthcare services.

By optimising the PALM Scheme, the Australian Government can provide more effective workforce solutions for regional Australia while maintaining strong protections and opportunities for workers from Pacific nations.

Motion number 108 Western Downs Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to reform building certifier accreditation processes, to allow persons with appropriate equivalent competencies to become Building Certifiers and include Building Certification on the Occupation Shortage List.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The objective of this proposal is to significantly improve the supply of building certifiers through the recognition of equivalent competencies to allow persons to enter the profession. There is a significant decline in the supply of building certifiers, with the impacts being disproportionately felt in regional areas. Many communities are now, or are at risk of, soon being without effective access to a Building Certifier. As a result, there appears to be a trend towards building works being undertaken outside of any regulatory framework, which is a serious risk to community members.

Without sacrificing the quality of the certification process, undertaking reforms in this regard will enable the better provision of certification services in regional areas by transferring persons from related fields into building certification roles, which will be a significant benefit for Local Government and communities in those areas.

KEY ARGUMENTS

A central theme of Western Downs Regional Council's Local Housing Action Plan (LHAP) is the urgent need to bolster the supply of skilled professionals in the construction sector. While conventional trades remain crucial, an increasingly severe constraint is the shortage of building certifiers, a bottleneck that now threatens the timely delivery of critically needed housing developments.

In 1998, private certification was introduced in Queensland to improve efficiency and introduce competition into the building industry. Unlike metropolitan areas, where private certifiers remain relatively abundant, many regional councils never had a deep pool of certifiers to begin with. In these areas, local governments often continued to provide building certification services due to the scarcity of private certifiers and the high costs associated with those who did operate in the regions, primarily due to significant travel distances.

Now, this fragile system is breaking down entirely. A wave of sole trader certifiers is exiting the industry, either due to retirement or because they are unable to secure mandatory professional indemnity insurance. At the same time, the pipeline of new certifiers is worryingly thin, which is particularly felt in regional areas.

This isn't just an administrative inconvenience; it has a direct and immediate impact on housing availability. When a certifier exits the industry mid-project, builders and homeowners are left in limbo, unable to complete final inspections and obtain occupancy approvals

Delays in certification mean delays in project completion, affecting critically needed housing developments, and other essential community infrastructure and industrial projects that support economic growth.

Part of the crisis stems from an unnecessarily rigid and prohibitive entry pathway for becoming a building certifier. Other inspectorial roles, such as plumbing inspectors, allow trade-qualified professionals to transition into inspection roles through recognition of prior learning (RPL). In contrast, becoming a certifier requires a lengthy university qualification followed by years of supervised work, often taking up to six years to achieve full competency.

Skilled builders, building designers, and others with direct industry expertise are effectively locked out, despite possessing comparable or even superior technical knowledge to some current certifiers. The consequence? A dwindling workforce that cannot meet demand

The accreditation process for certifiers needs immediate reform. Creating alternative pathways for qualified industry professionals to transition into certification roles through recognition of prior learning could dramatically increase supply. This is not about lowering standards; it is about aligning qualification requirements with real-world competencies.

While metropolitan centres may be insulated from the worst of this crisis, regional Queensland is already feeling the impact. Without action, this shortage will stall housing developments, drive up costs, and constrain economic growth, all at a time when regional areas are being looked to for housing expansion and decentralisation efforts.

This is not just an industry concern; it is a matter of regional liveability and economic sustainability. The solution is unambiguous. Cut the red tape, widen the talent pipeline, and ensure that housing development does not grind to a halt due to a solvable administrative failure.

Motion number 109 Huon Valley Council TAS

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to develop a 'Skills and Capability Framework' that sets out the capabilities and scope of practice for multi-disciplinary health care professionals (e.g. nurse-practitioners, paramedics, pharmacists). Against this framework, Medicare Billing Schedules (MBS) should adopt a block or blended funding model to allow all relevant health care professionals to bill the MBS for services delivered through a multi-disciplinary health care team. This will help ensure financial viability of medical services and improve patient access and health outcomes across regional and remote Australia.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Providing the Right Care, in the Right Place, at the Right Time - The Australian Government is responsible for Medicare and primary health care, yet Councils are often providing this service in the most vulnerable communities and at significant cost which impedes the delivery of core local government services. Access to GPs in these regions is often a barrier to Councils when providing these services.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Australia has a health system that much better than other parts of the world, but primary healthcare is going backwards, often in regional and rural areas, with these communities most at risk. The Department of Health and Aged Care's General Practitioner (GP) Workforce 2024 Supply and Demand study shows 'an undersupply of GPs over the next 25 years, which indicates that we will not have the number of GPs required to keep up with the demand for GP services in the community'.

Specifically, the report states 'national unmet demand projections (without assuming an initial equilibrium) estimate a current shortfall of over 2,400 FTE in 2024, increasing to around 3,900 FTE in 2028, and to over 8,900 FTE by 2048'.

In rural areas, local Councils often fill market gaps by directly providing medical services to the community. These services are often financially unviable, administratively burdensome and introduce significant risks into Council's operations. The most significant of our issues is the inability to attract and retain GPs in a supply constrained and worsening labour market.

Despite various commonwealth reviews and strategies for rural healthcare and workforce planning recognising that multidisciplinary care is part if the solution, nothing has been delivered to align Medicare Billing Schedules (MBS) to the scope of practice delivered by broader primary health care professionals. The MBS is still GP centric and while GP-led care is the right model, the MBS now needs to better recognise and remunerate all practitioners within a GP-led multidisciplinary team.

The independent, Unleashing the Potential of our Health Workforce - Scope of Practice Review examined the barriers and opportunities health practitioners face working to their full scope of practice in primary care. A key finding was 'Existing funding models restrict some professions from working to their full scope of practice and fail to adequately support primary care health professionals to work together in teams.'

Introducing flexible payment models for primary health care teams supports different professionals to better meet consumers' changing health care needs in line with the policy intent of My Medicare. Further, it supports practice financial viability and team wellbeing by allowing GPs to better manage their workload through focusing on high order cases and team oversight. Importantly, it is also seen as an effective strategy to reduce GP burnout from performing highly transactional '10-minute medicine' under the current MBS fee for service model.

In the Huon Valley Tasmania, Cygnet Family Practice received grant funding to demonstrate the effectiveness of a multidisciplinary care model for patient outcomes and hospital avoidance cost savings. If the MBS structure is revised, they could make the service financially viable, leading to greater outcomes in community care and health.

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Motion number 110 Federation Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide a funding support package to encourage planners, engineers, building surveyors to work in regional and rural councils.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

National Significance:

The issue affects the sustainable development and economic viability of regional and rural Australia, which has national implications.

It relates to broader national priorities such as:

- Regional development.
- Infrastructure investment.
- Balanced population growth.

Local Government Impact:

Local councils are directly responsible for planning, infrastructure, and building regulations.

The shortage of skilled professionals hinders their ability to fulfill these responsibilities.

The NGA is the location where local councils can bring their concerns to the national government.

Opportunity for National Solutions:

The NGA provides a platform for local governments to collectively advocate for national solutions, such as:

- Funding support packages.
- Incentive programs.
- Strategies to attract and retain skilled professionals in regional areas.

Alignment with NGA Goals:

As stated in the search results, the NGA is a place for local governments to bring forward issues that require national solutions. The theme for the 2025 NGA, "National Priorities Need Local Solutions," directly relates to this issue.

Therefore, a shortage of skilled workers in regional councils is a National Priority, that requires local solutions.

In essence, the debate aims to address a critical workforce shortage that impacts the ability of regional and rural councils to serve their communities and contribute to national development.

KEY ARGUMENTS

National Issue:

Shortage of Skilled Professionals in Regional and Rural Councils:

- The core issue is the difficulty regional and rural councils face in attracting and retaining qualified planners, engineers, and building surveyors.

This shortage impacts the ability of these councils to:

- Manage infrastructure development.
- Ensure proper planning and development approvals.
- Maintain building safety standards.
- Facilitate regional growth.

Regional Disparity:

- Major cities tend to attract these professionals due to factors like higher salaries, career opportunities, and lifestyle preferences.
- This creates a disparity in service delivery and development capacity between urban and regional/rural areas.

Motion number 110.1 Cabonne Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to work with ALGA, the Planning Institute of Australia and Higher Education facilities throughout Australia to develop and deliver a strategy to address the critical shortage of planning and building certification professionals in local government.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Support of skills shortage to enable regional growth and national housing targets.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Local Government is experiencing a critical shortage of qualified planning & building certification staff, which is essential to housing development. Councils throughout Australia are experiencing recruitment and retention difficulties in the highly regulated and legislated area of planning and development services. This, combined with the increased volumes of at times highly complex development applications is forcing up DA processing rates and compromising councils ability to deliver safe, compliant and sustainable housing and infrastructure in their communities.

A report released by the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) in 2023 found that 232 local government areas in Australia had no planners on staff, confirming one of the key findings of the ALGA 2022 Jobs and Skills Survey. Alarmingly, there has also been a recent trend of universities discontinuing planning programs

If this shortage is not addressed, the Government's Housing Australia Future Fund legislation will be severely impacted by simply not having experienced professionals to solve the challenges that come with housing and infrastructure development. We urge the Federal Government to make good on its agreement with the States and Territories to adequately resource built environmental professional in local government.

Motion number 110.2 Wakefield Regional Council SA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to work with state/territory, higher education and local governments across Australia, to increase Australia's capacity in the professions of built environment, in particular Environmental Health and Building Surveying to address the current workforce shortage.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The workforce shortage of Environmental Health Officers and Building Surveyors across the local government sector is at a critical level. The shortage of professionals has significant implications for Local Government capacity to deliver important statutory services, meet legislative responsibilities and assist with addressing the housing crisis as outlined in https://alga.com.au/app/uploads/Addressing-the-Housing-Crisis-report.pdf

KEY ARGUMENTS

Building Surveyors and Environmental Health professionals play a critical role in addressing the housing crisis. The building construction industry is the third largest industry in Australia with almost all building work requiring the skills of a Building Surveyor from design to Construction phase. Environmental Health Officers play a key role in emerging public health emergencies and in regional areas have additional critical responsibilities with community wastewater management schemes, schemes that are required to ensure housing development can continue to grow.

Several reports have highlighted this critical work skill shortage. With a report presented to ALGA in 2022 titled "2022 Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability Survey" https://alga.com.au/app/uploads/2022-Local-Government-Workforce-Skills-and-Capability-Survey-National-Report.pdf This report identified the skill shortages for both professions across the nation.

Building Surveyors and Environmental Health Officers within Local governments are integral to economic, social, and environmental service delivery, enhancing community liveability and productivity. It is critical that training be supported and that the professions become a key focus, that a nationwide workforce study to understand the extent of the chronic workforce shortage and impact of professionals retiring from the work force is undertaken, that the professions be marketed to encourage enrolments in accredited qualifications to build future building and health workforce (including university and TAFE pathways).

Motion number 111 Brisbane City Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide an environmental health skills and training package composed of funding, incentives and promotion initiatives to enable a sustainable long-term supply of qualified environmental health officers entering the workforce. The increasing discontinuation of environmental health courses within universities is limiting the supply of environmental health graduates available, particularly at the local government level. National strategies are required to support environmental health as a career of choice and to provide the necessary support to universities to ensure that the provision of environmental health courses remains viable.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Environmental health officers are employed across all levels of government, including a large local government workforce. This is an issue experienced across all local governments including in cities and regional and remote areas. Nationally, the shortage of environmental health officers is recognised as one of the top five skills shortages facing local governments, as identified in the 2022 Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability Survey.

Environmental health officers in local governments deliver on-ground preventative health activities that align to numerous Australian Government policies and programs and the Environmental Health Standing Committee (enHealth) Strategic Plan (2024-27) and National General Assembly (NGA) priority area of community services.

The lack of qualified environmental health officers puts the delivery of these policies and programs at risk and may result in compromised human health outcomes within communities across Australia.

Promoting environmental health as a career of choice would assist in increasing environmental health student numbers, either through direct enrolment or through transfer from other health or science-based courses, delivering a pipeline of environmental health graduates that would contribute to closing the gap in this skills shortage area.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Environmental health officers are an essential part of the core services that local governments deliver to their communities. They have a science-based understanding of human and environmental health, as well as an in-depth understanding of legislation and the interaction between individual health, public health, environmental health, environmental protection and sustainability policy and programs. Today environmental health officers routinely implement programs underpinned by risk management and evidence-based decision making. The expanding nature and scope of environmental health is shaped by an increasing awareness of the relationships between the natural and built environments and human health.

New and emerging public health threats such as mosquito borne diseases, food borne illness outbreaks, disaster response, increasing numbers of food and other regulated businesses are all matters that local government health officers respond to on a day-to-day basis. They require local governments to have the capability to respond to at a local level utilising local knowledge.

Environmental Health Australia (EHA) represents the environmental health profession and accredits environmental health university courses to ensure that they meet national standards and align to the enHealth environmental health skills and knowledge matrix.

A total of 15 accredited environmental health courses having been discontinued in recent years with only nine undergraduate and postgraduate courses remaining with at least one of these is no longer accepting new enrolments from 2025. With only five accredited undergraduate courses and four postgraduate courses currently listed on the EHA website, the potential number of students graduating from these courses nationally does not meet demand of qualified environmental health officers for local government, let alone those required by other levels of government.

Without investment in a strategy to increase student and graduate numbers, this skills shortage will become more pronounced. According to Jobs and Skills Australia, just over 22% of environmental health officers are at an age where they are likely to retire or begin transitioning to retirement within the next 5-7 years.

Before local governments can consider attraction and retention strategies, there needs to be a supply of qualified environmental health officers for local governments to employ.

Motion number 112 Warrnambool City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to expand the skills and training aspects of its 'Future Made in Australia' plan to better support workers who are willing to learn and live in the same region that they work.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Renewable energy transition impacts all Australians, with significant infrastructure being developed in regional communities across the country. Ensuring that these communities benefit economically and socially from hosting clean energy projects is vital for maintaining equity, fairness, and public support for Australia's energy ambitions. Without targeted policies to encourage workers to live and train locally, many regional areas risk missing out on the economic opportunities promised by this transition, leading to social disparities and resentment.

Local governments are on the frontline of managing the economic and social impacts of renewable energy projects. Their unique perspective ensures this motion will highlight practical, community-focused solutions to a challenge that affects municipalities nationwide. By adopting a unified national approach, Australia can avoid a fragmented system where the communities that consume the majority of the energy and industrial outputs do not also receive all the economic and social benefits at the expense of the regions that host renewable energy infrastructure.

Ensuring that the renewable energy transition is fair, inclusive, and sustainable for all is crucial to fostering stronger regional economies and create enduring social and economic legacies from renewable energy infrastructure development.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The Federal Government recently legislated its 'Future Made in Australia' plan with the passage of the Future Made in Australia Bill 2024.

This plan is designed for Australia to capture the opportunities presented to it by the global renewable energy transition. It establishes a $22.7 billion fund to invest in skills and training, renewable energy, industrial processes and products, natural resources and minerals, and innovation and technology.

Specific measures announced to date regarding skills and training include the 'New Energy Apprenticeships Program' which offers support payments of up to $10,000 to those undertaking an apprenticeship in the clean energy sector, the 'Building Women's Careers Program' which is a grant program to improve women's access to employment in male-dominate industries, and Fee-Free TAFE for clean energy courses.

These are valuable initiatives to prepare and upskill Australians for the clean energy industry, however there are currently no programs that encourage the workers who will take up these initiatives to actually live and study in the communities that host the renewable energy projects. The absence of such incentives risks creating a similar 'fly in fly out' culture that permeates the mining and fossil fuel industries presently.

The finite nature of fossil fuel reserves and the extreme remoteness experienced in mines necessitates such a culture in these industries, but clean energy will be much closer to established communities and renewable projects can theoretically stay in place indefinitely. This means that workers should be encouraged to live where they work so that communities can maximise the economic and social benefits of hosting clean energy infrastructure.

Encouraging workers to live, study, and work in the regions that host renewable energy projects is essential for fostering vibrant and sustainable local economies. Communities hosting renewable energy infrastructure often bear the brunt of environmental, visual, and social impacts, and it is only fair that they receive tangible, lasting benefits in return. A workforce that is embedded in these communities contributes not only through their labour

but also by supporting local businesses, schools, and services, creating a ripple effect of economic and social growth.

Expanding the skills and training aspects of the "Future Made in Australia" plan to include targeted incentives for regional living would help address this issue. Programs such as relocation grants, regional training hubs, or housing support could attract and retain skilled workers in host communities. These measures would foster a sense of pride and ownership among workers and residents alike, which can improve community sentiment toward renewable energy developments.

Embedding skills and training initiatives within regional communities ensures that workers have first-hand experience of the local context in which they operate. This alignment can lead to stronger collaboration between workers, local governments, and developers, as well as better alignment of training programs with the unique needs and opportunities of each region. By prioritising regional living and learning, the Federal Government can help transform renewable energy projects into true community assets, building stronger, more connected regions and ensuring a just transition to a clean energy future.

Motion number 113 Forbes Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government and all State and Territory Governments to amend current education and training laws to allow school students to leave school at the age of 16 to undertake full-time TAFE apprenticeships. This change would provide an earlier transition into the workforce, help address Australia's critical skills shortages and offer an alternative education pathway for students who may not thrive in a traditional academic setting. The reform should include appropriate safeguards such as mandatory career counselling, secure apprenticeship placements before leaving school, and ongoing mentoring to ensure student success.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Australia's workforce faces an urgent shortage of skilled tradespeople, yet the current education system requires students to remain in school until 17 before they can begin full-time TAFE apprenticeships. This restriction delays workforce entry and limits opportunities for students who are more suited to vocational training. Lowering the school leaving age to 16 for those pursuing apprenticeships would provide a structured, supported, and beneficial pathway into high-demand industries, ensuring businesses have access to skilled workers sooner.

For many students, the traditional classroom environment does not align with their strengths or career aspirations. Retaining these students in school for an additional year can lead to disengagement, absenteeism, and even dropping out without a clear pathway. Allowing students to begin apprenticeships at 16 keeps them engaged in education and employment, ensuring they acquire practical skills while earning an income.

This reform aligns with international best practices, such as in Germany and Switzerland, where vocational training begins at 16 or younger. A coordinated approach between governments, TAFE institutions, and industry stakeholders is needed to ensure proper implementation, providing students with a valuable head start in their careers while supporting national economic growth.

KEY ARGUMENTS

1. Addressing Industry Skills Shortages Sooner

Australia is facing a growing shortage of skilled tradespeople in industries such as construction, electrical work, and plumbing. The current school leaving age of 17 delays workforce entry, preventing young apprentices from filling these critical gaps sooner. Allowing students to commence TAFE apprenticeships at 16 will ensure earlier skill development, helping industries meet demand and reducing reliance on overseas workers.

2. Providing an Alternative for Students Who Struggle in Traditional Schooling

Not all students thrive in traditional academic environments and forcing them to remain in school until 17 can lead to disengagement, absenteeism, or dropping out altogether. Many students have strong practical skills suited to hands-on learning, and an earlier transition into apprenticeships will keep them engaged, ensure they acquire meaningful skills, and provide them with a structured pathway to long-term employment.

3. Earlier Workforce Entry and Economic Benefits

Apprenticeships typically take 3-4 years to complete, meaning a student who starts training at 16 will be fully qualified by 19 or 20, rather than 20 or 21. This allows young workers to earn a full wage, contribute to superannuation earlier, and achieve greater financial independence. A younger and more skilled workforce also benefits the economy by improving productivity and reducing youth unemployment.

4. Aligning with International Best Practices

Many advanced economies, including Germany and Switzerland, allow students to begin apprenticeships at 16 or younger. These systems have led to lower youth unemployment rates, better employment outcomes, and a stronger alignment between education and workforce needs. Australia's current restrictions place us behind these global models, and this reform would help modernise our vocational training system.

5. Safeguards to Ensure a Smooth Transition

To ensure students make informed choices and receive proper support, mandatory career counselling should be required before they leave school, and students must have a secured apprenticeship before exiting. Ongoing mentorship and workplace support from TAFE institutions and employers will ensure that students successfully transition from school to work, minimising dropout rates and workplace challenges.

Motion number 114 Knox City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to fund an “earn and learn” program that targets areas of skills-shortage and attracts job seekers to access training and employment programs within the Local Government sector.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Local Government is a major employer in Australia and is experiencing skills shortages that are impacting on service delivery for the community. Attracting and retaining talent must be addressed with innovative solutions, and an "earn and learn" program is one such way.

An "earn and learn" program, targeted at job segments where skills shortages exist, would assist in filling key gaps in the Local Government workforce, essential for servicing our local

communities. Programs that enable job seekers to earn while learning can successfully create opportunities and remove barriers to skills development and hands-on experience.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Research shows that 9 of every ten Local Governments are facing jobs and skills shortages. Key drivers of skills shortages include a lack of available training opportunities and a lack of resources to upskill existing staff.

Programs that support job seekers to earn while learning and support the existing workforce to develop their skills in areas of need, can significantly improve pathways to skilled employment and the ability to retain staff in areas of high skill demand.

A pilot program is currently underway in Victoria involving dual-sector universities working together and partnering within a consortium to deliver an earn and learn training pilot for Local Government. Funded by the Victorian government as a pilot, this type of model has national application in seeking to ensure Local Governments have an appropriately skilled workforce to deliver on community needs. A national approach to funding hands-on learning within Local Governments through an earn and learn approach is an important practical step to addressing skills shortages, gaps and training needs.

Motion number 115 Narrabri Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to extend financial support for the delivery of health services and equipment in rural and remote communities using a place-based and cooperative approach with local government.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The motion aligns with both ALGA Priority 6 and 7 in that it will assist in the alignment of appropriate skills to identified community needs and improve the delivery of health services across the nation.

KEY ARGUMENTS

It is acknowledged that place-based health and social care commissioning involves both designing and delivering health and social care services to meet the specific and unique needs of local communities. This model also ensures that the unique challenges and issues faced by communities are considered when services are commissioned. Creating a framework for the development of an understanding of the unique standards and community attributes and associated demographic and population attributes permits a deeper understanding of community needs. It also ensures that the services implemented to address these needs have an improved likelihood of success and sustainability. Actively bringing local government to the table and providing the opportunity to collaboratively work with health services and other community groups will improve service integration and overall health outcomes. There is a disparate approach to the delivery of place-based health services which could be resolved through appropriate resourcing, funding and clarity of policy directives.

There has been an increasing recognition of the benefits of place-based interventions (Crimeen et al. 2017), which reflects the growing international understandings on the social determinants of health (AIHW 2020). According to Edgar Liu, Malgorzata Lagisz, Evelyne de Leeuw and Hyungmo Yang as part of their report prepared for the Cancer Institute NSW

(February 2024), recognised that broadly, social determinants of health relate to the diversity of socioeconomic positions, conditions of employment, power and social support, which may differ from place to place. Further, social determinants of health may be enhanced or hindered by locationally specific factors including the availability of and access to infrastructure, policy and program coverage, environmental conditions to name a few. All these factors, therefore, may lead to a divergence of health outcomes. Through their research it was recognised that place-based interventions may be able to better respond to these socioeconomically and/or locationally-specific factors by implementing customised programs that address these specificities.

Motion number 116 City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder WA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to undertake a full review of the Modified Monash Model (MMM) classification for health and aged care and develop a new model that will incentivise more doctors and other health professionals to regional areas in Australia.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The Modified Monash Model (MMM) was developed to better target health workforce programs to attract health professionals to more remote and smaller communities; it is used to determine eligibility for a range of health workforce programs and funding.

The MMM classifies locations on a scale of 1-7 as either metropolitan, regional, rural or remote according to geographical remoteness - the higher the number the higher the remoteness and the greater eligibility for certain schemes and support. Locations are assessed on both population size and distance from the nearest major centre.

MMM classifications are based on the Australian Standard Geography Standard - Remoteness Areas (ASGD-RA) framework, which determines five levels of remoteness: major cities, inner regional, outer regional, remote, and very remote. The ASGS-RA, based on Census data, informs government research, policy development and funding.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The MMM was last updated in 2019. It is outdated and no longer fit-for-purpose. There are numerous examples of the differing classifications around Australia. As an example, the inequitable classification system sees a city such as Kalgoorlie-Boulder - 600km from Perth - receive the same MMM ranking and support as a town such as Busselton - which has a different ASGA-RA classification, is larger than Kalgoorlie-Boulder, and only 223km from Perth.

High quality health services are a key component of an area's liveability and assist with population attraction and retention, which enables business and industry growth and increases economic output. These services are also vital to the well-being of a community, including vulnerable populations such as those experiencing homelessness, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The NDIS has recently developed an alternative assessment model which translates to improved funding and the ability to deliver more in areas with high service delivery costs and pay workforces better, making it a more attractive care sector employer; especially in regional areas.

A review of the MMM classification system to provide a more equitable system that accurately recognises the situations in regional areas would result in greater support to attract health professionals into regional Australia, and therefore enhance the availability and delivery of health services.

The Federal government should undertake a full review of the MMM classification to incentivise more doctors and other health professionals to work in regional Australia, leading to better social and economic outcomes in the regions.

Motion number 117 City of Onkaparinga SA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to support local government action to combat misinformation and disinformation. This includes funding to support local government to continue providing the spaces and programs that build civic engagement and trust, as well as appropriate multi-level information sharing and training to enable better preparation for disinformation narratives and events.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Strengthening democracy in Australia is a national priority. Tackling the scourge of misinformation and disinformation is fundamental to this process and requires action by all levels of government.

As the 'Strengthening Australian democracy; A practical agenda for democratic resilience' (2024) report notes, the rapid spread of misinformation and disinformation are a threat to how people make sense of the world. False and misleading information can distort people's understanding of issues and events, erode trust in democratic systems and undermine the integrity of political processes.

The report states that 'democracy depends on the ability and willingness of citizens to participate in a shared democratic society', which is founded upon civic literacy, civic participation and civic connection within communities.

It recognises that civic engagement drives the quality of democratic society by building trust in democratic processes, building 'democratising strength', and by disrupting 'anti-democratising influences'.

Councils are increasingly contending with the adverse effects of disinformation, which can have a substantial impact on democratic processes and our community's trust in these.

We are also seeing an increased prevalence of misinformation which, such as in the case of natural disasters and other community emergencies, may have life threatening consequences for local residents.

As the level of government closest to the community, councils are at the forefront of civic engagement. We deliver programs and initiatives that actively support democracy and that build trust and engagement in democratic processes.

Local government is in a strong position to tackle these challenges. Many councils are already doing so through our civic engagement initiatives and other community programs that build civic participation and connection.

However, we need structural support and adequate funding to continue this work, and to expand our efforts and reach. The provision of appropriate funding for local government to

proactively counter the threats posed by misinformation and disinformation will help strengthen Australian democracy and preserve the Australian way of life.

KEY ARGUMENTS

As the Strengthening Australian democracy report notes, misinformation and disinformation on social media have been found to have been used globally to promulgate hate speech, incite violence, intensify polarisation, consolidate the power and influence of political actors, and as a platform for foreign interference.

In Australia, misinformation has fuelled conspiracy theories about government responses to natural disasters, potentially threatening lives. It has also been used to call for disruptive protests against G5 technology, including at some council meetings in South Australia, and to sow doubt about the veracity of election results at all levels of government.

Investing in key civic spaces is identified as a key action in the Strengthening Australian democracy report to help counter such challenges. The report states:

"Civic spaces such as libraries, schools, city halls and community centres allow people to meet, access information, learn new skills, exchange ideas and debate issues".

The City of Onkaparinga supports this approach, noting that many of the programs and initiatives we deliver that build civic engagement and support democracy are delivered in our civic spaces, including libraries and community centres.

While we welcome federal funding streams that target infrastructure support, the critical programs delivered within these important places are left significantly underfunded under current models.

Increasing funding support for our programs and initiatives which foster trust, civic engagement and community connections will support local government to combat the growing and corrosive impacts of misinformation and disinformation, thereby strengthening Australian democracy.

Further, there is evidence that collaboration between all levels of government can drive better outcomes in combatting the interconnected impacts of disinformation. We seek Federal government acknowledgement of, and support for, local government to engage in vertical communication about disinformation, to receive, analyse and share information with those working to address disinformation at other levels of government.

This will also support the intentions of the G7 rapid response mechanism, of which Australia is a participant. This mechanism seeks 'to identify and respond to diverse and evolving threats to our democracies', particularly foreign interference, which poses a threat to all levels of government and to the Australian way of life.

Motion number 117.1 Narrabri Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide additional resources and support to local government, in consort with the Australian Federal Police, to proactively manage the increasing operational impacts and associated community risks associated with the burgeoning Sovereign Citizen movement and other fringe anti-government movements.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion aligns to ALGA Priority 1 and will assist in the achievement of national security objectives.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The Sovereign Citizen movement also continues to gather steady traction nationally. Sovereign citizens, or "SovCits", is a term for people who hold extreme anti-government views, essentially believing laws and regulations don't apply to them. The ideology, in simple terms, is that modern western governments are illegitimate corporate entities and, therefore, in the same way a country is a sovereign nation unconstrained by other nations' laws, a person is themselves a sovereign unconstrained by the laws of such governments without a contract. Further information in relation to this movement is provided herewith: https://www.afp.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-09/123-023.pdf

Interest in this movement, in addition to other anti-government fringe organisations, has increased exponentially since the pandemic and is creating additional resourcing burdens for council staff in addition to placing demands on the court system nationally. Further support is sought from the Federal Government to assist local government in proactively managing these impacts.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Motion number 118 Glen Eira City Council VIC

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to strengthen and invest in community services by:

1. Fostering community safety and social cohesion through dedicated funding streams and resources for local councils to implement evidence-based community safety initiatives that promote social cohesion and inclusivity. These initiatives may include infrastructure improvements (e.g. improved lighting, clear and effective signage, graffiti removal, safer pedestrian routes), delivery of events, community engagement programs, and anti-discrimination measures.
2. Enhancing the prevention of family violence through sustained and long-term investment in primary prevention initiatives, tailored funding for support services and resources, including long-term housing, ongoing counselling, employment services, and legal and financial support.
3. Improving community wellbeing through:
    a. ensuring more inclusive and accessible public spaces
    b. expanding funding for mental health support services and social cohesion programs
    c. partnering with councils to deliver sustainable, local programs that address the impacts of rising living costs and support climate action, with a particular focus on supporting the most vulnerable in our communities, and
    d. delivering increased funding to support homelessness services and prevention initiatives, ensuring individuals receive assistance before reaching crisis levels.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Local councils are central to creating safe, inclusive spaces for all residents. However, effective action requires a collaborative and well-resourced approach. ALGA advocacy will ensure councils across Victoria have the capacity and consistency to address safety challenges and promote social cohesion.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Whilst safety related data indicates that overall, Glen Eira is one of the safest municipalities, perceptions of safety are equally as important and are influenced by a range of factors such as global events, social factors and the disproportionate risk faced by different groups. In response to recent antisemitism and heightened safety concerns in and around the municipality, Council is prioritising community safety, crime prevention, social cohesion, and community strengthening.

This motion serves as a platform for Councils to collaborate more effectively on these pressing issues and develop actionable strategies to enhance safety and well-being in their respective areas, as well as sector wide. The rise in antisemitic incidents and other forms of discrimination highlight the need for targeted safety measures to support vulnerable groups and build resilience across communities.

Local governments need dedicated funding to deliver initiatives that improve safety and inclusivity in public spaces. Measures such as better lighting, clear signage, pedestrian friendly infrastructure, and anti-discrimination programs contribute to a sense of belonging and security, reducing crime and antisocial behaviour.

Family violence remains a national crisis, requiring sustained investment in primary prevention programs, crisis support, and long-term recovery services such as housing, employment support, and legal assistance. Local governments are uniquely positioned to support these efforts through targeted community-based initiatives.

Rising living costs, challenges with climate action, increasing mental health challenges, and growing rates of homelessness demand a stronger, more collaborative approach to improve community wellbeing.

Social cohesion is critical to the resilience, wellbeing, and safety of communities. It fosters a sense of belonging, participation, and connection, contributing to healthier, more resilient communities with lower crime rates.

Motion number 118.1 Merri-bek City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish a dedicated funding stream to support local government-led social cohesion programs that foster inclusion and connectedness in communities across Australia. This includes funding for State and Territory Governments for the provision of on-site support workers in social and affordable housing complexes to enhance community well-being and address residents' needs effectively.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Local governments play a key role in fostering connectedness, particularly in areas with diverse and vulnerable populations. By establishing a federal funding stream, including provisions for on-site support workers in housing complexes, the Australian Government can

enable councils to address these challenges comprehensively and align with national priorities to create inclusive communities.

Local governments are uniquely positioned to design and deliver social cohesion programs. Many social and affordable housing complexes require on-site support workers to connect residents with services, resolve conflicts, and promote community well-being. Councils do not have the funding to provide these resources. The presence of on-site support workers can reduce anti-social behaviour, improve safety, and enable residents to actively participate in their broader communities. This also aligns with national priorities for social cohesion, health and wellbeing.

By debating this motion, the NGA can advocate for a stronger partnership between federal and local governments in building resilient, cohesive communities across Australia.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Establishing a dedicated federal funding stream for local government-led social cohesion programs, and State and Territory provided on-site support workers in housing complexes, represents a strategic investment in Australia's social fabric. This initiative would enable councils to address critical community needs, align with national priorities, and create more inclusive, connected, and resilient communities across the nation.

Motion number 118.2 Port Phillip City Council VIC

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to strengthen and invest in community services by:

1. Fostering community safety and social cohesion through dedicated funding streams and resources for local councils to implement evidence-based community safety initiatives that promote social cohesion and inclusivity. These initiatives may include infrastructure improvements (e.g. improved lighting, clear and effective signage, graffiti removal, safer pedestrian routes), delivery of events, community engagement programs, and anti-discrimination measures.
2. Providing provisions to upgrade and increase stock of public place CCTV and mobile CCTV trailers where appropriate. This will enhance public safety, deter criminal activities, and assist law enforcement agencies in monitoring and responding to incidents more effectively.
3. Improving community wellbeing through:
    a. ensuring more inclusive and accessible public spaces;
    b. dedicated graffiti mitigation and removal programs;
    c. expanding funding for mental health support services and social cohesion programs;
    d. partnering with councils to deliver sustainable, local programs that address the impacts of rising living costs, with a particular focus on supporting the most vulnerable in our communities; and
    e. delivering increased funding to support homelessness services and prevention initiatives, ensuring individuals receive assistance before reaching crisis levels.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

In light of recent incidents of antisemitism and growing safety concerns within municipalities across the nation, Councils are placing a strong emphasis on community safety, crime

prevention, social cohesion, and community strengthening. This initiative provides a foundation for Councils to work more effectively on these critical issues, developing actionable strategies to improve safety and well-being both locally and across the sector.

Strengthening community services to enhance well-being and safety is of national significance because it promotes social cohesion, prevents crime, and enhances public health. By fostering a sense of belonging and unity, community services help bridge divides and reduce tensions among different groups.

Well researched and thoroughly implemented measures can address the root causes of crime, such as poverty and social isolation, reducing the likelihood of criminal behaviour. Community support and safety services play a crucial role in promoting mental and physical health, improving overall well-being. Such activities and services also build resilience, equipping individuals and communities with the tools needed to cope with challenges and crises. This resilience is vital for responding to emergencies and maintaining stability.

Safe and well-supported communities attract businesses and investments, leading to economic growth and job creation, which enhances the quality of life for residents and contributes to national prosperity.

KEY ARGUMENTS

In response to recent antisemitism and heightened safety concerns in and around the municipality, Councils are prioritising community safety, crime prevention, social cohesion, and community strengthening. This motion serves as a platform for Councils to collaborate more effectively on these pressing issues and develop actionable strategies to enhance safety and well-being in their respective areas, as well as sector wide.

The rise in antisemitic incidents and other forms of discrimination highlight the need for targeted safety measures to support vulnerable groups and build resilience across communities.

Local governments need dedicated funding to deliver initiatives that improve safety and inclusivity in public spaces. Measures such as better lighting, clear signage, pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, and anti-discrimination programs contribute to a sense of belonging and security, reducing crime and antisocial behaviour.

Rising living costs, increasing mental health challenges, and growing rates of homelessness demand a stronger, more collaborative approach to improve community wellbeing. Social cohesion is critical to the resilience, wellbeing, and safety of communities. It fosters a sense of belonging, participation, and connection, contributing to healthier, more resilient communities with lower crime rates.

Local councils are central to creating safe, inclusive spaces for all residents. However, effective action requires a collaborative and well-resourced approach. ALGA advocacy will ensure councils across the nation have the capacity and consistency to address safety challenges and promote social cohesion.

Motion number 119 Camden Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to specifically fund the establishment of integrated, co-located hubs of community services delivery in growth areas

as one-stop-shops to bring services to where people are through effective partnerships and collaborative approaches.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Community hubs and one-stop-shops are spaces where communities increasingly demand responsive services and where people can participate in services, group activities, hobbies and advocacy. Local Government is by far the largest contributor to community service infrastructure, particularly through its role in managing place via the provision of social and cultural infrastructure (such as community centres, childcare centres, libraries, sports clubs and halls) and thereby promoting community cohesion and responding to community needs. At the same time, there is growing concern regarding Local Government's ability to effectively manage its social and cultural infrastructure. By co-locating activities, programs and services, community hubs present an opportunity to work in partnership and integrate services to provide more responsive and holistic care across Australia.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Investing in integrated, co-located community hubs across Australia should be a priority area for policy reform to generate effectiveness and efficiency through partnerships. Such hubs have the potential to significantly improve community outcomes, particularly for those experiencing disadvantage. Fine (1997) describes what effective service integration looks like - improved access for consumers; increased efficiency, achieving more from the use of limited resources; and enhanced effectiveness, resulting in improved outcomes for consumers and funders.

The Australian Government should provide a specific financial investment to deliver a national approach to implementing, funding and evaluating community hubs (outside the services themselves). There are currently place based and evidence based models of how this can be achieved. The Australian Government should facilitate the establishment of community hubs via:

- Agreed core components and appropriate governance structures.
- Support for existing community hubs to improve integration via funding for the partnership models. The funding is a vital component of community hubs that supports the integration of services and reduces fragmentation.
- Establishment of new community hubs, targeted to areas of significant disadvantage, including establishment, infrastructure and backbone funding to ensure success.
- Built in guidance and support for ongoing quality improvement and evaluation of community hubs through a harmonised set of process and impact measures.

Motion number 120 Dungog Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to review the fiscal arrangements affecting the sustainability of essential services provided by Licensed Post Offices and Mail Delivery Contractors and establish terms for financial sustainability with the postal services and those provided on behalf of the government.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

There are 4271 Post Offices throughout Australia of which about 2900 are Licenced Post Offices (LPO's), which account for about 70% of the network. They are privately owned &

operated businesses operating as branches of a government business enterprise. They are governed by Australia Post and paid commissions on transactions.

Some 2500 LPO's are located in regional areas and in many small towns the post office provides essential services including services on behalf of the federal government.

