



## **Ordinary Meeting of Council**

**Thursday 26 March 2026**

**4:00 PM**

**Yass High School**

**Grampian Street, YASS**

**PRAYER:**

**All Stand:**

**Mayor:** *Let us be still and remember the presence of God. As we commence our meeting let us together pray for guidance and help.*

**Join me in the prayer or take this moment to reflect:**

*Almighty God, we ask your blessing upon this Council.*

*Direct and prosper our deliberations to the true welfare of Australia and the people of Yass Valley Amen.*

**FUTURE MEETINGS**

**April 2026**

**Thursday 23rd**

**4:00 PM**

**Ordinary Meeting of Council**

# Ordinary Meeting of Council

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Open Forum

Page No.

### Webcasting

This meeting is being webcast, a reminder to those in attendance that you should refrain from making any defamatory statements. Also a reminder to the gallery that the use of a recording device is a breach of the Code of Meeting Practice and anyone contravening or attempting to contravene will be expelled from the meeting.

### Acknowledgement of Country

Yass Valley Council recognises the Ngunnawal people, the Traditional Custodians of the land, water, and sky. We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and future emerging leaders. We extend our respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who live in the Yass Valley Local Government Area.

### 1. Councillor Request for Attendance via Audio-Visual Link

### 2. Apologies

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**Close of Meeting Time**

**Gayleen Burley**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

## **1 Councillor Request for Attendance via Audio-Visual Link**

### **1.1 LEAVE TO ATTEND VIA AUDIO-VISUAL LINK – CR DAVID CARTER**

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A request has been received by the CEO from Cr David Carter on 23 March 2026 to attend the 26 March 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting via audio-visual link due to unforeseen caring responsibilities.

Councillors may wish to move and second either of the below suggested

Recommendations:

**That Council approve leave for Councillor David Carter to attend the 26 March 2026 Council Meeting via audio-visual link due to unforeseen caring responsibilities prohibiting him from attending the meeting in person.**

Or

**That Council does not approve leave for Councillor David Carter to attend the 26 March 2026 Council Meeting via audio-visual link as Council is not satisfied the request meets the eligibility requirements under the Code of Meeting Practice.**

The relevant clauses of the Code of Meeting Practice which need to be considered when determining whether to grant leave for Cr Carter are outlined below:

#### **Clause 5.18**

*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 where they are prevented from attending the meeting in person because of ill-health or other medical reasons or because of unforeseen caring responsibilities.*

#### **Clause 5.20**

*A request by a councillor for approval to attend a meeting by audio-visual link must be made in writing to the CEO prior to the meeting in question and must provide reasons why the councillor will be prevented from attending the meeting in person.*

#### **Clause 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.*

#### **Clause 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 the 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.*

#### **Clause 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 the meetings the resolution applies to.*

**Clause 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.*

**Clause 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 council must act reasonably when considering requests by councillors to attend meeting by audio-visual link.*

**Clause 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 committee of the council by audio-visual link.*

**Clause 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.*

**Clause 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.*

**Clause 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.*

**ATTACHMENTS:**    **NIL**



## **Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council**

**Thursday 26 February 2026**

4:00 PM

Yass High School

Grampian Street, YASS

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DRAFT

**Council Meeting - The Mayor declared the meeting open at 4.02pm.**

**Present**

Councillors Jasmin Jones (Mayor), Cecil Burgess, Kristin Butler (Deputy Mayor), Alvaro Charry, Fleur Flanery, Adrian Cameron, David Rothwell, David Carter and Allan McGrath.

Officers also present were Peta Gardiner(Acting Chief Executive Officer), Andrew Neil (Director of Planning & Environment), Nathan Cooke (Director of Infrastructure & Assets), Jason McGuire (Chief Financial Officer), Caitlin Flint (Senior Advisor Governance), Chloe Johnson (Executive Support Officer) and Katie Yeo (Learning & Development Officer).

**Acknowledgement of Country**

Yass Valley Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Ngunnawal people. We acknowledge and respect their continued connection to land, waters, skies and community. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Yass Valley Local Government Area.

**Prayer**

**1. Councillor Request for Attendance via Audio-Visual**

NIL

**2. Apologies**

NIL

**Motion**

***RESOLVED that an apology be received for Councillor Cameron to join the meeting late.***

***(McGrath/Charry)***

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

At 4.04pm Councillor Cameron joined the meeting.

**3. Declaration of Interest/Disclosures**

**Councillor Jones**, declared a Non-Pecuniary – Less than Significant Interest and will remain in the meeting in Item 6.7 YVC.PE.57.2025 Murrumbateman All Abilities Playground Construction.

**Reason:** Family is on the St Clements Parish Council, The Diocese owns the land being leased.

**Councillor Jones**, wished to place on record that the previous conflict of interest relating to the consideration of this matter is now extinguished. The Mayor will remain in the meeting to vote on Item 6.1 Review of Determination – Dazzle Dance – 26 Rose Street, Murrumbateman.

**Reason:** Child no longer attends the business for classes.

**4. Confirmation of Minutes**

***RESOLVED that the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 18 December 2025 covered by resolution numbers 414-439 inclusive, copies of which had been circulated to all Councillors, be taken as read and confirmed.***

(Flanery/Burgess) 1

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

## **5. Mayoral Minute**

### **5.1 SHINGLE HILL WAY & FEDERAL HWY INTERSECTION ADVOCACY**

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#### **SUMMARY**

Shingle Hill Way & Federal HWY intersection advocacy.

#### **RESOLVED that :**

- 1. Council acknowledges the Gundaroo RFS advocacy on the need for a coordinated approach to the intersection which straddles several jurisdictions, along with the YVC coordinated on-site meetings between Gundaroo and Wamboin RFS crews, YVC and QPRC Mayors and executive leadership, NSW Police, and Transport for NSW.**
- 2. Council supports further collaborative advocacy to the State and Federal Governments to prioritise a full upgrade to the Federal HWY-Shingle Hill Way intersection as a strategic response to the 2023 completion of the State and Federal Government \$4.4 million investment in and completion of the Shingle Hill Way bridge upgrade.**
- 3. Council brings to the attention of the State Government that the accommodation of Higher Mass Load (HML) vehicles and raising to a 166-tonne load limit of the Shingle Hill Way bridge creates a duty of care for the NSW Government to upgrade the state-managed highway intersection tie-in. This is necessary to mitigate the associated increased risks of nearby infrastructure supporting increased freight productivity and high-volume traffic—including caravans, horse floats, and agricultural truck movements—while ensuring the safety of emergency services response personnel.**

(Jones/Burgess) 2

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

### **5.2 CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE MAYOR OF WAVERLEY, CR WILL NEMESH**

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## SUMMARY

Bondi Condolence Message Book from Yass Valley presented to The Hon. Wendy Tuckerman.

Correspondence to and from Waverley Mayor Clr Will Nemesh

Letter of thanks to NSW RSL for the Yass Sub-Branch's support of the Bondi Candlelight Vigil in Yass

***RESOLVED that Council notes Yass Valley Council fulfilled its December 18 resolution in leading our community in a nationally signalled evening of prayer, reflection, and togetherness with a Candlelight Vigil at Yass Soldiers' Memorial Hall & Shrine in December.***

***On behalf of Council, I wrote to Waverley Mayor Clr Will Nemesh expressing our community's deepest condolences and unwavering solidarity following the anti-Semitic massacre at Bondi Beach on December 14, 2025. Correspondence tabled.***

***I received a letter from Mayor Nemesh expressing his and Waverley Council's deep appreciation of our support. Correspondence tabled.***

***On behalf of Council, I also wrote to NSW RSL thanking the Yass RSL Sub-Branch for their support and assistance with the Candlelight Vigil, supported by our Combined Churches and attended by The Hon. Michael McCormack, Yass Police & Emergency Services and 130 members of the public including Jewish residents and their Rabbi. Correspondence tabled.***

***On the 26<sup>th</sup> January, The Yass Valley Condolence Book of messages was presented to the Hon. Wendy Tuckerman MP for further coordination through NSW Parliament.***

**(Jones/McGrath) 3**

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Councillors A Charry and F Flanery

## 5.3 LONG SERVICE AWARD FORMAL COMMENDATION AND RECOGNITION

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### SUMMARY

Two of our longest serving councillors have received due recognition for their long and distinguished service in local government with thirty-year certificates and medals recently presented.

***RESOLVED that Council:***

- 1. Commends the long service recognition awarded to Councillor Allan McGrath and former Mayor for his service across the Yass Valley and Queanbeyan-Palerang local government areas, and Councillor Cecil Burgess OAM for his continuous service to Yass Valley.***
- 2. Formally congratulates both individuals on the presentation of their Local Government Association certificates and Long Service Medals at the 2026 Australia Day Ceremony.***
- 3. Extends its thanks to QPRC Mayor Clr Kenrick Winchester and Emeritus Mayor Rowena Abbey OAM for their participation in the award ceremony.***

**(McGrath/Burgess) 4**

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

## **6. Reports to Council – Supplementary Report**

### **6.22 AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION - NATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2026 MOTIONS**

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#### **SUMMARY**

The Australian Local Government Association is the peak national body representing local councils across Australia. The 2026 National General Assembly of ALGA will be held in Canberra between 23 and 25 June 2026.

**RESOLVED that Council submit the following motions to the Australian Local Government Association for consideration at the 2026 National General Assembly of ALGA:**

- **Establish a dedicated national fund specifically for the repair, replacement, and upgrade of ageing Olympic-style swimming pools operating as council-managed public assets (Motion 1)**
- **Increase the Financial Assistance Grants to 1% of Federal Taxation Revenue (Motion 2)**
- **Advocate for Council access to the National Messaging System for targeted emergency alerts (Motion 3)**
- **Restoration of Funding for The Green Army or similar grassroots program supporting First Nations & Council collaborations (Motion 4)**
- **Introduction of a national standard for tree management practices conducted by energy infrastructure maintenance bodies and their contractors (Motion 5)**

**(Cameron/Butler) 5**

**FOR:** Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

**AGAINST:** Nil

### **6.1 REVIEW OF DETERMINATION - DAZZLE DANCE - 26 ROSE STREET, MURRUMBATEMAN**

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#### **SUMMARY**

To present a review of the determination of DA230577B which relates to the approved hours of operation for 'Dazzle Dance' dance school at Lot 1 DP 1291221, 26 Rose Street, Murrumbateman. The application attracted 32 unique submissions. It is recommended a consent is issued with modified hours of operation.