KEY ARGUMENTS

There are four LPO's in Dungog Shire. Although they are stand alone businesses, they must purchase Australia Post products, often at low margins and in large quantities. In Dungog LGA every bank has closed except for the branch of the Mutual Bank in Dungog but all four LPO's provide financial services which are particularly important for elderly people and those without access to public transport or the internet.

This is a typical pattern throughout regional Australia, but over time the business model has not been adjusted to compensate for rising input costs, and payments are still linked to the postage rate when that aspect of the business is declining. Furthermore, they are not adjusted annually in real terms.

The growth in the Australia Post parcel delivery service has adversely affected the viability of LPO's when the exact opposite should apply. LPO's are not compensated for the extra time it takes with parcels compared to handling mail as there is a lot more involved in processing parcels, whether incoming or outgoing. Due to the unforeseen increase in demand for these services many LPO's struggle to cope with the extra secure storage required.

This has adversely affected the viability of LPO's when the exact opposite should apply. LPO's are not compensated for the extra time it takes with parcels compared to handling mail. There is a lot more involved in processing parcels, whether incoming or outgoing. Many LPO's are challenged with secure storage issues as they have no control over parcel volumes.

Commission margins on Australia Post products are minimal and if it wasn't for LPO's selling other items such as stationery, giftware & toys etc, they wouldn't survive. Some businesses have been able to diversify with a range of extra services such as a newsagency, lotto tickets, fuel and groceries. However, without receiving adequate remuneration from Australia Post they are all subsidizing the provision a government business.

The financial arrangements with Mail Delivery Contracts are very similar to the plight of LPO's. Australia Post pressures contractors to reduce the contract payments towards unviability. Australia Post has set a range of services they will pay for but this does not include vehicle repairs, which is problematic because of the large distances involved and rural back roads.

It is well known that LPO's across Australia are struggling to remain viable and despite numerous government inquiries and initiatives, the fundamental problems are ongoing. If LPO's are to survive Australia Post and the Australian Government needs to adequately remunerate them.

On the one hand, as a government business enterprise, the Australia Postal Corporation is required to act consistently with sound commercial practice, but on the other hand meeting the needs of small communities is a role of government that cannot be considered entirely within a commercial context.

By providing government services, which benefit the public in areas where it is not commercially viable, it is unreasonable to expect private individuals and businesses to cover

the cost. Accordingly, the Australian Government should ensure that Australia Post and its Licensees are not financially disadvantaged.

Motion number 121 City of Greater Bendigo VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Legislate the right to food in Australia and embed this right into all relevant national, state and local government policies, budgeting processes and activities.
2. Develop a National Food System Plan and appoint a Minister of Food to lead its development, implementation and evaluation. Such a Plan should provide for food security, including nutritional security of the nation and its people. It should have clear objectives and measurable targets set out in action plans and be subject to regular review. It should apply a food systems approach to account for the complex relationships involved from farm to fork, and foster relationships and synergies between government, relevant industries and civil society, and the community.
3. Facilitate resources to enable local governments to complete their own place-based food security data collection and evaluation, and to lead the participatory development of community food system strategies.
4. Increase income support payments, including Jobseeker, to above the poverty line and index them to wage growth, consistent with a rights-based and income-first approach to food security.
5. Recognise that whilst essential, emergency food relief is not the single solution to food insecurity. Instead, work with state and local governments and the food relief sector to develop new coordinated and collaborative approaches to improve dignified, affordable access to fresh and healthy food.
6. Support the development and implementation of regular (at least every two years) and comprehensive monitoring against the 6 dimensions of food security in Australia. This will assist active responses to changing needs and emerging issues that may impact food security, such as the rising cost of living and poverty rates. It should account for food security measures for both adults and children.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The right to food is a universal human right.

Food insecurity presents both challenges and opportunities for positive change.

The national objective should be for all adults and children to have access to adequate, affordable food that is fresh and healthy.

Victorian local governments have obligations under the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act (2008) to protect, improve and promote public health and wellbeing within their municipalities. They are also responsible for representing the views of their communities, many of whom are concerned about increased cost of living pressures contributing to increased food insecurity and demand for food relief services, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic.

If supported by appropriate resources, local governments are uniquely placed to complete place-based food security data collection and evaluation, and to lead the participatory development of community food system strategies.

The current lack of a National Food Systems Plan (including food security), appropriate resourcing and monitoring compromises the ability of the different levels of government plus other stakeholders to work effectively together:

- to improve food security (and food systems), and
- to measure and report on progress and impact.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The recent Foodbank Hunger Report 2024 revealed that 3.4 million households in Australia ran out of food in the last year.

Rates of food insecurity in Greater Bendigo are higher than the Victorian average. In 2019, the City conducted the Active Living Census and found that 9.6% of the population was food insecure, almost double the Victorian average at the time. 1 in 10 households did not have enough food to eat and, in some areas, this increased to 1 in 5. A local food relief agency, Bendigo Foodshare found that their partner organisations experienced an increase of 40-60% more people seeking assistance in 2023, compared to 2022. Agencies are also supporting people for the first time, including families with two income households.

The dominant response to food insecurity in Australia is via food relief. In Greater Bendigo, there are 25 organisations that offer food relief services as well as a Food Relief Network. Traditional food relief is designed to fulfill short term food needs. In Greater Bendigo many people have become dependent on food relief services for long-term food security for reasons including lower than Victorian average household incomes.

Traditional food relief services can have several limitations. Services may not have resources or capacity to meet nutritional needs of people and donations are often shelf stable, ultra processed foods. Providers may also require the collection of personal information to access their service and often do not provide choice in what food people receive. Lack of agency, as well as societal stigma associated with food insecurity, can fuel shame and embarrassment for those seeking assistance. While traditional food relief may promote food access, it does not fulfill the dimensions of agency or sustainability and cannot address the underlying systemic drivers of food insecurity that lie primarily in poverty.

Overall, it is difficult to fully understand the food security context in not only local government areas, but across the state and nation as current food security measures only include questions related to severe food insecurity (rather than questions related to the 6 dimensions of food security). Additionally, without a National Food Systems Plan there is no framework to guide federal, state and local governments work to support food security. Finally, with income support payments below the poverty line and the continuation of the 'cost of living crisis', food insecurity will likely continue to rise nation-wide.

Motion number 121.1 Merri-bek City Council VIC

The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

Commit $500 million to establish a national program that supports local governments to plan, implement, and scale up community-based food systems, urban agriculture, and repair/social enterprise initiative.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Food insecurity, chronic disease, and social isolation are growing national challenges, exacerbated by climate pressures and the rising cost of living. The need for healthy, affordable food and resilient, connected communities is universal across Australia - affecting cities, suburbs, regional towns, and remote communities alike.

This motion proposes a national response through local government-led initiatives, enabling councils to develop integrated community food systems, social enterprises, and repair cafes that provide real, measurable benefits. These projects improve public health, enhance social inclusion, reduce food and material waste, and support climate resilience - all critical national priorities.

Local governments are best placed to implement these place-based solutions, but they require meaningful federal support to scale. By investing in local-level action, the Federal Government would directly contribute to national goals including improved public health, increased food security, stronger community cohesion, climate adaptation, and reduced waste.

Debating this motion at the NGA is essential to building cross-jurisdictional momentum for a coordinated, nationwide approach to community food systems. It supports the ALGA's vision for empowered, sustainable councils, and puts forward a clear, actionable pathway for federally-supported local action in line with the NGA's theme: Climate Change and Renewable Energy.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Local food systems and community hubs offer scalable, place-based solutions to national challenges such as food insecurity, poor health, social isolation, and climate resilience.

Councils across Australia already support community gardens, food swaps, repair cafes and social enterprises - but the scope and impact of these initiatives are limited by resources. A $500 million federal investment would empower councils to deliver these programs at scale, resulting in significant national benefits.

Australia's public health system faces increasing strain from preventable chronic diseases like diabetes and obesity. "Food as medicine" programs - where fresh, healthy food is prescribed as part of treatment - have been trialled with great success in local settings, improving health outcomes and reducing long-term costs. Councils, through local health partnerships, are well-placed to implement such models.

Food systems resilience is another national priority. Local food production shortens supply chains and reduces vulnerability to disruptions. Urban agriculture, community gardens and farmers markets increase food access, reduce waste, and build skills. Social enterprises and cooperative food models also stimulate local economies and employment - especially for marginalised groups.

Repair cafes and community hubs reduce material waste and landfill while building intergenerational skills and community bonds. These hubs become spaces for climate action, circular economy initiatives, and social connection - all aligned with the Australian Government's emissions, waste and wellbeing strategies.

This motion proposes that a national program to address:

- Urban agriculture and food growing in public space
- Community-led markets, food swaps and co-ops
- Food-based health pilots ("food as prescription")

- Community hubs for sustainability, repair and food sharing

Federal support should also fund the development of benchmarking frameworks and shared best-practice tools so councils can report on outcomes such as: kilos of food grown or distributed; health improvements; waste diverted from landfill; participation rates and volunteer hours; social enterprise employment outcomes; and reductions in food insecurity.

This motion aligns with existing strategies like the National Obesity Strategy, National Food Waste Strategy, and the National Preventive Health Strategy - all of which highlight the importance of community-led initiatives in achieving national goals. It also supports ALGA's own policy positions on community wellbeing, sustainability, and local economic development.

This motion puts forward a practical, well-evidenced, and nationally-relevant proposal. It calls for investment where it matters most - in communities - and empowers local government to take the lead in delivering integrated solutions. Councils are ready to act and with a federal partnership, we can build healthier, fairer, and more sustainable communities across Australia.

Motion number 122 Brimbank City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to commit to implementing all thirty-two recommendations of the report by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs inquiry into online gambling and its impacts on those experiencing gambling harm in full.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Gambling is a rapidly growing public health issue in Australia. Each year, Australians lose up to $32 billion to gambling, the highest per capita spend in the world. A comprehensive ban on all forms of advertising for online gambling, a ban on inducements, a levy on gambling companies and a new national regulator is critical to preventing and reducing gambling harm.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Gambling harm plays a key role in increasing widespread and serious harm to our communities. In Australian culture, sport and gambling are intrinsically linked. Currently restrictions to gambling advertisements are insufficient and have detrimental impacts on our communities, including our young people.

Gambling advertisements during live sports broadcasts as well as on social media platforms are prolific and normalised. Gambling advertisements and simulated gambling through video games, is grooming children and young people to gamble and encourages riskier behaviour. The torrent of advertising is inescapable and manipulating an impressionable and vulnerable audience to gamble online.

Gambling harm happens every day, and the sooner that reforms are enacted the sooner the community will benefit.

Motion number 122.1 Maribyrnong City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to endorse the recommendations from the 2023 Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs Inquiry Report 'You Win Some You Lose More'.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The Alliance for Gambling Reform supports and encourages the Australian Government to adopt and implement all 31 recommendations. Gambling in all forms continues to be problematic for many people in our community, and it is recommended ALGA call on the Australian Government to implement all 31 recommendations.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs 2023 Inquiry Report 'You Win Some You Lose More' was released in June 2023 and outlines 31 recommendations regarding gambling reform. This inquiry considered whether the current regulatory framework for online gambling and gambling advertising in Australia is fit for purpose and meeting community expectations.

Motion number 122.2 Hume City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to implement all 31 recommendations from the You win some, you lose more report into gambling harm.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Gambling in Australia is a major public health issue. Gambling can cause a range of negative consequences, which are referred to in this report as gambling harms. These can include serious financial, legal, family and relationship, and health and psychological harms and homelessness.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The You win some, you lose more inquiry considered whether the current regulatory framework for online gambling and gambling advertising in Australia is fit for purpose and meeting community expectations.

Gambling in Australia is a major public health issue. Gambling can cause a range of negative consequences, which are referred to in this report as gambling harms. These can include serious financial, legal, family and relationship, and health and psychological harms and homelessness.

Almost half of those who gambled in 2022 (46%) were classified as being at some risk of gambling harm in the past 12 months. Around two-thirds of all participants who gambled on sports (67%), racing (63%) and electronic gaming machines (67 per cent) were classified as being at risk of harm.

The Committee made 31 recommendations (see Attachment 7) that apply a public health lens to online gambling to reduce harm across the whole Australian population. The Committee received powerful evidence from people with lived experience of online gambling harm, and from academic and health experts, peak bodies, community organisations and concerned individuals about the harm online gambling is causing to everyday Australians, the people they love, and to their communities.

Motion number 123 Moyne Shire Council VIC

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to address the urgent need for quality, accessible, and affordable childcare in regional and rural communities. This includes developing a national early years reform strategy with increased federal funding for childcare infrastructure and workforce initiatives. Key actions should focus on expanding service capacity in underserved areas and implementing targeted incentives-such as scholarships, relocation grants, and professional development funding-to attract and retain qualified early childhood educators.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Critical Childcare shortages are not a local or regional issue-becoming a national concern with broad economic, workforce, and social justice ramifications across the country. The increasing demand for affordable, accessible childcare, alongside the lack of sufficient services, is a challenge to communities nationwide, particularly in regional and rural areas. It is hurting employers, families, and local governments, all of whom are struggling with the fallout from limited childcare opportunities.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The shortage of childcare in our region is a critical and urgent issue that has far-reaching effects on local families, workforce participation, and economic development. Despite growing demand, there is a critical shortage of childcare places available, particularly in regional and rural regions, where existing services are stretched or under strain. This shortage not only places enormous pressure on parents, especially women, but also on employers who struggle to recruit and retain employees due to the inability of employees to gain access to safe childcare.

The lack of access to childcare is significantly contributing to under-employment in regional and rural areas, particularly those with low unemployment rates.

Local Council's play a crucial role in providing early childhood education and care services. However, funding is limited and subject to competition through grants or requiring matching resources, which places limitations on local government flexibility and responsiveness to fulfill the specific circumstances of their particular community.

The shortage in childcare is additionally exacerbated by the broader systemic issues of a lack of incentives to encourage childcare services to open operations in rural towns and a scarcity of trained childcare workers. These factors working together make it more difficult for local governments to effectively respond to their constituents.

To address these challenges, the Australian Government needs to provide federal support in terms of extra funds, tax incentives for new childcare centers, and funding for workforce development and training. Addressing the shortage of childcare services, the Australian Government can not only help families but also create a healthier local economy, promote gender equality, and benefit the general well-being of the community. Councils stand ready to collaborate to find long-term, sustainable solutions that meet the diverse needs of families and the workforce in our region.

Motion number 123.1 City of Darwin NT

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to recognise the important role of local government in the delivery of key early years supports and provide funding to local government authorities for new and upgraded infrastructure, additional childcare places, growing a local skilled workforce and increasing affordability of services in the delivery of early childhood education and care, playgroups and toy libraries.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Within an early childhood system that is complex and fragmented, local government plays a key role. Local government directly funds or offers childcare places or provides access to council-owned buildings through leasing for use as childcare centres, and more generally influences where early childcare services are located through land use planning. Many councils indicate commencing childcare services due to lack of viability in the childcare market for private operators, especially in regional communities, as reported to the recent Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability. Further, local governments manage and maintain playgrounds and other community hubs, and offer services through community hubs and libraries, including health checks, parenting programs, storytime sessions and toy libraries.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The size of a child's brain reaches 90 per cent of an adult's by the age of five. Early childhood is a time of rapid change - particularly for the development of a child's brain. These early years are critical for lifelong learning and well-being. Talking, reading, playing and singing with babies and toddlers is so important in shaping thinking and emotional patterns for life and influencing learning, relationships and resilience. However, the importance of this development and learning process has been ignored by decision-makers who continue to treat our early learning and childcare system as a child-minding service for parents returning to work. (Thrive by Five)

A high-quality, universally accessible and affordable early learning system will allow parents to get back into the workforce and remove the financial barriers to women in particular taking on full-time work.

Government, including local government, is firmly invested as a provider of early years supports. According to the 2024 Productivity Commission report, A path to universal childhood education and care, there are 1,180 State/Territory/Local Government managed providers of services. And local government offers key supports in addition to managed services, such as health and parenting programs, storytime sessions and toy libraries.

Achieving a high-quality, universally accessible and affordable early learning system will require significant new investment and an expanded footprint across our communities - that is, across local government areas. Without funding support, any further local government involvement in this space equates to burdensome cost-shifting by the Federal and State/Territory Governments.

According to ALGA's State of the Assets Report 2024, of the three levels of government in Australia, local government is by far the most asset intensive. With around $60bn of total revenue in 2022-23, this number is dwarfed by the $643bn value in total assets under its control. Infrastructure assets that provide services to our communities account for $424bn (66%) or approximately two-thirds of the total asset portfolio. 8% of local government assets are in poor condition with significant defects requiring higher order cost interventions, and 27% of local government infrastructure assets are in fair condition with defects requiring regular and/or significant maintenance to reinstate the service. The estimated replacement

cost of all infrastructure assets in poor condition, function, and capacity is estimated to be in the order of $50 to $55 billon, close to the $60 billion received in total annual revenue for the 2022-23 financial year.

With the Australian Government committed to moving towards universal access to early childhood education and care that is high quality, equitable, affordable and accessible, local governments require support to maintain existing early years infrastructure and to extend the availability of these and other services and community infrastructure assets.

Therefore, this motion calls on the Australian Government to recognise the important role of local government in the delivery of key early years supports and provide funding to local government authorities for new and upgraded infrastructure, additional childcare places, growing a local skilled workforce and increasing affordability of services in the delivery of early childhood education and care.

Motion number 123.2 Snowy Valleys Council NSW

The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to work with States and Territories, in consultation with Local Government, to prioritise the decentralisation of government jobs and agencies beyond major cities.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

To ensure councils are able to meet the disadvantaged and vulnerable childcare needs of their communities.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Whilst the provision of children's services is a community service, some profit needs to be achieved in order to ensure the sustainability of the service.

The fixed and variable costs of running such a service can outweigh any profit which would otherwise be utilised to keep the service running effectively.

An increase of Community Child Care Funding is vital to ensure the sustainability activities and capital expenses are met.

Communities and Local Government are working to ensure the statistics in the 'Childcare Deserts and Oasis: How accessible is childcare in Australia' study are reversed https://www.vu.edu.au/mitchell-institute/early-learning/childcare-deserts-oases-how-accessible-is-childcare-in-australia

This means some services will not have high occupancy rates and will struggle financially. Support is needed to ensure children's services are viable and not a burden to the ratepayer.

Motion number 124 Frankston City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to properly reimburse local governments for citizenship ceremonies noting costs such as marketing, venue hire, special guest speakers, materials, gifts, certificates, certificate frames, catering, staff (often at overtime rates), security, photographers.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The source of funding for citizenship ceremonies is currently from Local Governments and it could be debated that it should come from income taxpayer dollars.

KEY ARGUMENTS

This is a motion regarding the financial responsibilities associated with the conduct of citizenship ceremonies across our nation.

Citizenship ceremonies are a vital component of the citizenship process in Australia, providing new citizens an opportunity to formally embrace their citizenship and contribute to our nation's multicultural fabric. However, the responsibility for conducting these ceremonies lies with local governments, resulting in an increasing financial burden to ratepayers.

To date, local councils have been incurring significant costs related to these ceremonies. Despite the importance of these events, the funding for such activities aligns more closely with the functions of the Federal Government.

While it is an honour to hold these events, given it is essentially a Federal function that has been cost shifted onto local government, meaningful compensation should be provided to participating local governments.

Frankston City Council has recognised the importance of citizenship ceremonies and ensured that they are a meaningful and joyous occasion for our new residents. Over the past two years, keeping the number of the application lists to a minimum has resulted in rising costs to facilitate these events. Costs such as catering, venue hire, salaries (often at overtime rates), materials, gifts, security and photographers has resulted in a cost shift of over $40,000 per annum. Frankston prides itself on a wait time for a ceremony after an application of 97% within 3 months of being registered.

We propose that the Australian Government take responsibility for these costs, ensuring that local councils are not unduly strained by expenses that are essentially federal in nature. This shift would provide clarity and support for local governments while maintaining the dignity and importance of the citizenship process.

We respectfully urge the Australian Government to consider this motion and take the necessary actions to reimburse local councils for the costs associated with hosting citizenship ceremonies. This would reflect a more equitable approach to the distribution of responsibilities and resources in our shared commitment to Australian citizenship.

Motion number 125 Kingston District Council SA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to consider a range of adjustments and enhancements to Commonwealth support for local government as a major provider of in-home aged care.

We urge the Commonwealth to engage with us to address issues which currently threaten the viability of in-home aged care services, including, but not limited to:

- Inadequate funding of case management
- Excessive focus on compliance administration, at the cost of time available to provide direct care
- Counter-intuitive pricing of package levels, which provide no incentive to offer the necessary level of care to high-needs clients
- The lack of any dementia supplement within the Support At Home program

- Pressure on providers to seek individual pricing consent with no mechanism for dealing with situations where consent is not provided
- The difficulties and barriers to providing services to clients with higher acuity, complex mental health needs, housing or financial issues
- The enforcement-focused model which provides few if any positive incentives to improve performance against standards
- The failure to share any of the significant costs of transition and service transformation
- The absence of any measures which assist in growing the attractiveness of employment in the in-home care sector.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Councils are one of the largest providers of in-home aged care, and given the financial constraints that come to bear on local government generally, the ability of the sector to continue to offer these services is not guaranteed without significant funding and an easing of the compliance regime that diverts significant times and resources from actual delivery.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Greater compliance measures have been introduced by the Commonwealth to improve the quality of care provided by in-home aged care service providers. However, councils are financially constrained and the burden of compliance draws significant resources away from the provision of care. A light touch is needed, not least so that there are incentives to maintain and improve performance.

The Support at Home program assumes that all clients have the same needs, but where a client has significant vulnerabilities or health decline, or is in the early stages of dementia the additional time and effort required to provide care does not attract a pricing supplement any more.

The process of transition and service transformation is important, but very costly. All of the costs is complying with the Commonwealth's requirements are currently borne by the service provider, and this is problematic.

The pool of current and prospective employees for aged care services often live long distances from the areas in which they work. This is a significant problem for councils in inner and middle-ring suburbs that wish to attract and retain staff.

Motion number 125.1 Merri-bek City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to recognise the critical role of local government in delivering high-quality aged care services and provide support to ensure councils can continue to deliver these essential services to their communities by:

- continuing to provide additional funding that fully reflects Council's unit costs
- retain and further expand upfront Commonwealth block funding for Home Support services.
- recognise the existing governance requirements that are already embedded into Local Government operating frameworks and implement the New Aged Care Act in a manner that minimises unrealistic burdens and duplication on Local Government providers.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Australia's population is ageing, presenting challenges for governments and increased demand for aged care services. Councils provide a wide range of services to the community, including aged care services. Councils are uniquely positioned to deliver aged care services that are responsive to local needs ensuring that aged care services are accessible, culturally appropriate, and designed to address the specific needs of each individual.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Australia's population is ageing due to increasing life expectancy and declining fertility rates. Both the number of people at the older ages is growing and older people are representing an increasing share of the total population.

An ageing population presents challenges for governments and the demand for aged care services will continue to increase with an ageing population.

Many local governments across Australia have a long history of providing essential aged care services, ensuring older Australians can age with dignity and remain connected to their communities.

Local government is uniquely placed to deliver aged care services as:

- It is trusted by the community, has excellent local knowledge and networks and is often the first point of call for impartial advice for older people, particularly with information increasingly moving online.
- Has a more stable and highly skilled workforce thanks to councils' providing better wages and working conditions for in-home support workers often results in a better quality of continued care.
- Is committed to delivering services to ALL members of the community, including more complex cases, harder to reach cohorts and diverse communities - there is a risk of people falling through the gaps.
- Many councils have a lengthy history and much experience in communication and engagement with diverse, complex and hard to reach communities.

In particular, many Councils care for our ageing population in their homes via the block-funded Commonwealth Home Support Program. Caring for older people in their homes helps them to maintain their independence and stay in their homes and out of residential aged care for longer.

Retaining aged care services within councils is vital to meeting the growing demand for community-focused care and aligns with national priorities to improve the quality and accessibility of aged care services across Australia.

Motion number 126 Kingston District Council SA

The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to acknowledge the role that local governments play in addressing the cost-of-living crisis through the sector's support for community food banks, homelessness services and the shifting of many of the costs of in-home aged care to local government.

- In particular, we urge the Commonwealth to increase the real value of all social security payments so that recipients can afford to buy food after their unavoidable living expenses have been met.

- We urge the Commonwealth to recognise the important role of food banks by increasing the funding available to charities working with local government to provide food to those living in poverty due to joblessness, ill health, disability, age or social isolation.
- Provide the Federal Government with other Cost of Living Relief options as researched by institutions and think tanks.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Local government is the level of government with the closest relationship to food banks and other community welfare providers, and is a major funder and supporter of these entities. The lack of consistent financial support for food providers places the sector at risk, and with it, the health and wellbeing of people who are experiencing poverty due to joblessness, disability, age or isolation.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Australians are experiencing significant cost of living pressures, but the greatest difficulties are being experienced by people on social security payments like Jobseeker and the Age Pension. After housing costs and other bills, we see evidence of many people on these payments going without meals on a regular basis.

While bringing social security payments up to a livable amount should be a priority, the role of food banks and other direct providers needs to be acknowledged, supported, and the supply of basic food needs guaranteed.

Motion number 127 Shellharbour City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to commit a further 5% of its health budget to investing in preventative health measures.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Preventative health measures and initiatives spending, and investment is one of the most underfunded areas of the health spend with just under 1% of the federal health budget apportioned to preventative health. Currently only 1.1b of the federal health budget (112.7B) is spent on preventative health measures.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Preventative health care is one of the most important ways to foster the ongoing health of the human condition which prevents the onset of chronic illness which leads to the acute sector (hospital ED and GP offices) being overburdened and under pressure.

The public health association of Australia has urged the federal government to increase funding for preventative health measures after new data revealed a 13B surge in the cost of treating chronic diseases over the past year (2022-2023).

Motion number 128 Randwick City Council NSW

This National General Assembly of Local Government calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Ensure that programs to fund meaningful wage increases to Early Childhood Education and Care and Residential Aged Care Workers continue beyond 2025 and 2026, including workers employed in the Local Government Sector;
2. Continue working with all relevant stakeholders to address Gender Based Undervaluation and ensure the pay and conditions of workers in traditionally feminised industries properly reflect the value of the work, skills and responsibility required and / or the conditions under which the work is performed;
3. Allocate funds to support councils in delivering and expanding our services in these areas to address the growing needs of our communities amidst the increasing cost of living and sectoral crises.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion addresses the following key questions in the 2025 discussion paper:

Are there programs or initiatives that the Australian Government could implement that would enhance local government's capacity to attract and retain appropriately skilled staff now and into the future?

Noting the funding arrangements for the provision of local government community services are there programs and initiatives that the Australian Government could implement to improve the delivery of these services?

Are there reforms or improvements in national community services program that would help local governments support the Australian Government to deliver on its national objectives?

KEY ARGUMENTS

Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) workers and Residential Aged Care Workers are vital for the well-being of children and older adults, providing essential care, support, and fostering development and independence. Early Childhood and Aged Care services provided by councils play a vital role and are highly valued by their communities.

Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Workers:

ECEC workers play a crucial role in shaping children's development by providing a foundation for learning, social skills, and emotional well-being. They support children's cognitive, physical, social, and emotional growth through play-based learning and individualized care.

Quality ECEC helps children develop independence, confidence, and the skills necessary for future success in school and beyond. ECEC services are essential for children's healthy development, preparing them for school and fostering lifelong learning.

The Australian Government is funding a 15% above award wage increase for all eligible early childhood education and care (ECEC) workers through the ECEC Worker Retention Payment (Payment). The wage increase will be phased in over a two year grant period, with eligible ECEC employees receiving a 10% increase from December 2024, and a further 5% increase from December 2025.

As the main public provider of long day care, OOSH, and occasional care, local governments play a key role in delivering early childhood education & care and generally does so at a higher standard than for-profit centres. It is essential that these services are sufficiently resourced and staffed into the future so that we can both continue and expand our delivery of early childhood education in our LGAs.

One key investment is in wages, so as to address the sectoral crisis that sees many educators burn out and leave due to low pay and high workloads.

Residential Aged Care Workers:

Residential aged care workers provide essential care and support for older adults, ensuring their safety, health, and well-being. They assist with daily living activities, medication management, and emotional support, promoting independence and dignity.

Aged care workers help older adults maintain their health, independence, and quality of life in a safe and supportive environment. They are vital in addressing the needs of an aging population, ensuring that older adults receive the care and support they require.

The Fair Work Commission ("FWC") has awarded 'direct care' aged care employees employed under the federal Aged Care Award 2010 a 15% increase in award minimum wages, to be implemented over a series of stages.

The Australian Government, through the Department of Health and Aged Care, will fund the wage increases as it did with respect to the Stage 2 increases, including on-costs and the increased cost of historical leave liabilities.

Under its most recent decision, many registered and enrolled nurses working in aged care are receiving award wage increases from 1 March 2025, with further increases on 1 October 2025 and 1 August 2026.

It is essential that Early Childhood Education and Care and Residential Aged Care Workers continue to receive meaningful pay increases beyond 2025 and 2026 for the benefit of all in our community.

Motion number 128.1 Bega Valley Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to permanently support the childcare wage subsidy that it announced in August 2024.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

On 8 August 2024, the Federal Government announced an increase to the minimum wage for the early education and care workforce from December 2024. This includes a 10% increase in the first year followed by a 5% increase in the second year. The Federal Government will fund this increase for 2 years, after which time Councils who provide this service will be expected to fund the ongoing wage costs themselves or reduce the wages to pre-subsidy levels. The subsidy from the Federal Government is in the form of a grant application which also poses an additional administrative burden on Councils.

KEY ARGUMENTS

All levels of government have recognised a national shortage of early education and care workers, and several reviews were undertaken by the state and federal governments. The increase to the minimum wage, and the associated financial support from the Federal Government is a direct result of these reviews The increase will only be funded by the Federal Government for a 2-year period and is tied to a commitment that childcare centre limit fee increases. After this subsidised 2-year period service providers, including Councils will be required to cover these increased costs. This means in some instances rate payers may be subsidising childcare costs or fees will need to be increased to cover the increased

wages costs which may prohibit some families from using the service which is detrimental for early childhood outcomes.

Motion number 128.2 Penrith City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to increase the hourly rate contribution subsidy of $23.00 for an Additional Educator under the Inclusion Development Fund program.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The Federal Government provides an Inclusion Development Fund (IDF) to assist eligible Early Education Centres address the barriers of children's inclusion in childcare services. One of the funding streams provided by the Federal Government is an IDF subsidy for an Additional Educator for children with diagnosed disability and children with additional needs. The Federal Government supports this additional educator by funding a portion of the staff member's salary to the amount of $23.00 per hour. The issue experienced across the profession is that Childcare Assistants and Childcare Aides salaries increase annually, and the $23.00 payment contribution is not keeping pace with salary increases paid to these staff.

Demand for Inclusion Support funding in the Early Childhood Profession in Australia has grown significantly over the last few years with more than 19,000 children and approximately 5,600 services accessing IDF support in 2022-23.

Penrith City Council Children's Services has also seen significant growth in IDF submissions in its 19 Long Day Care Services and 20 Out of School Hours Care services, including Vacation Care. During 2024, Penrith City Council Long Day Care and Out of School Hours Care services were approved for 1154 hours per week of additional educator support. These hours provided support for the children attached to 110 approved cases. During an average Vacation Care week in 2024, 360 hours of approved case hours took place to support 20 children across 7 Vacation Care sites.

The engagement of additional educators to support inclusion with the approved hours of funding resulted in a loss of income of $720,000 for Penrith City Council services based on the approved cases in 2024. This loss is continuing to grow, without an increase in the subsidy hourly rate provided by the Federal Government.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Penrith City Council Children's Services is proud of its commitment to support inclusion in its childcare services. As a Local Government community-based provider, Penrith Council has been supporting children with additional needs for over 20 years. With salaries increasing yearly for Childcare Assistants and Diploma trained Educators, the financial gap between a staff members salary and the Inclusion Development Fund payment of $23.00 per hour is widening. Penrith Council Children's Services supported over 1150 hours of additional needs support in 2024 at a cost of approximately $720,000 in cost.

Penrith City Council Children's Services wants to continue to support Children with additional needs. It is important to note that if the Federal Government doesn't increase the hourly rate for children with additional needs, then Penrith Council may be forced to reduce the number of children with additional needs enrolled in our services which will have an impact in a quality early education program that they can experience.

Motion number 129 Paroo Shire Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to increase the level of subsidy available to aged care accommodation facilities with less than 20 residents to enable such facilities to provide a service to rural and remote communities. Due to limited revenue raising capacity, smaller facilities require additional financial support to cover increased regulatory requirements and the costs of specialist staffing.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Across Australia councils in rural and remote locations are required to operate aged care facilities because they are too small to be viable for stand-alone private operators. Residents wishing to spend their latter years in their local communities should be supported with a level of subsidy enabling them to live in dignity in facilities similar to those available in larger centres.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Australia is undergoing significant reforms to its aged care system, aiming to enhance the quality and accessibility of services for older Australians. The new Aged Care Act, set to commence on July 1, 2025, will place the rights and needs of older individuals at the forefront of the aged care system.

As part of these reforms, subsidies for Aged Care accommodation in rural and remote communities should be increased as currently the level of subsidy is insufficient for smaller facilities to be viable. As a consequence, service providers are unwilling to operate existing facilities which are mainly located in rural and remote local government areas.

Paroo Shire Council has a 12-unit facility in Cunnamulla which has been vacant for four years due to its operation being unviable despite a waiting list of local residents requiring aged care accommodation.

The council currently has a service provider who is interested in re-opening the facility but the compliance regulation of a registered nurse (RN) being available at all times is a prohibitive cost as these nurses have to be provided by nursing agencies. Recruiting and retaining resident nurses in rural and remote communities for this purpose is virtually impossible - a point clearly made by Ageing Australia in various submissions to Government.

In contrast, accommodation for NDIS residents does not require the services of a registered nurse and these residents would also require the administration of medication and other care but no RN supervision is needed under current regulations.

Another rural Council in our region has had a similar situation with a 10-unit facility in a small town. The operator of a low care residential aged care facility ceased operations in late 2020 and two of the reasons cited towards making the facility unviable included increased operational costs and increasing compliance requirements. The community were understandably concerned with the closure and the Council has attempted to mediate a solution to the issue of reduced options for aged care. Other less preferred options have been implemented to support older residents wishing to live in their local community.

Motion number 130 Wollongong City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to address chronic shortages in residential aged care beds which is having a severe impact on health services and communities across Australia.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Addressing the bed block issue requires input and action from stakeholders across all levels of government, the health and community services sector, and the wider community. From 1 July 2025 the Federal Government will no longer control residential care bed numbers regionally but will rely on a competitive market to deliver new residential aged care places. Providers are now making commercial decisions about the affordability of building new residential care homes to meet the need, with the cost of delivering residential aged care accommodation a major challenge. The Australian Government urgently needs to identify residential aged care facility shortfalls across the country, and work with public and private providers, including investigating incentives, to support the delivery of new residential aged care facilities.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Having older people in hospital beds while they wait for appropriate aged care can lead to adverse impacts on the whole community. On a typical day in the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District, there are between 100 and 150 patients in hospital who are ready for discharge and formally approved for accommodation and care in a residential aged care home. While some patients transition to aged care quite smoothly within a week or two of approval, many others find themselves unable to secure a placement in a suitable aged care home and remain in hospital for several months or more. This situation is being replicated to varying degrees across Australia.

Motion number 131 City of Darwin NT

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish a publicly-funded residential care operator in Australia, with the first facilities built in regional areas of high need in partnership with aged care providers.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Demand for residential aged care is growing as Australia's population ages, with demand for precursor services such as Home Care Packages, also growing rapidly.

There are approximately 764 residential aged care providers, 923 home care providers and 1334 home support providers in Australia, as reported through the 2022-23 Aged Care Financial Report (ACFR). There was a decline of 41 residential care providers in the reporting period as well as an overall decline in home support and home care providers.

152 councils are involved in providing aged care services; either residential aged care through a facility or through the Commonwealth Home Support Program, according to the Interim Report on Local Government Sustainability. The increased prevalence of providing aged care services is impacting council's financial sustainability, with councils facilitating the provision of aged care due to the absence of state and NT government services, or market failures.

Given the increasing demand for residential aged care services, combined with a reduction in number of providers and a market that is operating at a loss and market failures leading to

availability gaps, particularly in regional areas, it is timely for the Australian Government to establish a publicly-funded residential care operator in Australia.

KEY ARGUMENTS

In 2022-23 approximately 250,000 people received permanent residential care services at some time during the year, an increase from around 245,000 in 2021-22. Further, in the home care space, over 258,000 people were utilising a Home Care Package in June 2023, an increase of more than 42,000 since June 2022.

As of June 2020, there were approximately 4.2 million individuals aged 65 years and over, representing 16% of the total population. This marks a significant increase from previous decades. For instance, in 1970, older Australians comprised only 8.3% of the population. Looking ahead, the elderly population is projected to continue its upward trend. By 2041, the number of Australians aged 65 and over is expected to reach 6.66 million. And by 2042, the number of Australians aged 85 and over is projected to double to over 1 million people. This cohort of people is expected to continue seeking independent living through significant ongoing growth in home services, however a major boost in capacity of residential care places is required as this group continues to age and live longer.

Despite increasing demand for residential care services, the residential aged care market is weak. Although the overall financial position of the residential aged care sector improved in 2022-23 by $527 million, up from 23% from 2021-22, the sector operated at a loss of $1.7 billion from accommodation (not care) operating at a loss. As the market rationalizes, smaller operators operating in thin markets are leaving the market, creating market failures that local governments are often looking to address, and associated responsibility creep and cost shifting.

According to the State of the Sector: Aged Care 2024 report, only 51% of providers perceived Australia's aged care system as being on the right track. 70% of providers were concerned about the nation's readiness to support a growing ageing population. 92% of providers were concerned about Government funding and 54% considered funding to be the biggest challenge for the sector in the next two years. 20% of smaller providers were not confident in their ability to continue to provide aged care services in the next 12 months.

Given the existing and growing need for residential care services, market gaps and failures in the provision of aged care resulting in shifting of the burden and costs to local government, particularly in regional areas, this motion calls on the Australian Government to address the need for more residential care services, particularly in regional areas, by establishing a publicly-funded residential care operator, with the first facilities built in regional areas of high need where market failures are most evident.

Motion number 132 Shire of Ashburton WA

This National General Assembly acknowledges the 2024 motion calling for a feasibility assessment of a banking model to restore face-to-face banking services in regional Australia, with findings to be presented at the 2025 Assembly.

Following this, a detailed study commissioned by the Shire of Ashburton has identified the most suitable model to support banking access in remote communities.

This Assembly now calls on the Australian Government to:

- Endorses the findings of the Local Government Bank feasibility study and the preferred banking model as a viable solution to restore and sustain banking services in regional and remote communities.
- Calls on the Australian Government to support a more detailed study into the financial, operational, and technical aspects of implementing this model, including risk assessment, regulatory compliance, cost analysis, resource requirements, and scalability.
- Urges the Australian Government to explore partnership agreements with licensed financial institutions to utilise Local Government assets for service delivery.
- Recommends the investigation of expanding Bank@Post services in remote communities as part of the broader initiative to improve regional banking access.
- Calls on the Australian Government to subsidise the costs incurred by residents in regional and remote communities to access the limited transactional banking services available, ensuring affordability and equitable access to financial services.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

APRA reports a 41% decline in face-to-face branches across the country, with regional areas experiencing a 36% drop. Particularly in Western Australia, remote areas have seen a significant 42% reduction in bank branches.

With nearly 7 million Australians (approximately 28% of the population) residing in regional and remote areas, there is a critical need for a sustainable, community-driven solution that ensures ongoing access to essential financial services. Local Governments, with their strong social license, community trust, and not-for-profit mandate, are well-positioned to help address this challenge.

To explore viable solutions, the Shire of Ashburton commissioned a foundational feasibility study conducted by KPMG. This study examined regulatory, financial, and operational requirements, evaluating multiple ownership and service delivery models. A national advocacy group comprising several Local Governments was also formed to review the study's findings and identify the most suitable model for regional communities.

The study concluded that a partnership-based model with a licensed financial institution leveraging local government infrastructure through banking kiosks and facilities is the most feasible and effective approach. This model provides a scalable, cost-effective alternative to traditional bank branches while ensuring essential banking services remain accessible in remote and underserved areas.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Local Government Bank Feasibility Study Objectives and Scope:

- The Local Government Bank Initiative aims to create a sustainable, community-driven banking solution, backed by Local Governments across Australia, to ensure financial services remain accessible in regional and underserved areas.
- The primary objective of the Local Government Bank foundational feasibility study is to explore options for providing financial services to underserved communities. This goal aligns with the Senate inquiry, which has recognised access to financial services as an essential service.
- During the initial feasibility study, challenges related to access to cash and derivatives were identified. Although potential solutions, such as those provided by Australia Post, were explored, it was determined that additional research and planning are required to address these issues thoroughly and independently.

Feasibility Study Findings and Preferred Model:

The study evaluated two primary ownership models:

1. Full Ownership via an ADI (Authorised Deposit-taking Institution) or RADI (Restricted ADI) Licence: This model was deemed economically unviable due to its high complexity and significant start-up costs, estimated at approximately AUD 50 million for licensing, in addition to operational and foundational expenses.
2. Partnership with a Licensed Institution (Preferred Model). Two sub-options within this model emerged as viable:
    a. Agency Arrangements with a Licensed Bank: This option proposes a subsidised framework to address urgent banking needs, providing essential banking services through an agency relationship with a licensed institution.
    b. Shared Banking Hub Model: This involves multiple stakeholders and offers scalability through collaborative agreements with financial institutions, facilitating broader access to banking services.

The preferred partnership model must encompass the following essential financial services:

- Personal Banking: Savings and transaction accounts, term deposits, loans, credit and debit cards.
- Business Banking: Business accounts, loans, merchant services, cash management.
- Other Services: ATMs, money transfers, and insurance products.

Banking Service Delivery Models Evaluated

Four service delivery models were assessed:

1. Physical Branches: This model was not deemed feasible due to the high costs and complexity associated with establishing and maintaining physical branches.
2. Banking Kiosks/Facilities within Local Government Infrastructure: Identified as the preferred model, this approach leverages existing local government infrastructure to provide banking services in a cost-effective manner.
3. Mobile Banking Units: This model was not viable for remote areas due to significant logistical challenges, despite favorable cost considerations.
4. Enhanced Digital Infrastructure: This model is considered viable as a medium-term solution, with potential partnerships, such as with Starlink, to improve digital banking access in underserved regions.

Recommended Approach

A phased hybrid model is recommended, prioritising the establishment of Banking Kiosks/Facilities within Local Government Infrastructure in partnership with a licensed institution. This approach offers a cost-effective alternative to traditional bank branches, utilising existing local government assets, technology, and personnel to deliver essential banking services.

Additionally, enhanced digital infrastructure should remain under consideration as a medium-term solution, with ongoing exploration of partnerships to expand digital banking capabilities.

Motion number 133 Paroo Shire Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to review the regulations governing day care centres in rural and remote locations with a specific focus on:

- relaxing the qualifications required for all staff; and
- streamlining necessary regulatory and compliance measures to ensure fit for purpose models for rural and remote communities.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Across Australia day care centres in rural and remote locations are struggling to remain financially viable due to the overload of regulatory and compliance measures required by other levels of government. One such example is the requirement for formal staff qualifications across all roles in day care centres - which are often difficult to meet.

Consequently, such requirements plus others (see below) are jeopardising the continued operations of these centres long term. This outcome is prejudicial to the development of rural and remote children, the wellbeing of their families and acts as a barrier to attracting and retaining young families and professionals in rural and remote communities.

KEY ARGUMENTS

It is difficult to attract specialist staff to rural and remote communities and particularly so for day care operations given the added regulations currently in existence.

There are a few key areas in particular where the regulations affect the operation of day care centres in rural and remote locations as follows:

1. Staffing
    a. Having to have 50% Diploma qualified staff on the floor at all times is difficult to achieve. Staff need to have lunch breaks, personal days and leave days.
    b. Having to have a fully qualified Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood) teacher on staff.
    c. Having to have all other staff Certificate III+ qualified.
2. Study Support for Staff
    a. Staff who are enrolled in training receive few visits from their RTO's.
    b. Assessments once completed are slow to be marked.
    c. Literacy skills of trainers are questionable.
    d. Available funding programs do not allow for the cost of providing professional development.
3. Complexity of regulations with regards to facilities
    a. There are multiple regulations and compliance measures that need to be adhered to, some of which are overlapping or conflicting with others. No clear solutions are readily available.
    b. The cost and timelines for meeting compliance requirements.
    c. Regulations change without notice.

When comparing day care staffing regulations to those applying to schools, inconsistencies are evident. Teacher aides are not required to have specific qualifications, however, these individuals are in equally important roles as assistants in day care centres, are paid more and have more holidays.

Councils and day care centre operators want to ensure they are providing quality education and care in their centres for all children. However, being able to meet all of the regulatory and compliance measures in rural and remote communities is virtually an impossible task whilst keeping the centres consistently open to meet community needs and expectations.

Motion number 134 Strathfield Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to develop a National Mental Health Support Strategy, with local government collaboration to improve accessibility to mental health services at the community level.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Mental health challenges affect Australians in every part of the country.

Addressing mental health requires a coordinated national response that ensures equitable access to support services for all.

Many communities face long wait times, workforce shortages, or complete lack of access to local mental health services.

Councils are often the first point of contact for vulnerable individuals and deliver or support programs that promote mental health, social inclusion, and community resilience. However, they are rarely formally included in mental health strategy planning or funding streams.

Poor mental health has far-reaching impacts on workforce participation, education, housing stability, and community safety.

Local governments are well-placed to support preventative, community-based mental health initiatives tailored to their populations.

Mental Health is a Shared Concern Across All Councils

This motion calls for councils to be meaningfully included in national mental health planning and funding-not just as observers, but as collaborators.

The Commonwealth is investing in mental health through national reforms-this is the time to advocate for integration of local government in those efforts.

A national strategy that includes local governments will be more responsive, comprehensive, and effective in addressing mental health challenges at all levels.

KEY ARGUMENTS

1. Mental Health is a National Crisis Impacting All Communities
2. Local Governments Are Key to Community Wellbeing
3. Current Mental Health Services Are Inaccessible for Many
4. Councils Are Often Left Out of Mental Health Planning
5. Stronger Outcomes Through Early Intervention and Local Response
6. Mental Health is Tied to National Productivity and Social Cohesion
7. Supports Whole-of-Government Collaboration

Motion number 135 Wyndham City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to implement the Recommendations of the Multicultural Framework Review.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The implementation of all the recommendations of the Multicultural Framework Review will help build a stronger, more inclusive and equitable community.

Australia is a diverse multicultural nation that has been accepting of new people and new ideas. However, the notion of multiculturalism is facing a significant challenge by some political groups and community organises including some local politicians, international events, social media and misinformation. Data has shown that both antisemitism and anti-Islamic attacks have increased significantly in the last couple of years, while groups that identify as Nazis have paraded through Australian streets.

As such, it is important that all levels of Government work together to build strong, resilient and inclusive communities.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The Australian Government released "Australia's multicultural framework - a roadmap" in July 2024. The roadmap reviewed the existing Multicultural Framework and examined the state of Australia's multicultural society, making 29 recommends including changes to laws, policies and institutional settings that build on the strengths of multiculturalism and enable it to respond to contemporary challenges.

The Review recommends a progressive vision for multicultural Australia, addressing discrimination, promoting equity, and ensuring social and economic inclusion for all, with a focus on strengthening institutions, representing diverse cultures, and ensuring universal access to public services

The review urged the Australian Government to prioritise implementation of these recommendations and to ensure shared ownership and commitment across government and that significant uplift of capability and commitment is needed to ensure consistent whole-of-government commitment and understanding of these issues.

The Australian Government publicly committed to the Framework's principles and acknowledged it would be guided by them. However, more needs to be done than just committing to the principles. The Government needs to take decisive action on each recommendation to address the challenges to a cohesive multicultural society.

Motion number 136 Logan City Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to fund a grant program to support local governments to establish multicultural centres in fast growing regions across Australia.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Many local government areas across Australia are undergoing rapid population growth, which is placing increased pressure on existing community facilities. Booking of spaces, whether that be community spaces or private spaces can be competitive and expensive. This can result in multicultural community groups facing barriers when looking to hold celebration events and establish support services for their communities. A multicultural centre can offer a flexible, affordable, and approachable space that caters for those who may face social, cultural, or linguistic barriers. These centres are nationally important and have the potential to contribute to social cohesion by providing a space for diverse communities to engage and embrace different cultures and backgrounds.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Population growth is placing additional pressures on existing local government infrastructure and council owned infrastructure and spaces. Often these spaces serve multiple purposes and user groups. A grant dedicated to supporting the establishment of multicultural centres across Australia will help to create a crucial touchpoint for civic engagement and support, and a place for the wider community to understand, engage and celebrate other cultures more generally. These centres often provide services that help migrants and multicultural communities undertake language classes or employment training to assist in creating greater integration in the community, and the opportunity to attend culturally specific events so that these community members can expand their social circles and enable cross cultural connection and networking. They are often established with multi-function/hall spaces, meeting rooms, classrooms, kitchen spaces, quiet spaces for religious practices or sensory needs, computer rooms for access to the internet, art and multipurpose spaces and outdoor undercover spaces for gatherings. All of this allows for adaptable and flexible venues that can support a diverse range of needs. The 2021 ABS census revealed that over 7 million people in Australia were born overseas, this represents 27.6% of the population. This segment of the community is growing from 6.1 million or 26.3% in 2016, a record high since federation. Top five countries of birth from 2016 to 2021 include India (47.9% increase), Nepal (123.7% increase), Philippines (26.5% increase), China (7.9%) and Vietnam (17.6%). A fund aimed at supporting local government to establish multicultural centres would contribute to the broader national goals of social cohesion, health and welling, community resilience and economic development.

Motion number 137 Forbes Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to urgently review and amend the National Health Act 1953 and the associated Pharmacy Location Rules. The proposed amendments should promote fair competition, support independent pharmacy ownership, and improve accessibility, particularly in rural and under-serviced areas.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The objective of this motion is to ensure equitable, competitive, and community-focused access to pharmaceutical services by reforming the legislative framework that governs the establishment and location of pharmacies. The aim is to address pharmacy monopolies and ensure more equitable access to pharmaceutical services across Australia. The current Pharmacy Location Rules, although originally designed to ensure fair distribution, have inadvertently facilitated monopolistic practices, particularly in urban and high-density areas. Large pharmacy chains are often able to exploit these rules due to their financial capacity, which restricts market entry for independent operators and reduces consumer choice. This motion seeks to rebalance the legislative environment to prevent undue concentration of ownership, foster diversity in pharmacy operations, and enhance accessibility for all Australians-especially those in rural, regional, and under-served areas.

KEY ARGUMENTS

1. Monopolistic Impact of Location Rules:

The Pharmacy Location Rules under the National Health Act 1953 were intended to ensure equitable access to pharmacy services and prevent over-saturation in certain areas. However, these rules have been criticised for inadvertently supporting monopolistic practices by enabling large pharmacy chains to dominate key markets, particularly in urban regions.

2. Disadvantage to Independent Pharmacies:

Current legislative criteria, including minimum distance requirements and restrictive zoning, often present high barriers to entry for independent pharmacies. Larger corporate chains can more easily navigate these constraints through strategic acquisitions and capital investments, thus consolidating control over pharmacy markets.

3. Reduced Consumer Choice and Competition:

Concentrated ownership in certain areas leads to reduced competition, limiting consumer options and potentially impacting service quality and pricing. A more diversified pharmacy sector would encourage innovation, personalised service, and better health outcomes for communities.

4. Equity in Rural and Underserved Areas:

While the rules aim to improve access in remote areas, they often fall short due to market limitations. Monopolies in urban centres may overshadow the need for targeted support in rural regions, where community-based pharmacies are crucial for healthcare access.

5. Legislative Reform Priorities:

Proposed reforms should:

a. Introduce stronger mechanisms to limit excessive accumulation of pharmacy ownership.
b. Provide incentives for independent pharmacists to establish practices in underserved areas.
c. Revise location rules to ensure they do not unintentionally favour large operators.
d. Incorporate equity and competition principles into pharmacy planning regulations.
e. Monitoring and Accountability: The Department of Health and Aged Care should implement a robust framework for ongoing monitoring of the effects of the Pharmacy Location Rules. This would include regular reviews to assess impacts on competition, ownership diversity, and community access to services.
f. Consumer Rights and Access: The ultimate aim is to uphold Australians' right to accessible, quality pharmacy services through a competitive, community-responsive sector.

Motion number 138 Mount Alexander Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to ensure rural communities have access to the medical care they need by maximising place-based allied health services in the regions.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The National Strategic Framework for Rural and Remote Health aims to: 'Improved access to appropriate and comprehensive health care'.

Place-based allied health services are vital to rural and remote communities in order for residents to reach optimum health outcomes.

The Federal Government must maximise place-based allied health services in the regions.

Source: https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/10/national-strategic-framework-for-rural-and-remote-health.pdf

KEY ARGUMENTS

The 'Improvement to Access, Quality and Distribution of Allied Health Services in Regional, Rural and Remote Australia notes that: 'Allied health professionals are essential to the physical, social and psychological wellbeing of people living in rural and remote Australia' and that there is 'both an undersupply and a maldistribution of allied health services in rural and remote towns...'

The report also notes that: 'rural and remote communities... capacity to achieve optimal health outcomes is limited by inequitable access to appropriate health services...'

This may include timely access to:

- Mental health and psychiatric services
- Medical specialists and general practitioners
- Supports associated with domestic violence
- Assessment and treatment associated with neurodivergence.

It may be cheaper to centralise our health services, but in rural and remote communities this can lead to diminished health outcomes for those without local services.

Our Federal Government must maximise place-based allied health services in the regions.

Source: https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2021/04/final-report-improvement-of-access-quality-and-distribution-of-allied-health-services-in-regional-rural-and-remote-australia.pdf

Motion number 139 Shire of Campaspe VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to promote how and where people can access sexual and reproductive healthcare across regional and rural Australia.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Nationally, community access to sexual and reproductive healthcare poses significant challenges, particularly in rural and regional areas, with factors like limited services, stigma, and lack of awareness, impacting the ability of individuals to access timely and appropriate care. This creates social, cultural, and economic stressors for rural and regional women across Australia. Barriers to universal access to services disproportionately impact women and contribute to health inequities across the life course.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Nationally, community access to sexual and reproductive healthcare poses significant challenges, particularly in rural and regional areas, with factors like limited services, stigma, and lack of awareness, impacting the ability of individuals to access timely and appropriate care. This creates social, cultural, and economic stressors for rural and regional women across Australia. Barriers to universal access to services disproportionately impact women and contribute to health inequities across the life course.

Essential sexual and reproductive health services include family planning, maternity care, infertility treatment, abortion-related care, and the prevention, detection, and treatment of sexually transmitted infections. The implications of sexual and reproductive ill-health extend beyond the disease burden, affecting the social and economic well-being of individuals, families, and communities.

The Australian Government needs to promote how and where individuals can ensure there is access to affordable services, as associated costs, i.e. travel expenses, are often prohibitive. Adequate access benefits individual health and positively impacts population health while poor access contributes to health inequities and increases the disease burden.

Access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services is crucial for improving maternal health, reducing child mortality, and preventing communicable diseases. Despite Australia's reputation for advanced healthcare infrastructure, complex barriers and inequities persist in accessing these services in rural, regional, and remote areas of Australia.

CLOSING THE GAP AND ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER RECONCILIATION

Motion number 140 Blayney Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to review and update the process for assessing and considering applications under section 10 of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984, including;

- How to consult with all Aboriginal groups and gain a full and balanced understanding of the cultural significance of the application area,
- How to take into consideration the beliefs of all sections of the aboriginal community when making a determination,
- Determination of the ramifications of a reduction in job opportunities for Aboriginal people if a project falls under a section 10 declaration,
- Involving and consulting with local government for the section 10 process,
- How to examine what impacts a determination will have on local government in the declared area and their community assets before a determination is made,
- Review of the financial ramifications on local government if a determination is made,
- Providing a compensation fund for impacted communities and local governments if a declaration is made,
- Development of a method to take the National interest into account before a section 10 is declared.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984 is now 40 years old and needs to be reviewed and updated for the benefit and betterment of all Australians and stakeholders.

KEY ARGUMENTS

On 13 August 2024, the Minister for the Environment and Water, Hon Tayna Plibersek made a declaration (Declaration) under s10 of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage

Protection Act 1984 (ATSIHP Act) which directly impacted lands within the Blayney Shire Council LGA.

The Declaration protects and preserves a significant Aboriginal area located at Kings Plains (near Blayney, NSW) from injury or desecration (Protected Area) and was specifically in relation to the proposed McPhillamys Gold Project.

The process to consider and assess this section 10 application, was lengthy (in excess of 4 years), was not considered open and transparent, and did not include involvement of all stakeholders. An example of this is Blayney Shire Council not being sufficiently engaged on an ongoing basis even though it is the roads authority for Dungeon Road, which is a formed Council Road which is now directly impacted by the Declaration.

The process in relation to assessing and considering under s10 of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984 (ATSIHP Act) requires review and updating.

The provision of compensation also needs to be considered where communities and local governments are impacted by such a declaration.

Motion number 141 City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder WA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to lead culturally appropriate consultation and develop a nation-wide plan with First Nations people to address their requirements for fit-for-purpose temporary accommodation models and wrap-around support.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

In 2021, the Australian Local Government Association co-signed a landmark national agreement to close the gap, setting targets in education, employment, health, justice, safety, housing, land and waters, and Indigenous language preservation. The agreement includes a target to increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in appropriately sized (not overcrowded) housing to 88%.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The 2021 Census showed there were 122,000 people in Australia experiencing homelessness on Census night - 48 people per 10,000. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were disproportionately homeless - 307 out of 10,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were experiencing homelessness.

However, neither the Closing the Gap agreement, the Closing the Gap 2024 Annual Report and Commonwealth 2025 Implementation Plan, nor the 2024 National Housing and Homeless Plan Summary Report include any consideration for addressing transitional homelessness - only overcrowding issues.

Traditionally, transitional homelessness is not recognised in data or policy. However, it is a significant contributor to the numbers of street present people, posing challenges to their well-being, and potentially causing associated high-risk behaviours.

Historically, many regional centres and cities have been meeting places for different Aboriginal communities with these areas offering a place where individuals can meet to conduct cultural business, socialise with family and friends, shop, and attend medical and other appointments.

Significant numbers of visitors from remote communities visit regional centres and cities especially during the summer period with many local governments and their stakeholders ill-equipped to support their needs ranging from temporary safe accommodation to food provision. Many local governments are part of, or facilitate collaboration with service providers during the summer months who are either not funded to provide additional services or not resourced to do so.

While some visitors stay with family and friends, in many cases in overcrowded conditions, others sleep rough on the local streets, or camp in bush or neighbourhood areas and are unintentionally street present. Many visitors also have a lack of experience living in larger towns and place themselves in dangerous conditions.

The City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder is working on a collaborative, landmark national study on Anti-social Behaviour and Transitional Aboriginal Homelessness. This research project is engaging with local and state government agencies and key providers in over eight locations in Western Australia, the Northern Territory, and South Australia, to assess existing strategies, pinpoint gaps, and explore potential solutions that enhance local government efforts in this regard.

A nation-wide response, with input from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders, is needed to provide a framework to support the efforts of local governments and their stakeholders. This would inform and support a partnership between all tiers of government, leading to increased outcomes for reducing First Nations homelessness and associated high-risk behaviour.

Motion number 142 Roper Gulf Regional Council NT

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to consider Local Government Councils as Aboriginal Controlled Organisations in its Indigenous Procurement Policy, if individual Councils have >51% of their Elected Members comprising of Aboriginal People.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Closing the Gap, and financial sustainability of Councils is a common interest across the Sector, and Government as a whole.

By excluding Local Government bodies from being considered 'Aboriginal Controlled' despite the Councils themselves having >51% Aboriginal Representation, the viability of both the Councils, and service-delivery in regional and remote Aboriginal communities is compromised to the detriment of vulnerable Aboriginal people, the Councils, the Sector, and the stated goal of 'Closing the Gap'.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Local Government in regional and remote areas have a significant number of Indigenous representation on their Councils, as the elected members themselves are representatives from the local communities themselves, with high percentages of Aboriginal constituents. It is a concern across the local government sector, that Government (Commonwealth, State, and Territory) Procurement Policy explicitly excludes Local Government bodies from being considered Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations for the purposes of service delivery contracts. In many cases, including Roper Gulf Regional Council, regional councils have well above 51% representation on their 'boards' (Council), in some cases as high as

100%. By excluding local government by way of this policy, it is local residents that suffer from a lack of service delivery as many local, small Aboriginal Corporations struggle with capacity issues, especially in their governance, assets, and workforce.

Motion number 143 Newcastle City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Establish a dedicated funding stream for local government to implement community-led strategies and projects directly addressing Closing the Gap priority areas as outlined in the National Agreement. This funding must support place-based, culturally appropriate programs that improve outcomes in priority areas such as early childhood, housing, employment, and community safety.
2. Invest in resolving prolonged Aboriginal Land Claims to reduce distress among First Nations communities, unlock economic opportunities, and ensure timely determinations that uphold the principles of self-determination and land justice.
3. Strengthen accountability mechanisms by introducing an independent oversight process to monitor all levels of government on their progress towards Closing the Gap targets.
4. Commit to genuine partnerships with First Nations organisations and local governments to ensure that funding and policy decisions are aligned with the needs of communities, particularly in areas where community-controlled service delivery has proven successful.
5. Ensure transparency in data collection and reporting to track progress on Closing the Gap initiatives, particularly in critical areas such as Indigenous incarceration, child protection, and suicide prevention, where current approaches are failing.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Closing the Gap and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reconciliation

KEY ARGUMENTS

- While progress is being made in some areas, Governments are failing to meet critical Closing the Gap targets, particularly in areas such as digital
- nous incarceration, suicide prevention, and child protection. Local governments are uniquely positioned to drive change at the community level but lack direct, sustainable funding to do so.
- An ALGA-endorsed funding stream would enable local governments to deliver place-based, culturally appropriate programs that align with the National Agreement and respond to community needs.
- The prolonged backlog of Aboriginal Land Claims continues to cause distress to First Nations communities and hinder economic development. A federal commitment to clearing outstanding claims would restore trust and unlock opportunities for sustainable land use.
- Successful Closing the Gap initiatives rely on community-controlled service delivery. Local government engagement, alongside First Nations organisations, is essential for achieving sustained progress.
- Accountability and transparency mechanisms must be strengthened to ensure all levels of government uphold their Closing the Gap commitments.

Motion number 143.1 Strathfield Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to advocate for dedicated federal funding to support local government initiatives that contribute to the Closing the Gap targets and promote reconciliation efforts.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The National Agreement on Closing the Gap is a shared commitment between all levels of government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives.

Local Government is a Critical Delivery Partner.

While policy may be set nationally, genuine reconciliation is built locally-through community relationships, events, public spaces, and practical initiatives.

Councils play a vital role in promoting respect, understanding, and opportunities for First Nations peoples.

Many councils want to do more to support reconciliation and Closing the Gap objectives, but are constrained by lack of funding, especially in regional and rural areas.

Improved outcomes in areas like health, education, employment, housing, and justice require coordinated national, state, and local action.

Investment at the local level is essential to achieving sustained, measurable progress.

This presents a Sector-Wide Opportunity for Positive Change and strengthens the role of Local Government in equity and inclusion.

KEY ARGUMENTS

1. Local Government is Essential to Achieving Closing the Gap Targets
2. Reconciliation Begins at the Local Level
3. Lack of Dedicated Funding Limits Local Impact
4. Supports National Priorities and Partnerships5. Promotes Equity and Inclusion Across All Communities
5. Empowers Councils to Move from Intention to Action

Motion number 143.2 Narrabri Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to further support local government in the delivery of local youth-allied programs designed in partnership with Community that assist in Closing the Gap.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion aligns to ALGA Priority 8 and is consistent with the Australian Government Indigenous Advancement Strategy.

KEY ARGUMENTS

In 2008, the Council of Australian Governments set targets in health, education and employment to measure improvements in the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people. The Closing the Gap agenda was subsequently developed in response to concerns raised with governments by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

Being the government closest to the people, local government plays a pivotal role in achieving Closing the Gap outcomes. Increased levels of support are therefore needed to deliver local, culturally appropriate youth-allied programs that are tailored to the individual needs of Community.

Motion number 144 South Burnett Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to amend the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 (CATSI Act) so that Indigenous corporations are regulated by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) the same as non-Indigenous corporations.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Reduction of red tape and consistency in law; Avoidance of duplication

KEY ARGUMENTS

The Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 (CATSI Act) is the law that establishes the role of the Registrar of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporations and provides for a special form of incorporation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations play a critical role in delivering services and supporting economic development in Indigenous communities, particularly in regional and remote Australia. It is important that these corporations have the right regulatory framework and support.

Motion number 145 Torres Shire Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to work in partnership with First Nations councils and communities to increase long-term investment in transport infrastructure, prioritising all-weather road connectivity, to improve year-round access and resilience in remote First Nations communities. The Assembly urges a comprehensive review and expansion of Federal funding provided for sea and air transport subsidies also, particularly in remote areas where communities face disproportionate freight costs and chronic social equity issues.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion is consistent with ALGA's Closing the Gap and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reconciliation objectives, and supports priorities identified in ALGA annual Closing the Gap Reports. Transport and access concerns are shared by many First Nations and remote communities throughout Australia, as evidenced by past motions brought to ALGA NGAs.

KEY ARGUMENTS

It is vital that the Australian Government works in genuine and sustained consultation with First Nations councils and communities to review existing transport funding arrangements and increase long-term Federal Government investment across all modes of transport infrastructure-road, sea, and air. Many First Nations communities, particularly in remote and

regional areas, face significant challenges due to unreliable or inadequate transport networks, which can severely impact their resilience during natural disasters, limit economic participation, contribute to poor road safety outcomes and restrict access to essential goods and services such as food, health care, and education.

By involving First Nations councils directly in the decision-making process, the Government can ensure that transport solutions are locally informed, culturally appropriate, and tailored to meet the unique needs of each community.

It is essential that the Federal Government work with state and territory governments to support this - ensuring passenger and freight services are appropriately subsidised to improve year-round access, reduce isolation, and strengthen community resilience.

Reliable transport infrastructure and adequate funding underpins social and economic equity, supports regional supply chains, and enables stronger community wellbeing. Improved transport access also enhances the capacity of communities to manage emergencies, adapt to climate change, and seize development opportunities on their own terms.

Without funding to support improved transport, First Nations councils and communities will continue to face isolation, particularly during extreme weather events and natural disasters - which has cut off access to food, medical care, and other essential services in many communities for extended periods. This puts lives at risk and exacerbates existing health and social inequities. In addition, without action on this motion, economic opportunities will continue to remain limited, as poor transport links restrict local businesses, reduce access to markets and jobs, and deter investment in regional and areas.

Without action, the gap in living standards, economic participation, and service access between First Nations and non-Indigenous Australians will widen further.

DATA, DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AND CYBER SECURITY

Motion number 146 City of Prospect SA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Develop a policy framework for the use of Artificial Intelligence tools (including but not limited to Large Language Model Artificial Intelligence Tools and Utilities) by member councils.
2. Ensure that such a policy framework include guidance on disclosure requirements for reports and documents produced by councils using Artificial Intelligence tools.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

ALGA Strategic Objectives: "... demonstrate leadership in national policy and advocacy"

National Priorities Need Local Solutions theme: Data, digital technology and cyber security

KEY ARGUMENTS

1. The growth of Artificial Intelligence (AI) related tools is a global issue of immense importance. It is a rapidly evolving area of interest for all businesses, regardless of sector, location, or scale.
2. The issues the use of AI presents to the local government sector are relatively consistent - especially in Australia.
3. A uniform policy establishing clear guidelines and policies to ensure the ethical, efficient, and beneficial use of AI tools would help in maintaining consistency, transparency, and trust among the community, while also maximising the potential benefits of the technology.
4. A similar Motion to the one proposed above was presented to the AGM of the SA Local Government Association held on 22 November 2024, and carried, as follows:

Consistent Policy Position on use of AI in Local Government - (City of Prospect)

MOVED City of Prospect

SECONDED City of Campbelltown

That the Annual General Meeting recommend that Member Councils Support:

1. The development by LGA of a policy framework for the use of Artificial Intelligence tools (including but not limiting to Large Language Model Artificial Intelligence Tools and Utilities) by member councils.
2. That such a policy framework includes guidance on disclosure requirements for reports and documents produced by councils using Artificial Intelligence tools.

Carried

Motion number 146.1 Narrabri Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to regulate Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies in so far as it relates to the risk of proliferation of misinformation and disinformation.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion aligns to ALGA Priority 9 and the 2023-2030 Australian Cyber Security Strategy.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The rapid unregulated evolution of AI has created a situation whereby the users of AI can utilise the technology to create content including images, video and audio that is almost indistinguishable from real communications and content. This may include AI-generated depictions of real people both living and deceased. In the not-too-distant future, it is considered almost certain that AI technology will develop to the point where such content is indistinguishable from reality, and when that occurs it follows that such technology may be produced and used in a harmful way, either intentionally or unintentionally. By way of an example, it could also be utilised to maliciously influence political and policy decisions at all levels of government by creating false landscapes and associated narratives. In addition to presenting a range of cybersecurity risks it may also unreasonably influence community engagement processes and decision-making typically undertaken by local government leading to both uncertainty and inequities. Australia has not yet enacted any specific statutes or regulations that directly regulate AI. To date, Australia's response has been only voluntary. Urgent controls are therefore needed.

Motion number 147 Frankston City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

- to provide more clarity and direction on the use of blockchain as an efficiency tool for local government. This is to include ethical and grant-acquittal suitability insofar local governments utilising blockchain technologies.
- provide more clarity and direction on the overall crypto market in Australia.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The adoption of blockchain and cryptocurrencies can potentially enhance operational efficiencies within local governments while ensuring ethical and transparent practices. Clear guidelines from the Australian Government will foster a better understanding and implementation of these technologies, thereby supporting innovation and improving public services.

By looking at international precedents, such as New York City's initiatives, we can better assess the viability and implications of these approaches in the Australian context.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Blockchain and cryptocurrency are important issues for Australia to introduce in local government as it can significantly affect Australia's economy. It offers opportunities for new business models, financial services, and technological innovation, which can create jobs and stimulate growth.

As cryptocurrencies gain popularity, there is a pressing need for a regulatory framework to protect consumers and investors, prevent fraud, and ensure market stability. Debating this topic can help shape effective policies.

Blockchain presents various legal and ethical challenges, including questions about ownership, intellectual property, and smart contracts. These issues need exploration to ensure ethical standards are maintained. Engaging in a debate about these issues helps stakeholders identify opportunities, mitigate risks, and create a balanced approach to embracing blockchain and cryptocurrency in Australia.

Local governments could leverage blockchain and cryptocurrency technologies to enhance operational efficiency, transparency, governance, and stakeholder engagement. Examples are:

- securely record land ownership and transactions, reducing fraud and improving transparency.
- can improve the transparency and accountability of grant distribution to ensure funds are used appropriately. Smart contracts can automate fund release upon meeting specified criteria.
- track the procurement of goods and services, ensuring compliance with regulations, preventing fraud, and improving supplier accountability.
- enable more transparent and verifiable engagement processes where residents can provide feedback on local projects or vote on community initiatives, ensuring their voices are heard.
- all actions are recorded and traceable, making it easier to hold government officials accountable for their decisions and actions.

- Each of these enhancements can contribute to a more efficient, transparent, and inclusive local government framework in Australia.

Motion number 148 Frankston City Council VIC

The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to ensure that social media providers implement the necessary requirements to comply with the *Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Bill 2024*, within the designated 12-month timeframe. The Federal Government should fund organisations, such as SmackTalk to deliver key educational initiatives, including the provision of free awareness sessions to schools, businesses, and community groups, addressing the risks of social media.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Social media use among young Australians is of significant concern, particularly regarding its effects on mental health, cyberbullying, and online exploitation.

In 2023, more than 3,200 Australians died by suicide, including 801 in Victoria. This is more than the 299 people who died in road accidents in the state that year.

The Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Bill 2024, means young people under 16 won't be able to sign up for social media. The responsibility to enforce this falls on the platforms

This issue is an important as a topic for public debate to assess the effectiveness of current age restrictions, explore the best enforcement strategies, and determine how to better support young people in safely navigating the online space.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Frankston City Council's 2025 Citizen of the Year, Wayne Holdsworth, played a critical role in advocating for the Federal Government Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Bill 2024. Through his advocacy, he was instrumental in influencing the decision to introduce this Bill, recognising the urgent need to address the negative impacts of social media on young users.

It is essential the Federal Government ensures social media providers implement the necessary requirements to comply with the Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Bill 2024, within the designated 12-month timeframe.

Additionally, Mr Holdsworth is the founder of SmackTalk, a mental health awareness initiative established in memory of his son, Mac, who took his own life at the age of 17. In this role, Mr. Holdsworth builds awareness about the risks associated with social media access and its impact on mental health.

Frankston Council would like to see the Federal Government fund organisations, such as SmackTalk to deliver key educational initiatives, including the provision of free awareness sessions to schools, businesses, and community groups, addressing the risks of social media.

Motion number 149 Strathfield Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to develop a national framework to guide and support councils in adopting digital transformation strategies for improved service delivery and governance.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The Australian Government is committed to improving digital service delivery across all tiers of government through strategies such as the Digital Government Strategy and Australia's Data and Digital Government Strategy.

A national framework for councils aligns with this vision by promoting consistent, secure, and citizen-focused digital services at the local level.

Digital transformation improves operational efficiency, customer experience, and accessibility of council services, supporting national goals for better public sector performance and innovation.

A digitally capable local government sector supports small business, enables smart infrastructure, and improves local economic planning, contributing to national productivity and digital inclusion.

Strong digital governance practices, such as open data, online engagement, and automated workflows, support good decision-making and increase public trust in government at all levels.

A national framework can help ensure that councils in regional and rural areas are not left behind in the digital shift, supporting equitable access to government services nationwide.

Councils are at different stages of digital maturity. A national framework would provide consistent guidance and standards to help them progress in alignment with state and federal efforts.

Local governments often face barriers to digital transformation, including funding, skills shortages, legacy systems, and cyber risks.

The motion positions local government as a partner in achieving national digital goals.

KEY ARGUMENTS

1. Supports the Australian Government's agenda for digitally enabled public services across all levels of government.
2. Digital transformation enhances the efficiency, accessibility, and responsiveness of council services, benefiting all Australians.
3. A national framework would provide shared guidance, tools, and best practices to help councils of all sizes progress their digital transformation in a coordinated way.
4. Ensures that councils in less resourced are not left behind in the digital shift, helping to bridge the digital divide across communities.
5. Digitally capable councils can better support local businesses, deliver smart infrastructure, and drive innovation in local economies.
6. Digital systems improve decision-making, support open government, and foster stronger engagement between councils and their communities.
7. Coordinated action across local, state, and federal levels will lead to more integrated, secure, and future-ready public service delivery.

Motion number 150 Logan City Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to invest in the dark fibre network in metropolitan and regional areas with a focus on local government key major activity centres and economic hubs.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Investment in the dark fibre network will significantly expand digital infrastructure capacity across Australia's suburbs and regions. Dark fibre can create high-speed networks that connect multiple locations for fast communication and data transfer. Access to this network would provide economic hubs, key activity centres and the community with a reliable, high capacity and cost-effective digital infrastructure network and allow large scale computing services to be shared. This objective aims to significantly expand digital infrastructure capacity to Australia's suburbs and regions.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Investment in the rollout of dark fibre creates more reliable and higher capacity data sharing, especially for businesses and organisations that need to connect with significant digital infrastructure, including data centres. It supports greater economic development outcomes as businesses are able to disperse to locations with cheaper rental and operational costs, supporting startups, business growth and innovation. Much of the dark fibre rollout is private investment, which impacts overall affordability of services. Direct government investment in digital infrastructure such as dark fibre creates opportunity for a more diverse and resilient digital communication network that can be leveraged for public benefit. Governments can utilise this network for public services including civic services and operation, education, healthcare and data storage. It establishes an investment attraction lever that incentivises businesses or industry to establish in key towns, suburbs or cities, creating a more dispersed and diverse range of industries across Australia. Government ownership of this infrastructure can also reduce long-term costs associated with leasing bandwidth from third-party providers, allowing greater control over network

management and scalability. These benefits will help metropolitan and regional local government across Australia create a more connected, efficient and economically strong community.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

Motion number 151 Maribyrnong City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Establish programs to assist communities in transitioning to electrified homes, prioritizing vulnerable and low-income households;
2. Create a program that prioritises raising the energy efficiency of the lowest efficiency homes particularly to support vulnerable households with cost-of-living and providing a safe, comfortable living environment;
3. Provide financial incentives, grants, and subsidies for the adoption of energy-efficient electric appliances and systems;

4. Offer educational resources and workshops to inform residents about the benefits of electrification and how to achieve it;
5. Work collaboratively with state governments, industry stakeholders, and community organizations to secure funding, resources, and technical expertise for the transition;
6. Advocate for policies and regulations that support the adoption of renewable energy and electrification at all levels of government;
7. Establish a framework for regular monitoring and reporting on the progress of the transition to renewable electricity and community electrification; and
8. Ensure transparency and accountability by publishing annual progress reports and engaging with the community through public consultations and feedback sessions.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion signifies a strong commitment to environmental sustainability and community well-being. By transitioning to 100% renewable electricity and supporting the electrification of homes, local governments can lead by example and create a cleaner, safer and more affordable future for all.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Given the urgency to mitigate climate change, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and protect the health and well-being of our communities, it is imperative that local governments take the lead in transitioning from natural gas to renewable electricity.