#### **AMENDMENT:**

1. **That Modified Development Consent (DA237577B) at Lot 1 DP 1291221, 26 Rose Street, Murrumbateman be granted to operate within the following hours:**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Hours of Operation</b>
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<b>Monday to Friday</b>	<b>9am to 9pm</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>9am to 5pm</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>10am to 4pm</b>
<b>Public Holidays</b>	<b>No operation</b>

2. ***That Dazzle Dance Murrumbateman, located at 26 Rose St Murrumbateman, is permitted to operate 9am - 9pm on the Anzac Day public holiday Monday 27th April 2026 and the Kings Birthday Public holiday Monday 8th June 2026.***

***Butler/Rothwell***

That the amendment be moved separately for item 6.1.

***(Butler/Rothwell) 6***

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Councillor A Cameron

***RESOLVED that Modified Development Consent (DA237577B) at Lot 1 DP 1291221, 26 Rose Street, Murrumbateman be granted to operate within the following hours:***

<b>Day</b>	<b>Hours of Operation</b>
<b>Monday to Friday</b>	<b>9am to 9pm</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>9am to 5pm</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>10am to 4pm</b>
<b>Public Holidays</b>	<b>No operation</b>

***(Butler/Rothwell) 7***

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, D Carter, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Councillors A Cameron, A Charry and F Flanery

***RESOLVED that Dazzle Dance Murrumbateman, located at 26 Rose St Murrumbateman, is permitted to operate 9am - 9pm on the Anzac Day public holiday Monday 27th April 2026 and the Kings Birthday Public holiday Monday 8th June 2026.***

***(Butler/Rothwell) 8***

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Charry, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Councillors A Cameron, D Carter and F Flanery

## **6.2 REVIEW OF DETERMINATION - 7 HANLEY PLACE, YASS**

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### **SUMMARY**

To present a review of the determination of development application DA250320 for six (6) attached dwellings at Lot 1 DP1193382, 7 Hanley Place, Yass. The application for review attracted 19 unique

submissions, 15 in favour of the development and 4 opposed, and relevant conditions can be imposed to mitigate these impacts. Approval is recommended.

#### RECOMMENDATION

*That conditional development consent be issued for Development Application No DA250320 for six (6) attached dwellings at Lot 1 DP 1193382, 7 Hanley Place, Yass, subject to additional conditions which require the community title subdivision to be registered prior to the issue of any Occupation Certificate.*

*(Jones/Burgess)*

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, J Jones and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Councillors A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery and A McGrath

The Motion was lost and subsequently lapsed

### 6.3 DEVELOPMENT CONSENT DA035019D - DISCOVERY DRIVE RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISION (STAGE 3) - 63 DISCOVERY DRIVE, YASS

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#### SUMMARY

To present the assessment of a request to modify development consent DA035019D (19/2003A) for the staged residential subdivision at Discovery Drive, Yass. Stages 1 and 2 of the subdivision have already been completed, with the modification relating to Stage 3 on Lot 63 DP 1071431, with the subject land lot accessible via Discovery Drive.

The modification seeks to amend the internal road layout and lot configuration within the Stage 3 subdivision. The number of residential lots remains unchanged at seven, with all proposed lots achieving the minimum 1,000m<sup>2</sup> lot size in accordance with the Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013 (the LEP). A revised cul-de-sac design replaces a previously approved through-road and provides for improved lot configuration, and a pedestrian laneway to maintain walkability, pedestrian movement and emergency access. The modification application attracted five submissions during the exhibition period.

Given Yass Valley Council is the landowner of the site, Port Stephens Council have been engaged to undertake the assessment as a third-party independent assessor.

Approval is recommended.

***RESOLVED that Development Consent No. DA035019 be modified for Stage 3 of the subdivision at [63] Discovery Drive, Yass, subject to modified conditions which include for a footpath to be constructed to Hume Street.***

*(Carter/Butler) 9*

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, D Carter, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Councillors A Cameron and A Charry

### 6.4 DRAFT PARKWOOD DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN 2026

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## **SUMMARY**

At the Council meeting of 20 December 2023 it was resolved to prepare a Development Control Plan to guide development of the area covered by the Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan (Parkwood) 2020. This report seeks Council's resolution to place the draft Parkwood Development Control Plan 2026 (Parkwood DCP) on exhibition.

***RESOLVED that the draft Parkwood Development Control Plan 2026 be placed on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.***

***(Cameron/Charry) 10***

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

## **6.5 PLANNING PROPOSAL - 1600 YASS VALLEY WAY YASS (PP-2025-2358)**

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### **SUMMARY**

To present a report on a draft Planning Proposal seeking an amendment to the land use zoning under the Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013 for Lot 1 DP 541974, 1600 Yass Valley Way, Yass.

***RESOLVED that Council***

- 1. Endorse the Planning Proposal for Lot 1 DP 541974, 1600 Yass Valley Way, Yass.***
- 2. Forward the draft Planning Proposal to the Minister for Planning to request a Gateway Determination pursuant to s3.34 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979.***

***(McGrath/Charry) 11***

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

## 6.6 PLANNING PROPOSAL - 91 GUISE STREET, SUTTON (PP-2025-1997)

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### SUMMARY

To present a report on a draft Planning Proposal seeking an amendment to the land use zoning under the Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013 for Lot A DP 399029, Lots 107 and 317 DP 754882 and Lot 4 DP 1010009, 91 Guise Street, Sutton.

#### **RESOLVED that Council**

- 1. Endorse the Planning Proposal for Lot A DP 399029, Lots 107 and 317 DP 754882 and Lot 4 DP 1010009, 91 Guise Street, Sutton.**
- 2. Forward the draft Planning Proposal to the Minister for Planning to request a Gateway Determination pursuant to s3.34 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979.**

**(Jones/Rothwell) 12**

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, D Carter, A Charry, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Councillors A Cameron and F Flanery

### Motion

**RESOLVED that Item 6.7 YVC.PE.57.2025 Murrumbateman All Abilities Playground Construction be moved into Closed Session under section 10(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 1993 as a result of the Tender Evaluation Plan subsequent tender amounts needing to be discussed which would be on balance, contrary to the public interest and fairness of the tender process.**

**(Carter/Charry)**

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Councillor A Cameron

## 6.8 DRAFT SUTTON RECREATION GROUND STRATEGIC PLAN 2025

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### SUMMARY

To present the outcomes of the consultation period for the draft Sutton Recreation Ground Strategic Plan 2025.

It is recommended that the draft strategic plan is adopted (**Attachment A**).

#### **RESOLVED that Council:**

- 1. adopts the Draft Sutton Recreation Ground Strategic Plan 2025;**
- 2. undertakes an annual review of the Strategic Plan, incorporating feedback from the Sutton community and ensuring consistency with relevant Council policies and strategic documents; and**
- 3. reaffirms its commitment to work alongside and in support of the Sutton community to ensure that community views are properly considered in the implementation of the Recreation Ground Strategic Plan.**

**(Charry/Cameron) 13**

At 6.15pm Councillor Cameron left the Chamber.

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

ABSENT: Councillor A Cameron

## 6.9 DRAFT WALKER PARK STRATEGIC PLAN 2025

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### SUMMARY

To present the draft Walker Park Strategic Plan 2025 for endorsement to be publicly exhibited for 28 days.

***RESOLVED that Council endorse the draft Walker Park Strategic Plan 2025 for public exhibition for a minimum of 28 days and if no submissions are received, the strategy be adopted.***

***(Carter/Charry) 14***

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

ABSENT: Councillor A Cameron

At 6.18pm Councillor Cameron returned to the Chambers.

## 6.10 ROSSI STREET - STREET TREES

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### SUMMARY

To present an update on the two London Plane trees and one White Cedar tree along Rossi Street, Yass.

***RESOLVED that Valley Council continues its advocacy to Essential Energy for a review of and seeking alternate pruning measures particularly for mature street trees.***

At 6.18pm Councillor Cameron returned to the Chamber

***(Butler/McGrath) 15***

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

## 6.11 PESTICIDE USE NOTIFICATION PLAN

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## SUMMARY

To seek Council endorsement to proceed with community engagement regarding the Pesticide Use Notification Plan (the Plan). The Plan sets out how the Council will notify members of the community of pesticide applications made by Council and its contractors in public places.

***RESOLVED that Council endorse the Pesticide Notification Plan for public exhibition for a minimum of 28 days and if no submission are received, the plan be adopted.***

***(Burgess/Butler) 16***

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

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## 6.12 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION UPDATE - DECEMBER 2025 AND JANUARY 2026

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### SUMMARY

To present details of council's performance against the expectations set by the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure and to provide details of applications lodged and determined in December 2025 and January 2026.

***RESOLVED that information presented in the report and accompanying attachment be noted.***

***(Carter/Charry) 17***

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

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## 6.13 HEAT WAVE - FREE POOL ENTRY

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### SUMMARY

In accordance with a Council resolution from the February 2020 Council meeting, the Yass and Binalong pools allowed for free entry on days where the expected temperature was 40°C or above.

***RESOLVED that Council:***

- 1. Notes the impact on the 2025/26 operational costs associated with the operation of the Yass and Binalong Pools as a result of the 'free entry' days in January 2026.***
- 2. Notes that the recent five-day free access provided at the Yass and Binalong pools included days that fell outside the 2020 40-degree Celsius policy threshold upon request of the Mayor and the CEO.***
- 3. Recognises that this variation was an important response to the sustained heatwave conditions and the cumulative impact on the community, particularly during the school holiday period that continued until classes commenced on 2 February 2026.***
- 4. A review of the current policy be conducted prior to the next swimming season. This review should consider options for appropriate temperature thresholds and cumulative***

*impact of hot days to trigger free entry, and the associated budget implications, noting that any further negative impacts on the budget must be presented as a quarterly variation if not factored in as an emergency fund within the 26-27 operational budget.*

5. *Complete an end of season further analysis of attendance, pool entry fees, and canteen sales for the remainder of the swimming season following the six free days (including Australia Day). This should inform if increased promotion of the pool, uptake in community positive perception and increased participation contributed to a pattern of sustained increase in paid attendance overall and whether the initial \$10,000 loss could be considered recouped, in whole or part, when compared to traditional seasonal data.*
6. *Be presented with a draft Corporate Sponsorship Policy which considers the ability of Council to seek pre-arranged sponsorship for the seasonal cost of lifeguards to offset entirely or partially the cost in exchange for corporate branding inclusion on uniform, signage, social media and website communications and discovers other areas of the Organisation which could also qualify for Corporate Sponsorship arrangements.*

**(Jones/Rothwell) 18**

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

**Motion**

***RESOLVED that the meeting be extended by 1hr and adjourn for a 5 minute break at 6.48pm.***

**(Carter/Cameron) 19**

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

**Motion**

***RESOLVED that the meeting be resumed at 6.56pm.***

**(Carter/Cameron) 20**

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

### **Suspension of Standing Orders**

**RESOLVED** that Standing Orders be suspended in order to bring forward the following items to be dealt with at this time:

- **Item 6.14 Yass Water Treatment Plant Upgrade Project - Implementation - Bi-Monthly Update Report**
- **Item 6.15 Report on the 2025/26 Operational Plan**
- **Item 6.18 2025/26 Second Quarter Review Statement**
- **Item 6.20 Investment and Borrowing Report**
- **Item 6.21 Post-Exhibition Policy Report - Hardship & Financial Assistance Policy and Managing Unreasonable Conduct Towards YVC and its Employees Policy**
- **Item 9.1 Minutes of the Rescue Committee Meeting held on 8 May 2025 and 21 August 2025**
- **Item 9.3 Minutes of the Local Emergency Management Committee Meeting held on 8 May 2025 and 21 August 2025**

**(Jones/Carter) 21**

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

### **6.14 YASS WATER TREATMENT PLANT UPGRADE PROJECT - IMPLEMENTATION - BI-MONTHLY UPDATE REPORT**

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#### **SUMMARY**

To provide Council with an update on the Yass Water Treatment Plant Upgrade and Water Reticulation Improvement Projects.