This transition will not only contribute to our environmental goals but also support communities in electrifying their homes, thereby fostering a sustainable future.

Motion number 152 Newcastle City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Maintain its support for the development of offshore wind projects as part of Australia's transition to a low-carbon economy.
2. Recognise the potential of offshore wind energy to contribute significantly to national energy security, with projects such as Novocastrian Wind demonstrating the capacity to generate over two gigawatts of electricity-equivalent to powering 1.2 million homes.
3. Support the development of domestic offshore wind manufacturing hubs at key ports, such as the Port of Newcastle, to drive economic growth, create long-term employment opportunities, and ensure Australia maximises local content in the renewable energy supply chain.
4. Work with state and territory and local governments to invest in infrastructure upgrades that facilitate the transport and deployment of renewable energy components, ensuring efficient supply chains for Renewable Energy Zone projects nationwide.
5. Develop a national Renewable Energy Workforce Strategy to support skills training and job creation in offshore wind and related industries, ensuring a just transition for workers in traditional energy sectors.
6. Reaffirm its commitment to renewable energy as the foundation of Australia's future energy mix and continue to prohibit the establishment of nuclear energy generation, recognising its high costs, risks, and long lead times compared to renewables.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Support for offshore wind, renewable energy and a just transition.

KEY ARGUMENTS

- Offshore wind is a critical component of Australia's renewable energy future, with significant generation capacity and reliability.
- Investment in offshore wind infrastructure and workforce development will support regional economies and create thousands of secure jobs.
- National coordination is required to ensure infrastructure readiness and supply chain efficiency for offshore wind projects.
- Supports the implementation of a national coordinated strategy to enable workers in traditional energy sectors to transition into secure, high-skilled roles in renewables.
- Maintaining a focus on renewables over nuclear power aligns with Australia's commitment to cost-effective, safe, and sustainable energy solutions.

Motion number 153 Newcastle City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Establish and fund a national network of Local Energy Hubs, providing funding to support regional communities in navigating the clean energy transition.
2. Ensure Local Energy Hubs are independent, regionally based service centres, staffed by trusted local experts, to provide clear and accessible information on renewable energy projects, household energy efficiency, and community-led energy initiatives.
3. Develop Energy Hubs Australia as a national coordinating body to support knowledge sharing, collaboration, and technical assistance for Local Energy Hubs, similar to existing models such as Landcare and Regional Development Australia.
4. Recognise Local Energy Hubs as a key mechanism to strengthen social licence for renewable energy infrastructure, facilitating community engagement in transmission, solar, wind, and storage projects, and countering misinformation about the energy transition.
5. Support Local Energy Hubs in delivering targeted programs that:
    a. Help farmers and regional businesses develop decarbonisation plans and reduce energy costs.
    b. Promote household electrification and energy efficiency upgrades, increasing uptake of existing government incentives.
    c. Facilitate community-led energy projects, such as shared solar and battery storage initiatives.
    d. Provide First Nations communities with tailored support for off-grid renewable solutions and negotiations with energy companies.
    e. Integrate Local Energy Hubs with the work of the Net Zero Authority to ensure alignment with national decarbonisation strategies and community engagement initiatives.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Climate Change and Renewable Energy.

KEY ARGUMENTS

- Addressing Social Licence Barriers: Regional opposition to renewable energy projects has slowed the rollout of essential infrastructure. Local Energy Hubs will build trust and community engagement, preventing costly project delays.

- Economic and Employment Benefits: These hubs will create regional jobs, support clean energy workforce development, and ensure local communities benefit from the energy transition.
- Cost Savings for Government and Households: By improving engagement, reducing misinformation, and expediting infrastructure rollout, Local Energy Hubs will help achieve the Federal Government's 82% Renewable Energy Target by 2030, potentially saving $31 billion while lowering consumer power prices.
- National Coordination with Local Flexibility: A federal framework will ensure consistent community benefits, while local hubs will adapt to regional needs.
- Stronger Support for Renewable Energy and Transmission: These hubs will help communities understand the economic, environmental, and energy security benefits of the transition, ensuring Australia meets its net-zero commitments.

Motion number 154 Newcastle City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to lead the delivery of place-based, whole-of-government policy and planning to support mining-affected regions in transitioning to net zero economies. This should include:

1. A clear vision and strategic plan for each mining-affected region's economic evolution, ensuring long-term prosperity and job creation.
2. A national coordinating entity with the authority to direct cross-government and agency efforts, reducing duplication and improving policy alignment.
3. Adequate funding and resources to support:
    a. Communities adversely impacted by the transition to a net zero economy through workforce retraining and economic diversification.
    b. The use of city and regional deals as mechanisms to attract investment and coordinate sustainable development.
4. Support for and investment in circular economy solutions, driving innovation, resource efficiency, and sustainable industry development.
5. Clear and certain planning pathways for the adaptive reuse of mining and industrial lands to create new, high-value jobs in renewable energy, technology, and advanced manufacturing.
6. A formal commitment to local government representation in decision-making processes affecting local and regional communities, ensuring transparency and community engagement.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Climate change and renewable energy

KEY ARGUMENTS

- A whole-of-government approach is essential to provide certainty, attract investment, and drive regional economic evolution in line with global climate commitments.
- A national coordinating entity will streamline efforts, ensuring cross-government cooperation and efficient resource allocation, avoiding fragmentation and delays.
- Adequate funding is crucial to support affected communities, deliver workforce retraining, and implement regional economic transformation strategies.
- Circular economy solutions will unlock new economic opportunities by promoting resource efficiency, waste reduction, and sustainable industry innovation.

- Clear adaptive reuse pathways for mining and industrial lands will facilitate redevelopment, attract investment, and create long-term employment opportunities in growing industries.
- Local government involvement is key to ensuring decisions are place-based, responsive to local needs, and generate strong community support.

Motion number 155 City of Perth WA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to implement a national program to support renewable energy and energy efficiency in existing buildings to reduce carbon emissions, and lower living costs for vulnerable communities.

The program may include:

1. Coordinated efforts across the Australian Government, State, and local governments to scale retrofitting, especially for apartment buildings.
2. Funding programs, tax incentives, and grants to support retrofitting, and renewable energy interventions.
3. Policies and funding measures to promote retrofitting and renewable energy projects in the existing apartments through local government support.

The Assembly further calls for prioritising this climate and socio-economic opportunity to deliver comprehensive community benefits across the country.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

In November 2019 the Council of Australia Governments Energy Council (COAG EC) agreed to the Addendum to the Trajectory for Low Energy Buildings - Existing Buildings, stage 2 of the Trajectory for Low Energy Buildings national plan, working towards zero energy (and carbon) ready buildings for Australia.

The COAG EC identified that coordinated action on energy efficiency is needed because by 2050 an estimated 7 million existing homes and a third of commercial buildings will not have been built with energy efficiency measures under the National Construction Code (NCC). Older, existing buildings are energy-inefficient contributing to high energy consumption, increased carbon emissions and increased living costs for occupants.

Australian local governments, including the City of Perth, have demonstrated leadership in climate action through initiatives that promote renewable energy, sustainable urban planning, and emissions reductions. However, addressing the challenge of reducing emissions from the existing built environment requires greater Australian Government support to scale-up these efforts.

The ALGA NGA provides a forum where local government can make their case for the Australian Government to deliver a national program supporting energy efficiency and renewable energy in existing buildings, supported by recommendations for program measures and examples drawn from the United Kingdom's experience.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Supporting the existing built environment presents immediate opportunities to lower the costs of living for Australians, especially for those in energy-poor households, reduce emissions, create green jobs, stimulate local economies, and improve the quality of life for vulnerable populations and small local businesses.

Recent measures, such as the Home Energy Ratings Disclosure Framework (Version 2, December 2024) include an assessment tool for thermal performance, energy ratings, and upgrade guidance, aims to drive improvements in energy efficiency through market mechanisms via disclosure requirements at point of sale or lease.

The NCC 2022 introduced some improvements in energy and thermal efficiency standards, including provisions for EV charging capacity, although Western Australia remains one of the few states yet to adopt these measures. The draft NCC 2025 mainly focuses on new buildings and major renovations while the majority of existing building stock remains overlooked.

National funding initiatives, such as those provided to the Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC) for discounted green loans, have supported new construction and renovations but fall short of promoting a holistic approach to sustainability that includes local socio-economic benefits and reduced living costs.

Achieving emissions reduction targets at the necessary scale will depend on targeted policies, funding programs, and national incentives to retrofit existing residential and commercial buildings. Australia can adopt similar approaches as recommended by the United Kingdom Centre for Cities in 2021 through:

- Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery scheme to fund the installation of low-carbon heating systems and energy-efficient measures by leveraging building regulations, providing grants or subsidies.
- Green Homes Grant Scheme offering grants or subsidies for energy-efficient retrofits, lowering energy costs while stimulating the green economy and creating local jobs in energy efficiency, construction, and manufacturing.
- Reforming residential property taxes based on a building's energy performance or introducing tax credits as incentives for investment in energy-efficient retrofits.
- Introducing stronger regulations for new developments and building codes that ensure higher energy performance.

By advocating for a national retrofit program, the City of Perth's motion at ALGA highlights:

- The need for coordinated Australian and local government efforts to retrofit existing buildings to meet energy efficiency standards, thereby reducing household energy costs.
- The introduction of funding programs and policy incentives, including tax reforms and grants, to incentivise energy-efficient retrofits in both residential and commercial properties.
- A long-term, clear strategy for improving the energy performance of buildings, reducing the reliance on energy-intensive systems and providing socio-economic benefits, such as job creation, reduced energy poverty and improving living standards for communities.

Local governments are uniquely positioned to engage with communities and drive the implementation of a national program and initiatives at the grassroots level. Meaningful systemic change requires a coordinated effort between local governments and the Australian Government to deliver a national program that will provide environmental, social and economic benefits for all Australians whilst aligning with the need for a just and equitable transition to a low-carbon economy.

Motion number 155.1 Brimbank City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to fund a national pilot program for energy upgrades to vulnerable and low-income households.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

To create a robust, equitable and sustainable framework for upgrading existing homes to zero-carbon, energy efficient homes are needed to address significant emissions from the housing sector and the cost-of-living crisis. This will require a multi-level governance approach, strategic investments, and targeted policies to ensure the most vulnerable communities, including low-income households, benefit from necessary home upgrades, enabling nationwide transformation in building performance.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The housing sector is a major contributor to national emissions, with 11 million existing homes responsible for over 10% of emissions. An estimated 8 million homes, including 1.8 million low-income households need various upgrades in the next 10-15 years to become zero carbon, energy efficient homes.

With the cost of these upgrades estimated at $200 billion, many households, particularly those with low incomes, cannot afford the necessary improvements, thereby exacerbating the cost-of-living crisis.

Despite current government programs, funding is not reaching those who need it most. Market failures such as high upfront costs, lack of trusted suppliers, and challenges in engaging hard to reach communities are preventing progress. Without targeted intervention, vulnerable households will continue to struggle with high energy bills and inefficient homes.

A multi-level governance approach is needed to coordinate efforts across government levels, address key barriers, and unlock private sector investment. Establishing a sustainable funding model and a clear regulatory framework will ensure consistency across jurisdictions and create the conditions for national expansion, delivering long-term emissions reductions and household cost savings.

Motion number 156 Maitland City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to directly support the acceleration of local government actions that address imminent and substantial job losses arising from large scale industry closures in regional economies rapidly transforming to net zero by:

1. Clearly identifying and establishing a single Federal Government Minister and Agency with responsibility for delivering funding and coordinating the provision of broader agency resources directly to Council led initiatives.
2. Directly investing in Council led, place-based initiatives that Pilot reactivation and repurposing of current and former mining lands and infrastructure to create urgently needed new employment lands.
3. De-risk industry investment and strategically inform and accelerate industry attraction, skills development and job creation.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Consistent with global trends and international agreements, ambitious net zero targets to be achieved by 2050 have been established by federal, state and local jurisdictions right across Australia.

Regional areas have historically, through their traditional coal and energy-based industries, been the literal powerhouse of the nation. This will continue to be the case as regional economies transform to support and deliver the renewable energy production and new industries needed to move the nation to net zero by 2050.

In many regional areas however, this economic transformation is occurring at a pace faster than anticipated. This will result in imminent and substantial job losses arising from large scale industrial closures before alternative industries and employment opportunities have become established.

Ensuring a just transition in regional areas that supports continued employment opportunities and social cohesion as local and regional economies rapidly transform is critical to the effective delivery of national net zero targets and objectives.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Whole of government, place-based planning, coordination and investment to drive the economic evolution of regions across Australia will be critical to achieving ambitious 2050 net zero targets that have been established by the federal government and state and local government jurisdictions across Australia.

The Federal Government has established the Net Zero Economy Authority to help Australia transition to a net zero emissions economy by supporting workers and communities, facilitating investment and coordinating policy. However, further direct and coordinated investment and resource support is needed from the federal government to support practical place-based initiatives and action by councils that seek to address imminent and substantial job losses as their communities undergo rapid economic transformation.

While councils are actively seeking to develop and implement a range of innovative plans and actions to support their communities navigate and continue to thrive as their economies change, implementation is inhibited by:

1. A lack of funding and staff resources within councils to deliver these initiatives, which fall beyond the realm of standard local government operations

2. The enormous challenges of navigating multiple federal government portfolios and agencies to identify and procure support (either funding or agency resources) to enable delivery. While numerous government Ministers and agencies have roles to play in supporting regions transition to net zero, there is no single portfolio or agency with the authority and resources to directly support local place-based actions by councils that if delivered, will address multiple agency responsibilities and objectives.

A key local planning focus and action opportunity councils are pursuing is to reactivate and repurpose current and former mining and industrial lands. This is because:

- These lands already possess valuable high-grade infrastructure (e.g. rail, road, water and electricity). Rather than remove these assets (as required by current rehabilitation requirements), there is significant opportunity to cost effectively repurpose them for new employment generating activities
- They are located in close proximity and are well connected via transport infrastructure to populations of skilled workers and support industries

- Repurposing these sites prevents the need to develop new employment lands on currently undeveloped lands, thereby contributing to broader biodiversity conservation and environmental objectives.

Local planning and action by councils will directly inform development of clearer policy and planning pathways to facilitate the reactivation of former mining and industrial lands. This will contribute significantly to derisking industry investment and strategically informing and accelerating industry attraction, skills development and job creation in local communities as they rapidly evolve their economies toward net zero.

NB this motion is a regional motion supported by the ten local Mayors of the Hunter Region of NSW.

Motion number 156.1 Singleton Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to directly support the acceleration of local government actions that address imminent and substantial job losses arising from large scale industry closures in regional economies rapidly transforming to net zero by:

1. Clearly identifying and establishing a single Federal Government Minister and Agency with responsibility for delivering funding and coordinating the provision of broader agency resources directly to Council led initiatives.
2. Directly investing in Council led, place-based initiatives that Pilot reactivation and repurposing of current and former mining lands and infrastructure to create urgently needed new employment lands.
3. De-risk industry investment and strategically inform and accelerate industry attraction, skills development and job creation.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Consistent with global trends and international agreements, ambitious net zero targets to be achieved by 2050 have been established by federal, state and local jurisdictions right across Australia.

Regional areas have historically, through their traditional coal and energy-based industries, been the literal powerhouse of the nation. This will continue to be the case as regional economies transform to support and deliver the renewable energy production and new industries needed to move the nation to net zero by 2050.

In many regional areas however, this economic transformation is occurring at a pace faster than anticipated. This will result in imminent and substantial job losses arising from large scale industrial closures before alternative industries and employment opportunities have become established.

Ensuring a just transition in regional areas that supports continued employment opportunities and social cohesion as local and regional economies rapidly transform is critical to the effective delivery of national net zero targets and objectives.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Whole of government, place-based planning, coordination and investment to drive the economic evolution of regions across Australia will be critical to achieving ambitious 2050

net zero targets that have been established by the federal government and state and local government jurisdictions across Australia.

The Federal Government has established the Net Zero Economy Authority to help Australia transition to a net zero emissions economy by supporting workers and communities, facilitating investment and coordinating policy. However, further direct and coordinated investment and resource support is needed from the federal government to support practical place-based initiatives and action by councils that seek to address imminent and substantial job losses as their communities undergo rapid economic transformation.

While councils are actively seeking to develop and implement a range of innovative plans and actions to support their communities navigate and continue to thrive as their economies change, implementation is inhibited by:

1. A lack of funding and staff resources within councils to deliver these initiatives, which fall beyond the realm of standard local government operations

2. The enormous challenges of navigating multiple federal government portfolios and agencies to identify and procure support (either funding or agency resources) to enable delivery. While numerous government Ministers and agencies have roles to play in supporting regions transition to net zero, there is no single portfolio or agency with the authority and resources to directly support local place-based actions by councils that if delivered, will address multiple agency responsibilities and objectives.

A key local planning focus and action opportunity councils are pursuing is to reactivate and repurpose current and former mining and industrial lands. This is because:

- These lands already possess valuable high-grade infrastructure (e.g. rail, road, water and electricity). Rather than remove these assets (as required by current rehabilitation requirements), there is significant opportunity to cost effectively repurpose them for new employment generating activities
- They are located in close proximity and are well connected via transport infrastructure to populations of skilled workers and support industries
- Repurposing these sites prevents the need to develop new employment lands on currently undeveloped lands, thereby contributing to broader biodiversity conservation and environmental objectives.

Local planning and action by councils will directly inform development of clearer policy and planning pathways to facilitate the reactivation of former mining and industrial lands. This will contribute significantly to derisking industry investment and strategically informing and accelerating industry attraction, skills development and job creation in local communities as they rapidly evolve their economies toward net zero.

NB this motion is a regional motion supported by the ten local Mayors of the Hunter Region of NSW.

Motion number 156.2 Dungog Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to directly support the acceleration of local government actions that address imminent and substantial job losses arising from large scale industry closures in regional economies rapidly transforming to net zero by:

1. Clearly identifying and establishing a single Federal Government Minister and Agency with responsibility for delivering funding and coordinating the provision of broader agency resources directly to Council led initiatives.
2. Directly investing in Council led, place-based initiatives that Pilot reactivation and repurposing of current and former mining lands and infrastructure to create urgently needed new employment lands.
3. De-risk industry investment and strategically inform and accelerate industry attraction, skills development and job creation.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Consistent with global trends and international agreements, ambitious net zero targets to be achieved by 2050 have been established by federal, state and local jurisdictions right across Australia.

Regional areas have historically, through their traditional coal and energy-based industries, been the literal powerhouse of the nation. This will continue to be the case as regional economies transform to support and deliver the renewable energy production and new industries needed to move the nation to net zero by 2050.

In many regional areas however, this economic transformation is occurring at a pace faster than anticipated. This will result in imminent and substantial job losses arising from large scale industrial closures before alternative industries and employment opportunities have become established.

Ensuring a just transition in regional areas that supports continued employment opportunities and social cohesion as local and regional economies rapidly transform is critical to the effective delivery of national net zero targets and objectives.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Whole of government, place-based planning, coordination and investment to drive the economic evolution of regions across Australia will be critical to achieving ambitious 2050 net zero targets that have been established by the federal government and state and local government jurisdictions across Australia.

The Federal Government has established the Net Zero Economy Authority to help Australia transition to a net zero emissions economy by supporting workers and communities, facilitating investment and coordinating policy. However, further direct and coordinated investment and resource support is needed from the federal government to support practical place-based initiatives and action by councils that seek to address imminent and substantial job losses as their communities undergo rapid economic transformation.

While councils are actively seeking to develop and implement a range of innovative plans and actions to support their communities navigate and continue to thrive as their economies change, implementation is inhibited by:

1. A lack of funding and staff resources within councils to deliver these initiatives, which fall beyond the realm of standard local government operations

2. The enormous challenges of navigating multiple federal government portfolios and agencies to identify and procure support (either funding or agency resources) to enable delivery. While numerous government Ministers and agencies have roles to play in supporting regions transition to net zero, there is no single portfolio or agency with the

authority and resources to directly support local place-based actions by councils that if delivered, will address multiple agency responsibilities and objectives.

A key local planning focus and action opportunity councils are pursuing is to reactivate and repurpose current and former mining and industrial lands. This is because:

- These lands already possess valuable high-grade infrastructure (e.g. rail, road, water and electricity). Rather than remove these assets (as required by current rehabilitation requirements), there is significant opportunity to cost effectively repurpose them for new employment generating activities
- They are located in close proximity and are well connected via transport infrastructure to populations of skilled workers and support industries
- Repurposing these sites prevents the need to develop new employment lands on currently undeveloped lands, thereby contributing to broader biodiversity conservation and environmental objectives.

Local planning and action by councils will directly inform development of clearer policy and planning pathways to facilitate the reactivation of former mining and industrial lands. This will contribute significantly to derisking industry investment and strategically informing and accelerating industry attraction, skills development and job creation in local communities as they rapidly evolve their economies toward net zero.

NB this motion is a regional motion supported by the ten local Mayors of the Hunter Region of NSW.

Motion number 156.3 Muswellbrook Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to directly support the acceleration of local government actions that address imminent and substantial job losses arising from large scale industry closures in regional economies rapidly transforming to net zero by:

1. Clearly identifying and establishing a single Federal Government Minister and Agency with responsibility for delivering funding and coordinating the provision of broader agency resources directly to Council led initiatives.
2. Directly investing in Council led, place-based initiatives that Pilot reactivation and repurposing of current and former mining lands and infrastructure to create urgently needed new employment lands.
3. De-risk industry investment and strategically inform and accelerate industry attraction, skills development and job creation.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Consistent with global trends and international agreements, ambitious net zero targets to be achieved by 2050 have been established by federal, state and local jurisdictions right across Australia.

Regional areas have historically, through their traditional coal and energy-based industries, been the literal powerhouse of the nation. This will continue to be the case as regional economies transform to support and deliver the renewable energy production and new industries needed to move the nation to net zero by 2050.

In many regional areas, however, this economic transformation is occurring at a pace faster than anticipated. This will result in imminent and substantial job losses arising from large scale industrial closures before alternative industries and employment opportunities have become established.

Ensuring a just transition in regional areas that supports continued employment opportunities and social cohesion as local and regional economies rapidly transform is critical to the effective delivery of national net zero targets and objectives.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Whole of government, place-based planning, coordination and investment to drive the economic evolution of regions across Australia will be critical to achieving ambitious 2050 net zero targets that have been established by the federal government and state and local government jurisdictions across Australia.

The Federal Government has established the Net Zero Economy Authority to help Australia transition to a net zero emissions economy by supporting workers and communities, facilitating investment and coordinating policy. However, further direct and coordinated investment and resource support is needed from the Federal Government to support practical, place-based initiatives and action by councils that seek to address imminent and substantial job losses as their communities undergo rapid economic transformation.

While councils are actively seeking to develop and implement a range of innovative plans and actions to support their communities navigate and continue to thrive as their economies change, implementation is inhibited by:

1. A lack of funding and staff resources within councils to deliver these initiatives, which fall beyond the realm of standard local government operations.

2. The enormous challenges of navigating multiple Federal Government portfolios and agencies to identify and procure support (either funding or agency resources) to enable delivery. While numerous government Ministers and agencies have roles to play in supporting regions transition to net zero, there is no single portfolio or agency with the authority and resources to directly support local place-based actions by councils that, if delivered, will address multiple agency responsibilities and objectives.

A key local planning focus and action opportunity councils are pursuing is to reactivate and repurpose current and former mining and industrial lands. This is because:

- These lands already possess valuable high-grade infrastructure (e.g. rail, road, water, and electricity). Rather than remove these assets (as required by current rehabilitation requirements), there is significant opportunity to cost effectively repurpose them for new employment generating activities.
- They are located in close proximity and are well connected via transport infrastructure to populations of skilled workers and support industries.
- Repurposing these sites prevents the need to develop new employment lands on currently undeveloped lands, thereby contributing to broader biodiversity conservation and environmental objectives.

Local planning and action by councils will directly inform development of clearer policy and planning pathways to facilitate the reactivation of former mining and industrial lands. This will contribute significantly to derisking industry investment and strategically informing and accelerating industry attraction, skills development and job creation in local communities as they rapidly evolve their economies toward net zero.

NB: This motion is a regional motion supported by the ten local mayors of the Hunter Region of NSW.

Motion number 156.4 Cessnock City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to directly support the acceleration of local government actions that address imminent and substantial job losses arising from large scale industry closures in regional economies rapidly transforming to net zero by:

1. Clearly identifying and establishing a single Federal Government Minister and Agency with responsibility for delivering funding and coordinating the provision of broader agency resources directly to Council led initiatives.
2. Directly investing in Council led, place-based initiatives that Pilot reactivation and repurposing of current and former mining lands and infrastructure to create urgently needed new employment lands.
3. De-risk industry investment and strategically inform and accelerate industry attraction, skills development and job creation.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Consistent with global trends and international agreements, ambitious net zero targets to be achieved by 2050 have been established by federal, state and local jurisdictions right across Australia.

Regional areas have historically, through their traditional coal and energy-based industries, been the literal powerhouse of the nation. This will continue to be the case as regional economies transform to support and deliver the renewable energy production and new industries needed to move the nation to net zero by 2050.

In many regional areas however, this economic transformation is occurring at a pace faster than anticipated. This will result in imminent and substantial job losses arising from large scale industrial closures before alternative industries and employment opportunities have become established.

Ensuring a just transition in regional areas that supports continued employment opportunities and social cohesion as local and regional economies rapidly transform is critical to the effective delivery of national net zero targets and objectives.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Whole of government, place-based planning, coordination and investment to drive the

economic evolution of regions across Australia will be critical to achieving ambitious 2050 net zero targets that have been established by the federal government and state and local government jurisdictions across Australia.

The Federal Government has established the Net Zero Economy Authority to help Australia transition to a net zero emissions economy by supporting workers and

communities, facilitating investment and coordinating policy. However, further direct and coordinated investment and resource support is needed from the federal government to support practical place-based initiatives and action by councils that seek to address

imminent and substantial job losses as their communities undergo rapid economic transformation.

While councils are actively seeking to develop and implement a range of innovative plans and actions to support their communities navigate and continue to thrive as their

economies change, implementation is inhibited by:

1. A lack of funding and staff resources within councils to deliver these initiatives, which fall beyond the realm of standard local government operations

2. The enormous challenges of navigating multiple federal government portfolios and agencies to identify and procure support (either funding or agency resources) to enable delivery. While numerous government Ministers and agencies have roles to play in supporting regions transition to net zero, there is no single portfolio or agency with the authority and resources to directly support local place-based actions by councils that if delivered, will address multiple agency responsibilities and objectives.

A key local planning focus and action opportunity councils are pursuing is to reactivate and repurpose current and former mining and industrial lands. This is because:

- These lands already possess valuable high-grade infrastructure (e.g. rail, road, water and electricity). Rather than remove these assets (as required by current rehabilitation requirements), there is significant opportunity to cost effectively repurpose them for new employment generating activities
- They are located in close proximity and are well connected via transport infrastructure to populations of skilled workers and support industries
- Repurposing these sites prevents the need to develop new employment lands on currently undeveloped lands, thereby contributing to broader biodiversity conservation and environmental objectives.

Local planning and action by councils will directly inform development of clearer policy and planning pathways to facilitate the reactivation of former mining and industrial lands. This will contribute significantly to derisking industry investment and strategically informing and accelerating industry attraction, skills development and job creation in local communities as they rapidly evolve their economies toward net zero.

NB this motion is a regional motion supported by the ten local Mayors of the Hunter Region of NSW.

Motion number 156.5 Upper Hunter Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to directly support the acceleration of local government actions that address imminent and substantial job losses arising from large scale industry closures in regional economies rapidly transforming to net zero by:

1. Clearly identifying and establishing a single Federal Government Minister and Agency with responsibility for delivering funding and coordinating the provision of broader agency resources directly to Council led initiatives.
2. Directly investing in Council led, place-based initiatives that Pilot reactivation and repurposing of current and former mining lands and infrastructure to create urgently needed new employment lands.

3. De-risk industry investment and strategically inform and accelerate industry attraction, skills development and job creation.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Consistent with global trends and international agreements, ambitious net zero targets to be achieved by 2050 have been established by federal, state and local jurisdictions right across Australia.

Regional areas have historically, through their traditional coal and energy-based industries, been the literal powerhouse of the nation. This will continue to be the case as regional economies transform to support and deliver the renewable energy production and new industries needed to move the nation to net zero by 2050.

In many regional areas however, this economic transformation is occurring at a pace faster than anticipated. This will result in imminent and substantial job losses arising from large scale industrial closures before alternative industries and employment opportunities have become established.

Ensuring a just transition in regional areas that supports continued employment opportunities and social cohesion as local and regional economies rapidly transform is critical to the effective delivery of national net zero targets and objectives.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Whole of government, place-based planning, coordination and investment to drive the economic evolution of regions across Australia will be critical to achieving ambitious 2050 net zero targets that have been established by the federal government and state and local government jurisdictions across Australia.

The Federal Government has established the Net Zero Economy Authority to help Australia transition to a net zero emissions economy by supporting workers and communities, facilitating investment and coordinating policy. However, further direct and coordinated investment and resource support is needed from the federal government to support practical place-based initiatives and action by councils that seek to address imminent and substantial job losses as their communities undergo rapid economic transformation.

While councils are actively seeking to develop and implement a range of innovative plans and actions to support their communities navigate and continue to thrive as their economies change, implementation is inhibited by:

1. A lack of funding and staff resources within councils to deliver these initiatives, which fall beyond the realm of standard local government operations

2. The enormous challenges of navigating multiple federal government portfolios and agencies to identify and procure support (either funding or agency resources) to enable delivery. While numerous government Ministers and agencies have roles to play in supporting regions transition to net zero, there is no single portfolio or agency with the authority and resources to directly support local place-based actions by councils that if delivered, will address multiple agency responsibilities and objectives.

A key local planning focus and action opportunity councils are pursuing is to reactivate and repurpose current and former mining and industrial lands. This is because:

- These lands already possess valuable high-grade infrastructure (e.g. rail, road, water and electricity). Rather than remove these assets (as required by current

rehabilitation requirements), there is significant opportunity to cost effectively repurpose them for new employment generating activities
- They are located in close proximity and are well connected via transport infrastructure to populations of skilled workers and support industries
- Repurposing these sites prevents the need to develop new employment lands on currently undeveloped lands, thereby contributing to broader biodiversity conservation and environmental objectives.

Local planning and action by councils will directly inform development of clearer policy and planning pathways to facilitate the reactivation of former mining and industrial lands. This will contribute significantly to derisking industry investment and strategically informing and accelerating industry attraction, skills development and job creation in local communities as they rapidly evolve their economies toward net zero.

NB this motion is a regional motion supported by the ten local Mayors of the Hunter Region of NSW

Motion number 156.6 Port Stephens Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to directly support the acceleration of local government actions that address imminent and substantial job losses arising from large scale industry closures in regional economies rapidly transforming to net zero by:

1. Clearly identifying and establishing a single Federal Government Minister and Agency with responsibility for delivering funding and coordinating the provision of broader agency resources directly to Council led initiatives.
2. Directly investing in Council led, place-based initiatives that Pilot reactivation and repurposing of current and former mining lands and infrastructure to create urgently needed new employment lands.
3. De-risk industry investment and strategically inform and accelerate industry attraction, skills development and job creation.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Consistent with global trends and international agreements, ambitious net zero targets to be achieved by 2050 have been established by federal, state and local jurisdictions right across Australia.

Regional areas have historically, through their traditional coal and energy-based industries, been the literal powerhouse of the nation. This will continue to be the case as regional economies transform to support and deliver the renewable energy production and new industries needed to move the nation to net zero by 2050.

In many regional areas however, this economic transformation is occurring at a pace faster than anticipated. This will result in imminent and substantial job losses arising from large scale industrial closures before alternative industries and employment opportunities have become established.

Ensuring a just transition in regional areas that supports continued employment opportunities and social cohesion as local and regional economies rapidly transform is critical to the effective delivery of national net zero targets and objectives.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Whole of government, place-based planning, coordination and investment to drive the economic evolution of regions across Australia will be critical to achieving ambitious 2050 net zero targets that have been established by the federal government and state and local government jurisdictions across Australia.

The Federal Government has established the Net Zero Economy Authority to help Australia transition to a net zero emissions economy by supporting workers and communities, facilitating investment and coordinating policy. However, further direct and coordinated investment and resource support is needed from the federal government to support practical place-based initiatives and action by councils that seek to address imminent and substantial job losses as their communities undergo rapid economic transformation.

While councils are actively seeking to develop and implement a range of innovative plans and actions to support their communities navigate and continue to thrive as their economies change, implementation is inhibited by:

1. A lack of funding and staff resources within councils to deliver these initiatives, which fall beyond the realm of standard local government operations

2. The enormous challenges of navigating multiple federal government portfolios and agencies to identify and procure support (either funding or agency resources) to enable delivery. While numerous government Ministers and agencies have roles to play in supporting regions transition to net zero, there is no single portfolio or agency with the authority and resources to directly support local place-based actions by councils that if delivered, will address multiple agency responsibilities and objectives.

A key local planning focus and action opportunity councils are pursuing is to reactivate and repurpose current and former mining and industrial lands. This is because:

- These lands already possess valuable high-grade infrastructure (e.g. rail, road, water and electricity). Rather than remove these assets (as required by current rehabilitation requirements), there is significant opportunity to cost effectively repurpose them for new employment generating activities
- They are located in close proximity and are well connected via transport infrastructure to populations of skilled workers and support industries
- Repurposing these sites prevents the need to develop new employment lands on currently undeveloped lands, thereby contributing to broader biodiversity conservation and environmental objectives.

Local planning and action by councils will directly inform development of clearer policy and planning pathways to facilitate the reactivation of former mining and industrial lands. This will contribute significantly to derisking industry investment and strategically informing and accelerating industry attraction, skills development and job creation in local communities as they rapidly evolve their economies toward net zero.

NB this motion is a regional motion supported by the ten local Mayors of the Hunter Region of NSW.

Motion number 156.7 Newcastle City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to directly support the acceleration of local government actions that address imminent and substantial job losses arising from large scale industry closures in regional economies rapidly transforming to net zero by:

4. Clearly identifying and establishing a single Federal Government Minister and Agency with responsibility for delivering funding and coordinating the provision of broader agency resources directly to Council led initiatives.
5. Directly investing in Council led, place-based initiatives that Pilot reactivation and repurposing of current and former mining lands and infrastructure to create urgently needed new employment lands.
6. De-risk industry investment and strategically inform and accelerate industry attraction, skills development and job creation.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Jobs and Skills

KEY ARGUMENTS

Achieving Australia's 2050 net zero targets requires coordinated, place-based planning and investment across all government levels. The Federal Government's Net Zero Economy Authority supports this transition by aiding workers, communities, and investment. However, more direct federal investment and resources are needed for local councils to address job losses during economic transformations.

While councils are actively seeking to develop and implement a range of innovative plans and actions, implementation is inhibited by:

- A lack of funding and staff resources to deliver these initiatives, which fall beyond the realm of local government operations
- Navigating multiple federal government portfolios and agencies to identify and procure support (either funding or agency resources). While numerous government Ministers and agencies have roles in supporting regions transition to net zero, there is no single portfolio or agency with the authority and resources to directly support local place-based actions by councils that if delivered, will address multiple agency responsibilities and objectives.

A key focus is repurposing current and former mining and industrial lands due to their existing infrastructure, proximity to skilled workers, and environmental benefits. This approach avoids developing new lands, aiding biodiversity conservation.

Local planning and action by councils will inform policy development and planning pathways to facilitate the reactivation of former mining and industrial lands. This will reduce investment risk and accelerate industry attraction, skills development and job creation as local economies evolve toward net zero.

Motion number 156.8 Lake Macquarie City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to directly support the acceleration of local government actions that address imminent and substantial job losses arising from large scale industry closures in regional economies rapidly transforming to net zero by:

7. Clearly identifying and establishing a single Federal Government Minister and Agency with responsibility for delivering funding and coordinating the provision of broader agency resources directly to Council led initiatives.
8. Directly investing in Council led, place-based initiatives that Pilot reactivation and repurposing of current and former mining lands and infrastructure to create urgently needed new employment lands.
9. De-risk industry investment and strategically inform and accelerate industry attraction, skills development and job creation.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Jobs and Skills

KEY ARGUMENTS

Achieving Australia's 2050 net zero targets requires coordinated, place-based planning and investment across all government levels. The Federal Government's Net Zero Economy Authority supports this transition by aiding workers, communities, and investment. However, more direct federal investment and resources are needed for local councils to address job losses during economic transformations.

While councils are actively seeking to develop and implement a range of innovative plans and actions, implementation is inhibited by:

- A lack of funding and staff resources to deliver these initiatives, which fall beyond the realm of local government operations
- Navigating multiple federal government portfolios and agencies to identify and procure support (either funding or agency resources). While numerous government Ministers and agencies have roles in supporting regions transition to net zero, there is no single portfolio or agency with the authority and resources to directly support local place-based actions by councils that if delivered, will address multiple agency responsibilities and objectives.

A key focus is repurposing current and former mining and industrial lands due to their existing infrastructure, proximity to skilled workers, and environmental benefits. This approach avoids developing new lands, aiding biodiversity conservation.

Local planning and action by councils will inform policy development and planning pathways to facilitate the reactivation of former mining and industrial lands. This will reduce investment risk and accelerate industry attraction, skills development and job creation as local economies evolve toward net zero.

Motion number 157 Cabonne Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to support communities to become energy independent and resilient through renewable energy and ensure the transition considers reliability, sustainability and affordability in regional communities.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Reliable, secure and cost-effective energy supply options for regional and remote communities.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The expansion of renewable energy will require significant investment in existing grid networks to cope with the voltage fluctuations and periods of low activity from renewable energy sources.

In 2023, Central NSW Joint Organisation and its member councils commissioned a business case on the nexus between energy security and emissions reduction which found that of the region's 30 distribution zone substations, one-third and their surrounding areas are currently experiencing:

- Network constraints - where electricity demand exceeds the rated infrastructure capacity,
- Reliability issues - where supply interruptions in minutes are highest in the region, or
- Both.

Energy security and reliability challenges are impacting economic growth in the regions where not only are businesses not coming to town as there is insufficient electricity capacity in the grid, but towns are also losing existing businesses for this same reason.

A key finding of the business case is that while renewable generation is increasing the grid cannot handle it as it was not built for two-way flow, and it is now struggling to keep up as technology progresses. Significant investment will be required to ensure existing grid networks can cope with the voltage fluctuations and periods of low activity from large scale renewable energy sources.

There is a strong need for support to increase the uptake of distributed energy resourced (DER) (e.g. rooftop solar, small to mid-scale solar installations, and batteries), which is likely to be faster, cheaper and less complex than then current roll-out of large-scale renewable energy through the Renewable Energy Zones (REZs). An increase in DER can be achieved through providing access to clear and consistent information, as well as grants, rebates and incentives.

The Central NSW region is supportive of a distributed energy model, promoting energy independence at the grass roots level. More investment is needed to support regional communities to ensure secure, reliable, renewable and well-priced electricity which enables future growth.

Motion number 157.1 Gladstone Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to create dedicated funding programs (full funding or 80:20) to support local governments to upgrade critical electrical infrastructure to ensure compatibility with renewable energy and carbon neutral technologies so renewable energy and emission reduction targets can be achieved.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The Australian Government's introduction of the Climate Change Bill in 2022 legislates the nation's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 43 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030, and net zero by 2050.

Modernising electrical infrastructure is a national issue because the transition to renewable energy and emissions reduction targets set by the Australian Government requires coordinated action at all levels of government, including local councils. However, outdated electrical infrastructure is a widespread barrier preventing local governments from integrating

renewable energy technologies, limiting their ability to contribute effectively to national climate goals.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Local government is facing significant challenges due to ageing electrical infrastructure, which is:

1. Incompatible with modern renewable energy technologies - limiting the ability to construct, upgrade and integrate clean energy solutions.

2. Lacking the capacity to support solar, wind, energy storage and decentralised generation - creating barriers to emissions reduction.

At the same time, community expectations for sustainable services are rising, yet outdated infrastructure prevents local governments from meeting these demands in a timely manner.

Funding is required not only for new and upgraded infrastructure but also for condition assessments before renewable energy solutions can be identified and implemented. Without these investments, progress towards emissions reduction targets will be delayed, operational costs will rise, and local communities and the environment will bear the burden.

Federal funding and local action are essential to driving meaningful change, supporting emissions reductions and ensuring lasting benefits for Australia's environment and communities. Local governments play a critical role in transitioning to renewable energy and sustainable infrastructure but face substantial challenges due to ageing electrical systems originally designed for centralised, fossil-fuel-based power grids.

This motion calls on the Australian Government to provide funding for:

- Comprehensive condition assessments and upgrade recommendations to modernise electrical infrastructure.
- Delivery of essential upgrades to power grids, substations, transformers, distribution networks, streetlights and switchboards.

These upgrades will:

- Enhance flexibility, reliability and capacity of electrical infrastructure, enabling local governments to integrate emerging renewable energy technologies.
- Support energy use reductions at high-energy-use facilities such as water and wastewater treatment plants and aquatic centres.
- Strengthen energy security, particularly in remote and vulnerable communities.

As renewable energy technologies continue to evolve, modern electrical infrastructure is essential to managing growing demand and enabling a clean energy future. Investing in these upgrades will empower local governments to be active participants in Australia's energy transition, equipping them with the tools and resources to meet federal and state emissions targets while improving local energy resilience and sustainability.

Motion number 157.2 Narrabri Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to develop a National Renewable Energy Information Portal to assist local government to prepare for and to assist in the planning and delivery of the 2050 Net Zero emissions target. The portal will capture

critical information, including, but not limited to, location of key infrastructure assets, and detail grid capacity limitations and expansion opportunities.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion aligns to ALGA Priority 10 Climate Change and Renewable Energy. It will also assist in the achievement of the 2050 Net Zero national emissions target.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Australia's whole-of-economy Long Term Emissions Reduction Plan aims to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 and forms part of a suite of current policies and programs to assist Australia in responding to climate change. In the absence of a clearly detailed framework and reliable resources, local government across the nation will continue to face ongoing challenges and inequities in managing the transition process. A key identified deficiency is the absence of centralised core data sets to inform the overarching road map that is accessible by local government.

A dearth of reliable data exists along with an absence of a central source of 'truth' for essential information and supporting resources that will both guide and inform decision-making at a strategic level. Local government is an essential component of this reform process and must be afforded appropriate levels of support in order to navigate the reform agenda. Further, this approach will assist in ensuring that communities are both well-placed and appropriately engaged with both to capitalise on associated benefits and to readily identify and address associated gaps.

Motion number 158 Warrnambool City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish a uniform Community Benefit Fund in each Australian municipality that hosts or directly supports large scale energy projects, to be administered by Local Government, and with mandatory contributions made by each developer.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

As the NGA 2025 Discussion paper states -

'The rapid increase in renewable energy projects in regions across Australia is resulting in uneven and inconsistent community benefits being offered and delivered to communities. It is also placing significant pressure on local governments to plan, negotiate and secure an enduring constructive legacy associated with renewable energy projects.

Local governments are the only local democratic institution in a position to convene local interests and broker long term social and economic benefits from renewables projects, and should be recognised and supported for their role in maintaining social license for renewables projects.'

The absence of a uniform framework has resulted in varying standards and practices for community benefits across municipalities. A standardised national policy, tailored to local needs, would address this issue by creating a consistent and transparent approach that ensures fairness and certainty for all communities hosting or supporting large-scale energy projects while also enabling coordination across municipalities to reflect the broader regional impacts of energy developments. Such a scheme would hand control of how community benefits are realised to the communities themselves.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Communities that host energy projects often bear the brunt of environmental, visual, or social impacts. This is recognised by governments and developers and is sometimes offset through community benefit programs.

Currently, there are no universal, federally mandated benefit programs for renewable energy projects. Instead, the Federal Guidelines on Community Engagement and Benefits for Electricity Transmission Projects encourage meaningful engagement with communities and suggest dedicated benefit programs as one way to deliver positive outcomes.

States have varying frameworks and policies encouraging or requiring benefit initiatives, with some integrating these into the planning approval process.

This fragmented approach results in inconsistent community benefits, depending on state and local policies, community activism, the strength of local government advocacy, and the developer's approach. It creates inequities and adds complexity for both developers and governments.

A uniform Energy Community Benefit Fund would ensure all communities hosting large-scale projects receive consistent, proportionate support. It would also simplify current processes and reduce disparities.

The fund's structure should recognise that while energy infrastructure is often located in rural areas, the economic and social impacts extend regionally. Regional cities are key hubs-supporting workers, services, and infrastructure critical to these projects. The fund should be designed to reflect this broader footprint.

The scheme could require all developers to contribute a set amount per megawatt hour generated, including contributions from regional cities hosting workforce or training facilities. Similar arrangements could apply to transmission projects. Local governments would administer the fund, with decision-making shared with community members and organisations-perhaps through delegated committees. The Federal Government could set overarching criteria while leaving detailed decisions to local communities.

Local governments are well-placed to manage such a fund, given their close ties to residents and understanding of local needs. This ensures funds are used effectively to address local challenges and priorities.

This approach would boost public trust in energy projects, reflecting a commitment to fairness and community empowerment. Community involvement in decision-making would enhance buy-in and strengthen the social license for renewables.

A standardised, locally administered framework would streamline processes for developers, ensure equitable outcomes, and foster cooperation between developers, councils, and communities-essential for Australia's energy transition.

Motion number 159 Wakefield Regional Council SA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to prioritise its support for the establishment of a renewable fuel industry in Australia, with the aim of providing locally produced alternative fuels for industries such as heavy transport, mining, agriculture and construction (including local government civil construction), where electrification is not a realistic option.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The purpose of the motion is to highlight to Local Government and the Federal Government the urgency and the advantages of establishing a renewable fuels industry to supply alternative lower emission fuels to industries where electrification is not realistic. The heavy transport industry, mining, agriculture and civil engineering including Local Government are examples of industries that need certainty as to how their industries will be fuelled into the future.

The industry should produce renewable diesel, ethanol and aviation fuel products that can be produced by existing processes that utilise a range of renewable feedstocks, including but not limited to plant oils or residues and animal fats. Renewable fuels should be capable of replacing existing petroleum-based fuels without modifications to existing engines and be safely transported and distributed by the current fuel outlet networks.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Some renewable fuels can be purchased in Australia now, but it is almost all manufactured overseas. In Europe and the US renewable fuels industries already exist and the production and use is increasing.

The Australian Government is in the early stages of consultation and planning for a renewable fuel industry, however the greening of the electricity grid and solar and wind generation, along with the promotion of electric vehicles have been the priorities to date. Green hydrogen fuel has been promoted as a future alternative fuel for larger engines where electrification is not a practical solution. Governments and Private Enterprise around the world are now realising that the cost of green hydrogen fuel, currently at around four times the price of petroleum-based fuels, is at the moment not a cost-effective replacement fuel.

The renewable fuels industry has already demonstrated overseas that the technology exists and is producing greener fuels for heavy engines and machinery, at a competitive price, that requires no vehicle replacement or modification and the fuels can be distributed using much of the existing distribution network.

Australia's primary production sector has the capacity to produce the renewable feedstock sources and a renewable fuel industry would reduce Australia's dependence on imported fuels and make us more secure and self-reliant in times of disruption to trade.

It can be an affordable option to current fuels either in the medium term or until better technology is proven, or as a long-term replacement if solutions such as hydrogen fuel proves to be unviable.

Local Government will require a replacement fuel that it can afford and renewable fuels appear to be a viable option when available. Not having to replace all vehicles and machinery when changing to alternative fuels would considerably reduce costs to already strained budgets. The same benefits also apply to most of Australia's heavier industries where electrification in not an option.

Local Government has a role to play in the development of a renewable fuels industry, not just for its own future but for the future of Australia.

Motion number 160 Paroo Shire Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to embed in its regulatory framework a compulsory Code of Conduct for the Australian Carbon Farming Industry to safeguard that carbon farming activities are environmentally sustainable, socially responsible, and economically viable.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Carbon farming in Australia is a practice aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions through agricultural and land management techniques. Through various Federal and State Government schemes landholders are incentivised to earn Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs) by adopting practices that reduce or remove carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions from the atmosphere.

In recent years carbon farming activity has grown significantly and is predicted to continue to grow strongly, especially across Regional Australia.

Currently there is no compulsory Code of Conduct governing the complex interaction of the carbon farming industry with local communities including councils and landholders.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The growth of the carbon farming industry in Australia, has, not surprisingly, also caused co-existence challenges in local communities. This has recently been highlighted in several articles by The Age newspapers which have identified key landholder concerns including:

- Long-Term Commitment and Restrictions within Carbon Contracts
- Uncertainty of Income
- Verification and Monitoring of Activities
- Changes in Policy or Regulations
- Environmental Risks
- Upfront Costs and Capital Investment
- Liability for Non-Performance of Contracts
- Impact on Agricultural Operations
- Market Complexity
- Transparency and Power Imbalances in Contract Negotiations

The Carbon Market Institute (peak body) has developed a voluntary Australian Carbon Industry (ACI) Code of Conduct. This Code defines industry best practice for project services and advisory services provided within Australia's Carbon Industry and represents the minimum standards that all Signatories agree to meet.

Whilst this is a positive step forward, given the continued growth of carbon farming across Australia and its corresponding co-existence challenges, it is suggested that such a Code now be made mandatory as part of the Australian Government's regulatory framework. This will help ensure carbon farming projects deliver genuine environmental and social benefits as well as build trust among stakeholders and the public.

Motion number 161 City of Cockburn WA

This National Assembly calls on the Australian Government to amend the National Construction Code and implement a blanket ban on the use of dark coloured roofing materials to alleviate the urban heat island effect (UHI), particularly in newer suburbs.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This is a national issue because Australia is being impacted by longer hotter summers. Already this year many temperature records have been broken across the country. Longer hotter summers mean an increased need for cooling. Houses with black roofs require more energy to cool. This increases costs for residents as well as increasing carbon emissions. If Australia and the States are to meet our emission reduction targets placing a ban of dark building materials will go a long way to help us reach these targets.

It's also the matter of human health. According to the World Health Organisation global temperatures and the frequency and intensity of heatwaves will continue rise in the 21st century as a result of climate change.

Extended periods of high day and night-time temperatures create cumulative physiological stress on the human body which exacerbates the top causes of death globally, including respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, diabetes mellitus and renal disease. Heatwaves can acutely impact large populations for short periods of time, often trigger public health emergencies, and result in excess mortality, and cascading socioeconomic impacts such as lost work capacity and labour productivity.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The UHI effect increases energy consumption and adversely impacts human comfort and health.

Reducing the use of dark building materials, such as dark roofs can reduce the UHI effect, reduce energy costs and improve human comfort and health.

Reducing the use of dark building materials can help Australia meet its greenhouse gas emission targets while we transition to renewable energy.

The World Health Organisation states that population exposure to heat is increasing due to climate change, and this trend will continue. Globally, extreme temperature events are observed to be increasing in their frequency, duration, and magnitude.

The UHI effect is a phenomenon that occurs when built-up areas, like cities and towns, are significantly warmer than their rural surroundings. This is due to the increased heat absorption by materials commonly used in construction, such as asphalt, steel, and concrete.

The UHI effect can cause significant problems, including increased demand for energy resources for cooling, air pollution, and decreased water quality and heat stress in humans. Exposure to excessive heat has wide ranging physiological impacts for all humans, often amplifying existing conditions and resulting in premature death and disability.

Dark roofs, which are often chosen for their aesthetic appeal, tend to absorb and retain heat, increasing the (UHI) effect, while high-density housing that is being developed in Greenfields sites reduces green spaces reducing the natural cooling provided by vegetation.

In most cases, darker roofs will absorb more heat than a lighter roof. This means that having a black roof on a home can require much more energy consumption to cool the house, particularly in the hot Australian summer. This can not only increase energy bills but also increase carbon emissions if the energy being used is being produced from fossil fuels. Exceptions to the rule might be in places like southern states such as Tasmania.

In summary, the UHI can be reduced by using lighter surfaces to reflect heat rather than absorb it. Lighter roofs can help reduce a temperatures in built-up areas and make them more comfortable for residents.

Reducing the UHI can also help Australia to reach its emissions targets by reducing the energy consumption when energy is produced by fossil fuels.

ENVIRONMENT

Motion number 162 Narrabri Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to urgently implement the National Established Weeds Priority (NEWP) framework to manage biosecurity (weeds) risks with an associated focus on updating the Australian Weeds Strategy 2017-2027 and Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity to focus on harmonisation of Biosecurity (Weeds) legislation across mainland States and Territories.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion aligns to ALGA Priorities 1 and 11. It is consistent with the principles of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity (IGAB).

KEY ARGUMENTS

The National Established Weeds Priority Framework (NEWP) has recently been developed and is designed to guide future collaboration and to manage established weeds in Australia. The NEWP also aims to add new weeds to the Weeds of National Significance list. It is also designed to provide focus on weed issues beyond a specific species. This particular initiative forms part of the Australian

Weeds Strategy 2017 - 2027.

In the preparation of these overarching strategies, it is widely acknowledged that weeds have major social, economic and environmental impacts in Australia, occasioning damage to coastal areas, waterways, natural landscapes and agricultural land. Effectively managing weeds requires a collaborative approach between key stakeholders including landholders, community groups, industries and all levels of government.

The Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity, IGAB (Council of Australian Governments 2012) is an agreement between the Commonwealth, State and Territories (excluding Tasmania) that aims to improve the shared management of risks posed by pests and diseases entering, emerging, establishing and spreading in Australia. The IGAB was developed to improve the national biosecurity system by more clearly identifying the roles and responsibilities of governments. It provides the direction and framework for a national biosecurity system. One of the identified gaps in both the IGAB and the National Weeds Strategy relates to the harmonisation and consistent

application of legislation to ensure a consistent and holistic biosecurity management response. This is particularly evident in cross-border communities. Following recent major rain and flooding events in north-western NSW for example, disparate approaches is biosecurity (weeds) management was highly evident. The weighting of legislative obligations and associated delivery capacity creates increasing management and resourcing burdens

for downstream communities and their respective local government authorities. Once they enter the environmental system, weeds do not respect state boundaries and are readily dispersed within catchments. A more consistent approach to regulation and supporting resourcing is therefore essential.

There have been regular and systematic attempts to downgrade significance of prohibited matter. At state-level, there are proposals to downgrade the significance of weeds from prohibited matter to biosecurity matter simply because its 'too far gone' in some areas. Unfortunately, some local government areas and States have failed to appropriately act for various reasons, including from

resourcing limitations to relaxed regulation on local authorities, and subsequently some prohibited matter is now out of control. As a result, the problem has been categorised as too challenging to effectively address and if the weed is downgraded then these same organisations are no longer responsible for control work. If this becomes a common and accepted practice to downgrade weeds of significance to reduce resourcing and financial reasons there will be far greater separation between control authorities and corresponding major impacts to environment, local economies, and agriculture. This unfortunate situation further reinforces the need for tangible and practical national harmonisation of frameworks.

Motion number 163 Noosa Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to review the *Waste Reduction Act* 2020, to better equip the Act to address the current and future circular economy needs and to address resource recovery and waste challenges. This includes the viability of soil remediation within the circular economy to encourage social and environmental best sustainable practice at local level to contribute to healthier communities, sustainable development, housing, and responsible resource management.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This is a national issue because limitations of current Acts and approaches to recycling and waste reduction demand urgent review to address current contemporary environmental impacts and human rights.

A review should also address how the Act operates to inform and enable action at local government level to respond to the needs of developing critical circular economy markets.

A successful review and resulting reforms would provide all levels of government with legislation and frameworks to inform local social, economic and environmental place-based solutions to connect and engage with local communities to deliver sustainable and effective actions. These would be underpinned by fit for purpose decision making research, evidence, tools and resources to empower sustainable practices and policies. Commonwealth legislation would support critical action on the ground to focus on local level solutions towards promoting circular economy, resource recovery and waste management in collaboration with the establishment of an independent agency Environmental Protection Australia (EPA).

Bioremediation and phytoremediation are both innovative, nature-based solutions for soil decontamination, fostering targets to effectively deliver place-based solutions for environmental and financial sustainability. These should be considered in scope of the Review.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Here's how these approaches align with national priorities and can help local governments meet their sustainability goals within a circular economy framework:

1. Environmental Sustainability

- Bioremediation and Phytoremediation: Both methods involve the use of natural processes to clean up contaminated soils. Bioremediation uses microorganisms to degrade or transform pollutants, while phytoremediation uses plants to absorb, accumulate, or transform contaminants. By using these technologies, local governments can address soil contamination in a way that protects biodiversity, promotes healthy ecosystems, and supports long-term environmental stewardship.

2. Financial Sustainability

- Alignment with Circular Economy & Local Economic Development: Implementing bioremediation and phytoremediation can also stimulate local economies by encouraging local expertise, job creation in the green sector (e.g. environmental scientists, engineers), and the potential for creating sustainable agricultural products (such as biofuels, plant-based materials, or eco-friendly products) with potential to leading to long-term cost savings for local governments with both methods promoting reusing natural resources and resource recovery aligning with the circular economy by creating value from what would otherwise be considered waste or hazardous material.

3. Place-Based Solutions

- Context-Specific Interventions & Community Engagement: Bioremediation and phytoremediation can be tailored to the specific environmental conditions of different localities. Allowing local governments to implement solutions that are appropriate for the unique characteristics of their community, contributing to more effective and region-specific environmental outcomes. These techniques can be integrated into community-led environmental projects, where local residents become directly involved in the process of remediation, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility.

4. Supporting Circular Economy Targets

- Resource Recovery: By cleaning up contaminated soils, these methods restore land that could potentially be reused for agriculture, construction, or community development. Repurposed soil for growing crops contributing to food security and reducing the need for new land or resources.
- Waste Reduction: Phytoremediation, for example, can result in the growth of plants that are capable of absorbing or even breaking down pollutants. In some cases, these plants might be harvested and used for bioproducts or biofuels, creating reducing reliance on traditional waste disposal methods.
- Sustainable Land Use: The process of remediating contaminated soil using plants or microorganisms can help local governments meet their circular economy and land-use goals by restoring the land to productive use, development, without creating further waste or environmental damage.

5. Policy and Local Government Action

- Regulatory Alignment & Collaboration: Bioremediation and phytoremediation can align with the regulatory frameworks set by local governments and environmental authorities in Australia complimenting national policies on environmental protection, waste management, and sustainable land use.

Local governments can partner with universities, environmental NGOs, and the private sector to develop and implement bioremediation and phytoremediation strategies, ensuring a collaborative approach that aligns with national sustainability objectives and local needs.

Motion number 164 Woollahra Municipal Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to step up its efforts to protect significant waterways and coastal waters by accelerating the rollout of state-of-the-art wastewater treatment systems and spearheading the establishment of new marine parks, particularly in and around urban coastal areas.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The Australian Government must accelerate the rollout of modern wastewater treatment technologies and establish new marine parks to protect the nation's iconic waterways. These steps are vital to preserving public health, maintaining tourism and recreation industries, and ensuring clean and resilient coastal ecosystems for future generations.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Councils across Australia are reliant on waterways and coastal assets like beaches as important recreational areas and tourism drawcards. Unfortunately, many of these areas are not adequately protected by state-of-the art wastewater treatment systems that properly break down sewage and prevent "toxic" industrial and agricultural waste from entering sewerage networks. Recent examples of this problem include the temporary closure of multiple Sydney beaches over the past six months due to the washing up of thousands of sticky round "human waste" globules; the temporary closure of Hobart's Derwent River beaches from discharge into the sewerage system of "high strength trade waste"; and the detection of PFAS chemical contamination in sewage by-products used for agriculture, and in dams servicing drinking water supplies in the Blue Mountains.

Australia as a whole needs to follow the example of Singapore and Western Australia, both of which are well advanced in installing advanced water treatment plants to purify wastewater to a very high degree so that it can be safely and reliably put back into drinking water supplies. In addition to improving wastewater treatment, expanding the network of Australian marine parks is also vital for protecting sensitive marine habitats, particularly in and around urban coastal areas, which are under increasing pressure from urban expansion, increased pollution and climate change stressors. These protected zones enhance water quality and serve as sanctuaries for marine species, helping to rebuild fish populations, safeguarding seagrass meadows, and restoring coral reefs. The urgent acceleration of the implementation of state-of-the-art wastewater treatment systems, coupled with the establishment of new marine parks, are essential for safeguarding the nation's iconic waterways and coastal environments for future generations.

Motion number 165 Brisbane City Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to collect information through the Australian Census for data information about pet ownership, particularly around domestic animals (dogs, cats, chickens, birds, etc).

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

All Local, State and Territory Governments would benefit from having consistent national data information on pet ownership as it would assist concentrating efforts for education, regulation and policy and program direction.

KEY ARGUMENTS

It is estimated Australia has some of the highest pet ownership rates in the world and has a similar pet ownership rate to the United States. In Australia it's predicted that two thirds of Australians have at least one pet. (Statistics sourced from the internet).

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on pet ownership, as shown in research conducted by Animal Medicines Australia. Research has shown that nationwide, the number of Australian households owning pets has increased from 61 percent in 2019, to 69 percent in 2021. This means the total number of pets in Australia has increased from 28.5 million in 2019 to 30.4 million in 2021.

Local governments play a critical role on a local level in the implementation of legislation to regulate and manage the keeping and control of animals in a way which protects the community against risk of injury, environmental harm, amenity of the local environment and foster responsible pet ownership.

Accurate and informed data through Census will provide all levels of government the ability to better structure programs and services to support pet owners across Australia. The information will help governments understand issues, how to better support pet owners and the industries that service them targeting education, policy and program initiatives relating to responsible pet ownership.

Although there are some private companies and some State Governments which conduct surveys, these surveys have a limited number of participants and the data is extrapolated to give estimations, rather than exact numbers. These surveys are also very narrow in the type of information sourced.

Embedding pet ownership questions into the Australian Census would effectively collect data in a consistent manner and provide an opportunity every 5 years to obtain accurate information on pet ownership across Australia.

There is an opportunity for the Australian Government to assist local, state and territory governments to gain better data and a deeper understanding of pet ownership and pet owner behaviours to inform decision making, policy initiatives and community education.

Motion number 166 Narrabri Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to develop a nationally accessible Companion Animals Register.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion aligns to ALGA Priority 1 and in addition to reuniting pets with their owners, regardless of which state they are in, it will assist in national biosecurity management objectives.

KEY ARGUMENTS

According to Animal Medicines Australia (November 2022) Australia's most comprehensive pet population survey (Pets in Australia) has revealed that more than two-thirds of Australian households now own a pet. A recent comprehensive population survey has revealed the boom in pet ownership experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic has levelled out to a new normal of strong pet ownership, with 69% of households across metropolitan, regional and remote Australia now home to one or more pets. An estimated 28.7 million pets are located within approximately 6.9 million households across Australia. Dogs and cats have led this sustained growth in pet ownership, with almost half of all households having at least one dog and a third of all households housing at least one cat. The survey further noted that for many pet owners, typical reasons for owning a pet include companionship, rescuing animals, relaxation and mental health, with 85% of survey respondents saying that their pet had a positive impact on their physical and mental wellbeing.

With an increasingly mobile society, managing pet registrations and reuniting lost pets with their owners is becoming increasing challenging for local government. This situation is further compounded by the fact that there is no integration of companion animal registrations across

states and territories, with each jurisdiction running their own system. With the view of creating efficiencies and increasing the likelihood of successfully reuniting pets with their owners, a national register arrangement is sought to capture available data across all states and territories as a single information source. It is further foreshadowed that this arrangement would also assist national biosecurity management principles in the view of a disease outbreak.

Motion number 167 Bega Valley Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to work with each State Government to develop Bi-lateral Agreements that allow the EPBC Act to “turn off” requirements of state based environmental legislation, when the same species or ecosystem type requires assessment under both Federal and State Legislation.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

There is increasing pressure on outer metro, rural and coastal Local Government Areas (LGAs) around Australia to accommodate population growth and subsequent housing development to cater for these increases in population. In many LGAs there is inevitable conflict between development pressures and the environmental values of these LGAs that have not yet seen the forms of intense housing growth as metropolitan areas.

The EPBC Act has an important role in safeguarding biodiversity across Australia. The Federal EPBC Act is the only biodiversity legislation that is (largely) independent of other legislative constraints and can operate in the present-day. Biodiversity does not have any other powerful legislative safeguards that can act on current environmental circumstances.

By allowing the EPBC Act to turn off state based environmental assessment, this will provide a more streamlined and well-defined assessment process for development proponents,

provide greater clarity for LGAs charged with assessing the impacts of potential development and have enhanced environmental outcomes, through the removal of potential perverse environmental outcomes that can arise through "zombie developments".

KEY ARGUMENTS

The current Federal and State legislative assessment requirements regarding biodiversity assessment has been demonstrated to cause uncertainty for development proponents, particularly with regard to much needed new housing development.

Due to the environmental values of many of our outer urban and rural shires, there is an increasing likelihood of the need for development proponents in these areas to be faced with multi-faceted biodiversity assessment and offsetting requirements. This does not provide certainty for our local communities who are looking to preserve high value areas, whilst still encouraging appropriate housing development to be provided in a timely fashion.

Discrepancies in the application and impacts of environmental legislation between the federal and state governments can also result in perverse environmental outcomes due to other legislative constraints that impact state-based biodiversity legislation.

As an example, in certain circumstances such as zombie developments or development approvals that predate current legislation, NSW legislation (EP&A Act and BC Act) allows biodiversity impacts that could cause serious and irreversible impacts (SAIIs) that could result in extinction of a species or of a local population/s.

One solution is once a species or ecological community is listed under the EPBC Act that they are removed from State Based listings. This way there is certainty for not only proponents and their professional consultants, but also local Council staff charged with steering applicants through the current process.

Alternatively, providing bilateral legislative agreements to allow the EPBC Act the power to turn off State legislation (e.g. BC Act) where there is species / ecological community overlap.

In the NSW case this would allow the EPBC Act to facilitate a development modification when an activity is deemed to have a significant impact on a threatened entity under the NSW legislation (and therefore not allowing for a development modification). Within Bega Valley Shire Council there are prominent cases where this approach, could allow a redesign that may strike a balance between the development expectations of the site and the community, whilst still protecting the biodiversity values protected by the EPBC Act.

Motion number 168 Lake Macquarie City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish a regulatory environment allowing for the adaptive reuse of mining related sites that balances future employment generation and environmental stewardship.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

With more than 500 councils across Australia, many of which have historically been reliant on mining to support their economy, local government organisations have great potential to actively participate in the transition away from mining with adaptive reuse of land for job creation and future building.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Adaptive reuse of post-mining landscapes presents a strategic opportunity for transitioning communities. By repurposing disturbed mining and energy-generating lands, communities can avoid the environmental impact of developing untouched greenfield sites. This approach aligns with sustainable development goals and supports housing solutions, job creation and the emergence of new industries, thereby diversifying local economies.

The NSW Government has acknowledged the importance of this issue with the establishment of an inquiry into beneficial and productive post-mining land use. Multiple hearings and submissions highlight the complexity of the existing system and disconnection between landowners, mining leaseholders and future land use opportunities. It is often at the discretion of the mining leaseholder to initiate an alternative land use, and leaseholders may lack incentives to deviate from established consent conditions due to the associated risks. This situation can hinder the implementation of adaptive reuse strategies within a reasonable timeframe or uses that are relevant to a modern land use. Notably, successful projects like Black Rock Motor Resort in Lake Macquarie have progressed primarily due to the determination of the proponents, underscoring the need for a more streamlined and supportive regulatory framework.

The Australian Government's role is pivotal in facilitating the transition of mining-related lands to new uses. It must act as a custodian, ensuring active transition is encouraged and allowing a pathway where proponents other than miners have a pathway to achieve adaptive reuse. Mining companies, as key stakeholders, must be encouraged to participate actively in this process, so that new opportunities can be pursued for these lands.

Motion number 169 Sunshine Coast Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to increase funding to local governments for litter management programs to address the environmental, amenity, and financial impacts of roadside litter by targeting products or services which generate common roadside waste such as plastics, wrappers, cigarettes and vapes.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Roadside litter has widespread environmental, economic, and social impacts. Litter along roadsides contributes to pollution, harms wildlife, and degrades natural landscapes, affecting all communities. This presents ongoing costs to local governments, which are called upon to maintain the environmental health, safety, and amenity of their areas.

Economically, roadside litter can deter tourism and investment, reducing the amenity of regions and subsequently impacts local economies. Effective litter management aligns with national priorities such as environmental sustainability, public health, and community well-being. It supports the circular economy by promoting recycling and waste reduction, reducing the burden on landfills.

Local governments, which are responsible for managing a significant portion of Australia's road network, often lack the necessary resources to address this issue adequately. Increased funding and support are essential for councils to implement effective roadside litter management programs, ensuring cleaner, safer, and more attractive communities nationwide.

By addressing roadside litter as a national priority, the Australian Government can enhance environmental protection, boost local economies, and improve the quality of life for all Australians - demonstrating a commitment to sustainable and responsible governance.

Funding for such programs could target products or services that generate common roadside waste such as plastics, wrappers, cigarettes and vapes.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The ongoing costs of managing litter poses a significant and continuous impact on local governments. Providing financial support to local governments to address roadside litter can improve environmental and community outcomes.

The true cost of managing litter is difficult to estimate. In reviewing the impacts of litter and illegal dumping in Queensland, the Queensland Government found that in 2018/2019 local governments spent $59.4 million to address litter and illegal dumping. A NSW Government report from 2016 estimated the cost of litter to local governments in NSW was approximately $135 million in 2024/2015, with community organisations, private businesses and the NSW Government bearing an additional $27 million for the same period. Much of the costs associated with dealing with these issues continue to be borne by local government today.

The costs of proactively managing litter along roadsides, in addition to current local programs, are cost and resource prohibitive without support from the Federal Government.

Clean Up Australia's 2024 Litter Report states that soft plastics, wrappers and cigarette butts are the most common items found littered in areas they surveyed in 2024. The presence of vapes is also increasing at surveyed locations. The litter is most often located in waterways, followed by parks and bushland. Roadside litter often contributes to these impacts as it is moved from the roadside into these areas by weather events.

The impacts of items made of plastic and cigarette butts are well understood, with the materials taking tens to hundreds of years to degrade, being ingested by wildlife or marine life, affecting the overall health of environments which fall under the responsibility of local government.

While the behaviour of littering can be linked to several causes there is strong evidence which indicates that the presence of litter can encourage more littering. Enabling local governments to address litter consistently addresses environmental impacts while encouraging the community to change their behaviours by creating a sense of community pride and social expectation.

Enforcement is one tool available to local government to address littering behaviour; however, the impact of this is limited to observing or capturing the offence. The resourcing and infrastructure to monitor this effectively are cost prohibitive at a large scale and only addresses one component of the problem.

From a community perspective, there is also the potential to improve resourcing in areas such as volunteering. In 2024 over 1 million Australians participated in Clean-Up Australia Day activities. This does not include initiatives run by local community groups or local governments. This represents over 2.1 million hours of volunteer support. There is growing demand for volunteer support across Australia for a range of services, taking proactive action to reduce the presence and occurrence of litter may ultimately reduce the demand for volunteer support and allow community members to focus on other services in need of support.

Funding for litter programs could be provided by targeting products or services which generate common roadside waste such as plastics, wrappers, cigarettes and vapes.

Motion number 170 Loddon Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to put Basin communities at the heart of Basin Plan delivery and future water reform by ceasing the damaging water purchase programs in our irrigation districts. Water purchasing programs will lead to job losses, put food production in our region at risk and will add to the cost of living crisis. We call on the Australian Government to instead engage with communities and local governments to deliver a long-term sustainable future for food growing and manufacturing in the Basin, and to ensure improved environmental outcomes for all the Basin's valued riverine and floodplain ecosystems.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The Murray Darlin Basin is Australia's largest water catchment and river system. National coordinated water policy is required to deliver a balanced allocation of precious water resources for the ecosystems of the Basin, the communities, First Peoples and the essential food producing industries on which all Australians rely for fresh food. The current implementation of the Basin Plan using the blunt instrument of water purchase programs to transfer water ownership from irrigators to government is causing long term damage to food producing industries and the communities that rely on them and is failing the environment at the same time. Local solutions are required to ensure that the balance is right.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The Government's current approach to Basin Plan delivery is putting our food production industry and our communities' prosperity at risk. The Murray River Group's six council areas produce some $7.75 billion in food every year. The entire regional economy and 16,000 jobs depend on agriculture and food manufacturing across MRGC councils. Around half our 5000 farm businesses rely on irrigation. Although among the more productive, our region is only one part of the Murray Darling Basin. Communities and food production are at risk across the whole Basin.

As we prepare for a drier future with more intense and frequent extremes of weather, we need local, community led solutions both to ensuring a viable agriculture and food manufacturing sector into the future to produce local food for all Australians and also to ensure that unique valued environments across the region are sustained and nurtured.

Open-market, non-strategic, buy backs are a blunt instrument that will increase the pressure on irrigation districts and on irrigators, inevitably pushing up the cost of living for all Australians.

There is a better way. Put communities at the heart of the Basin Plan and water reform. By working with local communities on a catchment level to design and implement local solutions that will deliver water savings for environmental watering and will reshape irrigation districts to allow them to be more efficient and continue to be viable into the future.

Transitioning to a lower water future will require innovation and investment in altering the irrigation network. Non-strategic, open market buy backs rip water from districts without regard to their long-term operation. The evidence demonstrates that it increases water prices, increases farmer risk and exposure to the increasingly volatile temporary water market.

As well as being formally endorsed by Loddon Shire Council, this motion is supported by all six member councils of the Murray River Group of Councils.

Motion number 171 Nillumbik Shire Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to increase grant funding and investment of infrastructure to support the delivery of their National Feral Deer Action Plan 2023, which aims to limit the spread of feral deer into new areas and reduce their negative impacts on agriculture, communities and the environment.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The introduction of a commonwealth feral deer control grant program would support the delivery of the National Feral Deer Action Plan 2023.

KEY ARGUMENTS

- Further investment into the infrastructure upgrades and procurement chains could turn feral deer carcases into a commodity with sufficient commercial value to fund widespread control.
- Deer are rapidly increasing in population and extent across Australia. This needs to be halted.
- Deer destroy ground and mid-story vegetation, destroy habitat for native fauna; destroy saplings and damage mature trees; and damage waterways with hard hooves and wallowing, causing erosion and reducing water quality. They also cause agricultural, indigenous heritage and road safety impacts.
- More intensive and ongoing landscape-scale deer control is necessary to protect Australia's native biodiversity.
- There is an opportunity to for the Australian Government to partner with local government to increase on-ground control efforts; and should explore opportunities to make deer control commercially viable and self-sustaining in the long-term.

Motion number 172 Cabonne Council NSW

That this National General Assembly call on Australian Government to increase its commitment to water security to ensure local water authorities can future-proof water resources, preparing for droughts and building sustainable water networks.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Water is one of our most important resources and we must make sure it is sustainable, reliable, and resilient to drought and a changing climate.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Councils are facing major challenges in managing water supplies. Impacts such as drought and climate change are impacting on the ability to manage water resources effectively and the financial burden of replacing aging infrastructure is impacting on planning for future population growth and development.

State Governments are working with local water utilities to manage risks and develop and implement long term solutions however there is a need for an increased commitment by the Federal Government based on an integrative approach to manage this precious resource into the future.

Motion number 172.1 Western Downs Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to assess and invest in expanded long-term bulk water supply infrastructure to enable water security of regional Australia and unlock new economic opportunities for the nation.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

It is expected that investment in long-term bulk water supplies for regional areas will transform regional economies to enable new economic development opportunities, such as hydrogen. Construction of water infrastructure will create a significant number of local jobs and will greatly benefit the agricultural and renewable energy sectors, further driving economic strength.

Water security will also assist with de-urbanising metropolitan areas. The Regional Australian Institute estimates that 1 out of 5 households living in metropolitan areas is considering moving regionally. Investment in long-term bulk water sources will make the regions more attractive to live and work.

Infrastructure Development Assessment Frameworks are structured to evaluate proposed infrastructure projects of national significance to unlock new economic opportunities for the nation and to ensure high-quality decision-making.

Current assessment frameworks, such as the Infrastructure Australia Assessment Framework, are not fit-for-purpose to assess significant new infrastructure developments. Existing frameworks are biased towards short-term infrastructure projects with an immediate to short-term payback benefit. Efforts to consider significant long-term infrastructure projects are fruitless due to the short-term economic analysis of existing frameworks.

This approach limits the nation's ability to pursue significant projects and enable long-term sustainability of regional communities.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Regional Australia is at the heart of the renewable energy transition, however significant limitations to water supply are considered the single limiting factor to capitalise on new and emerging economic opportunities.

In the Western Downs region, despite representing 0.6 per cent of Queensland's population, the region contributes 1.3 per cent of the state's Gross State Product. Water demand is forecast to increase due to population growth, agricultural demand and industry demand. Demand is estimated to exceed water supply and this difference is expected to continue to grow in the absence of new supply projects. The scarcity of secure water supply will significantly constrain large-scale industrial projects that support the nation, and hurt the regions liveability.

Delivery of new long-term bulk water supply for regional communities will support forecast population and industry growth, and further unlock significant economic opportunities, such as hydrogen production. This can position Australia as a leading nation exporting hydrogen and supporting decarbonisation efforts of other nations.