**RESOLVED** that Council notes the updated report and work completed on the Yass Water Treatment Plant Upgrade Project.

**(Jones/Carter) 22**

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

## 6.15 REPORT ON THE 2025/26 OPERATIONAL PLAN

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### SUMMARY

In addition to the requirements required under the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, Council has committed to providing, every quarter, a report on progress against the actions and activities identified in its Operational Plan. This report contains the status of actions and activities for Quarter 2 2025-2026.

**RESOLVED that the Quarter 2 update for the 2025-2026 Operational Plan be noted.**

**(Jones/Carter) 23**

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

### Motion

**RESOLVED that Item 6.16 Advisory Committee Membership be moved into closed session under Section 10(A)(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 1993 given the discussion will relate to the personal information of some applicants and their suitability for recommended Committees. Discussion in open Council would be on balance, contrary to the public interest.**

**(Charry/McGrath)**

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

## 6.18 2025/26 SECOND QUARTER REVIEW STATEMENT

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### SUMMARY

This report represents the 2025-26 Second Quarter Budget Review Statement (QBR2) for the period 1 October 2025 to 31 December 2025. The review demonstrates Council's projected year end consolidated Net Operating Result before Capital items remains negative and is predicted to be (\$1.2M) compared to the revised consolidated budgeted deficit of (\$1.5M) at following the First Quarter Budget Review (QBR1). Actual results as at 31 December 2025 show a surplus of \$8.4M due to rate and annual charges recognised in July with expenses evenly spread across the year.

**RESOLVED that Council:**

- 1. Notes the 2025-26 Second Quarter Budget Review.**
- 2. Adopts the adjustments detailed in the 2025-26 Second Quarter Budget Review Statement.**
- 3. In accordance with the Local Government (General Regulation (NSW) Clause 203 (2)(a), Council notes its financial position as at 31 December 2025 as being satisfactory, having regard to revised projected estimates of income and expenditure from this review.**
- 4. Notes that the 2025-26 Second Quarter Budget Review Statement will be provided to the Office of Local Government.**

*(Jones/Carter)* 24

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

## 6.20 INVESTMENT AND BORROWING REPORT

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### SUMMARY

In accordance with clause 212 *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005*, this report provides a summary of Council's investments for the period 1 to 31 January 2026. In accordance with paragraph (1) (b), it can be certified that the investments listed have been made in accordance with the Act, the Regulations and Council's Investment Policy.

The Investment and Borrowing Report for December 2025 is attached for information.

***RESOLVED that the Investment & Borrowings Reports, covering the period 1 to 31 January 2026 be noted.***

*(Jones/Carter)* 25

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

## 6.21 POST-EXHIBITION POLICY REPORT - HARDSHIP & FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY AND MANAGING UNREASONABLE CONDUCT TOWARDS YVC AND ITS EMPLOYEES POLICY

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### SUMMARY

Council, at the meeting of 27 November 2025 resolved to place the following policies on public exhibition for 28 days.

- Hardship and Financial Assistance Policy (**Resolution 392/25**)
- Managing Unreasonable Conduct towards YVC and its Employees Policy (**Resolution 391/25**)

Given both policies attracted one submission each during the consultation period, they are being reported back to Council, with changes where determined necessary, for final adoption.

***RESOLVED that Council:***

- 1. Adopt the Hardship and Financial Assistance Policy.***
- 2. Adopt the Managing Unreasonable Conduct towards YVC and its Employees Policy.***

*(Jones/Carter)* 26

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

### **9.1 MINUTES OF THE RESCUE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8 MAY 2025 AND 21 AUGUST 2025.**

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#### **REPORT**

The minutes of the Rescue Committee meetings held on 8 May 2025 and 21 August 2025 are included as **Attachments A and B**.

As per the Terms of Reference, the Committee provides advice and recommendations to Council only, with no decision-making delegations. Therefore, actions identified in the attached minutes will require the formal approval by Council before any commitment or adjustment to the Operational Plan / Budget is made.

Accordingly, the minutes are presented for information.

***RESOLVED that the minutes of the Rescue Committee meetings held on 8 May 2025 and 21 August 2025 be noted.***

***(Jones/Carter) 27***

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

### **9.3 MINUTES OF THE LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8 MAY 2025 AND 21 AUGUST 2025.**

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#### **REPORT**

The minutes of the Local Emergency Management Committee meetings held on 8 May 2025 and 21 August 2025 are included as **Attachments A and B**.

As per the Terms of Reference, the Committee provides advice and recommendations to Council only, with no decision-making delegations. Therefore, actions identified in the attached minutes will require the formal approval by Council before any commitment or adjustment to the Operational Plan / Budget is made.

Accordingly, the minutes are presented for information.

***RESOLVED that the minutes of the Local Emergency Management Committee meeting held on 8 May 2025 and 21 August 2025 be noted.***

***(Jones/Carter) 28***

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

### **6.17 UPDATE ON TRANSFER OF TELEGRAPH CLOSE, YASS**

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## SUMMARY

To provide Council with an update on the sale of Telegraph Close Yass in accordance with Council Resolution 23 October 2025 (**Resolution 367/25**).

### **RESOLVED that :**

- 1. Council set aside Resolution 367/25 noting the additional information supplied by the landowner.**
- 2. A refund of the \$1,000 paid to Council by the landowner on 28 June 2024 be processed given there was no formal agreement for which it be charged and therefore accepted.**
- 3. Any Land Registry Service (LRS) documentation associated with the transfer of the land to Bellevale Cattle Company Pty Ltd and resulting closure of the road reserve be executed by the CEO when required.**

**(McGrath/Carter) 29**

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

## 6.19 MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

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### SUMMARY

This monthly financial report provides information about Council's financial position at the end of January 2026 with the full year and year-to-date budgets reflecting the budgets adopted as part of the First Quarter Budget Review (QBR1). The report also includes a variance analysis against the full-year and budget year to date. An Investment and Borrowing Report is prepared and is presented to Council as a separate report.

The monthly finance report for December 2025 is attached for information.

**RESOLVED that the Monthly Financial Report for January 2026 be noted.**

**(Rothwell/Charry) 30**

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

## **7. Notice of Motion**

### **7.1 PROPOSED CHANGES TO USER CHARGES - COUNCIL SPORTING GROUNDS 2026/2027**

---

Councillor Fleur Flanery has given notice that at the Ordinary Council Meeting on 26 February 2026, she will move the following motion.

**RESOLVED that Council:**

- 1. Adopts a cost recovery of 15 % of annual operational costs as the basis for calculating fees for annual sports and equestrian user groups in accordance with the Asset Management Strategy 2022- 2033**
- 2. Agrees that no individual sporting club's fee increases by more than 30% when compared to the previous financial year**
- 3. Agrees no individual sporting club pays less than the fee charged in the last financial year, 2024/25**
- 4. Reaffirms that the Yass Valley Council is committed to supporting local sporting and equestrian clubs and will work to reduce their operational maintenance costs of the sporting grounds through setting service levels in conjunction with the newly formed Sporting Clubs' Committee.**

**(Flanery/Butler) 31**

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

## **8. Questions with Notice**

### **8.1 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE - CR FLEUR FLANERY**

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#### **Question 1**

*Given the recommendation for Yass Council to have a Tree Management Strategy has been on-going for more than a decade, why is consultation occurring before a scope has been provided to and agreed by Councillors?*

#### **Response**

On 24 July 2025, Council resolved to:

#### **RESOLUTION [247]**

**Develop a Tree Management Strategy in the current term of Council that prioritises:**

- The retention of non-invasive trees the Shire in towns, villages and its roadways.**
- New tree planting in streets and parks to improve amenity and environmental outcomes**
- Replacement of dangerous and declining trees with trees better suited to the environment.**
- Removal of exotic invasive trees on public land near environmentally sensible locations ie the Yass Gorge and other locations to be specified**

- ***Replanting of trees that have been removed with native species endemic to the area where possible***
- ***Develop a list of trees suitable for the region to guide future planting in new development areas and replanting programs***
- ***Maintenance of street trees to Australian Standards***

This Resolution was essentially a 'work order' to the CEO to progress this body of work and the subsequent engagement of a consultant via a Request for Quotation (RFQ) process.

The RFQ containing a scope of works is something within the delegation and remit of the CEO and Council Officers and it is not common or usual practice for an RFQ scope to be "agreed" by Councillors.

Resolution [247] was viewed as the scope provided by Council for Officers to act. Notwithstanding, the intention was always for extensive community engagement to take place to ensure any resulting Strategy was fit for purpose.

It is noted that at the request of an individual Councillor, the scope prepared for this Strategy has been provided to Councillors.

### **Question 2**

*With respect to the consultation for the Tree Management Strategy why is the proposed Strategy only focusing on trees on public (Council) land when almost 50% of trees in urban areas in the Yass Valley are on private land and form a vital part of any climate mitigation strategy and ambience of the streetscapes?*

### **Response**

The approved budget set by Council for the creation of a Strategy is \$80,000. The focus of this Strategy has therefore needed to be refined to areas that Council can affect immediate effect change upon (i.e. public trees).

### **Question 3**

*How have stakeholders (the public) been informed about the scope of the Tree Management Strategy?*

### **Response**

As the RFQ has only recently been awarded, the process remains in early stages. The point of the initial consultation round is to allow the community a voice in refining the scope. Council has moved away from a traditional consultation model into one in which empowers the community to take ownership and have increased input into the Councils strategies that impact them.

### **Question 4**

*When will the Council be provided with the updated Play Space Strategy?*

### **Response**

The Parks and Play Strategy was placed on public exhibition between 28 November 2025 and 31 January 2026. Council staff are currently reviewing the submissions from the community with a view to reflect the feedback in the final strategy. This version will be presented to Council for final adoption in the coming months.

### **Question 5**

*How long on average does it take Council to respond to non-urgent requests such as barking dogs or fixing a lock on the door of the public toilets in Riverbank Park? Does Council have KPI's for this?*

**Response**

Council currently has no Rangers and therefore we have had to prioritise areas that pose immediate public concern such as off-leash dogs and dog attacks.

Council's Customer Service Charter, available on the YVC website, specifies that 'other dog complaints' such as barking dogs can expect a 5 working day response timeframe.

The fixing of a door in Riverside Park is something that would be attended to as soon as possible for inspection and for a permanent fix, resources permitting.

**RESOLVED that the Questions with Notice be tabled and noted.**

**(Flanery/McGrath) 32**

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

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**8.2 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE - CR ADRIAN CAMERON**

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**Question**

What was the process for deciding that some council properties are to be let on a commercial basis; the Goodradigbee Centre, the library and one of the spaces in the memorial hall, whilst others are used by community groups on what appears to be a grace and favour arrangement. Whilst other community groups have been excluded and/or evicted from council property?

**Response**

Both the Goodradigbee Building and the small space at the front of Memorial Hall have both been leased on a commercial basis previously. Both of these spaces are currently vacant and have been advertised for commercial leases through a local real estate agency.

When the library moves into the new building within the Crago Mill Precinct, the existing library area will be commercially leased to provide an income to Council. All community groups are able to apply to lease any of the commercial spaces at the assessed market value for each space.

As per Council resolution at the February 2023 Council meeting, that the Yass District Historical Society were offered first option of the location of the current Library space at market value. The Society have thanked Council for their proposal and have formally advised Council that they will not be accepting this offer.

Council does not have any existing commercially lettable spaces on grace or favour arrangements. The Men's Shed and Yass Landcare have ongoing access to Council owned facilities, that are not considered commercially lettable spaces. These arrangements have been in place for some time.

At this point in time, Council is not in a financial position to be offering commercially lettable spaces for free or below market value to community groups.

**RESOLVED that the Questions with Notice be tabled and noted.**

**(Jones/Cameron) 33**

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell  
AGAINST: Nil

## **9. Minutes and Recommendations of Council Committees**

### **9.2 MINUTES OF THE LOCAL TRANSPORT FORUM HELD ON 3 FEBRUARY 2026**

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#### **REPORT**

The minutes of the Local Transport Forum meeting held on 3 February 2026 are included in **Attachment A**.

As per the Terms of Reference, the Local Transport Forum provides advice and recommendations to Council only, with no decision-making delegations. Therefore, actions identified in the attached minutes will require the formal approval by Council before any commitment or adjustment to the Operational Plan/Budget is made.

Accordingly, the minutes are presented for information.

***RESOLVED that the minutes of the Local Transport Forum meeting held on 3 February 2026 be noted and adopt the following recommendations:***

#### **1.0 ROAD CLOSURES ANZAC DAY 2026 – YASS**

***That:***

- 1.1 Council support the Yass 2026 Anzac Day Road closures.***
- 1.2 Council arrange all traffic management, public notification of the road closures and advise the NSW Ambulance Services and NSW Fire and Rescue.***

#### **2.0 ROAD CLOSURES ANZAC DAY 2026 – BINALONG**

***That:***

- 2.1 Council support the Binalong 2026 Anzac Day Road closures.***
- 2.2 Council arrange all traffic management, public notification of the road closures and advise the NSW Ambulance Services and NSW Fire and Rescue.***

#### **3.0 ROAD CLOSURES ANZAC DAY 2026 – SUTTON**

***That:***

- 3.1 Council support the Sutton 2026 Anzac Day Road closures.***
- 3.2 Council arrange public notification of the road closures and advise the NSW Ambulance Services and NSW Fire and Rescue.***

#### **4.0 ROAD CLOSURES ANZAC DAY 2026 – GUNDAROO**

***That:***

- 4.1 Council support the Gundaroo 2026 Anzac Day Road closures.***
- 4.2 Council arrange public notification of the road closures and write advice the NSW Ambulance Services and NSW Fire and Rescue.***

#### **5.0 LOAD LIMIT BACK CREEK ROAD GUNDAROO**

***That:***

- 5.1 Council support in principle the introduction of a 15T load limit on Back Creek Road.***
- 5.2 Council places this proposal on public exhibition to obtain community feedback and the proposal be specifically referred to the Gundaroo Progress Association.***
- 5.3 A further report be provided to the May 2026 Local Transport Forum if any objections are received.***

#### **6.0 SAFETY CONCERNS INTERSECTION MOUNT AND GLEBE STREETS YASS**

**That:**

- 6.1 Council change the existing give-way signs at the intersection of Mount and Glebe Streets Yass to stop signs.**
- 6.2 Council review opportunities to improve parking at this intersection.**

**7.0 DETAILED DESIGN YASS RAIL TRAIL**

**That:**

- 7.1 Council support the draft detailed design of the Yass Rail Trail, which will deliver a significant asset that will benefit the community and local economy.**
- 7.2 Council continues with community consultation to develop a final detailed design.**

**8.0 SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS YASS VALLEY WAY – WARGEILA TO BELLEVALE ROADS YASS**

**That:**

- 8.1 Council support the proposed safety improvements for Yass Valley Way between Wargeila and Bellevale Roads, Yass.**
- 8.2 Council investigate grant opportunities to deliver the proposed safety improvements.**

**9.0 SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS SHINGLE HILL WAY**

**That:**

- 9.1 Council implement the following safety improvement works at the intersection of Shingle Hill Way and Sutton Road:**
  - 9.1.1 replace the give way signs with a 'B' size stop signs.**
  - 9.1.2 install rumble strips in Shingle Hill Way.**
  - 9.1.3 investigate improved street lighting.**
- 9.2 Council implement the following safety improvement works at the intersection of Shingle Hill Way and Federal Highway:**
  - 9.2.1 Replace the existing 'B' size stop signs at this intersection with 'C' size stop signs.**
  - 9.2.2 Install rumble strips on Shingle Hill Way prior to both Hadlow Drive and Federal Highway intersections.**
  - 9.2.3 Install prepare to stop sign on Shingle Hill Way prior to intersection similar to what is installed on Bungendore Road.**
  - 9.2.4 Council Investigate improved street lighting.**
- 9.3 Council implement the following safety improvement works at the intersection of Shingle Hill Way and Hadlow Drive:**
  - 9.3.1 Install 'C' size stop signs and associated line marking on Shingle Hill Way at the intersection.**
  - 9.3.2 Install prepare to stop sign on Shingle Hill Way prior to the intersection.**
- 9.4 Council request TfNSW to undertake a speed review for Shingle Hill Way.**
- 9.5 Council continues to work with TfNSW and Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council to develop other safety improvement options.**
- 9.6 Council request TfNSW investigate options for advisory signs to warn heavy vehicles of the dangers of using Shingle Hill Way to turn right onto the Federal Highway.**
- 9.7 Council request TfNSW investigate options to provide an online system to warn heavy vehicles of the dangers of using Shingle Hill Way to turn right onto the Federal Highway.**

**10.0 SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS MURRUMBATEMAN ROAD**

**That:**

- 10.1 Council support the proposed safety improvement works on Murrumbateman Road between Dicks Creek Road and Noyes Lane be supported.**
- 10.2 Council consider funding opportunities to obtain grant funding to undertake these works.**

**(Rothwell/Charry) 34**

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

**Motion**

***RESOLVED that the meeting be extended by 30 minutes at 7.56pm.***

***(Charry/Carter) 35***

FOR: Councillors K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Councillor C Burgess

**10. Confidential Matters**

**6.7 YVC.PE.57.2025 MURRUMBATEMAN ALL ABILITIES PLAYGROUND CONSTRUCTION**

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**SUMMARY**

To recommend a preferred Tenderer for the Murrumbateman All Abilities Playground Construction.

***RESOLVED that Council accepts the Tender from Briarwood Pty Ltd T/A Ram Constructions under Contract YVC.PE.57.2025 Murrumbateman All Abilities Playground Construction subject to satisfactory reference checks.***

***(McGrath/Butler) 36***

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

## 6.16 ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

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### SUMMARY

Council at its meeting of 23 October 2025, resolved to call for Expressions of Interest for the following advisory committees: Economic and Development Advisory Committee, First Nations Advisory Committee, Access and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee and Sport and Open Space Advisory Committee.

Council advertised the expression of interest process extensively on both the YVC website and social media channels and accepted Expressions of Interest from 1 November 2025 until 23 December 2025. It is noted that given the number of applications that had been received at the closing date, staff kept the expression of interest link on the website open over the festive season in order to try and attract further applicants.

It is noted that the First Nations Advisory Committee, Access and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee and Sport and Open Space Advisory Committee did not receive enough applications to complete the membership as outlined in each of the individual Terms of Reference. This therefore means that some Advisory Committees will operate with vacancies.

The names of all applicants are outlined below however each application is considered Confidential as they contain sensitive contact information and relate to the circumstances of each individual.

### **RESOLVED that Council:**

- 1. Appoint the following ex-officio, industry expert and community members to the Economic and Development Advisory Committee:**
  - *Jessica Bryden – on behalf of Destination Southern NSW*
  - *Gill Elphinston – on behalf of Regional Development Australia Southern Inland*
  - *Jason Burgess – on behalf of Yass Valley Business Chamber*
  - *Jack Walker - on behalf of Yass Valley Business Chamber*
  - *Yasmin Coe*
  - *Aunty Karen Denny*
  - *Landon Hodgkinson*
  - *Kieran Reynolds*
- 2. Appoint the following community members to the First Nations Advisory Committee**
  - *Aunty Karen Denny*
  - *Marcayla Stopp*
  - *Tegan Denny*
  - *Aunty Pam Bell*
- 3. Defer the appointment of members to the Access and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee and Sport and Open Space Advisory Committee until Council identifies key stakeholders and writes to them.**
- 4. Recirculate the offer to nominate for the Access and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee and the Sport and Open Space Advisory Committee once key stakeholders have been identified.**

*(Butler/Flanery) 37*

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, D Carter, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

The meeting closed at 8.21pm.



## **Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Council**

**Wednesday 4 March 2026**

4:00 PM

Yass High School

Grampian Street, YASS

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DRAFT

**Extraordinary Council Meeting - The Mayor declared the meeting open at 4.07pm.**

**Present**

Councillors Jasmin Jones (Mayor), Cecil Burgess, Kristin Butler (Deputy Mayor), Alvaro Charry, Fleur Flanery, Adrian Cameron, David Rothwell and Allan McGrath.

Officers also present were Peta Gardiner (Acting Chief Executive Officer), Andrew Neil (Director of Planning & Environment) via Teams, Nathan Cooke (Director of Infrastructure & Assets), Caitlin Flint (Manager - Governance & Risk), Chloe Johnson (Executive Support Officer).

**Acknowledgement of Country**

Yass Valley Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Ngunnawal people. We acknowledge and respect their continued connection to land, waters, skies and community. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Yass Valley Local Government Area.