A number of regional areas across Australia, including the Surat Basin, have seen strong investment in the resources industry over the past 15 years. Legacy infrastructure, as well as the available pool of highly skilled workforce, positions these regions favourably for

renewable energy generation, recognised by the proposed development of renewable energy zones across Australia.

The Surat Basin region has established itself as an energy hub on the back of some of Queensland's most productive agricultural land and beef production. The region's resilience during prolonged drought events has driven the need to become highly efficient in water management. These gains in consumer efficiency place the diverse industry portfolios in a prime position to take advantage of new water sources.

Existing energy companies are diversifying their energy portfolios and include renewable and green sources of energy generation. There is great interest in green hydrogen production, and this opportunity has the ability to transform regional economies by creating export opportunities. In addition to the energy sector, a new bulk water supply will greatly benefit the strong agricultural sector.

Significant renewable energy developments, such as hydrogen, can be unlocked by investing in a long-term bulk water supply, to leverage of current power infrastructure and enable green hydrogen production from water electrolysis (electrolytic hydrogen) and renewable energy sources such as solar and wind.

It is apparent that the ability to gain support and funding for large scale infrastructure projects are ultimately fruitless due to the assessment framework currently in place. Developments in regional Australia are further hampered due perceived economies of scale and complexities in modelling benefits over a long-term horizon.

Motion number 172.2 Balonne Shire Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to commit to early and comprehensive engagement with the local government sector on:

- The principles of the new Intergovernmental Water Agreement;
- Jurisdictional Action Plans; and
- Joint Actions Roadmap

to prevent any unintended consequences for local communities when renewing and implementing the new National Water Agreement.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The implementation and outcomes of the new National Water Agreement will have direct and significant consequences for local and regional communities across Australia. As a partner in Government, the motion calls on the Australian Government to recognise the unique role of local government (not just another stakeholder) and engage the sector appropriately to progress local, regional and national objectives for water security under the new Agreement.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The Australian Government is renewing the National Water Initiative that has socio-economic impacts for rural and remote councils that rely on secure water supplies to expand remote communities and support the irrigated agriculture sector.

Management of water resources remains the responsibility of states and territories.

The Commonwealth provides overarching policy guidance, regulation, and support to ensure these efforts are consistent.

Local government's play a key role in either delivering urban water supplies in communities or ensuring their communities have access to safe and secure water supplies.

As such, it is incumbent on the Australian as well as State/Territory Governments to ensure local government is adequately engaged in the development and implementation of the new Water Agreement and its associated Action Plans and Roadmap.

Motion number 172.3 Lithgow City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to improve grant funding opportunities to ensure that regional areas are catered for with water and sewer services.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

It is a national issue that regional Councils do not currently have funding opportunities to ensure security of water and sewer services.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Regional water schemes are becoming insecure and do not provide the level of resilience to accommodate for new development, transitioning economies

and new manufacturing or industry.

Local water utilities are operating ageing infrastructure with a rate base unable to cater for new infrastructure in its entirety and, in Lithgow's case, are complex and expensive with the use of the Fish River Scheme and many sewerage systems. Strategy development needs to progress to ensure that regional areas are catered for with water and sewer services, together with appropriate funding.

Motion number 173 Sunshine Coast Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to expand the support provided to local governments in fire ant eradication and suppression treatment areas to include financial support for resources allocated to meeting general biosecurity obligations for fire ants.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The federal government should provide increased funding to local governments in fire ant eradication and suppression treatment areas to support them in meeting their general biosecurity obligations due to the significant economic, environmental, and public health impacts if the response is inadequate to suppress their growth. Fire ants can cause extensive damage to infrastructure, agriculture, and households, with potential economic losses projected to reach $2.5 billion annually by 2035. Environmentally, fire ants disrupt ecosystems, displace native species, and reduce biodiversity. Public health is also at risk, as fire ant stings can cause severe allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis, affecting thousands of Australians.

Local governments are under pressure to balance resources across a diverse range of services and programs. The impacts of funding additional resources to support the eradication of fire ants can impact the delivery of other core services. Federal funding can provide the necessary support for coordinated and comprehensive eradication efforts, ensuring consistency and efficiency across regions. Investing in eradication now can prevent higher future costs and protect Australia's economy, environment, and public health from the severe threats posed by fire ants.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Fire ants can cause billions of dollars in damages, disrupt ecosystems, and pose significant health risks. Local governments in eradication and suppression treatment areas need federal support to meet their biosecurity obligations to contribute to an effective, coordinated eradication effort and preventing higher future costs at a national level.

The National Fire Ant Eradication Program (NFAEP) provides the lead response in eradicating and limiting the spread of fire ants throughout Australia. Their efforts are focused on South-East Queensland where the initial incursion of fire ants has taken place. While the NFAEP are the lead response agency, local governments play key roles in their respective regions for managing open spaces such as waste facilities, parks and environmental reserves. Local governments in the heart of biosecurity zone (the eradication and suppression treatment areas) are particularly impacted with most having to implement additional pest control programs to meet their general biosecurity obligation for fire ants. The response of the local government is important to limiting the spread and effect of fire ants, failure to meet their biosecurity obligations would have impacts to all of Australia:

- Environmental protection - Fire ants cause severe environmental damage by preying on native species and disrupting ecosystems. This can lead to a loss of biodiversity and long-term ecological changes.
- Public health and safety - Fire ants are a major public health concern. Their stings can cause severe allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis. An inquiry 2024 estimated that 174,000 people could develop severe allergic reactions if fire ants were to become endemic in Australia. Additionally, based on current data fire ants could cause six deaths and trigger 116,000 medical visits annually in Queensland alone.
- Economic impact - Fire ants pose a significant economic threat. They can damage infrastructure, including roads and electrical systems, leading to costly repairs and maintenance. The projected economic losses if fire ants are not eradicated could reach up to $2.5 billion annually by 2035.

A coordinated national approach, which includes enabling local governments in the eradication and suppression areas to respond appropriately to land under their control, is key to ensuring a consistent and efficient outcome nationally.

While the Federal Government has committed significant funding to the national program and supporting local governments with the supply of treatment material and training, this does not address the significant resource investment for local governments in the eradication and suppression areas. Funding should be targeted to local governments with biosecurity obligations within the eradication and suppression areas.

Motion number 174 Strathfield Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to advocate for increased federal funding for urban greening initiatives, including tree planting programs and green space enhancements in local communities.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Urban greening helps reduce the urban heat island effect, lowers carbon emissions, and enhances biodiversity, all of which directly contribute to national climate adaptation and sustainability targets.

Access to green spaces improves mental and physical health, encourages active lifestyles, and strengthens social cohesion.

Tree planting and green infrastructure reduce flood risk, improve stormwater management, and increase resilience to extreme weather events.

Urban greening projects generate local jobs, boost property values, and create more attractive and inclusive public spaces.

Not all communities have equal access to quality green spaces, this disproportionately affects disadvantaged and high-density areas.

Urban greening is a priority for councils of all sizes, particularly those facing growth pressures, urban heat, or community health challenges.

Councils are best placed to plan and deliver greening initiatives in partnership with their communities.

While some state and local programs exist, there is a clear need for more robust and long-term federal funding support to scale up impact.

The motion supports national frameworks such as the National Urban Policy, National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy, and 2030 Emissions Reduction Target.

Federal investment in urban greening fosters stronger intergovernmental partnerships and supports place-based solutions to environmental and urban challenges.

KEY ARGUMENTS

1. Urban greening helps meet Australia's climate adaptation, emissions reduction, and biodiversity targets.
2. Green spaces support mental and physical health, reduce heat stress, improve air quality, and encourage active lifestyles.
3. Tree planting and green infrastructure help manage stormwater, reduce urban heat, and increase resilience to extreme weather events.
4. Greening projects create local jobs, enhance property values, and activate public spaces, supporting local economies and community life.
5. Federal investment ensures all communities can access quality green spaces.
6. Councils are best placed to design and deliver greening projects tailored to their communities' needs.
7. Supports key federal priorities such as the National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy and Urban Policy Framework.
8. A national funding commitment fosters stronger partnerships and enables place-based solutions to environmental and urban challenges.

Motion number 175 Whitsunday Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to allocate dedicated funding and resources for Local Governments to support the implementation of the PFAS National Environmental Management Plan.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This is a national issue because PFAS (per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances) are widespread environmental contaminants that pose significant health risks to communities across Australia.

Contamination from PFAS can affect water supplies, soil, and ecosystems, leading to long-term health concerns and environmental damage.

Debating this at the National General Assembly highlights the urgent need for a coordinated response to PFAS contamination and providing a platform for local representatives to advocate for the resources they need to address these challenges effectively.

KEY ARGUMENTS

PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) are a group of synthetic chemicals that have been widely used in various industries, including manufacturing, firefighting, and consumer products.

The PFAS National Environmental Management Plan was developed to provide a framework for managing and mitigating the risks associated with these contaminants. However, local governments often lack the funding and resources necessary to implement this plan effectively.

- Allocating dedicated funding for local governments is essential for addressing the health risks posed by PFAS contamination.
- By providing Local Governments with the necessary funding, the Australian Government can support efforts to reduce PFAS levels in the environment, contributing to healthier ecosystems and sustainable communities.
- Consistency in the approach and management of PFAS across all Councils will help contribute to a greater understanding and the implementation of mitigation measures to minimise the environmental impacts on local communities.
- Funding can be used for community education and engagement initiatives that inform residents about PFAS risks and remediation processes.

Motion number 175.1 Narrabri Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to create a non-competitive funding pool, as part of a broader compensation fund accessible by local government, to address the progressive remediation of PFAS-contaminated town drinking water supplies.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion aligns to ALGA Priority 1 and is consistent with the Intergovernmental Agreement on a National Framework for Responding to PFAS Contamination which came into effect in February 2018. It is an agreement between the Commonwealth and the states

and territories to respond consistently to PFAS contamination to protect the environment and, as a precaution, protect human health.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Australian councils are increasingly grappling with PFAS contamination in their drinking water supplies. Affected communities potentially face catastrophic situations, particularly during future droughts without urgent intervention.

Stricter proposed PFAS drinking water guidelines, as recently released by the National Health and Medical Research Council, will further significantly limit four types of 'forever chemicals', technically known as per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances. With ongoing challenges facing the sector in respect of financial sustainability, local government is not currently equipped, both in a resourcing and fiscal sense, to manage and administer complex remediation programs nor associated unplanned infrastructure upgrades.

Motion number 175.2 Randwick City Council NSW

This National General Assembly of Local Government calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Recognise and address the devastating health and social impacts of PFAS chemicals and PFAS contamination on individuals, communities and the environment;
2. Acknowledge that many communities have been severely impacted by contamination from PFAS used by Commonwealth agencies, such as the Department of Defence and Airservices Australia, and by industry;
3. Investigate contamination from PFAS used by Commonwealth agencies and industry, and release all reports;
4. Fund and commence remediation of all impacted sites, water catchments and waterways;
5. Conduct water testing and install appropriate filtration on all affected drinking water treatment plants;
6. Overhaul our chemicals regulatory framework to uphold the precautionary principle and prioritise hazard assessments ahead of risk assessment for all industrial chemicals, both existing and those being introduced into Australia and address PFAS as a full class, restricting and eliminating all imports, usage and emissions to the environment of PFAS;
7. Immediately stop the use of PFAS-contaminated biosolids, a byproduct of wastewater treatment plants, much of which is applied to agricultural lands;
8. Immediately ban the use of PFAS in all food contact packaging and restrict PFAS in all imported consumer products, with a focus on personal care items and children and baby products;
9. Undertake widescale monitoring of agricultural environments and natural areas, particularly river systems and urban wetlands; and
10. Initiate a claim against 3M to help finance PFAS elimination, remediation, and compensation efforts, particularly for impacted First Nations, Defence Department and neighbouring communities.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion addresses the following key questions in the 2025 discussion paper: How could the Australian Government partner with local government to strengthen Australia's environmental services and infrastructure?

KEY ARGUMENTS

Significant community concerns regarding PFAS are being investigated in the current NSW Parliament Select Committee Inquiry into PFAS Contamination in Waterways and Drinking Water Supplies Throughout NSW and the Senate Select Committee on PFAS (per and polyfluoroalkyl substances).

PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, a group of over 4000 chemicals) have many specialty applications and have been widely used in a range of products in Australia and internationally since the 1950s.

Because of their unique physical and chemical properties, including heat and chemical resistance, PFAS have been used in:

textiles and leather products, metal plating, food packaging, firefighting foams, floor polishes, denture cleanser, shampoos, coatings and coating additives, photographic and photolithographic processes, medical devices, hydraulic fluids.

PFAS chemicals endanger the health of humans, the environment, and the climate. The durability of PFAS means they do not break down in the natural environment, which has earned them the nickname "forever chemicals." They have been detected in drinking water, soil, household dust, groundwater, wastewater, and even rainfall. Contamination from release of PFAS into the environment has the potential for impacts beyond the site and may remain in the environment over an unknown time period.

PFAS chemicals have been demonstrated to damage endocrine, reproductive and immune system health of both humans and wildlife. A study on PFAS in three Australian communities with known contamination undertaken by ANU found that there was clear evidence of elevated blood serum concentrations of PFAS in residents and workers in the three PFAS-affected communities, and of increased psychological distress in the three exposed communities.

Many local councils are responsible for providing water and sewerage services to their communities via council-owned and operated local water utilities (LWUs).

Councils also deliver waste, recycling and resource recovery services to the community, and provide and operate recycling and disposal infrastructure to reduce the amount of waste ending up in landfill and the environment. Councils continue to face significant challenges from increasing waste generation and materials.

A resolution of LGNSW's 2024 Annual Conference was to call on the NSW Government use the Plastic Reduction and Circular Economy Act 2021 to ban intentionally added Polyfluoroalkyl chemicals (PFAS) in all products that may impact human health especially all food packaging and products. Given many products are imported from overseas and interstate, corresponding national controls on PFAS are also sought.

PFAS contamination in land, food and water sources appears to be increasingly identified across Australian communities. While the federal government plays a coordinating role in pollution regulation across the country, more needs to be done to ensure standards and guidance set at the national level are being implemented and enforced at the state and territory level. Given the need to take a precautionary approach when impacts of PFAS on the environment and human health are still being revealed, this National General Assembly of Local Government calls for greater consistency, enforceability, and protection of our communities.

Source:

https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/PFAS_per_and_polyfluoroalkyl_substances/PFAS/Submissions

Motion number 176 Snowy Valleys Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to ensure that blackberries be considered as a priority weed and controlled for all Local Government Areas across Australia.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

To address the economic impact, costs, productivity loss and regional economic loss caused by Blackberry.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The Blackberry (and its various genomic variations - more than 20) is considered a weed of national significance because of its invasiveness and ability to spread. It is among Australia's top 10 invasive species, impacting 47 threatened native Australian species as well as biodiversity and eco-system services.

Blackberry has been removed as a priority weed on the NSW State Weeds Action Plan.

The environmental, social and economic impacts of invasive Blackberry species in NSW are well understood by landholders but somehow misrepresented in polices and regional plans.

The impact of letting Blackberries grow uncontrolled will have a long-lasting impact on the environment, fire preparation, tourism and productivity.

Motion number 177 Town of Bassendean WA

This National General Assembly:

1. Requests the Australian Government to take urgent action to legislate to restrict the sale nationally of Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (SGARs).
2. Requests the Australian Government, as a priority, to curtail the use of SGAR's in all Commonwealth national parks, reserves and property administered by the government and/or it's agents as a first step towards a legislative ban or restricted sale of SGAR's.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion aligns with NGA's 11th priority area 'Environment' outlining the need for the Australian Government to partner with local governments to undertake broad and diverse work to support improved environmental outcomes.

The Australian Government plays a vital role in reducing the distribution of products toxic to our environment. Local Governments are confronted with multiple challenges due to the widespread availability of SGAR's as outlined in the following points:

- Environmental Impact: SGAR's are highly toxic to non-target wildlife that consume rodents poisoned by these chemicals The accumulation of these toxins in the food chain leads to significant ecological imbalances and harms biodiversity.

- Threat to Public Health: SGAR's, if misused or improperly disposed of are a risk to human and pet health. This is concerning in urban settings where exposure to these chemicals is most prevalent.
- Pest Resistance: Over time rodents can develop resistance to SGAR's, which diminishes their effectiveness as a pest control method, leading to increased reliance on even more toxic substances.
- Long-Term Ecosystem Health: SGAR's can remain in the environment for extended periods, affecting the health of ecosystems for years The restriction of these chemicals helps mitigate their long-term effects, promoting a healthier, more sustainable environment.

Restricting the sale of SGAR's aligns with the national interest by protecting wildlife, public health, and the environment, while also ensuring effective and responsible pest management.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs) are referred to as 'single-dose anticoagulants'. A lethal dose can be ingested in a single feeding, making SGARs substantially more potent than First Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (FGARs). SGARs are slower to break down than FGARs and pose a higher risk of secondary poisoning to non-target animals (source: Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority).

Non-target animals including owls, eagles, magpies, kookaburras, lizards, ravens, snakes and other native wildlife are at risk of secondary poisoning by anticoagulant rodenticides. A study by BirdLife Australia found SGARs in the livers of nearly all deceased Owls that they analysed. It is important that the risks associated with using Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (SGARs) are acknowledged together with their impact on non-target species.

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Authority (APVMA) has commenced a 'reconsideration of anticoagulant rodenticide'. This will reassess the risks associated with the use of these products and consider whether labels carry adequate instructions to protect the health and safety of people. Anticoagulant rodenticides; warfarin, coumatetralyl, diphacinone, brodifacoum, bromadiolone, difenacoum, difethialone and flocoumafen were all nominated for review. In the meantime there is mounting evidence of negative impacts to native wildlife through secondary poisoning associated with the ease of access and widespread use of SGAR's.

Motion number 177.1 Shire of Mundaring WA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to restrict or eliminate the use of second generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs), because of their severely negative impact on native wildlife, particularly owls.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This issue of the widespread use of second generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs) is a matter of national significance because it negatively impacts wildlife. And because owls and other native wildlife eat the poisoned rodents (rats and mice) they are killed themselves because of the longevity of the poison contained in SGARs.

This is because second SGARs use much more powerful chemicals to get a near instant kill on rodents as opposed to first generation rodenticides which use a weaker chemical to kill rats and are therefore are much less dangerous to wildlife in Australia.

AVPMA is the national authority responsible for pesticides and poisons in Australia. AVPMA are an instrument of the Australian National Government and therefore this motion and its message needs to be heard by government as this is likely an easy way to prevent loss of species in Australia that are being poisoned by SGARs. The EU, UK and US also restrict the use of SGARs. British Colombia in Canada has banned their use. Australia needs to take action now to restrict or eliminate altogether the use of SGARs by following in the footsteps of other countries that have restricted their use.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Rationale/Key arguments in support of the motion

The instant kill component of Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides, has been scientifically proven to kill native wildlife that consume rodents poisoned by SGARs.

The Australian Government through the Australian Veterinary Medicine and Pesticides Authority (AVMPA) has the power to restrict and limit or ban altogether the use of second generation anticoagulant rodenticides to protect native wildlife.

Owls are particularly vulnerable to such poisoning as they catch and eat sick, poisoned and dying rats.

This is a matter of national environmental significance as these SGAR poisons are deadly to wildlife and are easily available in shops across Australia.

Shire of Mundaring's Environmental Advisory Group (committee) had previously advised Council of this emerging environmental issue and as a consequence, Council has unanimously passed the following resolution on 12th September 2023 as follows:

Resolution That Council:

1. Declare the Shire of Mundaring to be Owl Friendly;

2. Requests that as part of the scheduled review of the Purchasing Policy, it be amended to require that any pest management at Shire facilities is planned to minimise risk to wildlife and does not include the use of Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides; and

3. That information regarding the Owl Friendly initiative be provided to schools within the Shire.

If these kinds of operational initiatives could be taken across Australia by Councils then there would be significant environmental benefits for the wildlife of Australia.

However better still would be a nation-wide ban or at the least restricted use of these SGARs to protect wildlife from these poisons at a more strategic and overarching national level by the Australian Government.

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CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Motion number 178 Blacktown City Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Adopt broader legislative change to introduce right to repair laws
2. Adopt legislative change to mandate that electronic and electronic items have a repairability index
3. Remove GST from repair services.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The Australian Government has set a national ambition to double Australia's circularity by 2035 under Australia's Circular Economy Framework 2024.

KEY ARGUMENTS

To help Australia's circular economy transition under a national ambition, the Australian Government needs to support consumers to keep products and materials in the economy for longer.

The Australian Government has failed to support reuse and product repairability as a core principle of the circular economy having no legislative, regulatory or policy position. Opportunities to support the repair sector could include:

- Strong legislative framework
- Supporting training in repair services
- Facilitating increased job opportunities in the repair sector
- Promoting to consumers the benefits including environmental benefits of using repair businesses and services.

The Australian Government has failed to implement regulatory measures to ensure products and materials remain in the economy for longer through repair and they need to take urgent action, which could include:

- Introducing broader right to repair laws that set compliance standards requiring manufacturers to provide access to repair information, tools and services for their products where suitable
- Remove GST from repair services to promote and to incentivise repair and encourage consumers to opt for repairing rather than replacement
- Adoption of a repairability index for electronic and electrical equipment, in the first instance, to provide consumers with clear and accessible information on the ease and cost of repairing products so they can make informed purchasing decisions.

For example, the French repairability index implemented in 2021, models a successful mandatory regulation for electrical and electronic items displaying clear information on the repairability of items.

The Australian Government should support local governments in their endeavours to move to a more circular economy where products are designed to be repaired, and repair is an accessible option for consumers.

Motion number 179 Noosa Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to commit to conducting a feasibility study to evaluate the implementation of a policy similar to the European Union's Urban Wastewater Treatment and Reuse framework, as part of Australia's efforts to achieve its Zero Pollution goals.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The EU's goal to remove micropollutants from urban wastewater by 2045 sets a vital benchmark for sustainable water management. A feasibility study examining the applicability of this framework in Australia - including challenges, costs, benefits, and broader impacts on communities, economies, and the environment, would enable Australia to determine its practicality. Such an approach would help secure long-term water resources, protect public health, and enhance environmental quality.

By prioritizing advanced wastewater treatment and reuse technologies, Australia can improve water management, reduce pollution, and remove emergent micropollutants to ensure good water quality. The EU has introduced new rules to better protect people and the environment. This contributes to national sustainability, climate resilience, and Zero Pollution objectives. Moreover, the study will encourage collaboration between federal and local governments, fostering a unified effort to enhance environmental services and infrastructure across the nation.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The EU's goal to remove micropollutants from urban wastewater by 2045 sets an important standard for sustainable water management. A feasibility study that assesses the new standard's applicability, implementation challenges, and both direct and indirect costs and benefits for local communities, economies, and environments will allow Australia to assess whether this approach is practical, helping to secure long-term water resources, protect public health, and improve environmental quality.

Strengthening environmental services and infrastructure in Australia is essential. Local governments are pivotal in managing these services yet often face significant challenges due to limited resources and technical expertise. Fostering a stronger partnership with the Australian Government can address these challenges, yielding better environmental outcomes.

Water management is a critical area of focus. The EU's Urban Wastewater Treatment and Reuse framework is an exemplary sustainable water management model. A feasibility study would critically evaluate the benefits and challenges of adopting such a framework in Australia, including direct and indirect impacts on communities, economies, and ecosystems. This step is key to identifying practical measures for successful implementation.

Adopting advanced wastewater treatment and reuse technologies can transform Australia's water management systems. These technologies eliminate micropollutants and enable the reuse of treated water for purposes like irrigation and industrial applications-vital for securing water resources in regions facing scarcity.

Implementing such practices aligns with Australia's sustainability and Zero Pollution goals. Reducing micropollutants in natural water bodies will protect ecosystems, biodiversity, and public health.

Motion number 180 Noosa Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to undertake a comprehensive review into the end of waste criteria for resource recovery products against the specification for materials used in federal, state, and local infrastructure projects.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

A review into the end of waste criteria for resource recovery products against the specification for materials used in federal, state, and local infrastructure projects, including identifying and balancing associated risks. For example, crushed concrete, crushed glass, mulch, and compost for use in road base, parks and gardens, etc. Desired outcome is a pathway forward to facilitate and incentivise re-use of processed waste in local and state infrastructure projects to drive pull market dynamics.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Currently, there is an identified (or perceived) gap between the specifications required for materials to be used in commonwealth, state, and local infrastructure projects (i.e. roads), and the resource recovery products such as crushed concrete specifications to meet the criteria for use in these types of projects.

The purpose of this review is to assess the suitability and alignment of these resource recovery products with infrastructure project requirements to promote a circular economy throughout Queensland.

As an example, but not limited to, the review shall consider products such as crushed concrete, crushed glass, mulch, and compost for use in road base, parks and gardens, playground equipment etc.

Given the strategic drives towards a circular economy and principles outlined in the Waste Management Hierarchy. Re-use of products is a strategic objective of the government. This review also aligns with the state development goals including:

- Responsible Consumption and production
- Sustainable cities and communities
- Good health and wellbeing

Motion number 181 Glen Innes Severn Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to support implementation of the Australian Biochar Industry 2030 Roadmap, the world's first such roadmap to provide concurrent action on energy, climate, sustainability and circular

economy across the Australian economy, providing potential new 'green' jobs in regional and urban communities, and upcycling more than 50 million tonnes per year of carbon-based biowastes into valuable biochar for agriculture and industry, and liquids and syngas for energy and renewable fuels. Supporting the roadmap also helps satisfy recommendations of the Circular Economy Ministerial Advisory Group's (CEMAG) final report to prioritise market development for biochar and would be in line with significant international movements such as in Denmark.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

National/global issue is the threat of Global warming. In keeping with Australia being a signatory to the Paris Accord, we have a national commitment and obligation to harness and reduce our carbon footprint and environmental impact. The above Roadmap provides opportunities to harness benefits from Biochar. This General Assembly of Australia's local governments has an opportunity to participate and define the environmental debate.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Climate change and renewable energy; this proposal builds on the mandates of developing partnerships, programs, and initiatives which local government and the Australian Government can form to achieve Australia's 2050 net zero emissions target.

Citing the Paris Accord: "With a climate cataclysm looming, the pace and scale of current climate action plans are wholly insufficient to effectively tackle climate change. Increasingly frequent and intense extreme weather events are already impacting every region on Earth. Rising temperatures will escalate these hazards further, posing grave risks.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) emphasizes that deep, rapid and sustained reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are essential in all sectors, beginning now and continuing throughout this decade. To limit global warming to 1.5oC above pre- industrial levels, emissions must already be decreasing and need to be cut by almost half by 2030, just seven years away.

Urgent and transformative action is crucial, going beyond mere plans and promises. It requires raising ambition, covering entire economies and moving towards climate-resilient development, while outlining a clear path to achieve net-zero emissions. Time is running out, and immediate measures are necessary to avoid catastrophic consequences and secure a sustainable future for generations to come". Through:

- Highlighting the products, services, and benefits available within various markets
- Aligning biochar's benefits to the objectives of government, industry, and the community at large
- Defining and mainstreaming the requirements for Carbon neutrality and beyond through clear carbon accounting methodologies and robust verification

Australia will contribute to versatile, dynamic and carbon neutral industry. Link to Roadmap: https://anzbig.org/biochar-industry-2030-roadmap/

Motion number 182 Town of Claremont WA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to work with state, territory, and local governments to:

1. Develop a National Recycled Materials Market Development Strategy that includes:

   a. Investment incentives for manufacturers using recycled content
   b. Mandatory recycled content procurement targets for all levels of government
   c. Research and development support for new recycled material applications
   d. Funding for regional recycling hubs that can achieve economies of scale
2. Establish a nationally consistent regulatory framework for the circular economy that:
   a. Harmonises definitions, standards, and end-of-waste criteria across jurisdictions
   b. Implements a national contamination standard for recyclable materials
   c. Streamlines approval processes for recycling facilities and technologies
   d. Expands mandatory product stewardship schemes for priority materials
3. Create a dedicated National Organics Recovery Program that:
   a. Supports the expansion of Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) collection systems
   b. Develops nationally consistent quality standards for processed organics
   c. Invests in regional-scale organics processing infrastructure
   d. Removes regulatory barriers to beneficial use of processed organics in agriculture, landscaping, and land rehabilitation

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion aligns with the 2025 NGA theme "National Priorities Need Local Solutions" by recognising that while waste and recycling challenges require national coordination, implementation must be tailored to local conditions and delivered through local government.

The motion supports several national priorities, including:

- Reducing emissions through diversion of organic waste from landfill
- Creating jobs in the circular economy
- Improving Australia's resource security and resilience
- Delivering more sustainable and cost-effective waste management.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Australia's waste and recycling sector continues to face significant challenges despite progress and attention across all levels of government, including the Commonwealth (through the National Waste Policy Action Plan 2024). Local governments across Australia are experiencing increasing pressure to improve resource recovery outcomes while managing rising costs and complex market conditions for recycled materials. Specific challenges for local councils that would benefit from a coordinated, national approach include:

1. Fragmented markets for recycled materials: Data from the National Waste Report 2022-23 ("National Waste Report") indicates that while Australia's resource recovery rate has improved to 62%, there remains significant variability in market demand for recovered materials. Local governments continue to face uncertain and volatile markets for many recycled commodities, particularly mixed plastics, glass, and some paper grades. The 2023 Australian Circular Economy Baseline report by CSIRO identified that only 18% of materials remain in productive use after their initial lifecycle, highlighting significant opportunities for improvement in market development.

2. Inconsistent regulatory environment: Regulatory inconsistencies across states and territories create inefficiencies and barriers to investment in recycling infrastructure. This includes:

a. Varying definitions of waste and resource recovery

b. Different end-of-waste criteria and specifications

c. Inconsistent product stewardship requirements

d. Divergent approaches to market development.

3. Contamination standards: The absence of nationally consistent contamination standards has been identified as a key barrier to developing robust domestic markets for recycled materials. Processors and manufacturers report that inconsistent input quality makes it difficult to develop reliable supply chains and products. The National Waste Report notes that contamination rates in kerbside recycling vary from 6-25% across different council areas, significantly impacting the economic viability of recycling operations.

4. Organics recovery: Organics represent approximately 50% of municipal waste streams, with the potential to deliver significant environmental and economic benefits through proper recovery and processing. However, the organics recycling industry faces its own specific challenges:

a. Inconsistent collection systems across jurisdictions

b. Varying quality standards for processed organics

c. Limited market development for compost and other organic outputs

d. Regulatory barriers to beneficial use of processed organics.

Motion number 183 Strathfield Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Develop a national Circular Economy Strategy with targeted funding and regulatory support for local governments.
2. Provide direct financial assistance to local councils to invest in circular economy initiatives, including infrastructure, waste reduction programs, and local circular business partnerships.
3. Strengthen producer responsibility schemes to reduce waste at its source and incentivise circular design.
4. Standardise national procurement policies to prioritise recycled and sustainable materials across all levels of government.
5. Facilitate knowledge-sharing networks and provide capacity-building support for councils to implement circular economy principles effectively.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Australia generates over 75 million tonnes of waste annually, and traditional linear consumption models are unsustainable. Transitioning to a circular economy is essential for long-term environmental protection, resource efficiency, and economic resilience.

A circular economy reduces greenhouse gas emissions, conserves raw materials, and supports Australia's commitments under the National Waste Policy, Climate Change Act 2022, and global agreements like the Paris Agreement.

Circular models support local manufacturing, innovation, and green jobs, boosting local economies while reducing environmental impact. National coordination is needed to scale and support this economic transformation.

Councils face fragmented policies, inconsistent regulations, and varying access to recycling infrastructure. A national strategy would drive standardisation, efficiency, and collaboration across all levels of government and industry.

With direct funding and capacity-building, councils can drive place-based innovation-such as reuse hubs, repair cafes, community composting, and circular business precincts.

Communities increasingly expect action on waste reduction, sustainability, and climate change. This motion ensures councils have the tools, support, and legislative framework to meet those expectations effectively.

KEY ARGUMENTS

1. A circular economy reduces emissions, conserves resources, and supports Australia's waste and climate commitments.
2. Councils manage waste services, support local businesses, and engage communities, making them critical to circular economy success.
3. Councils face inconsistent regulations, limited infrastructure, and insufficient funding to scale circular initiatives.
4. Circular economy programs can drive innovation, boost local manufacturing, and support green jobs in communities across Australia.
5. A national strategy ensures alignment across all levels of government, enabling efficient and standardised approaches to waste and resource management.
6. Strengthening product stewardship schemes ensures manufacturers are accountable for end-of-life product management, easing the burden on councils.
7. Federal support ensures that regional and remote councils can access the infrastructure and resources needed to participate in the circular economy transition.
8. With funding and capacity-building, councils can lead local programs such as reuse hubs, composting, and sustainable procurement.

Motion number 183.1 Bega Valley Shire Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to take decisive action in supporting local governments in the transition towards a circular economy. Recognising the critical importance of local governments in providing place-based solutions to national priorities, we urge the federal government to implement the following measures:

1. Support local government circular economy initiatives

Increase federal funding and support for local government initiatives that promote and deliver circular economy outcomes. This would include resourcing local governments to:

- Investigate and implement circular economy opportunities within their own operations
- Support local communities to transition to a circular economy.

2. Invest in innovation, skills development, data capture and analysis:

Support innovation and skills development by integrating circular economy priorities into government funding programs and providing financial support for material flow analysis to support informed decision-making.

3. Legislate for a circular future:

Introduce legislation that provides an overarching, integrated regulatory framework for the circular economy. This legislation should include clear objectives and principles, a framework for setting design rules for products, and a regulatory framework for product stewardship.

4. Empower consumers and communities:

Implement measures to empower consumers and communities by building circular economy literacy, improving product labelling for durability and repairability, and supporting initiatives that promote reuse, repair, and recycling.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The transition to a circular economy is a national issue because it has significant economic, environmental, and social implications. Economically, it can drive growth by creating new business opportunities, jobs, and industries, while reducing waste and resource extraction. Environmentally, it helps minimise degradation and lower greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to national sustainability goals. Socially, it promotes sustainable consumption, improves public health, and fosters community resilience. Local governments need federal support to implement circular practices effectively.

The Federal Government's Circular Economy Ministerial Advisory Group's 2024 report, 'The Circular Advantage' highlights the importance of this transition. The motion aligns with the report's recommendations. With increasing interest in circular economy outcomes across all levels of government, it is timely to emphasise the important role that local governments must play in the transition and to advocate for appropriate resources and policy frameworks to support them.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The circular economy is a model of production and consumption that involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing, and recycling existing materials and products to optimise their value in the economy for as long as possible.

This approach aims to tackle global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, waste, and pollution by designing out waste and pollution, keeping products and materials in use, and regenerating natural systems.

Local governments play a crucial role in the transition to a circular economy. They are on the front lines of managing waste and environmental sustainability, making their involvement and support essential for achieving national goals. However, local governments often face challenges such as limited resources, funding, and expertise.

A coordinated national approach is necessary to harmonise regulations, standards, and specifications related to the circular economy, ensuring consistency and efficiency across different levels of government and industry.

Through this motion, local governments can collectively advocate for the necessary federal support and policy changes to drive the transition to a circular economy.

Motion number 184 City of Darwin NT

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to review regional waste processing to identify opportunities for more innovative waste processing approaches by councils, including waste aggregation and transfers to more advanced recycling facilities and alternative technology facilities including waste to energy.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The National Waste and Resource Recovery Reports outlines the increase in generation of waste in Australia over time. In the latest report covering 2022-23, about 75.6 Mt of headline waste was generated in Australia, including 13.5 Mt (18%) being Municipal Solid Waste. Waste diversion and recycling rates continue to grow nationally, however there is a lag between targets and outcomes across Australia, most noticeable in regional areas such as the Northern Territory.

The National Waste Policy Action Plan 2024 includes targets such as Reduce total waste generated in Australia by 10% per person by 2030; achieve an 80% average resource recovery rate from all waste streams following the waste hierarchy by 2030; and halve the amount of organic waste sent to landfill for disposal by 2030.

Addressing lagging waste diversion in parts of Australia such as the Northern Territory is critical if Australia is to meet its waste diversion and recycling targets. Given entrenched trends and practices increasing this challenge, it is timely to thoroughly explore how new technologies in waste handling and processing, such as waste to energy, can support regional cities and towns to reduce waste to landfill.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The Northern Territory has unique challenges in waste management and resource recovery with a relatively small and dispersed population base with limited infrastructure connectivity and weather extremes. These conditions pose challenges for traditional waste management and resource recovery due to high transportation costs, limited economies of scale and financial viability of new infrastructure. The majority of remote waste generated across the Northern Territory is stranded in remote areas, creating a lost circular economy opportunity and compliance, environmental and human health issues for local communities who do not have the resources for effective onsite waste processing.

Despite ongoing efforts to address the issue of low resource recovery rates in the Northern Territory, the Territory continues to have the lowest resource recovery rates in Australia, ranging between 20 - 34% since 2006, well below the Nation's average (Australian National Waste Report 2020 and 2024). The Northern Territory has an extremely limited ability to achieve or contribute towards the 2030 resource recovery targets outlined in the National Waste Policy Action Plan 2024 without a fundamental shift in how waste is managed and treated.

As owner of Shoal Bay Waste Management Facility, the Top End region's only licenced landfill facility, City of Darwin has worked with the Circular Economy divisions within Federal and Territory Governments to implement best practice circular economy initiatives and progress the 2030 City of Darwin Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy. City of Darwin has also tested the market with regard to establishing a food organics composting facility, and secondly, investigating advanced waste processing opportunities, including waste to energy.

Whilst City of Darwin and other regional councils in Australia continue to implement measures to increase diversion of waste to landfill, given entrenched trends and practices

increasing this challenge, it is timely to thoroughly explore how new technologies in waste handling and processing, such as waste to energy, can support regional cities and towns to reduce waste to landfill, thereby extending the life of existing landfill facilities and reducing costs for current and future ratepayers, while also empowering the regions to do more to improve waste diversion and resource recovery more broadly.

Therefore, this motion calls on the Australian Government to review regional waste processing to identify opportunities for more innovative waste processing approaches by councils, including waste aggregation and transfers to more advanced recycling facilities and alternative technology facilities including waste to energy.

OTHER ISSUES

Motion number 185 Hume City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to reduce the fuel excise to better support the community that is suffering due to increased cost of living expenses.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Communities across Australia are grappling with the challenges of a cost-of-living crisis. Intervention from the Commonwealth in reducing the Fuel Excise can make a significant difference on the budgets of families right across Australia.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The fuel excise is a flat sales tax levied by the Federal Government on petrol and diesel and from 5 February 2024 the rate has increased from 48.8 cents per litre to 49.6 cents per litre for every litre of fuel purchased.

While 0.8 cents is by no means a dramatic rise, the latest increase will mean close to $40 in total excise costs per tank for a large SUV with an 80-litre fuel tank. Australian motorists will pay $67.6 billion over the next four years (2023-24 to 2026-27), as forecasted in the October 2023 Federal budget.