**1. Prayer**

All say together or take this moment to reflect: Almighty God, we ask your blessing upon this Council. Direct and prosper our deliberations to the true welfare of Australia and the people of Yass Valley Amen.

**2. Apologies**

**Apology**

***RESOLVED that apologies be received from Councillor Carter and leave of absence be granted.***

***(Butler/Charry)38***

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Cameron, A Charry, F Flanery, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Nil

**3. Declaration of Interest/Disclosures**

NIL

**Procedural Motion**

It was moved by Councillor Cameron, seconded by Councillor Flanery, that Council not proceed with the meeting at this time.

The Chair ruled against the Procedural Motion however sought a vote from Council.

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Charry, J Jones, A McGrath, D Rothwell

AGAINST: A Cameron, F Flanery

#### **4. Reports to Council**

##### **4.1 REVIEW OF DETERMINATION - 7 HANLEY PLACE, YASS**

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#### **SUMMARY**

To present a review of the determination of development application DA250320 for six (6) attached dwellings at Lot 1 DP1193382, 7 Hanley Place, Yass. The application for review attracted 19 unique submissions, 15 in favour of the development and 4 opposed, and relevant conditions can be imposed to mitigate these impacts. Approval is recommended.

***RESOLVED that conditional development consent be issued for Development Application No DA250320 for six (6) attached dwellings at Lot 1 DP 1193382, 7 Hanley Place, Yass, subject to additional conditions which require:***

- 1. The community title subdivision to be registered prior to the issue of any Occupation Certificate.***
- 2. Reduced height of landscaping to maximum maturity of approximately 1.5m along the driveway adjacent with Lot DP 1154354, 5 Hanley Place.***
- 3. Details of external lighting associated with the development. External lighting is to be mounted, screened, and directed in such a manner so as not to create a nuisance, and for wherever possible, being sensor active with a limited time that the light is on.***

***(Charry/Flanery)39***

FOR: Councillors C Burgess, K Butler, A Charry, J Jones, A McGrath and D Rothwell

AGAINST: Councillors A Cameron and F Flanery

The meeting closed at 4.34pm.

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## 5.1 MAYORAL MINUTE - WAR WIDOW CONCESSION EQUITY ADVOCACY 2026

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### SUMMARY

I am formally proposing that Council advocates to the NSW Government for war widow concession equity in relation to council rates relief under Local Government Regulation 2021 and call upon the State and/or Federal Governments to support councils with reimbursement for this revenue loss.

### RECOMMENDATION

*That Council:*

1. *Writes to the Australian Local Government Association to request that an urgent motion to the ALGA National General Assembly (June 2026) be submitted requesting advocacy for all states and territories to remove income testing for war widow/widower to ensure concession equity.*
2. *Call upon ALGA to advocate for the Federal Government/States/Territories to reimburse local councils for the resulting revenue loss.*
3. *Submit a motion to the NSW Local Government Conference (November 2026) seeking advocacy to secure amendments to clause 134 to ensure concession equity.*
4. *Writes to the Country Mayors Association to request that a motion be submitted for inclusion in the first available meeting agenda.*
5. *Writes directly to the NSW Minister for Veterans, the Minister for Local Government, and local Members of Parliament urging these legislative changes.*

### REPORT

Proposed advocacy action includes an urgent late motion for the 2026 ALGA National General Assembly in June, and a motion for the 2026 NSW Local Government Conference in November. These motions concern the eligibility criteria for pensioner concessions on council rates for war widows and widowers.

Specifically, I am advocating for a non-means-tested approach be adopted for war widows/widowers, as experienced in Victoria. In NSW, this requires amending clause 134 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021. Currently, this clause limits full concessions to those who qualify for a Pensioner Concession Card (PCC). *Consequently, some war widows lose the concessions they previously received as a household once their veteran spouse dies.*

The organisation *Families of Veterans Guild*, highlights the impact of these restrictions using data from the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA):

In the Yass Valley Council area, 11 of the 33 known war widows are currently ineligible. Extending this concession locally would cost approximately \$2,104.

Across NSW, approximately 3,227 war widows are currently ineligible under existing regulations.

By removing these barriers, essential support to veterans' families can be strengthened within a difficult cost-of-living environment.

**ATTACHMENTS:**    Nil

## 6.1 REVIEW OF DETERMINATION - BOOKHAM WINDFARM GEOTECHNICAL INVESTIGATION

### SUMMARY

This report presents the review of the determination of development application no. DA250398 for the proposed geotechnical investigations at 736 Childowla Road, Bookham. The proposed geotechnical investigations are earthworks, including boreholes and test pits, and are to occur across 12 properties. The original application was recommended for approval by Council staff but refused at the meeting of 25 September 2025.

The applicant has requested a review of determination under S.8.1 of the Act. No new information has been provided, and no amendment to the application has been made. The applicant has provided additional legal advice, outlining that Council has the obligation to assess the application as it has been lodged. Not for the potential future application.

Approval is recommended.

### RECOMMENDATION

*That conditional development consent be issued for development application no DA250398 for the geotechnical investigations at 736 Childowla Road, Bookham.*

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Resources for development assessment are provided for in the current Operational Plan.

### POLICY & LEGISLATION

#### Acts and Regulations

- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021
- Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016
- Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2017
- Rural Fires Act 1997
- Rural Fires Regulation 2022

#### State Environmental Planning Policies-

- State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021

#### Local Controls

- Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013
- Yass Valley Development Control Plan 2024
- Yass Valley Development Contributions Plan 2018
- Yass Valley Community Engagement Strategy

#### Guidelines

- Planning for Bushfire Protection
- Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales

### REPORT

#### 1. [Application Details]

Date Received	-	21 November 2025
Land	-	Multiple Lots, Bookham Locality (Childowla Road)
Area	-	Multiple Lots, Bookham Locality (Childowla Road)

Zoning - RU1 – Primary Production

## 2. Site Description and Locality

The proposed geotechnical investigations are to be undertaken across 12 separate landholdings located within the RU1 Primary Production zone in the locality of Bookham, NSW. The investigation area is situated within a predominantly rural landscape, characterised by active agricultural land uses, including broadacre farming and grazing. The surrounding area comprises a mix of large-scale rural properties and rural residential lots, with neighbouring properties situated to the north, east, south, and west of the investigation area.

The broader investigation area spans multiple privately owned rural properties, each exhibiting varying levels of existing development. Some properties contain rural buildings and agricultural infrastructure, such as sheds, fencing, internal access tracks, and water tanks. The topography is typical of the region, comprising open paddocks, undulating terrain, and intermittent vegetation, contributing to the area's agricultural productivity and rural character.

No changes to the original application have been proposed as part of this review.

A Locality Plan is included in **Attachment A**.

## 3. Proposal

The application submitted for the review of determination is an identical application to that refused, contrary to staff recommendation, at the meeting of 25 September 2025.

The submitted development application involves earthworks comprising 43 test pits (maximum 150mm diameter) and 26 boreholes.

The Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013 (the LEP) defines 'earthworks' as 'excavation or filling'. 'Earthworks' is permitted with consent in the RU1 Primary Production zone.

It is acknowledged that the development application submitted is in connection with the proposed future Bookham Wind Farm. Notwithstanding this context, the proposed geotechnical investigations are properly characterised as 'earthworks' on their own.

For the purposes of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (the Act), these earthworks are not considered to be ancillary to, nor an integral or necessary component of, electricity generating works associated with a future wind farm proposal. Accordingly, the geotechnical investigations are to be assessed on their own merits as a distinct category of development, for which council is the consent authority.

It is important to note that any development application must be assessed on its own merits, and not on the basis of speculation about future development (see *Woollahra Municipal Council v Minister for the Environment (1991) 23 NSWLR 710*; *Stockland Development Pty Ltd v Manly Council [2004] NSWLEC 472*). The Application before Council is for temporary geotechnical investigations only, and any future proposal for a wind farm will be subject to a separate, comprehensive assessment process, under the State Significant Development pathway. Therefore the application must be assessed under the merits of this application, not for concerns over future applications.

Details of the proposal are included in **Attachment B**.

## 4. Public Exhibition

Public exhibition included notice to 25 adjoining and nearby landowners, including the 23 original objectors and five (5) additional submissions have been received (refer **Attachment C**). Of these, four (4) are objections that replicate the original submissions made. One (1) is a letter of support for the broader objectives and outcomes of the windfarm.

## 5. Assessment

The proposed development was originally against the requirements of section 4.15 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. It is considered that the proposed development can be supported for the reasons outlined in the Assessment Report (refer **Attachment D**) and the original Council Report

**(Attachment E).** Due to no additional information being provided, no new assessment report has been undertaken.

The following additional planning issues have been identified including the response to the issues raised in submissions. These are largely similar to the original assessment of this application.

### **1.1 Traffic and Road Safety – Childowla Road**

Submissions raise concerns about the additional heavy vehicle movements associated with the proposed geotechnical work, particularly given existing impacts from the Humelink project. Specific concerns relate to road deterioration and safety risks for residents and agricultural operations along Childowla Road.

It is acknowledged that the proposed works will generate short-term traffic impacts due to the use of drilling rigs, excavators, flatbed trucks, and support vehicles. However, the scale and duration of the activity is limited, and no long-term or ongoing traffic generation is proposed.

To manage potential impacts on local road infrastructure and safety, conditions are imposed to ensure works are undertaken in a manner which does not impact the public or surrounding properties and public infrastructure.

### **1.2 Environmental Impacts – Biodiversity, Landscape Disturbance and Water Use**

Submissions have raised concerns regarding the cumulative environmental impacts of the proposed development. It is acknowledged that the SEE describes the geotechnical investigations as having negligible environmental impact, with the SEE outlining a total water requirement of 300-500 litres per borehole.

While the total volume of water used is relatively low and unlikely to impact regional water resources, site specific effects such as runoff, ponding, or unintended overland flow onto adjoining land or toward drainage lines are valid considerations. Water use and disposal can be managed in a way that avoids adverse environmental or off-site impacts. This includes directing water away from drainage lines and minimising ponding in low-lying areas.

### **1.3 Risk of Scope Creep**

Submissions have raised concern that the Statement of Environmental Effects (SEE) notes “further assessments may be required” based on the initial geotechnical results. This has been suggested as potentially enabling repeated or incremental applications, which could avoid comprehensive environmental scrutiny and undermine the intent of the Act.

This concern is acknowledged. The proposal is for temporary geotechnical investigations only, comprising a defined scope of 43 test pits and 26 boreholes across 12 rural properties. The works are limited in scale, duration, and impact, and do not include any associated infrastructure, permanent site modifications, or development that would facilitate future construction or operation of a wind farm.

While the SEE does state that further assessments may follow, this is not unusual for early-stage investigative works, particularly in the context of a future State Significant Development (SSD), which must undergo its own comprehensive assessment process under Part 4, Division 4.7 of the Act. Any subsequent development beyond the current geotechnical scope will be subject to a new and separate development application and will be classified as SSD.

### **1.4 Consistency with Zone Objectives**

Submissions challenge the SEE claim that the proposed geotechnical investigations are consistent with the RU1 Primary Production zone objectives under the LEP. The concerns focus on land use compatibility, sustainable agriculture, soil stability, rural character, and potential land fragmentation.

It is acknowledged that the properties involved in the investigation are used for productive agricultural activities, including livestock grazing. The RU1 Primary Production zone seeks to

protect and encourage sustainable primary production, including the use of land for agriculture and grazing.

The proposed geotechnical investigations are temporary and low scale in nature, comprising limited earthworks distributed across 12 properties. While minor disturbance to pasture may occur, the works are short-term, and the disturbed areas are required to be reinstated upon completion. No permanent infrastructure, land clearing, or change of land use is proposed as part of this application.

Clause 6.7 of the LEP requires consideration of the impact of development on highly erodible soils. The SEE does not specifically map or analyse soil erosion risk associated with the location of each borehole or test pit. However, the SEE acknowledges the presence of erosion-prone soils in the region.

To address this, conditions of consent can require:

- Run-off and erosion control measures must be implemented to prevent soil erosion, water pollution or the discharge of loose sediment on surrounding lands.
- Erosion control measures, such as sediment fencing or mulching, to be implemented where necessary.

The RU1 Primary Production zone aims to preserve the rural character of the locality while allowing compatible land uses. While the geotechnical investigations are linked to a future wind farm proposal, the current application does not authorise or facilitate any permanent development of that nature. The temporary nature and limited visual or structural footprint of the works ensure that rural character is maintained.

The assessment has considered the objectives of the RU1 Primary Production zone under the LEP, and it is acknowledged that agricultural productivity must be preserved. The temporary nature for the purposes of the earthworks is not expected to result in significant or lasting disruption to agricultural operations.

Further concerns regarding the broader visual and land use implications of the potential wind farm are noted, however, these matters will be assessed through any future SSD application.

An additional application in support of the Bookham windfarm in general has been received that details that the windfarm will enable the ongoing operation of rural land uses, including grazing, in the locality.

### **1.5 Concerns Regarding the License Agreement and Owner Consent – Linked to Ongoing Supreme Court Proceedings:**

A submission raises concerns over the legal framework that created a licence agreement between a company owned pastoral company and the applicant. This is not a reason for refusal under the Act and is a separate civil matter between landowners and the applicant.

### **1.6 Support for Council's Original Refusal Grounds – Maintaining Integrated SSD Processes**

Submissions raise the importance of maintaining the SSD process and supporting the original reasons for refusal.

Council must consider an individual application on its own merits. Therefore the assessment of this item must only consider it as an application for geotechnical investigations. There is significant case law demonstrating that an application must be assessed purely on the merits of the application and not based on speculation about future applications. This is outlined in *Woollahra Municipal Council v Minister for the Environment* (1991) 23 NSWLR 710 and *Stockland Development Pty Ltd v Manly Council* [2004] NSWLEC 472.

Any future application for a windfarm will require assessment under the relevant legislation. Opposition to potential future developments cannot be used as a reason for refusal.

### 1.7 Impacts on Rural Landscape and Agricultural Values

Submissions express concern that the proposed development undermines the rural and environmental character of the locality. The submissions note that the geotechnical investigations, as a precursor to an industrial-scale wind farm development, conflict with the values and land use of the region.

The site and surrounding locality are zoned RU1 Primary Production under the LEP, with objectives that include the promotion of agricultural land use and preservation of the rural landscape.

The current proposal involves temporary geotechnical investigations only and does not include infrastructure associated with wind energy generation. While minor short-term impacts may occur due to earthworks and vehicle movement, these are not considered to result in permanent loss of agricultural land or character.

Potential impacts on soil, amenity, and land use compatibility have been assessed under clause 6.1 (Earthworks), and conditions of consent can be imposed to ensure the land is reinstated to its original condition following completion of works.

### 1.8 Council Policy Position on Wind Energy Development

Submissions raise concerns that the proposed geotechnical investigation are inconsistent with council's adopted policy stance on wind energy development.

It is important to distinguish between preliminary geotechnical investigations and the future wind farm development which is subject to a separate SSD process.

This application does not seek approval for a wind farm, it is limited to temporary geotechnical investigation to inform future feasibility studies. Council's policy position on wind energy development therefore cannot be used as a basis for refusal of this application.

### 1.9 Poor Community Consultation and Social Division

Submissions raise concerns about a lack of broader community consultation, noting that engagement has focused primarily on landholders directly involved in the proposal.

There is no statutory requirement for the applicant to undertake consultation in relation to the subject application for geotechnical investigations. The application was publicly notified, and submissions received during this period form an important part of the assessment process.

Social impacts arising from division within the community are noted but are to be appropriately assessed during the future SSD process where formal stakeholder and community engagement is mandated.

### 1.10 Support for Bookham Windfarm

A submission received details support for the overarching Bookham windfarm proposal, requesting that Council reconsider their opposition to the project, detailing the positive economic and environmental outcomes of windfarms, especially the ongoing income available to graziers in the district.

## 6. Conclusion

From the assessment of the proposal and consideration of issues raised in submissions, it is recommended that a Development Consent be issued. Draft conditions are included in **Attachment F**.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

CSP Theme	Our Environment (EN)
CSP Strategy Objective	We have a robust planning framework that protects and maintains our rural character and natural landscapes

Strategies	EN. 9: Our local character is maintained through the protection and preservation of our built, cultural and natural heritage
Delivery Program Action	EN. 9.1: We will encourage and implement progressive urban design, sensitive to environmental and heritage issues and maintaining local character.

- ATTACHMENTS:**
- A. Locality Plan [⇒](#)
  - B. Plans and Supporting Information [⇒](#)
  - C. Redacted Submissions [⇒](#)
  - D. Assessment Report [⇒](#)
  - E. Council Report [⇒](#)
  - F. Draft Conditions of Consent [⇒](#)

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## 6.2 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION NO. DA250584 - COMMERCIAL HOTEL - 170-186 COMUR STREET, YASS

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### SUMMARY

To present the assessment of Development Application No. DA250584 for the Commercial Hotel at 170-186 Comur Street, Yass. The application attracted seven submissions including one objection, two neutral, and four in support. The proposal seeks exception to several planning controls. Approval is recommended.

### RECOMMENDATION

*That conditional development consent be issued for development application No. DA250584 for the Commercial Hotel at 170-186 Comur Street, Yass*

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Resources for development assessment are provided for in the current Operational Plan.

### POLICY & LEGISLATION

#### Acts and Regulations

- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021
- Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016
- Local Government Act 1993
- Roads Act 1993

#### State Environmental Planning Policies

- State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Industry and Employment) 2021

#### Local Controls

- Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013
- Yass Valley Council Development Control Plan 2024
- Yass Valley Development Contributions Plan 2018
- Yass Valley Community Engagement Strategy
- Road Standard Policy RD-POL-09

#### Guidelines

- NSW Guide to Varying Development Standards
- NSW Guide to Traffic Impact Assessment 2024

### REPORT

#### 1. Application Details

Date Received	-	23 September 2025
Land	-	Lot 2 DP 631643, 170-186 Comur Street, Yass
Area	-	2,495m <sup>2</sup>
Zoning	-	E1 Local Centre

## 2. Site Description and Locality

The site is in the Yass town centre in an area characterised by primarily a mix of commercial uses. There is also some nearby shop-top housing on the opposite side of Comur Street and residential development further to the north on Lead Street. The site is within the Yass Heritage Conversation Area and is in proximity to a number of local heritage items.

The site is a corner lot with primary frontage to Comur Street and secondary frontage to Lead Street where there are existing driveways. The site is currently vacant other than temporary structures. The site is partially flood affected.

The site formerly accommodated the original 1840s Commercial Hotel, which ceased operation in 2005 and progressively deteriorated. In 2022 Council issued an order for demolition of the veranda which extended over the footpath. In May 2023 the building was then subject to a fire causing significant damage. Council subsequently issued a demolition order due to the extent of the damage and risks to public safety. Demolition occurred shortly after.

A Locality Plan is included in **Attachment A**.

## 3. Proposal

The submitted application involves:

- Erection of a three-storey building comprising of a bar, bistro, function room/restaurant and gaming area on the ground floor with hotel rooms on the two floors above
- Carpark
- Ancillary infrastructure
- Installation of the sign that previously adorned the Commercial Hotel (building identification sign)

Details of the proposal are included in **Attachment B**.

## 4. Public Exhibition

Public exhibition included notice to 46 adjoining and nearby landowners, the Yass Valley Business Chamber, and the installation of a prominent site notice on the fence to Comur Street. There were seven submissions received (refer **Attachment C**) comprising:

- One objection
- Two neutral with comments or concerns
- Four in support

It is unclear who the author of the submission of the detailed objection is, where they are from or their connections to Yass, with the name withheld and provided address being outside of the Yass Valley. One submission of support is also from outside the Yass Valley.

The applicant's response to submissions and Council's additional information request is included in **Attachment D**.

## 5. External Referrals

The proposal was referred to NSW Police (Yass) who did not make a submission.

## 6. Assessment

The proposed development has been assessed against the requirements of s4.15 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (the Act). It is considered that the proposed development can be supported for the reasons outlined in the Assessment Report (refer Attachment E).

The following planning issues have been identified including the response to issues raised in submissions.

### 6.1 Submission of Support

The submissions of support highlight the view that the proposed development is welcomed and finally makes use of the site which has been disused for over 20 years. One submission suggests that this proposal will revitalise the main street. The submissions of support are noted and the comments generally agreed with.

## 6.2 Exceptions to Local Environmental Plan Development Standards

The applicant has requested an exception to two development standards contained in the Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013 (the LEP) pursuant to clause 4.6 of the LEP, as detailed below:

Clause	Requirement	Proposed Exception
Clause 4.3 <b>Height of buildings</b>	Maximum 12m above natural ground level	Maximum 12.45m Exception: 0.45m or 3.75%
Clause 4.4 <b>Floor space ratio</b>	1:1	1.23:1 Exception: 23.17% (additional 578.15m <sup>2</sup> gross floor area)

Clause 4.6 allows for consideration of exception to development standards in certain circumstances, intending to allow a degree of flexibility and enabling development which achieves environmental planning objectives. Clause 4.6 is a key part of the planning system and the LEP, and a non-compliance with a development standard does not automatically mean that the development is not orderly or has an adverse planning outcome – this however, must be demonstrated.