For a typical household, this year's fuel excise bill will be over $1,000. For Hume City Council, it is estimated that we pay approximately $500,000 per annum in fuel excise to support our fleet of vehicles to provide essential services such as rubbish collection.

In 2022 the Federal Government temporarily halved the fuel excise, providing a 24.2 cent per litre (GST inclusive) cut to petrol over a period of six months as part of their pre-election cost of living package. We call on the Australian Government to reduce the excise to better support the community.

Motion number 186 Darebin City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

- Confirm its commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as part of Agenda 2030.

- Deliver a program to support local governments to adopt the UN SDG Framework and integrate consideration of the Goals into Council Plans and other key strategic documents.
- Deliver a grant program to support local governments to fund actions aligned with the SDG commitments developed through their strategic objectives.
- Create a reporting framework that local government can participate in to record and demonstrate the collective action on the SDGs across the country.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Outline a clear pathway at the Federal level to recommit to the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goal Agenda and as part of this, resource local government to progress alignment with and implement programs to address the SDGs in ways that are meaningful to their local context.

KEY ARGUMENTS

In 2015 the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, joined 193 Leaders and Ministers from across the globe at the United Nations in New York, to welcome and endorse the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Australia actively participated in international discussions to design the 2030 Agenda and supported the involvement of all development actors, including civil society organisations, the private sector and academia.

Australia was also part of the Voluntary National Review 2018 through the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and Key Messages out of this included:

The SDGs reflect Australia's values and belief in a 'fair go'.

The SDGs reflect things that Australians value highly and seek to protect, like a healthy environment, access to opportunity and services, human rights, inclusive economies, diverse and supportive communities and our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage. Our support for political, economic and religious freedoms, liberal democracy, the rule of law, equality and mutual respect underpin a strong, fair and cohesive society.

Core to the Australian understanding of the SDGs is the Australian value of a "fair go". Like "leaving no one behind", it is a call to action for fairness, justice and equality of opportunity.

This is a 'whole of Australia' endeavour, across the whole Agenda.

The 2030 Agenda is not just for and about government initiatives and activity: it also involves the business sector, civil society, academia, communities, families and individuals. Australians are already contributing to achievement of the SDGs through their work in the care economy, by volunteering, by preserving the natural environment and through their everyday activity.

Australia's youth play a crucial role given their potential to deliver on the SDGs into the future and their stake in the realisation of the Goals.

Our response to the SDGs is shaped by our environment, governance systems, institutions, economy, and society.

Australia is a constitutional, democratic federation of states and territories sharing governance and regulatory responsibilities with the national level of Government. Local governments have a vital role in local services and regulation. There is coordination and collaboration between all levels of government, supported by a range of existing institutions and processes that ensure accountability and transparency.

Despite this early engagement, efforts to drive the agenda from the national level seems to have stalled since 2018. There has been significant efforts through the higher education sector (including formal assessment mechanisms), in some of corporate Australia and in Victoria, the City of Melbourne has taken a leadership position at the local government level.

With only five years remaining to achieve the goals globally, a clear commitment, direction and support from the Federal Government that connects to and flows through to local government is seen as a critical step to our national commitments.

This motion strongly delivers on the theme of "National Priorities Need Local Solutions" and is a way to recognise the breadth of work that local government already does that aligns with the UN SDGs while elevating these efforts and providing more resources to achieve more.

Motion number 187 Tamworth Regional Council NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to immediately apply resources to investigate and thwart the increases in cigarette and vape stores establishing in the regions around Australia selling illegal foreign products harmful to the health of Australians and detrimental to the Commonwealth's taxation revenues and established businesses that currently sell legal products.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Australia is being inundated with cigarette and vape stores peddling illegal products.

KEY ARGUMENTS

In its Main Street and CBD the city of Tamworth boasts 9 similar stores selling cheap tobacco and vape products. This is having a detrimental impact on the health of our residents, impacts the revenues of other businesses that sell legal tobacco products and would also impact the taxation revenues of government. This problem is Australia wide with some enterprises operated by criminal gangs.

Motion number 188 City of Adelaide SA

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government, in the context of Scope 3 of the Australian Sustainability Reporting Standards - Disclosure of Climate-related Financial Information, to amend its mandate requiring tenancy only in 6-star rated new builds, so that, subject to conversion, existing building stock could qualify for being leased as office space for Commonwealth agencies, to serve the dual purpose of:

1. Incentivising inner city property owners to invest in renovation and conversion of existing building stock, and
2. Avoiding the continued and increasing loss of carbon embodied in existing buildings.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

The high office vacancy rate and the preponderance of old building stock in Australia's biggest cities (not just the capitals), much of which has become "stranded" could be reduced by a relatively simple change in the operating guidelines for office accommodation of Commonwealth staff. Such a change would have a profound impact on the path to net zero.

Currently the office vacancy situation is exacerbated by the apparent Commonwealth mandate to require tenancy in 6-star rated new builds. In this context, the imminent requirement to account for energy consumption through the Australian Sustainability Reporting Standards - Disclosure of Climate-related Financial Information, as proposed by the Australian Accounting Standards Board, means stranded assets and the tendency towards incentivising demolition will result in the loss of large amounts of embodied carbon. This constitutes Scope 3 emissions under the standard and would be an unintended consequence of the Commonwealth's accommodation and letting practices.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The ALGA is asked to communicate with the Federal Government and lobby for this relatively simple change on the basis that the incentivisation for the demolition rather than conversion of "stranded" building stock in our bigger cities, and unintended consequence of the Commonwealth mandate to require tenancy in 6-star rated new builds, has a double negative impact on the nation:

1. The loss of large amounts of embodied carbon, and
2. The greater diversion of construction materials and labour to the new builds than is warranted and might be available to other sectors of the national economy, such as housing.

Motion number 189 City of Melbourne VIC

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government's Productivity Commission to investigate the current and future productivity of Australia's Capital Cities and their competitiveness compared to global peers. Specifically, this should include the efficiency and appropriateness of current finance and governance arrangements as it relates to infrastructure and service delivery.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This is a national issue because:

- Australian Capital Cities are facing increased economic, social, and cultural competition internationally as other global cities seek to improve their relevance as global centres.
- Nearly 90 per cent of Australia's GDP is produced in the Capital Cities. Australia's economic success depends on successful cities.
- Funding allocated to Australia's Capital Cities is often constrained by the discretionary decision making in State and Territory budgets, limiting their ability to deliver essential infrastructure and services which may be more appropriately managed at the Capital City scale.

KEY ARGUMENTS

The motion seeks the Productivity Commission - Australia's principal review and advisory body - to investigate the productivity of Australia's Capital Cities in their current governance arrangements.

Productivity Commission may seek to understand the benefits of:

- Stronger urban and regional planning
- Increased economic competitiveness

- Better service delivery
- Stronger governance and strategic leadership
- More equitable resource distribution
- Different models for city governance including Metropolitan Authorities that coordinate infrastructure and services at the Capital City level
- Improved efficiency and cost savings

Examples may include the failure to coordinate and align transport, planning, population growth and economic policy to address challenges such as high housing costs and long commute times that reduce productivity and redistribute income and wealth away from the productive sectors of the economy.

Australia's eight Capital cities - Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Darwin, Hobart, Melbourne, Sydney and Perth - are home to more than 75 per cent of Australia's population and produce nearly 90 per cent of Australia's economic output.

Motion number 190 South Burnett Regional Council QLD

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to reduce red tape and regulations imposed upon non-profit organisations. For example, food safety standards - lesser standard of compliance for NFP groups, insurance, compliance, minimise Financial Reporting.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Increased national productivity.

KEY ARGUMENTS

Regulations can be categorised as follows:

- Red tape to regulation that restricts the activities of businesses or imposes compliance costs on businesses.
- Green tape refers to regulation that places restrictions or imposes requirements on businesses that relate to environmental concerns and impacts.

These categories reflect the social, economic, and environmental outcomes sought by government when regulating, and there can be elements of all three types in a single regulation.

Streamlining and where possible reduction in regulations will stimulate and improve productivity.

Motion number 191 Snowy Valleys Council NSW

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to hold a Royal Commission into the handling of COVID-19.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

That the Australian Government undertake a Royal Commission to investigate its response to COVID-19 and the consequential effects of that response.

KEY ARGUMENTS

A Royal Commission into the Australian Government's handling of COVID-19 would enable:

- An independent and comprehensive public inquiry;
- recommendations to be made to the Australian Government on behalf of all Australians, not just state or territory;
- Recommendations to be made to the Australian Government to more effectively foresee, prepare, and respond to future pandemics;
- Transparency and assist in restoring confidence in the Australian Government for all Australians.

Motion number 192 City of Greater Dandenong VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Acknowledge Greater Dandenong City Council as Secretariat of the Local Government Mayoral Taskforce Supporting People Seeking Asylum on behalf of the following councils that are members:
    a. Executive Members - Blacktown City Council, Brimbank City Council, Casey City Council, Darebin City Council, Hume City Council, Kingston City Council, Monash City Council, Merri-bek City Council, Wyndham City Council, Yarra City Council
    b. General Members - Ararat Rural City Council, City of Ballarat, Banyule City Council, Blue Mountains City Council, City of Canterbury Bankstown, Hawkesbury City Council, Hobsons Bay City Council, Inner West Council, Maribyrnong City Council, Melbourne City Council, Moonee Valley City Council, Newcastle City Council, Nillumbik Shire Council, Orange City Council, City of Port Adelaide Enfield, Randwick City Council, Surf Coast Shire, City of West Torrens, City of Whittlesea; and
    c. Supporter Councils - Albury City Council, City of Greater Bendigo, Cardinia Shire Council, City of Greater Geelong, City of Port Phillip, City of Hobart, Macedon Ranges Shire Council, Queenscliff Borough Council, Wellington Shire Council, City of Wagga Wagga, and
2. Provide people seeking asylum with a valid visa and the opportunity to work while they await decisions on their protection application, including automating the bridging renewal process. By providing people work rights, they can contribute skills to Australia, remain independent in society and stay engaged in the asylum process.
3. Expand the eligibility criteria of the Status Resolution Support Services program to ensure people's basic needs are met, including health care, accommodation, crisis support, so people in need can live safely and not in destitution and deep poverty.
4. Grant permanent visas to people who have been previously refused a visa via the unfair 'Fast Track' process. Ending the uncertainty, by providing a pathway to permanency to the 7,700 people, will at last resolve the matter, enabling them to rebuild their lives.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion addresses the Community Services priority area for submission as it recommends reforms in national community services, which would help local governments support the Australia Government to deliver on its national objectives.

The Australian Federal Government has responsibility for immigration policy and providing people seeking protection with a clear and efficient Refugee Status Determination process, with adequate support mechanisms for those in need.

People seeking refugee protection face major barriers in accessing federal-funded support programs. Most are currently ineligible for the Status Resolution Support Services Program, the only Federal support people seeking asylum whilst their application for protection is processed.

Consequently, they rely on support from local governments, community groups for charity or work in exploitative conditions. This places huge burdens on local government and their communities, needlessly places individuals and families in destitution and erodes trust in Government process and institutions. The temporary status of people seeking asylum adds further challenges, including ineligibility to women's refuges, homelessness services and education opportunities.

'Arguably there is no greater obligation upon government than to maintain the trust that citizens have in meeting their community services obligations and promises, particularly to society's most vulnerable.' (2024 National General Assembly ALGA discussion paper).

KEY ARGUMENTS

The Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) Program has become so restricted that it fails to achieve its intended purpose. Financial assistance delivered through the SRSS Program has been cut by 95% (from $300 million in 2015-16 to $16 million in 2023-24) and the number of people assisted has dropped to only 1,057 in 2024.

Charities cannot meet the need for material aid and financial assistance. The demand for help far outstrips what local government and charities have been able to provide. Homelessness services are reporting an increase in the number of people seeking asylum sleeping on the streets.

State governments have wound back support in expectation that the Federal Government would step in. After providing short-term assistance to fill the gap created by the Federal government's cuts, assistance for plane arrivals has ended in Queensland and the NSW Government ended its assistance in 2023.

Lengthy delays in visa processing have made the situation much worse. Currently, 2,500 people seeking asylum do not have a valid visa and work rights. The lack of assistance, coupled with extended waiting times for decisions, have led to people waiting for over 11 years without access to basic support during resolution of their asylum application.

Local Government Response - Since 2018, the Local Government Mayoral Taskforce Supporting People Seeking Asylum (Taskforce) has been advocating for the rights of people seeking asylum to the Federal Government. Established and chaired by Greater Dandenong Council, the Taskforce is made up of a growing membership of over 40 councils nationwide, who understand that this is an issue of national importance - the advocacy for a fairer and swifter Refugee Status Determination system with adequate support systems in place for individuals and families at risk of destitution.

The Albanese Government's implementation of its 2022 election promise to end temporary protection has enabled more than 20,000 refugees on temporary visas to move to permanent Resolution of Status visas, providing certainty for people who have been living and working in Australia for more than a decade.

However, there are close to 8,000 people waiting for their immigration status to be resolved. They arrived over a decade ago to seek refugee protection yet continue to live without safety and certainty. This includes families with children who are Australian citizens and will be separated from their parents due to temporary visa status.

The 'Fast Track' process, which was intended to expedite decisions, has proven to be unfair, as evidenced by the government's recent abolition of its review component. This inefficient, slow process has left 1,190 people waiting for a primary decision, with average wait times of 864 days. People who have been refused under the Fast Track process are told to engage in return processes even if country conditions have drastically changed.

The prolonged uncertainty and harsh conditions experienced during the asylum process in Australia have led to trauma and isolation and prevents families within our community from gaining the stability that refugee status provides.

Motion number 192.1 Monash City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

5. Acknowledge Greater Dandenong City Council as Secretariat of the Local Government Mayoral Taskforce Supporting People Seeking Asylum on behalf of the following councils that are members:
    a. Executive Members - Blacktown City Council, Brimbank City Council, Casey City Council, Darebin City Council, Hume City Council, Kingston City Council, Monash City Council, Merri-bek City Council, Wyndham City Council, Yarra City Council
    b. General Members - Ararat Rural City Council, City of Ballarat, Banyule City Council, Blue Mountains City Council, City of Canterbury Bankstown, Hawkesbury City Council, Hobsons Bay City Council, Inner West Council, Maribyrnong City Council, Melbourne City Council, Moonee Valley City Council, Newcastle City Council, Nillumbik Shire Council, Orange City Council, City of Port Adelaide Enfield, Randwick City Council, Surf Coast Shire, City of West Torrens, City of Whittlesea; and
    c. Supporter Councils - Albury City Council, City of Greater Bendigo, Cardinia Shire Council, City of Greater Geelong, City of Port Phillip, City of Hobart, Macedon Ranges Shire Council, Queenscliff Borough Council, Wellington Shire Council, City of Wagga Wagga, and
6. Provide people seeking asylum with a valid visa and the opportunity to work while they await decisions on their protection application, including automating the bridging renewal process. By providing people work rights, they can contribute skills to Australia, remain independent in society and stay engaged in the asylum process.
7. Expand the eligibility criteria of the Status Resolution Support Services program to ensure people's basic needs are met, including health care, accommodation, crisis support, so people in need can live safely and not in destitution and deep poverty.
8. Grant permanent visas to people who have been previously refused a visa via the unfair 'Fast Track' process. Ending the uncertainty, by providing a pathway to permanency to the 7,700 people, will at last resolve the matter, enabling them to rebuild their lives.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion addresses the Community Services priority area for submission as it recommends reforms in national community services, which would help local governments support the Australia Government to deliver on its national objectives.

The Australian Federal Government has responsibility for immigration policy and providing people seeking protection with a clear and efficient Refugee Status Determination process, with adequate support mechanisms for those in need.

People seeking refugee protection face major barriers in accessing federal-funded support programs. Most are currently ineligible for the Status Resolution Support Services Program, the only Federal support people seeking asylum whilst their application for protection is processed.

Consequently, they rely on support from local governments, community groups for charity or work in exploitative conditions. This places huge burdens on local government and their communities, needlessly places individuals and families in destitution and erodes trust in Government process and institutions. The temporary status of people seeking asylum adds further challenges, including ineligibility to women's refuges, homelessness services and education opportunities.

'Arguably there is no greater obligation upon government than to maintain the trust that citizens have in meeting their community services obligations and promises, particularly to society's most vulnerable.' (2024 National General Assembly ALGA discussion paper).

KEY ARGUMENTS

The Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) Program has become so restricted that it fails to achieve its intended purpose. Financial assistance delivered through the SRSS Program has been cut by 95% (from $300 million in 2015-16 to $16 million in 2023-24) and the number of people assisted has dropped to only 1,057 in 2024.

Charities cannot meet the need for material aid and financial assistance. The demand for help far outstrips what local government and charities have been able to provide. Homelessness services are reporting an increase in the number of people seeking asylum sleeping on the streets.

State governments have wound back support in expectation that the Federal Government would step in. After providing short-term assistance to fill the gap created by the Federal government's cuts, assistance for plane arrivals has ended in Queensland and the NSW Government ended its assistance in 2023.

Lengthy delays in visa processing have made the situation much worse. Currently, 2,500 people seeking asylum do not have a valid visa and work rights. The lack of assistance, coupled with extended waiting times for decisions, have led to people waiting for over 11 years without access to basic support during resolution of their asylum application.

Motion number 192.2 Randwick City Council NSW

This National General Assembly of Local Government calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Acknowledge Greater Dandenong City Council as secretariat of the Local Government Mayoral Taskforce Supporting People Seeking Asylum on behalf of the following councils that are members:

   a. Executive Members - Blacktown City Council, Brimbank City Council, Casey City Council, Darebin City Council, Hume City Council, Kingston City Council, Monash City Council, Merri-bek City Council, Mornington Peninsula Shire, Wyndham City Council, Yarra City Council
   b. General Members - Ararat Rural City Council, City of Ballarat, Banyule City Council, Blue Mountains City Council, City of Canterbury Bankstown, Hawkesbury City Council, Hobsons Bay City Council, Inner West Council, Maribyrnong City Council, Melbourne City Council, Moonee Valley City Council, Newcastle City Council, Nillumbik Shire Council, Orange City Council, City of Port Adelaide Enfield, Randwick City Council, Surf Coast Shire, City of West Torrens, City of Whittlesea; and
   c. Supporter Councils - Albury City Council, City of Greater Bendigo, Cardinia Shire Council, City of Greater Geelong, City of Port Phillip, City of Hobart, Macedon Ranges Shire Council, Queenscliffe Borough Council, Wellington Shire Council, City of Wagga Wagga, City of Whitehorse; and
2. Provide people seeking asylum with a valid visa and the opportunity to work while they await decisions on their protection application, including automating the bridging renewal process. By providing people work rights, they can contribute skills to Australia, remain independent in society and stay engaged in the asylum process;
3. Expand the eligibility criteria of the Status Resolution Support Services program to ensure people's basic needs are met, including health care, accommodation, crisis support, so people in need can live safely and not in destitution and deep poverty;
4. Grant permanent visas to people who have been previously refused a visa via the unfair 'Fast Track' process. Ending the uncertainty, by providing a pathway to permanency to the 7,700 people, will at last resolve the matter, enabling them to rebuild their lives.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion addresses the following key questions in the 2025 discussion paper:

Are there reforms or improvements in national community services program that would help local governments support the Australian Government to deliver on its national objectives?

KEY ARGUMENTS

The Australian Federal Government has responsibility for immigration policy and providing people seeking protection with a clear and efficient Refugee Status Determination process, with adequate support mechanisms for those in need.

People seeking refugee protection face major barriers in accessing federal-funded support programs. Most are currently ineligible for the Status Resolution Support Services Program, the only Federal support people seeking asylum whilst their application for protection is processed.

Consequently, they rely on support from local governments, community groups for charity or work in exploitative conditions. This places huge burdens on local government and their communities, needlessly places individuals and families in destitution and erodes trust in Government process and institutions. The temporary status of people seeking asylum adds further challenges, including ineligibility to women's refuges, homelessness services and education opportunities.

The Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) Program has become so restricted that it fails to achieve its intended purpose. Financial assistance delivered through the SRSS

Program has been cut by 95% (from $300 million in 2015-16 to $16 million in 2023-24) and the number of people assisted has dropped to only 1,057 in 2024.

Charities cannot meet the need for material aid and financial assistance. The demand for help far outstrips what local government and charities have been able to provide. Homelessness services are reporting an increase in the number of people seeking asylum sleeping on the streets.

Lengthy delays in visa processing have made the situation much worse. Currently, 2,500 people seeking asylum do not have a valid visa and work rights. The lack of assistance, coupled with extended waiting times for decisions, have led to people waiting for over 11 years without access to basic support during resolution of their asylum application.

The Albanese Government's implementation of its 2022 election promise to end temporary protection has enabled more than 20,000 refugees on temporary visas to move to permanent Resolution of Status visas, providing certainty for people who have been living and working in Australia for more than a decade.

However, there are close to 8,000 people waiting for their immigration status to be resolved. They arrived over a decade ago to seek refugee protection yet continue to live without safety and certainty. This includes families with children who are Australian citizens and will be separated from their parents due to temporary visa status.

The 'Fast Track' process, which was intended to expedite decisions, has proven to be unfair, as evidenced by the government's recent abolition of its review component. This inefficient, slow process has left 1,190 people waiting for a primary decision, with average wait times of 864 days. People who have been refused under the Fast Track process are told to engage in return processes even if country conditions have drastically changed.

The prolonged uncertainty and harsh conditions experienced during the asylum process in Australia have led to trauma and isolation and prevents families within our community from gaining the stability that refugee status provides.

Motion number 192.3 Brimbank City Council VIC

This National General Assembly calls on the Australia Government to:

1. Acknowledge Greater Dandenong City Council as Secretariat of the Local Government Mayoral Taskforce Supporting People Seeking Asylum on behalf of the following councils that are members:
    a. Executive Members - Blacktown City Council, Brimbank City Council, Casey City Council, Darebin City Council, Hume City Council, Kingston City Council, Monash City Council, Merri-bek City Council, Wyndham City Council, and Yarra City Council.
    b. General Members - Ararat Rural City Council, City of Ballarat, Banyule City Council, Blue Mountains City Council, City of Canterbury Bankstown, Hawkesbury City Council, Hobsons Bay City Council, Inner West Council, Maribyrnong City Council, Melbourne City Council, Moonee Valley City Council, Newcastle City Council, Nillumbik Shire Council, Orange City Council, City of Port Adelaide Enfield, Randwick City Council, Surf Coast Shire, City of West Torrens, and City of Whittlesea.
    c. Supporter Councils - Albury City Council, City of Greater Bendigo, Cardinia Shire Council, City of Greater Geelong, City of Port Phillip, City of Hobart,

Macedon Ranges Shire Council, Queenscliffe Borough Council, Wellington Shire Council, and City of Wagga Wagga.

2. Provide people seeking asylum with a valid visa and the opportunity to work while they await decisions on their protection application, including automating the bridging renewal process. By providing people work rights, they can contribute skills to Australia, remain independent in society and stay engaged in the asylum process.
3. Expand the eligibility criteria of the Status Resolution Support Services program to ensure people's basic needs are met, including health care, accommodation, crisis support, so people in need can live safely and not in destitution and deep poverty.
4. Grant permanent visas to people who have been previously refused a visa via the unfair 'Fast Track' process. Ending the uncertainty, by providing a pathway to permanency to the 7,700 people, will at last resolve the matter, enabling them to rebuild their lives.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVE

This motion addresses the Community Services priority area for submission as it recommends reforms in national community services, which would help local governments support the Australia Government to deliver on its national objectives.

The Australian Federal Government has responsibility for immigration policy and providing people seeking protection with a clear and efficient Refugee Status Determination process, with adequate support mechanisms for those in need.

People seeking refugee protection face major barriers in accessing federal-funded support programs. Most are currently ineligible for the Status Resolution Support Services Program, the only Federal support people seeking asylum whilst their application for protection is processed.

Consequently, they rely on support from local governments, community groups for charity or work in exploitative conditions. This places huge burdens on local government and their communities, needlessly places individuals and families in destitution and erodes trust in Government process and institutions. The temporary status of people seeking asylum adds further challenges, including ineligibility to women's refuges, homelessness services and education opportunities.

'Arguably there is no greater obligation upon government than to maintain the trust that citizens have in meeting their community services obligations and promises, particularly to society's most vulnerable.' (2024 National General Assembly ALGA discussion paper).

KEY ARGUMENTS

The Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) Program has become so restricted that it fails to achieve its intended purpose. Financial assistance delivered through the SRSS Program has been cut by 95% (from $300 million in 2015-16 to $16 million in 2023-24) and the number of people assisted has dropped to only 1,057 in 2024.

Charities cannot meet the need for material aid and financial assistance. The demand for help far outstrips what local government and charities have been able to provide. Homelessness services are reporting an increase in the number of people seeking asylum sleeping on the streets.

State governments have wound back support in expectation that the Federal Government would step in. After providing short-term assistance to fill the gap created by the Federal

government's cuts, assistance for plane arrivals has ended in Queensland and the NSW Government ended its assistance in 2023.

Lengthy delays in visa processing have made the situation much worse. Currently, 2,500 people seeking asylum do not have a valid visa and work rights. The lack of assistance, coupled with extended waiting times for decisions, have led to people waiting for over 11 years without access to basic support during resolution of their asylum application.

Local Government Response

Since 2018, the Local Government Mayoral Taskforce Supporting People Seeking Asylum (Taskforce) has been advocating for the rights of people seeking asylum to the Federal Government. Established and chaired by Greater Dandenong Council, the Taskforce is made up of a growing membership of over 40 councils nationwide, who understand that this is an issue of national importance - the advocacy for a fairer and swifter Refugee Status Determination system with adequate support systems in place for individuals and families at risk of destitution.

The Albanese Government's implementation of its 2022 election promise to end temporary protection has enabled more than 20,000 refugees on temporary visas to move to permanent Resolution of Status visas, providing certainty for people who have been living and working in Australia for more than a decade.

However, there are close to 8,000 people waiting for their immigration status to be resolved. They arrived over a decade ago to seek refugee protection yet continue to live without safety and certainty. This includes families with children who are Australian citizens and will be separated from their parents due to temporary visa status.

The 'Fast Track' process, which was intended to expedite decisions, has proven to be unfair, as evidenced by the government's recent abolition of its review component. This inefficient, slow process has left 1,190 people waiting for a primary decision, with average wait times of 864 days. People who have been refused under the Fast Track process are told to engage in return processes even if country conditions have drastically changed.

The prolonged uncertainty and harsh conditions experienced during the asylum process in Australia have led to trauma and isolation and prevents families within our community from gaining the stability that refugee status provides.

Motion number 192.4 Newcastle City Council NSW

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ALGA

Australian Local Government Association



COMMUNIQUE

More than 1,300 local government leaders from across Australia gathered in Canberra from 24-27 June for the 31st National General Assembly of Local Government (NGA).

We were welcomed to country for the National General Assembly by Ngunnawal woman and Co-Chair of ACT Reconciliation Council, Selina Walker. The Assembly recognised the Ngunnawal and Ngambri peoples as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognised any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. The Assembly paid its respects to their elders past, present and emerging, and acknowledged the vital and ongoing contributions First Nations peoples continue to make to our nation.

Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of Australia, formally opened the Assembly and spoke about the role of community leadership and local engagement in building national resilience and unity, including the importance of teaching our younger generation the importance of civic governance.

We heard from a range of Federal Ministers across the Assembly including: The Honourable Kristy McBain MP, Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher, The Honourable Julian Hill MP, The Honourable Josh Wilson MP, The Honourable Darren Chester MP, Dr Anne Webster MP and the Honourable Kevin Hogan MP.

There was broad acknowledgement from Ministers that councils play a critical role in supporting their communities and that the role has expanded significantly, as has the financial pressure councils face. That is why local government is calling for urgent action to ensure the financial sustainability of councils.

Delegates heard from Mark Bouris AM and Dr Merriden Varrall who unpacked global economic forces shaping Australia's local economies, including trends in trade, security, and investment.

Jason Clarke, world leading consultant on issues of leadership and innovation, closed Day 1 of the NGA with an energising and practical presentation on how councils can take bold ideas and translate them into tangible, community-focused change.

Day 2 of the NGA featured the launch of ALGA's exciting new research "Adapting Together: Local Government Leadership in a Changing Climate". The report finds that Australia's councils are expected to spend more than $2 billion over the next five years to future-proof their communities from the changing climate, resulting in up to $4.7 billion in avoided costs to communities.



ALGA President Mayor Matt Burnett noted "Climate-resilient infrastructure is expensive and takes time to build, so we need sustainable funding from the Federal Government to implement long-term planning and adaptation now and into the future". That is why "We are asking the Government for a new $400 million climate adaptation fund, distributed to all Australia's councils each year, to deliver ongoing and sustainable place-based climate solutions" Mayor Burnett said.

Councils considered the way AI is shaping the future with presentations from Stephen Scheeler, founder of The Digital CEO and co-founder and CEO of Omniscient, and Tim Golsby-Smith, co-founder and CEO of myLot.

The 2025 NGA saw the return of concurrent listening sessions providing an interactive platform for delegates to engage directly with federal agencies and sector experts on key policy issues. The listening sessions included:

- Housing and community infrastructure – where the discussion covered a range of challenges from housing affordability, the prohibitive cost of housing infrastructure, ideas around housing and homelessness.
- Emergency management capacity and capability – where attendees shared examples of what has worked in their communities and highlighted remaining challenges. This included the need for long-term funding certainty and better integration of local knowledge in disaster preparedness and recovery frameworks.
- Local government jobs and skills – where attendees highlighted key issues attracting workers to the regions, promoting council careers to young values-led workers, better access to local training, cost-shifting concerns, migrant workforce support, and housing shortages as a major staffing barrier.
- Safer roads - discussed infrastructure funding and general maintenance, speed management, driver behaviour, and the broader questions of regional vs urban specific problems.

Motions and Assembly Outcomes

- Almost 190 motions were debated across a range of policy areas including financial sustainability, roads, disaster resilience, health, housing, and climate. Motions passed by the NGA will be referred to relevant Ministers for response and also used by the ALGA Board to inform national policy positions.

MELBOURNE LEADERSHIP GROUP

NGA 2025 National General Assembly
National Convention Centre, Canberra



LISTENING REPORT

2025 National General Assembly

- ✓ Emergency Management: Capability & Capacity
- ✓ Safer Roads
- ✓ Housing & Community Infrastructure
- ✓ Local Government Jobs & Skills

LISTENING SESSIONS OVERVIEW

As part of the 2025 ALGA National General Assembly, four concurrent listening sessions were held to enable representatives of local councils to speak directly with policy-makers. Over 700 participants shared their stories in response to four challenging areas of public policy:

i) Emergency Management Capability & Capacity
ii) Safer Roads
iii) Housing & Community Infrastructure
iv) Local Government Jobs & Skills

As with previous events, panels made up of policy specialists from both government departments and the non-government sector were invited to attend. Their purpose was to hear first-hand from local government representatives, take in the perspectives and concerns shared by participants, and offer commentary and reflections on federal initiatives and other programs that might help address the issues raised.

The sessions were independently facilitated by Melbourne Leadership Group (MLG), who have prepared this listening report. The feedback summarised here draws on both the spoken contributions of participants and written input gathered through the audience engagement tool Slido. Rather than providing a chronological summary, this report presents insights grouped into key themes that emerged during the conversations.

It's important to note that the sessions were not structured as forums for developing solutions. As such, this report does not put forward recommendations or formal positions from participating organisations. Instead, its purpose is to reflect the tone, sentiments, and viewpoints expressed by local government leaders, their teams, and members of the community. The views in this report do not necessarily reflect ALGA policy positions or the views of MLG. The report is intended as a summary of the broad-ranging discussions.

Councils urged the federal government to take leadership on the critical issues of housing, safe roads, emergency management, and workforce skills. They expressed a desire for collaborative involvement in these challenging policy fields, which could be explored in more depth to drive even more meaningful solutions for the nation at local level.

Melbourne Leadership Group
26 June 2025

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT – CAPABILITY & CAPACITY

Survey results and responses

A survey was sent out prior to the Emergency Management Capability and Capacity session. In total, 14 responses were received from leaders in local government, some of whom were in the audience. To widen these insights, the audience in the room were also asked to indicate their responses to the questions, as the results we presented, by a show of hands. There were approximately 200 people in the room.

In response to the question "Has your council been in a declared natural disaster area in the last 24 months?", about a third of the room indicated yes, which mirrored the pre-event survey results.

Regarding disaster recovery funding applications, many in the room indicated they had applied successfully for such funds, and they were received in a timely manner. Others applied but experienced delays, and a smaller portion did not apply at all. When asked if that funding included a betterment component, a number of people (about 25%) indicated they had successfully applied for betterment funding, while several indicated they had not.

A few councils had applied to the Disaster Recovery Fund successfully (21%), but the majority were unsuccessful in their applications. The show of hands in the room again mirrored the pre-event survey results.

When ranking barriers to responding effectively to disasters, ageing infrastructure and assets were the main blocker, followed by a lack of funding for preventative new infrastructure.

Participants in the room indicated in fairly even numbers that their council's emergency management capacity and capability had either improved or declined. Only a small number felt it had remained the same over the past three years. Pre-event survey responses to this question were very different, with 79% responding that it had improved and just 7% that it had deteriorated.

When asked what councils needed in order to improve their emergency management capacity and capability, the survey showed that funding was the dominant need, with 64% of the vote. Those in the room agreed with this, followed by the need for training, and clearer roles and responsibilities.

Panellists acknowledged that funding remains a significant issue for many councils. The need for greater clarity and consistency across the nation would be helpful, with

emergency management legislation, plans, and arrangements varying between states and local governments. They observed that the landscape of emergency management is changing, from councils experiencing none or one disaster per year, to concurrent or co-occurring events affecting communities, which in turn is reducing the window for recovering from disasters.

KEY THEMES

Early warning systems and communication gaps

The conversation opened with a council explaining the challenges with boil water notices, due to ageing water treatment systems and the issue of communicating rapidly with transient populations. Currently, councils may get less than four hours' notice to inform the community. The platform for this alert is passive – an announcement on their website. A text message alert system would at least allow councils to reach people with more assurance.

A panellist shared that early warning SMS systems haven't evolved as quickly as required and that we should not rely on just one system; rather, multiple channels are needed. The current national SMS system is at the end of its lifespan, and while alternatives are being worked on, currently emergency alerts are only available to limited numbers. New national messaging systems (like cell broadcast) are in development, with discussions about local council-level access in progress. Panellists felt that the development of the technology is not the part that takes significant time, but rather analysing the access and process issues, the construction of the messages, and the responsibilities that sit with this.

One council shared a concern that after significant rain, there can be up to 12 days' between one area flooding and flood waters reaching the next area. However, they can only go into response mode when the flood hits, rather than being proactive in their response. It was felt that there is a missed opportunity here to alert the community early, enable the adjustment of levies, and ensure that property is kept safe. A panellist noted that disaster declarations are not used in the particular state referenced, and that there may be misunderstanding about how and when support can be accessed.

Disaster recovery funding and access

A participant questioned why there is not a nationally consistent approach across states and territories for betterment funding, as similar projects have received different levels of support across jurisdictions, resulting in inequity. A show of hands

in the room echoed that this national approach would be helpful, however the conversation that followed highlighted the view that national consistency may not be possible nor desirable, given the nature of disaster management being led by states and territories. In an era of growing frequency of national disasters, there is an increase in significant fiscal requests impacting budgets, and long-term investments are needed to match the long-term need. This pressure is also felt across other areas of government such as health, defence and transport.

Some panellists felt that while national consistency is desirable, the federated model in Australia means that local governments will remain best placed to review situations and understand local community needs. It was suggested that federal level support would be helpful in providing evidence and data to enable more informed local decision making.

The Resilient Homes Fund was shared as an example of success following the 2022 floods in Ipswich. Participants were interested to know if these programs will be continued. The issue that many councils face is that the same communities are impacted on a recurring basis.

The importance of comprehensive flood studies, along with well-documented community consultation, was discussed as a way to develop a sound business case for funding and support. A panellist observed that there isn't one right way to respond to flood disasters – some states have offered programs that allow people to move to an alternative block in the same community area and that this was crucial for local resilience, giving residents meaningful choice rather than forcing relocation.

A panellist shared that more funding may also be needed in energy resilience, as half of all faults come from energy disruption. The Strengthening Telecommunications Against Natural Disasters (STAND) program was highlighted as a government initiative focused on improving telecommunications infrastructure in disaster-prone areas and was suggested as a source of support, information and data.

Role of insurance and risk mitigation

Many participants in the room felt that reforms in the insurance sector were needed. One example highlighted was that measures to protect homes are not included in the risk profiling used to estimate premiums. This means that even when local flood levies have been built, and homes are better protected, the risk reduction to individual properties is not being recognised in the insurance premiums charged.

An awareness of the implications of being underinsured was also raised as an important factor.

A panellist offered the view that insurance companies exist to make money and how they set premiums is their own decision. They suggested that the problem could be reframed as "how can local governments influence and share knowledge with insurance companies, and what is it that can be done differently to change this situation for the better?"

Another panellist indicated that there is reason to be optimistic. A recent summit on insurance and local disaster management acknowledged that the dial is shifting, and there is more focus on getting the right data and up-to-date information to inform the work of insurance companies.

There are also opportunities for better public and private sector relationships to help fund projects that enable communities to be more proactive before an emergency. Having all three levels of government working together would only reinforce this opportunity further. The integration of services and support across all levels of government, and the exploration of the other opportunities this presents, will emerge further in coming years.

First Nations

A recurring topic in the conversation was the importance of facilitating culturally-appropriate supports for First Nations peoples and communities. An extension of this was the need to embed cultural practices and knowledge, such as controlled burning and water management, in our emergency management preparations and responses.

It was observed that there is an opportunity to embed cultural engagement practices in emergency management preparation and response, as in some areas this isn't being adequately discussed. Often in periods of recovery, important cultural sites and heritage centres are affected, and community organisations are left to deal with them without adequate support. Furthermore, the impact of First Nations peoples needing to move off country during and after a disaster needs to be considered.

In response, panellists acknowledged that the level of resourcing and service provision for First Nations peoples varies across regions. In some areas, there is a need for stronger protections and restorative action, including measures such as levees around sacred burial sites. This reflects the broader need to recognise and

address the deep cultural and spiritual losses that First Nations communities often experience during natural disasters.

A participant suggested that building networks of local indigenous people in local council areas that can help embed knowledge into planning and strategies would be incredibly impactful.

The provision of better facilities and shelters on country for First Nations communities in some remote areas was seen to be important, as people may feel abandoned and expected to 'sit and wait it out'. These shelters are needed inland and along coastal as well, across many jurisdictions. These needs have been well-known and funding support has been sought for many years without response.

Broader systemic inclusion was called out as a requirement, with the suggestion that many plans were outdated and First Nations-led councillors felt frustrated with the lack of support from other levels of government.