Clause 4.6(3) of the LEP requires:

- (3) *Development consent must not be granted to development that contravenes a development standard unless the consent authority is satisfied the applicant has demonstrated that—*
- (a) *compliance with the development standard is unreasonable or unnecessary in the circumstances, and*
  - (b) *there are sufficient environmental planning grounds to justify the contravention of the development standard.*

Clause 4.6 was updated across all Standard Instrument LEPs by the NSW Government in November 2023. The onus now rests with the applicant to demonstrate, through a written request supported by sufficient information and evidence, that the development standard is unreasonable or unnecessary in the circumstances, and that there are sufficient environmental planning grounds to justify the contravention. This means it is no longer simply a matter for determination by Council as the consent authority. Council must not grant consent unless they are satisfied that that the applicant’s written request has demonstrated the above matters.

The initial written requests accompanying the application were considered unlikely to have demonstrated the required matters. Opportunity was provided for revision, with the applicant then engaging a town planner who prepared revised written requests.

### 6.2.1 Clause 4.3 – Height of Buildings

The application requests an exception to the development standard contained in clause 4.3 in relation to the maximum height of buildings. Clause 4.3(2) requires the height of a building not to exceed the maximum height, which in this instance is maximum 12m, measured above natural ground level. The proposal has a maximum height of 12.45m above natural ground level, representing a 0.45m or 3.75% exception.

The applicant’s written revised request is included as **Attachment F** and the record of assessment for the purposes of clause 4.6(4) is included as **Attachment G**.

Unreasonable or Unnecessary

The applicant's request is relying on basis of the objectives of the standard being achieved, notwithstanding the noncompliance with the numerical height development control. The objectives are:

- (a) *to ensure that the heights of buildings are consistent with the existing streetscape or character of the area in which the buildings are to be located,*
- (b) *to nominate heights that will provide a transition in built form between residential and recreation zones, Zone E1 Local Centre and Zone E3 Productivity Support,*
- (c) *to protect the character and significance of heritage items and heritage conservation areas identified in this Plan,*
- (d) *to encourage well designed, accessible and viable retail and commercial development of a scale that is consistent with existing retail and commercial development,*
- (e) *to minimise the loss of solar access and privacy for neighbouring development.*

In summary, the justification in the written request includes:

- The height of the proposed development is consistent with existing retail and commercial premises along Comur Street, which includes a mix of one to two storey buildings (at a range of heights). Notably the Liberty Theatre opposite comprises two-storeys and is clearly in exceedance of the 12m height limit and the Club House Hotel of a similar scale (due to the pitched roof form). The slightly larger scale of these existing buildings reflects the design rational that civic, arts and public buildings located on prominent corners should be slightly more dominant in order to reinforce the activity of main streets.
- That a significant part of the building does comply with the 12m height limit and therefore is also consistent with the streetscape and character.
- That the design of the proposed development remains compatible with, and sympathetic to, the heritage conservation area and surrounding local heritage items.
- The development is at a site which has been disused since the early 2000s and would introduce a new high-quality hospitality and accommodation experience into the town of Yass. The proposed building is well designed and also respects the former Commercial Hotel building and heritage.
- The scale of the proposed development is generally consistent with comparable hotel accommodation development in the surrounding area with similar site area.
- The proposed development will only result in minor loss of solar access at 9am to the existing shop-top housing opposite on Comur Street. Notwithstanding, these properties are still able to achieve at least 3 hours of solar access daily. The Application would not result in any additional privacy impacts.

It is accepted that based on the above the applicant has demonstrated that compliance with the development standard is unreasonable and unnecessary as the objective has been nonetheless achieved.

It is noted that Council's heritage advisor has indicated that the additional level incorporated into the mansard roof adequately addresses the additional height from a heritage design perspective.

#### Environmental Planning Grounds

The environmental planning grounds presented in the applicant's written request include:

- The exceedance in height largely results from a change in slope of the land to a north westerly direction.

- To achieve the 12m height limit across the entire site, a re-design of the proposal would be required to step down parts of the building or to reduce floor to ceiling heights across the development. Such design changes would be considered unreasonable within the circumstances as it would impact ability to achieve compliance with the National Construction Code (NCC) and accessibility standards and diminish the quality of design, in exchange for limited visual benefit or impact mitigation.

It is accepted that the applicant has demonstrated that there are sufficient environmental planning grounds.

#### 6.2.2 Clause 4.4 – Floor Space Ratio

The application requests an exception to the development standard contained in clause 4.4 in relation to the maximum floor space ratio (FSR). Clause 4.3(2) stipulates a maximum FSR of 1:1. The proposal has a floor space ratio of 1.23:1, representing a 23.17% exception (additional 578.15m<sup>2</sup> gross floor area).

The applicant's written request is included as **Attachment H** and the record of assessment for the purposes of clause 4.6(4) is included as **Attachment I**.

##### Unreasonable or Unnecessary

The applicant's request is relying on the objectives of the standard being achieved, notwithstanding the noncompliance with the numerical FSR control. The objectives are:

- to ensure buildings are compatible with the bulk and scale of the existing and future character of the locality,*
- to encourage well designed, accessible and viable retail and commercial floor space of a density that is consistent with existing retail and commercial development.*

In summary, the justification in the written request includes:

- The historic Yass CBD area includes a mix of one to two storey commercial buildings, typically fine grained, but varied in height and density due to the presence of a range of building typologies and architectural features (for example parapets, roof form, floor to ceiling height). The diversity of the built form is considered to contribute to the character of the locality.
- That proposed development is compatible with the bulk and scale of the existing locality for the following reasons:
  - The existing locality contains buildings that vary in bulk and scale. The height and density of the proposed development is consistent with the range exhibited in the locality.
  - The proposed development is three storeys, maximum height 12.45m which is consistent with the Liberty Theatre and Club House Hotel on the Comur and Lead Street intersection.
  - The proposed development has nil setback to the street or above the ground floor consistent with the Liberty Theatre and Club House Hotel on the Comur and Lead Street intersection.
  - The slightly larger bulk and scale of the proposed development compared to adjoining heritage buildings to the north is justified on the basis that it helps to define the Comur and Lead Street corner, similar to the Liberty Theatre and Club House Hotel.
- The proposed development references the building footprint of the former Commercial Hotel, rationalises the building form and improves its presentation to the corner, particularly along Lead Street by adopting consistent storeys and ground floor activation. The additional 'bulk' resulting from FSR non-compliance is located

to the rear, is not visible from the public domain and not anticipated to have additional visual impact.

The written request is supported by photo analysis of the built form in the locality to support the justification. It is accepted that the applicant has demonstrated that compliance is unreasonable or unnecessary as the objective has nonetheless been achieved.

#### Environmental Planning Grounds

The environmental planning grounds presented in the applicant's written request include:

- The proposed development meets the objectives of the FSR control, notwithstanding the proposed variation. The density is appropriate having regard to its location in a commercial town centre within proximity to services. It is consistent with the built form of the locality, and would not result in any significant unacceptable impact in terms of privacy, solar access or heritage.
- Strict compliance with the FSR control would result in an underdevelopment of the site, not commensurate with the maximum height standard and reduce the commercial viability of the proposal. That outcome is considered inconsistent with objective 4.1(1)(b).

It is accepted that the applicant has demonstrated that there are sufficient environmental planning grounds. It is noted that the applicant's environmental planning grounds presented also reflect the objects of the Act, specifically 'to promote the orderly and economic use and development of land'.

### **6.3 Car Parking – Exception to Development Control Plan**

Concerns in relation to the number of car parking spaces provided on site were raised in submissions and identified as a key issue in the assessment.

#### Requirements vs. Proposed

The proposed development provides for **39 car spaces** on site, with the carpark accessed from Lead Street. A traffic impact assessment (TIA) (prepared by a traffic engineer) was submitted with the application and identified that the Yass Valley Council Development Control Plan 2024 (the DCP) requires car parking to be provided on site, for hotel and motel accommodation, at the following rates:

- 1 space per hotel suite + 1 space per 2 fully time equivalent (FTE) employees
- Function room or food and drink premises - add the greater of 1 space per 10m<sup>2</sup> GFA or 1 space per 3 seats.

Based on the floor area of the building, the proposed uses, and the number of accommodation rooms, the **DCP requires 101.5 car spaces** to be provided on site. The proposed development represents a shortfall of **62.5 car spaces** (or 38.5%).

#### Applicant's Justification

The applicant's TIA provides the following justification for the acceptability and reasonableness of the shortfall:

- That a comparison should be made to the pub/hotel development which existed on the site up until 2023. Application of the current parking rates to the various components of the previously approved pub/hotel development on the site yields a requirement of 76 car spaces. The previously existing pub/hotel development made no provision for any formal, line marked off-street car parking, thereby resulting in a shortfall of 76 car spaces when assessed in accordance with the DCP parking requirements - i.e. the *previously existing* shortfall of 76 off-street car spaces means that most of those 76 cars were likely parked on the street. As such, the proposed development will reduce that shortfall in car parking from 76 spaces down to 63 spaces, thereby "freeing up" 13 on-street parking spaces.

- That the “function room or food and beverage premises” parking rates in the DCP would appear to be based on the surveys conducted in 1977 by the then Traffic Authority of NSW, before the introduction of random breath testing in 1982. There has been a substantial shift in attitudes towards drink-driving since then, resulting in a substantial reduction in the traffic and parking demands generated by licensed premises.
- It is highly unlikely that the hotel accommodation rooms will achieve 100% occupancy, and it is generally accepted that parking assessments for hotel accommodation rooms should be based on an occupancy rate of 60% to 80%.
- Many of the customers of the function room or the ‘food and drink’ component of the proposed development will be staying in the hotel accommodation rooms and will therefore not require another car parking space.
- Apart from hotel accommodation room guests, the pub component is intended to cater primarily for customers living or working in the surrounding area, within walking distance of the site, or are travelling to/from the site with a “designated driver” with a high vehicle occupancy.
- The proposed development makes provision for 39 off-street car parking spaces which occupies approximately half of the total site area. Whilst additional car parking could be provided, this would require the construction of a structure car park or a basement car park which was considered inappropriate for the location.
- The proposed parking provision will be able to accommodate the majority of the parking demands that will be generated by the site throughout the course of a typical week, apart from a busy Friday or Saturday evening.
- Recent aerial images of the site and surrounding area demonstrate that substantial on-street car parking tends to be readily available in the vicinity of the site, particularly along both sides of Lead Street.
- Aerial images also indicate that the public car park located diagonally opposite the site, on the south-side of Lead Street (the “Park and Ride”) is substantially underutilised.

#### **Internal Concerns and Preference**

Council’s engineer has raised concerns that the number of car spaces is significantly below the DCP requirements, and the justification presented may not be sufficient. The preference and advice received from Council’s engineer is that the design be revised to include a basement to achieve (or be closer to) the requirements of the DCP.