Capacity and capability of councils

Sharing the lessons learned from flooding and other disasters at a local government area is proving hugely valuable. One council shared that their most impactful learnings in two floods was the need for a service to take care of people's pets and animals in an emergency. Community members were at risk, as they felt unable to evacuate without knowing their pets were cared for. Establishing this service locally resulted in the safe evacuation of the community during a second flood event.

The integration of local knowledge into crisis management teams is crucial. The Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System (AIIMS) is being updated for all fire and emergency services, with the emphasis on local and cultural knowledge, and the idea that recovery should be embedded from the start, to identify any developing impacts and ensure the best response.

Having a council representative that really knows the local area well was repeatedly highlighted as a key to success. To explore this in more detail, the establishment of strike teams that include an engineer, project manager, and community engagement professionals, who can fill the capability gap across councils would be helpful. The opportunity for this centralised support offering and 'on the ground' response would help anticipate and manage community impacts during emergencies.

Participants noted that year-round training and insight-sharing between councils is important, rather than only during the recovery phase of a disaster. There is a need

to have clear plans in place that are risk-based and evidence-informed, to help councils to seek the support needed to build and manage capacity. While states have a responsibility to lead the response, there is a chance to identify where gaps and vulnerabilities are at a local level, which enables the creation of a broader national picture and a strong case for investment where it is needed most.

Panellists asserted that role clarity for local government in emergency management is vital, given the responsibilities for councils differ under each state and territories' legislation, and emergency management acts and plans. A panellist noted that the current variability makes it difficult for the Commonwealth to fund and resource emergencies appropriately.

There was clear positive recognition for a program run by one state local government association, which facilitates councils requesting and dispatching staff to neighbouring LGAs that are experiencing a disaster. Some panellists were pleased to learn about this program.

Human resilience

The ongoing effect of historic natural disasters on mental health, social cohesion and volunteering was raised. Participants questioned if enough was being done by state and federal government to support those affected. The example was given of people still affected by 1983 Ash Wednesday bushfires. Emergency management evidence shows that the long-term psychosocial impacts from these disasters are significant. Participants felt there needs to be strong investment in mental health support to help communities rebuild and sustain social cohesion in the wake of emergencies. A panellist noted communities that are better connected, and have clearly established support networks before a disaster occurs, have been proven to recover at a much quicker pace.

The need for a wider conversation about volunteering, and declining volunteer numbers, was raised as crucial to address the gaps in community resilience. A councillor offered that one reason for this was the resulting burn-out of being chronically under-resourced and under-funded. While there are strategies to reward volunteers, proper funding in this space still doesn’t exist. For example, a large volunteer base requires co-ordination and the management of this is a full-time job, which includes the recruitment of new volunteers, selection for the right roles, adequate training, reward and recognition.

A panellist observed that “our country is built on volunteers, but volunteers are not free” in acknowledgement of the challenge of declining volunteer numbers. Whilst there might be pockets of outstanding volunteers, especially within grassroots

community organisations, who can pull together mass community volunteers quickly, issues around background checks of volunteers demonstrates the need to look systemically at volunteer engagement in emergency management.

Systems resilience

Exploring the language of resilience was a focus for the final segment of the conversation, including ideas around what truly holds communities together. It was observed that there is an 'elasticity' that occurs in response to the frequency of emergency events and the ongoing challenges this creates in the community.

Ideas around social cohesion were again shared. The role of education, community agency and the arts being used as a means to help mitigate impacts following an emergency was recommended.

A councillor noted the arts are often neglected in conversations about emergency management, yet artists have an important role to play in supporting social cohesion and community resilience. Visual artists, musicians, story tellers create tools that help tell important stories, share lessons learned and increase community understanding.

Ideas for the future

With more satellite technology becoming available, text messaging and satellite-enabled communications could be used more widely when telecommunication networks go down during an emergency.

Embedding local knowledge into emergency management and recovery plans, in relationship with local First Nations Peoples' cultural knowledge and practices, would create more successful and thorough plans. Additionally, the establishment of shelters in First Nations communities to enable First Nations people to stay safely on country during emergencies is key.

Panellists and participants discussed the value of water in reservoirs and levies, and the missed opportunity to manage perpetual 'spill and fill' situations differently. This would ensure water is not wasted, through giving authorities the confidence to act and make decisions quickly when needed.

Ensuring councils have multiple channels for communicating with their communities, particularly when informing them of emergency situations, and leveraging the use of developing SMS alert systems and satellite technology, would be hugely beneficial to local councils who are repeatedly having to handle these situations.

There could be more sharing of information between the insurance industry and local councils, particularly in providing updates and data that will inform more accurate risk profiling and premiums.

Further discussion around the role of volunteers and how to manage declining numbers is imperative in ensuring future success and the necessary resources to support services and initiatives.

Finally, taking a proactive approach to creating social cohesion in communities, rather than waiting for this to happen in response to an emergency, will result in stronger community resilience, which can lead to faster recovery after a disaster.

SAFER ROADS

Survey results and responses

Only 14 responses were received for the Safer Roads survey, but they provided a sound basis to kickstart discussion.

All survey respondents indicated there was a dangerous road in their local area. The majority of respondents did not have a road safety officer, whether due to funding constraints or other reasons. Panellists urged all councils to actively prioritise a dedicated road safety resource where possible.

Whilst some councils had developed a road safety strategy in response to community advocacy, others had not developed a strategy, or had partnered with road safety organisations on road safety plans and initiatives. There was a variance in undertaking road safety network risk assessments, and similarly only some councils had conducted road safety training for staff.

The biggest barriers for improving road safety were seen to be road funding and the capacity for risk assessment. The panel highlighted that there was a range of tools and resources available to councils to assist with risk assessments, which included road conditions, crash data and other variables.

Councils were encouraged to consider the primary use of particular roads and to identify treatments accordingly. The majority of council respondents considered that road safety in their area had remained static over time, without great evidence of improvement. Local solutions to this problem that were highlighted included community consultation and reviews of black spots, traffic management, dedicated cycling lanes and lower speed limits.

Participants observed the need for greater coordination between federal, state and local governments to plan and prioritise funding to meet local needs. There would be benefit in sharing case studies and practices in Australia and overseas which positively impact road safety.

KEY THEMES

Speed limits

There was a discussion around whether speed limits should be set by local councils or state governments. Interpreting road safety guidelines and applying them

consistently was also explored, along with the need for local communities to provide feedback about safety initiatives on their own roads. Periodic surveys and public forums could reflect the changing views of the community and contribute to policy making.

The importance of accurate data for network planning and speed limit setting was stressed. Methods of assessing risk and the tools available were also discussed, with participants exploring means for local councils to translate certain parameters into relevant risk ratings for road trauma.

Speed reduction as a road safety strategy

Speed reduction was explored as the simplest and fastest method to enhance road safety. Specific circumstances were considered alongside speed reduction, reflecting the varied needs in urban, rural and remote areas. Expansive and high-speed regional networks were discussed, as well as the need to find a balance between engineering solutions, law enforcement and community action.

The concept of speed reduction as a 'last resort' was explored. Elements such as road design, strategic use of funding and policy choice contributed to a broader conversation around speed reduction. Participants urged a greater focus on road design; identifying how roads will be used, and for what means, in order to determine appropriate speed settings.

Funding gaps and infrastructure

Finding the balance between the appropriate level of funding and the need for improved infrastructure was a common theme throughout the session. Despite state and federal funding, there are still gaps at local council level. Councils feel that roads cannot be maintained at the desired level, and there is still a need to concentrate funds on clear strategic priorities. These needs vary greatly between urban and remote areas, and this dichotomy was repeatedly reinforced during discussions.

The need to quantify risks and funding based on data-driven safety ratings was identified. Accurate measures of vehicle types, vehicle use and journey types, in conjunction with collective risk analysis, could better inform road safety investment. The conversation explored the experience of individual drivers, compared to the wider data sets upon which funding decisions are often made.

Practical, low-cost safety solutions were explored as priorities to help high-speed local roads, making them safer and lower risk. Upgrading roads was identified as the

most expensive option. The issue was the need to make strategic road system investments, with positive cost-benefits achieved through preventing costly crashes that are a burden on the health system and the wider community.

Changing motor vehicle landscape

The shifting use of the road network was discussed. Participants observed that our current infrastructure cannot cope with changes brought on by heavier vehicles, larger caravans and road trains. There was an appetite in the room for innovative thinking about infrastructure to support multiple road use – industry, local traffic and inter-city.

The desire for better infrastructure for Australian drivers was explored through the comparison to the standard of European networks. Engineering and design options were highlighted, especially where best practice and the opportunity for innovation might not always align. The increase of electric batteries and vehicles, their considerable weight, and the equity of petrol excise was discussed. Alternative methods of vehicle licencing, petrol pricing, and road user charges were raised.

Driver behaviour and compliance

Driver behaviour, education and law enforcement featured in much of the conversation. Road trauma has increased to its highest rate in both occurrence and real numbers since the 1970s, affecting different demographics at a socio-economic level. The group recognised a noticeable negative shift in driver behaviour and an increase in risky driving. In response, the group discussed the possibility for standardised driving tests across the nation.

Ideas for the future

The factors impacting road safety across local government areas are many and complex. Patterns of road use are changing, with a larger population necessitating more freight vehicle movements that cause road deterioration.

It was observed that the rate of crashes and road trauma is increasing despite safer vehicle design, improved traffic treatments and lower speed limits. New technology for automated and electric vehicles is seen as great advance and a challenge.

Local government does not have capacity to manage the demands for road system investments, even for the roads, bridges and cycling paths which are within their jurisdiction. Funds available at local, state and federal levels for road system upgrades, maintenance and treatments is finite.

Participants acknowledged there is excess demand for road funding across the board, where new funding streams have been significantly oversubscribed. Although representations are being made for increased federal funding, this should not be seen as the single solution. Road treatments such as overtaking lanes, larger truck stops, and slip lanes to address higher traffic volumes, could be considered. Criteria for black spot funding may require review to accommodate broader demands.

Road user behaviour and culture were cited as significant concerns. Suggestions were made that registration and licencing systems need to be overhauled to ensure better driving practice. Further, the licencing of vehicles could be standardised across states and redesigned to reflect driver and vehicle impacts on road safety. Electric vehicles, which are heavier than standard passenger vehicles, and automated freight vehicles, will require roads of greater weight capacity than current Australian standards. Therefore, an overhaul of the regulatory system was canvassed.

The need for greater engagement with local councils was underscored. Improved connections between all levels of government would assist in achieving improved road safety outcomes, with funding decisions supporting tailored local road safety solutions.

All levels of government were urged to work together and to share data on crashes, injuries, and non-compliance impacts. Local government, along with state and federal government, was strongly encouraged to use the tools, data and evidence available through the various road safety research bodies to improve safety outcomes.

HOUSING & COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Survey results and responses

A pre-event survey of local councils regarding housing issues yielded 69 responses. Increased funding for public and social housing was the top priority for unlocking more housing, according to survey respondents. Enabling works for greenfield development were also seen as critical.

When asked whether their council had received funds from the Housing Support Program or the Housing Australia Future Fund, many respondents indicated that they were not aware of these funding programs. This perhaps highlights a need to improve the understanding, awareness and reach of these programs.

The open text sections of the survey noted that a range of community infrastructure assets were needed to support liveable communities, including open space, footpaths, bike lanes, libraries, and streetscape beautification. Some respondents were also concerned about critical enabling infrastructure, including wastewater and power services.

Survey results indicated that some councils have shovel-ready enabling infrastructure projects. Other councils are wary about the financial contribution required for these projects, with a 25% funding contribution being seen by some as reasonable, but 50% being unaffordable.

Some positive examples of good practice in housing development were shared in the survey, including the establishment by councils of Affordable Housing Trusts, using air rights above council-owned car parks to construct affordable apartments, and key worker social housing projects.

Communication and coordination barriers between layers of government were highlighted, including delays in the provision of grant funding, and frustration that grant programs are competitive rather than collaborative.

Overall, these survey results resonated with the panellists. Some of the issues raised by survey respondents match themes which the federal government is working on.

Some panellists observed that there is an opportunity for the federal government to improve how programs and funding opportunities are communicated with the sector. Work could be done to communicate clear and understandable information about funding programs, improve the capacity of councils and their partners, and provide greater clarity about what stage projects need to be at in order to apply. It

was mentioned that a toolkit is being developed for local groups to help educate them on funding programs with standardised forms to use as templates.

KEY THEMES

Four of the strongest themes to emerge from the wider discussion included the failure of the private housing market to provide the right type of housing mix for our communities, difficulty of access to the materials and trade (particularly in remote areas) to deliver enabling infrastructure, lack of certainty of funding to enable a consistent housing build pipeline, and the need for greater communication and coordination between levels of government.

Some participants questioned the definition of affordability, and thought that commonly-accepted metrics of affordability were still too out of reach for low-to middle-income earners. Social housing supply was seen to be low, with long waiting times. Public and community housing efforts are fragmented, underfunded, and uneven across regions. Panellists did point out that progress has been made, and that affordability is arguably improving in some areas.

Planning system complexity

Some participants questioned whether red tape and excessive regulation were major contributors to inadequate housing supply. Panellists did not think this was the case, although they acknowledged that current planning regulations were sometimes complex.

Inconsistencies between local and state planning roles and requirements were seen to cause confusion, delays, and additional costs. Some participants described examples of developers and builders facing difficulties complying with differing regulations across multiple jurisdictions.

Regional housing targets were described by some participants as unclear or misaligned with local needs. Specific concerns were raised regarding delays at the state level in implementing inclusionary zoning.

Infrastructure delivery was identified by some participants as a significant bottleneck. One example was given of a contractor reportedly dealing with up to 50 different engineering standards for water and sewage. Paperwork inconsistencies were also noted across jurisdictions.

Delays in core services such as water and sewerage were claimed to increase the final delivery costs of housing by up to tenfold. Panellists acknowledged the complexity of these issues but noted that efforts were underway to find solutions, as such delays were halting some developments.

Public and private sector disconnect

A disconnect between the public and private sector in housing and infrastructure delivery was discussed. Participants felt the historic shortage of housing supply had reached a critical point. Some participants observed that the private sector has fallen short in meeting housing demand or prioritising quality – that the market is failing to provide sufficient housing mix and the quantity needed to meet demand.

Meanwhile, some participants saw government as hesitant to intervene in markets. Local councils reported feeling constrained by funding arrangements, fragmented policy environments, and limited support from higher tiers of government. Some participants urged the federal government to take a stronger leadership role in the coordination of the housing market.

In smaller communities, it was noted that councils often assume the role of land developer due to market failure – because there are no other providers available, council steps in. Challenges were raised around councils being asked to subsidise rates in order for affordable housing developments to be viable. Panellists suggested that such issues should be addressed during planning stages of developments, rather than at the 'keys in doors' stage.

Frustration was also expressed by some participants about the lack of transparency in funding processes. Councils and community housing providers reported instances of making significant upfront financial commitments (for example, the cost of preparing detailed business proposals to make grant applications) and being disappointed that clear feedback was not then given to them explaining why the grant application had been unsuccessful.

Participants and some panellists described the urgency for funding certainty to enable a pipeline of housing construction across future years.

Land supply and enabling infrastructure

Concerns were raised regarding land banking by developers, the slow release of land, and limited accountability for long-term outcomes. Zoning restrictions, insufficient incentives for mixed-use developments, and underutilisation of infill sites were cited by some as barriers.

High costs and difficulties in obtaining permits for high-density developments were identified as additional obstacles. These challenges were said to hinder affordability and project viability.

Suggestions were made to increase density in metropolitan areas and explore opportunities in peri-rural zones to meet the target of 1.2 million new homes. While land costs in rural areas were considered less of a constraint, delays were reported at gateway approval stages.

Some caution was expressed around rural housing expansion, due to potential impacts on systems such as agriculture and food production. It was also noted that although rural land costs may be low, broader building costs remained high – including freight access and lack of access to sufficient skilled trades to complete fit-outs.

The provision of enabling infrastructure in cash-strapped rural and regional council areas was observed as a barrier to land release and housing construction.

Design and liveability

Participants raised concerns about housing targets not considering urban design, limited public transport, inadequate recreational infrastructure, and car dependency. These factors were said to reduce liveability, particularly in outer suburban and rural locations.

Additional themes discussed included lengthy work commutes through traffic snarls, and challenging access to childcare services, which could not be fully staffed due to lack of nearby affordable housing for childcare workers.

State infrastructure was reported as lagging behind population growth. An example was described of housing estate access roads being repeatedly patched, rather than rebuilt, causing ongoing inconvenience and higher long-term costs.

Increased migration, freight and connectivity issues, population outflows, workforce shortages, and material supply constraints were also cited as challenges affecting regional construction and liveability.

Equity and inclusion

Planning and housing systems were seen as lacking in diversity, both in decision-making representation and in outcomes for marginalised groups. Ongoing gaps

relating to gender, age, income, and regional or rural disadvantage were highlighted.

The provision of sufficient public housing was highlighted by some participants as an obvious and critical part of the solution. Concern was expressed about adequate social housing and support options for women experiencing domestic violence and facing economic hardship. A suggestion was made that there should be a formula to determine how much social housing each local government area should have.

A focus on educating culturally and linguistically diverse communities about housing accessibility, affordability, support providers, and the social housing system was discussed. Improved understanding was seen as a way to expand access beyond conventional platforms such as online real estate listings.

The particular challenges facing remote indigenous communities in WA, NT and the Torres Strait were highlighted through a number of illustrative stories shared by participants. Panellists were urged to travel from Canberra to some of these remote areas and see the needs first-hand.

Ideas for the future – Systemic reforms and governance

Participants discussed the principle of housing as a human right, while others noted that housing was more commonly seen as a commodity to make money from.

A strongly recurrent theme throughout the conversation was cross-government cooperation at federal, state, and local levels. Suggestions included early guidance, national workshops, roundtables for each state, more consistent planning frameworks, and improved feedback mechanisms.

Policy design was encouraged to consider the full housing continuum. The panel noted that cabinet, through the National Building Reform Blueprint, was supporting collaboration between the commonwealth and states to reduce regulatory barriers and accelerate housing delivery.

It was observed that standardised funding and procurement models were not delivering for rural and regional communities. Greater flexibility and local relevance were identified as necessary to support sustainable, locally driven housing solutions.

Some participants proposed a range of reforms including capital gains tax adjustments, remote housing fringe benefit tax reviews, ‘use it or lose it’ land provisions, and removal of financial disincentives for local government-led

development. The revival of the National Rental Affordability Scheme, limited to local government delivery, was also suggested.

The importance of showcasing positive examples of urban change was highlighted as a way to bring developers on board. Stronger partnerships between state governments and communities were recommended to design incentives tailored to local needs.

It was strongly suggested that the National Housing Program be continued. Participants noted that three times as many applications were received as were approved, and requested transparency around the assessment of applications and provision of feedback where applications have been unsuccessful. Stronger use of local data was called for to guide housing allocations, inform decision-making, and review planning outcomes.

It was suggested that funding grant applications for housing projects needed to clearly explain who would be housed and why, to avoid oversupply in already well-serviced areas.

Land that had previously been deemed unsuitable for development was cited as potentially viable for new housing if expert advice was sought. This indicated a more open approach to site assessments could be beneficial in expanding housing supply.

Finally, some participants were firmly against local government being involved in housing programs, seeing this clearly as a state government issue.

Ideas for the future – Place-based and practical solutions

Some support was expressed for co-housing, community land trusts, tiny homes, modular construction (with enhanced quality control), and climate-appropriate kit homes for remote areas. Preference was shown for small-scale, mixed-use, and adaptive models over large, uniform developments.

Integrating active transport, and reducing parking requirements, was seen as critical to improving affordability, as provision of car parking in multi-unit development increases cost substantially. A strong case was made for designing cities around people rather than cars, to foster greener and more connected communities.

Construction of three to four-storey buildings in selected outer suburban areas with existing infrastructure and transport links was seen as preferable to concentrating growth in already dense inner urban zones.

Other reform ideas included fast-tracking approvals through the use of AI, simplifying red tape, allowing more zoning flexibility, particularly for underutilised rural land, and streamlining developer contributions while maintaining essential services.

A shift toward medium-density housing supported by cycling paths, green spaces, community hubs, and public transport, was encouraged. Poor housing design was noted to have psychological and social costs. Although higher up-front costs were acknowledged, the longer-term human, social, and economic benefits of well-planned communities were emphasised.

Emerging energy transition projects were identified as an opportunity to generate housing and employment benefits, with suggestions to ensure long-term legacy value for affected communities.

In some regional areas, it was reported that 50% of the population commuted out for work. As councils do not typically derive significant revenue from residential ratepayers, it was suggested that more commercial and employment zones could help diversify income streams.

A future sustainability model was discussed, involving commercial ratepayers contributing to major social housing projects. This was seen as a way to support communities where residents can live, work, and thrive.

Proposals to improve housing development in regional areas included freight subsidies, decentralisation incentives, skilled migration of trades, and first home buyer programs linked to housing delivery. Flexible funding for small councils was described as essential.

It was emphasised that regional and rural communities must be engaged in the design of solutions. Community engagement should be based on genuine consultation rather than top-down instruction. Increased availability of short-stay accommodation in remote areas was recommended to assist visiting staff from housing support agencies.

Whilst the nation takes action to address the housing shortage, participants urged policy makers not to forget those currently displaced, facing homelessness, or sleeping rough.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT JOBS & SKILLS

Survey results and responses

Prior to the session, a survey collected data on the current issues councils were facing with jobs and skill development. We collected responses from 29 people. The findings provide insight into the current state of recruitment, training, and staff retention for local government areas.

The results highlighted widespread shortages of qualified professionals in critical roles, the barriers councils face in attracting and retaining talent, and the growing interest in alternative training pathways such as micro-credentialing and VET provision.

The majority of councils reported being adversely affected by shortages of qualified staff across a range of professional disciplines. These workforce constraints are presenting substantial operational challenges and affecting councils' ability to maintain service delivery standards.

Recruitment difficulties are particularly acute for several critical roles. Responding councils identified engineers, urban and statutory planners, environmental health officers, building inspectors, and professionals in aged care and maternal health as the most difficult to source. Responders commented that these roles are essential for meeting regulatory obligations and delivering frontline services, and that ongoing vacancies in these areas risk current and ongoing service delivery gaps.

Councils cited a number of structural and systemic barriers to recruitment. These included a limited pool of appropriately qualified professionals within regional areas, intense competition for talent from the private sector and metropolitan councils, and salary competitiveness challenges. Further, many councils noted a lack of accessible local training pathways contributing to persistent skills shortages.

When considering workforce development, only 52% of councils reported having access to sufficient training options within their region. Juxtaposed to this, of the responding councils, only 12% have looked at micro-credentialling through becoming a VET training provider – an approach that may contribute to meeting local needs more directly. A greater proportion of organisations (some 45%) have looked at the Diploma of Local Government and its component courses.

Finally, while staff retention vary across councils, the challenge of attracting and retaining skilled staff remains a persistent concern.

KEY THEMES

Skilled migration and regional retention

Participants felt that skilled migration settings have been effective in encouraging relocation to regional communities, however long-term retention remains a challenge. Key enablers include spousal employment support, school access, and culturally welcoming programs. It was suggested that councils could better frame the value proposition for migrants. Along with reframing, career progression pathways that reflect personal and holistic needs could also be amplified and may contribute to more sustained retention.

While the Designated Area Migration Scheme (DAMS) has proven to be an effective mechanism in attracting skilled workers, concerns were expressed regarding the administrative burden and cost associated with its implementation. A more streamlined and affordable approach was suggested as a potential solution to support councils in accessing international talent.

Occupational shortages in planning, surveying and certification

Persistent shortages in professions such as building certifiers and surveyors were noted. Barriers highlighted included declining enrolments in tertiary training, difficulties securing insurance, and complex, inconsistent legislation. These factors, combined with the high-risk nature of the roles, may deter new entrants. These shortages have flow-on impacts to the ability of the nation to release land for more housing. Peak bodies were called upon to support uplift efforts. Uniform licensing schemes and clearer ethical guidance could help mitigate these issues.

Barriers to workforce attraction

A lack of available housing, and low levels of building rates in certain regions, were seen to have compounded recruitment difficulties, despite the implementation of progressive measures, including housing incentives and micro-learning pathways. For some council areas, unemployment rates remain negligible, and new arrivals face affordability barriers.

Concerns were raised in the discussion regarding the accessibility of local government employment platforms. For prospective applicants, particularly younger individuals, the complexity and inconsistency of council websites have been described as a barrier, leading to disengagement from the application process altogether.

In regional areas, the availability of early childhood educators has been highlighted as a critical issue. The lack of accessible childcare services impedes workforce participation, particularly for parents who may otherwise be willing and able to return to work or accept employment opportunities.

For councils facing many of these barriers, it was suggested that existing and traditional services could be reimagined or delivered differently, including through outsourcing, cross council collaborations, or digital augmentation.

Competition for resources

Some participants felt the competition for skilled labour from large-scale infrastructure projects of national significance, such as Snowy 2.0 and the Transgrid transmission line upgrades, exacerbated staffing challenges. Local governments are unable to compete with the salaries and employment conditions offered through such projects, thereby creating an uneven playing field for recruitment and retention.

In addition, clarification was sought regarding the potential impacts of multi-employer bargaining reforms on the local government sector. The question was raised as to whether these changes will enhance or hinder workforce stability and capability.

Workforce data, FTE growth and consultant use

Full-time equivalent (FTE) employee growth in the sector was observed to be broadly aligned with population increases, though financial and operational pressures persist. The use of consultants was seen by participants as often necessary to fill specialist or project-based roles, particularly in infrastructure.

Panellists encouraged councils to distinguish their core responsibilities from the provision of other services. It was felt there was also a recognised need to capture local talent and reduce dependence on external contractors wherever possible. Participants commented that consultant use is a prudent and effective way to flex council organisations where necessary, without the risk of overburdening head count permanently.

It was suggested that there is need to ‘talk up’ local government as a career option, and highlight the fulfilling careers that can be had in the sector.

Workforce strategy and planning frameworks

A panellist noted that work was underway on developing a framework or roadmap, with supporting data, for a national vision for people in regional, rural and remote areas. There would be an emphasis on place-based collaboration and evidence-based planning. Forthcoming releases, including a regional roadmap and annual workforce insights report, could be expected to highlight successful case studies and emerging solutions.

There was recognition that the sector would benefit from a more clearly defined problem statement to guide future workforce strategies. It has been suggested that thought leaders and facilitators may assist in sharpening the collective understanding of the challenges, thereby enabling a more targeted and effective response. For example, key barriers remain around childcare, housing, and access to training.

Migrant integration and diversity initiatives

The room explored how we might assist migrants to feel welcome in Australia. Nationally, workplace integration strategies for migrant workers are under development, with a focus on job readiness and two-way cultural understanding.

It was also discussed that programs that build social cohesion, such as volunteering and community participation, are instrumental. The federal government was referenced, as it has recently made high-level appointments in multicultural affairs that reinforce the importance of diversity – it was highlighted as an example of diversity done well.

Expanding responsibilities in rural and remote councils

Participants observed that local councils are increasingly required to deliver services traditionally funded or managed by other tiers of government, including mental health, aged care, and emergency response. It was discussed that these issues disproportionately affect smaller and more isolated regions. Volunteering can bridge the gap for certain councils to an extent, however, the more remote a council is, the less viable this option becomes.

Ideas for the future

Participants felt the challenges surrounding workforce attraction and retention in local government have become increasingly evident. There is a growing perception that recruitment practices within the sector are overly reliant on existing local

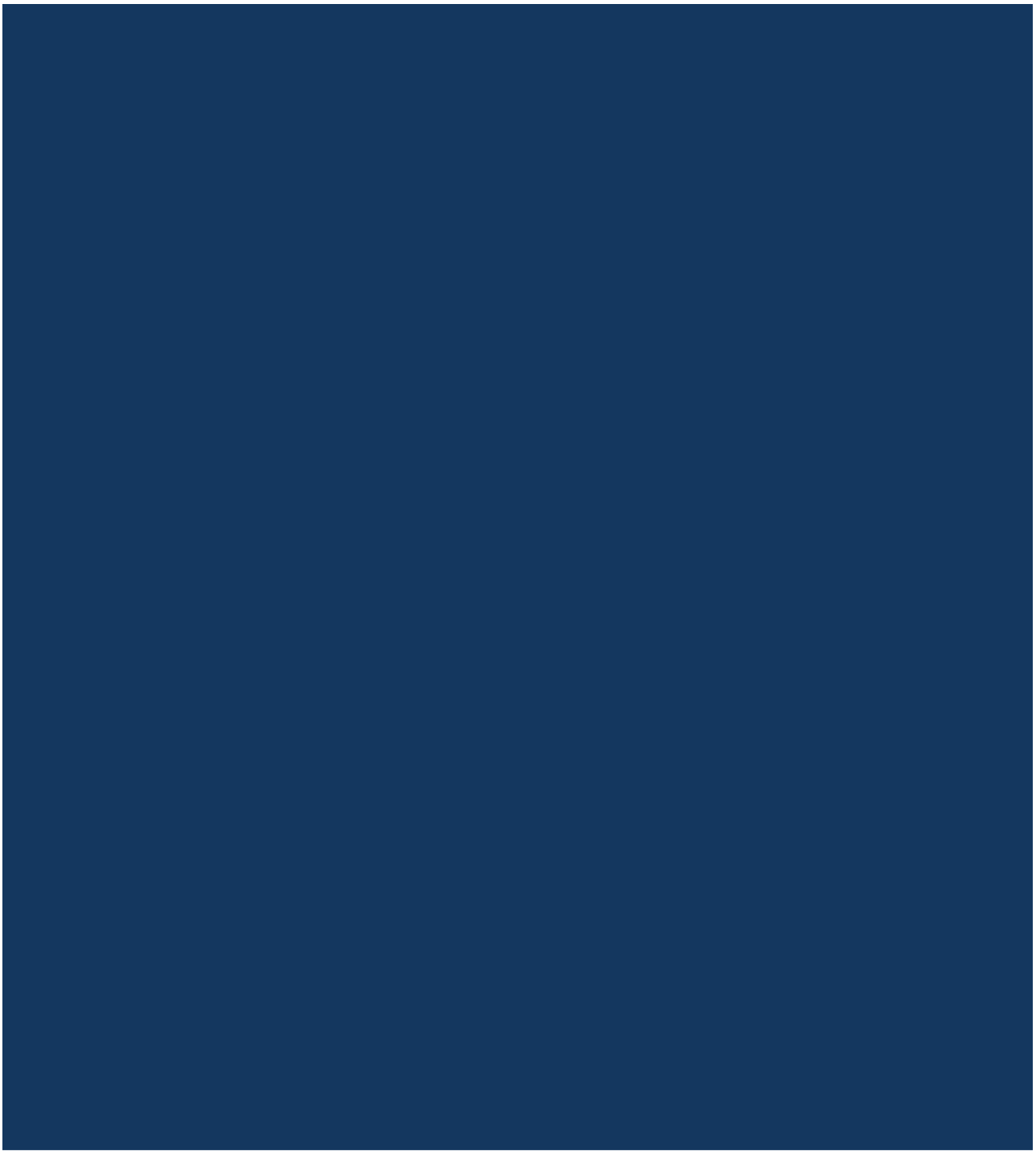
government networks, with limited engagement or outreach to professionals from industry and business. This insularity had the potential to narrow the talent pool and may discourage skilled individuals from considering local government as a viable career path.

Local governments were said to face particularly persistent challenges in attracting and retaining health and technical professionals, particularly in regional areas. Addressing this would require modernising recruitment practices, embracing skills-based employment pathways, and actively removing structural and cultural barriers.

Initiatives such as cadetships, school outreach, and purposeful storytelling were identified as helpful ways local government could position itself as a meaningful career option.

At the same time, it was mentioned that it would be helpful to prioritise competencies over formal qualifications. This would better support mid-life career transitions, and create more inclusive, flexible work environments that might better compete with other sectors.

Further interest was expressed in the federal rollout of programs such as Workforce Australia and Career Transition Assistance. Local councils, particularly those in regions affected by transitions in the mining sector, are eager to understand how these initiatives may be leveraged to support local employment outcomes.



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Minutes of the Local Emergency Management Committee

Thursday 13 February 2025
10.00am
Yass SES, 1410 Laidlaw Street, Yass

Minutes of the Local Emergency Management Committee held on 13 February 2025

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Minutes of the Local Emergency Management Committee held on 13 February 2025

Meeting Opened – 10.00am

Present

In Person:

N Cooke (Director Infrastructure & Assets – Chair), Dianne Erickson (NSW RA), George Shepherd (RFS), Paul Vasey (VRA Binalong), Phil Marshall (ACT ESA), Mike Fitzgerald (Humelink), Schott Schlunke (SE LLS), Barry Griffith (NSW SES), Katie Yeo – Yass Valley Council and Louise Smith - Yass Valley Council

Teams:

Paul Cortese, Mike Fitzgerald (Humelink), Ben Reyes (Transgrid), Wade Baverstock (Transport NSW) and Claran Treanor

Acknowledgment to Country

1. Apologies

Fiona Leech (Local Land Services), Jim Walsh (ACT Fire and Rescue), David Arthur (DET NSW), Dave Cowell, Dean Campbell and Paul Box.

2. Confirmation of Minutes

COMMITTEE DECISION

That the minutes of the Local Emergency Management Committee held on 14 November 2024 be taken as read and confirmed.

3. Correspondence

Nil to report.

4. Staff Reports

Humelink – Mike Fitzgerald presented a slideshow (report attached). 150 transmission houses, Yass industrial park camp facility for up to 300 people, this should start in around 3 months' time. Around 50 access points in the Yass region which will start in around two months' time, whole project will take around 18 months. Someone will be trained in emergency response for heights. Drones will be running but no helicopters at present on site.

Peter Scott is the safety director and will be the person communicating with the LEMC about any emergency responses. 4wd operations, small number of trained in vehicle recovery, every vehicle has first aid and AEDs. Supervisors have star link fitted to vehicles and can hot spot from vehicles when on site.

Outsourced Paramedic will be onsite to be first responder for medical and fire incidents.

Emergency drills will be run every 3 months.

Bushfire response with RFS and fire and rescue.

Biosecurity management plan is in place.

Mike to provide contact details, Emergency critical Incident program to be sent with correct presentation.

Disaster Welfare – as tabled.

NSW Reconstruction authority report – Di Erickson will be the point of contact for this area. Will be attempting to attend 50% meetings in person otherwise online. Recovery efforts from storms 15 Jan, staff deployed up north. Current working in Harden.

Disaster ready fund is now open closing 2 April, focus on key priorities.

Get ready resources over 100 to use.

Transport NSW – as tabled.

DET Education – as tabled.

VRA Binalong – as tabled.

Delegates Reports

Police

Nil.

Ambulance

Nil .

Fire Rescue NSW

Nil to report

Rural Fire Service

From Nov to Jan 165 incidents plus within our zone and other external incidents, LG, SH and SWS. Yass Area 20 fires, 19 MVA, 1 hazard, 19 service calls.

- Operational capability business as usual
- Increase of hazard complaints
- Inspection of hazard reductions have been carried out within the area.
- Inspection of fire trials within the zone have been completed.

- Pockets of dry areas still, but with the storms coming through.

NSW State Emergency Service

Barry Griffith – will send through a tabled report.

VRA Rescue NSW Limited – Binalong Rescue

Report has been tabled.

Local Land Services

Scott Schulunke, business as usual, Aviagan influenzas concerns but not same strain.

Arial shoot happening March to April.

Correspondence will be sent to LEMC.

Staff – restructure in upper management.

At last meeting, having a truck rollover for emergency livestock, still on agenda to complete.

Southern NSW Local Health District

Nil.

NSW Department of Family & Community Services

Nil.

Transport for NSW

Report as tabled.

Red Cross

Nil.

Council

Nathan Cooke has been speaking with LEMC regarding a letter of support for the Crago Mill Precinct. Once constructed the council chambers will become the local emergency response area.

Assist with grants.

All agreed.

Regional Management Officer

Nil.

Education

Nil.

Other Business

Signature needed for the Yass Valley Emergency flood plan – correction of form, no changes. Report to come through and to be distributed to be signed.

Meeting Closed at 10.34am.

Next Meeting

Thursday 8 May 2024 at Yass SES @ 1410 Laidlaw Street, Yass.

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Minutes of the Rescue Committee

Thursday 20 February 2025
9.30am

Yass SES, 1410 Laidlaw Street, YASS

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Minutes of the Rescue Committee held on 20 February 2025

Present

Dave Cowell – LEOCON (Chair), Matt Chifley – (NSW Police – REMO - Teams), Rob Bolin (NSW SES – Yass), Barry Griffiths (NSW SES - Teams), Nathan Cooke (Director Infrastructure & Assets), Paul Vassey (VRA Rescue NSW), George Shepherd (NSW RFS), Dean Campbell (FRNSW), Scott Lang (FRNSW), Chris Inglis (FRNSW) and Katie Yeo – Yass Valley Council.

Teams

Erin Pogmore, Matthew Chifley and Paul Flynn.

CHAIR

Acknowledgement to Country

1. Apologies

Ben Hutchinson

2. Confirmation of Minutes

COMMITTEE DECISION

That the minutes of the Rescue Committee held on 14 November 2024 be taken as read and confirmed.

(George Shepherd and Nathan Cooke)

3. Delegates Reports

Police

Been involved in several rescues, most involved in heavy vehicles. Improving capability, boat course Monday 6 extra trained staff in PD and 3 for Yass.

Fatigue, distraction and drugs are the 3 main courses.

Ambulance

Paul Box reported business as usual.

NSW State Emergency Service

Paul Bolin unaware of anything, but Yass getting back online for rescue. Closest was Boorowa.

Who let the boats out, apparently very successful.

ACTION – update report for next meeting on "Who let the boats out".

Fire Rescue NSW

Scott Lang reported covered of on major truck accident, terms of rescue contributions

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planned training sessions, perishable. Debrief coming up for truck accident last week, just waiting on time and day.

Rural Fire Service
Business as usual.

VRA Rescue NSW Limited – Binalong Rescue

Tabled Report as correspondence.

Regional Emergency Management Officer

SRV have funding for local exercises – focus on flood rescue. People to let him know what you want done.

Paul Flynn – Fire rescue ACT

Nil to report.

Dave Cowell (Chair) asked where there any operations or exercises you have held in relation to NSW, anyone attend crashes on barton with NSW? 1 yesterday a cyclist on federal highway, nothing major.

Dave Cowell (Chair) thanked his involvement in the meetings.

Erin Patmore – FRNSW at Goulburn.

Nil to report.

General Business

Discussion was held regarding Truck accident at Gunning.

George Shepherd RFS – fire trucks all over the place, MDT getting installed with 4 & 5g. Yass area installed at Bowning, Goulburn at Goulburn station, ULSC at Crookwell.

Scott Lang – last meeting and was congratulated on his redeployment. Collaboration between RFS and Fire and rescue – 2nd April last day.

Next Meeting

Thursday 8 May 2025 at Yass SES, 1410 Laidlaw Street YASS.

Meeting closed at 9.58am.