The applicant has stated that the construction of a basement carpark is cost-prohibitive and therefore declined the opportunity to redesign the development. It is noted that Council also identified the significant costs of providing a basement carpark in the design of the Crago Mill Precinct and therefore that option was not pursued.

The technical advice of Council’s engineer is one matter that needs to be considered as part of the broader planning assessment under s4.15 of the Act, noting that number of car spaces for a development is not an exact science and therefore also requires merit assessment.

#### **Reasons for Supporting Variation**

The broader planning assessment has indicated that there is merit in supporting an exception to the DCP and allowing a reduced number of car spaces, for the following reasons:

- **Regard to the previous use** - Whilst the site ceased trading in c2005, it is understood that the site retained a ‘continuing use right’ enabled by the previous lawful use (which did not change) and the ongoing permissibility under the LEP. It is also noted that Council’s records indicate a substantial history over the last decade of owners seeking pre-lodgement engagement for similar proposals for the site, including the refurbishment of the original building or a replacement building (including a DA lodged and then withdrawn in 2019). It is noted that had the original building not burnt down, the DCP and approach would have generally allowed

concession to car parking requirements based on the existing use and the level of car parking provided for that. Although the site is now vacant, due to the circumstances of the fire, it would appear unreasonable to simply apply the current DCP rates (which has significant additional car parking requirements) to essentially the same type of land use for the site.

- **Suitability of DCP control** - The applicant's TIA has suggested that the parking rates adopted in the DCP are based on historic assumptions. This argument is not supported by council's engineer who is of the view that the DCP control remains suitable for the nature of the uses. However, a review of the most recent NSW Guide to Transport Impact Assessment 2024 (the TIA Guide) does state:

*"Hotels (1980)*

*Original research undertaken in 1980 indicated a large variance in the vehicle trip generation rates of hotels. This variation is due to such factors as the building's location and age, its internal design, the provision of live music and other facilities. Since these surveys were undertaken, there have been significant changes in the use of hotels, including the introduction of random breath testing, gambling facilities, less live music, better food and less emphasis on accommodation. Therefore, it is recommended that the analysis of proposed hotel developments be based on surveys of similar existing hotels."*

In relation to car parking, the TIA Guide does not adopt a reference rate for car space ratios but outlines the historic provisions. It suggests comparisons be drawn to similar development.

Furthermore, it is noted that the DCP requirements for car parking, like the TIA Guide, are not a 'one size fits all'. The appropriateness of the ratio for car parking varies with location and setting. For example, a similar development to this proposed on the edge of Yass or in Murrumbateman is likely to have different car parking needs to that which is in Comur Street within the CBD. The ratio in the DCP is therefore likely suitable in some cases but not necessarily in all situations. The Yass CBD is an area where there is a greater appropriateness for less car spaces to be provided on site given:

- The desire to utilise land for higher value purposes
- Retaining a compact and walkable CBD
- The opportunity for other modes of transport to be utilised (including active transport)
- The temporal aspect to use of existing car spaces (both public and private) (i.e. across business hours vs. evening and weekends).

- **DCP framework for consideration of reduced parking** - The DCP (control I4, p.104) states:

*"Developments involving a change of use or additions/alterations may attract parking credits. Parking credits will be determined by length of street frontage, type of existing parking (parallel or angled), the existing use and the number of existing carparking spaces on site and the demand for on site parking from the proposed development. Where a development can demonstrate its peak parking is outside 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 12noon Saturday and is located in close proximity to alternate parking facilities, reduced carparking may be considered."*

It is noted that the peak car parking demand of the pub is likely to be outside of 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 12 noon on Saturday, and the site is located in close proximity to alternate parking facilities. This indicates Council has provided a mechanism for reduced car parking to be considered in these circumstances.

- **Capacity within existing street and off-street parking** - The applicant's TIA outlines that there is likely capacity within the existing on-street and off-street car parking. This has not been supported by a detailed study of existing level of demand and turnover, it instead relies on generalised conclusions based largely on aerial photography. However, this conclusion is generally consistent with local observations by council planning staff and is also supported in the findings of the 2021 TIA for the Crago Mill Precinct which was undertaken by a local engineering consultant and included on-the-ground observations and study.

- **Crago Mill Precinct shortfall** - It is noted that the Crago Mill Precinct development also has a shortfall of on-site car parking spaces by 32 (required 99 but provided 67) and relies on the availability of on-street parking for the shortfall. This suggests that Council, through its own development, has accepted that variations to the DCP car parking requirements are appropriate for the CBD.
- **Heritage Conservation Area** - There are ways in which additional car parking could be achieved, including a basement, multi-level carpark, or reducing the building footprint to have additional site area. A basement carpark with a rear entrance may be suitable from a heritage conservation perspective, however other options may erode the overall design which is currently sympathetic to the heritage conservation area and surrounding local heritage items.

#### **Concerns with Applicant's Justification**

There are weaknesses in the applicant's justification for reduced on-site car parking and other areas of concern which require discussion:

- **Shortfall exacerbated by FSR** - The shortfall of on-site car parking is exacerbated by the exceedance of the floor space ratio. That is, if the proposal complied with the LEP control for the FSR, the shortfall of car spaces would also be less.
- **Calculation of previous car spaces** - A submission notes that whilst the original Commercial Hotel may not have provided any *formal* car parking on site, there appeared to be *informal* opportunity for the parking of more than 13 cars – i.e. therefore the applicant's justification that the proposed development "frees up" 13 street car spaces and reduces the shortfall compared to previously is flawed.

A review of previous plans and Google Streetview finds that there was a hardstand area to the rear of the original Commercial Hotel and that some car parking was or could have been provided on site. This applicant's TIA suggestion that there was no formal car parking simply because it was not line marked is misleading, incorrect, and a poor analysis of previous conditions which has been used to suit their justification. However, the annotated plan included in the submission also portrays that there was more car parking available on site than there was, with the annotated car spaces extending into where was original part of the fenced licenced area and beer garden.

It was also noted that there were two driveways and a drive-through bottle shop, within the associated circulation area therefore also occupying some of the hardstand space. A plan in c1988 referred to a car parking area at the rear of the site, with the area to the immediate rear of the hotel being stated as 'open area'. A site plan (and supporting statement) in 2012 as part of a proposed change of use (which did not eventuate) showed approximately seven car spaces within the existing hardstand area. These relevant historic plans are shown in **Attachment J**.

It is therefore unclear on whether there were more or less than 13 car spaces on site at the original Commercial Hotel – i.e. whether the proposed development would be slightly 'better' or slightly 'worse' in relation to the shortfall of on-site car spaces. Given the uncertainty, it could be reasonable to conclude that the shortfall of car spaces is approximately neutral between the original Commercial Hotel and the proposed development.

- **Yass Park and Ride** - The TIA suggests that there is underutilisation of the 'Park and Ride'. However, it must be recognised that the 'Park and Ride' was intended to be a carpark servicing commuters, particularly those to and from Canberra. Whilst it is a Council carpark and includes electric vehicle charging, the primary purpose is still as a 'Park and Ride' and care needs to be taken not to erode this function.

It is however important to note that the "Park and Ride" facility is largely utilised at times outside of peak operation of the proposed development, and a level of shared usage is considered appropriate.

- **Crago Mill Precinct** - The Crago Mill Precinct also has a shortfall of 32 spaces, as outlined above. This was however supported by an assessment which included on-the-ground parking survey

(observations of use) and relied on a customer survey of use of library facilities - i.e. taking an evidence-based approach to support assumptions. It also provided an overall strategy including amending street parking to provide additional car spaces.

Fundamentally, it is also recognised that the Crago Mill Precinct includes community or public uses, rather than just private uses in the case of the Commercial Hotel (i.e. Crago Mill Precinct is using public street car spaces to support a public use).

The shortfall by Crago Mill Precinct will generally increase the overall demand for street parking in the locality. However, it is noted that the operating hours of the Crago Mill Precinct and the Commercial Hotel and their peak car parking demands are likely to be staggered.

### **Recommendations**

With consideration of the above, it would not be inappropriate for Council to be satisfied that the proposed exception to the required number of car spaces is reasonable given the history of the site, the level of existing demand and capacity for car parking which is available, the temporal aspect of the car parking demand, the heritage considerations, and the broader economic and CBD vitality benefits the development provides. The shortfall of car spaces is unlikely to result in any significant traffic or car parking issues in the locality, however, post-construction monitoring of car parking may be necessary (including turnover of spaces within time limits and use of the 'Park and Ride').

It should also be noted that in accordance with s4.15(3A) of the Act, Council must be flexible in applying DCP provisions to allow reasonable alternative solutions that achieve the objective of prescriptive development controls.

If Council has further concerns in relation to car parking, it would be suggested that the determination be deferred and opportunity provided for the applicant to submit further detailed analysis which includes a current on-the ground and temporal study.

It is noted that one submission suggests that there is already lots of car parking provided in the locality and would prefer to actually see less provided on the site in favour of an outdoor area.

The proposal also requests a variation to the number of bicycle spaces which is calculated on a ratio of number of car spaces. It proposes to calculate the number of bicycle spaces based on the *reduced* number of car spaces rather than the *required* number of car spaces. This approach should not be supported. It is noted bicycle use becomes even more important where there is a reduced number of car spaces – i.e. encouraging alternate modes of transport. Conditions of any consent should include for the required number of bicycle spaces to be provided in accordance with the DCP.

## **6.4 Heritage**

The original Commercial Hotel was not a listed local heritage item, however the site is located within the Yass Heritage Conversation Area and in proximity to a number of listed local heritage items. The application was referred to Council's heritage advisor. Additional information was requested through the course of the assessment. Council's heritage advisor has now indicated that the design is well-considered and echoes that of the original building including the overall form, height, opening proportions, and materials. Conditions for minor additional detail of materials would be required prior to issue of a construction certificate should development consent be granted.

## **6.5 Harm Minimisation and Interior Design**

One submission raises concerns relating to harm minimisation and interior design, including for location of toilets, sight lines, and the ATM.

### **Toilets to Gaming Room**

Concern is raised that the ground floor plan effectively provides 'private' toilets to the gaming room, potentially decreasing the likelihood of persons taking a break and considering how long they have been gambling, as well as reducing passive surveillance by staff.

Whilst there may be harm minimisation considerations relevant to the public interest, this is a matter which is more appropriately considered by Liquor and Gaming NSW as the expert authority as part of the issue of any licence and any associated gaming machine entitlements and permits. There are no planning or building code controls which prohibit this layout or require a best practice to be adopted. It is also noted that a recently-renovated licenced premises in Yass includes a similar layout with toilets to the gaming room which has been approved by Council.

#### Sight Lines to Toilets

Concern is raised that the main female toilets are not provided screening because of a sight line that exists between the lift, the lift lobby, and the female cubicle. The submission suggests that this could be considered a form of discrimination and should be screened in a similar way to the male toilets.

The applicant in response to the submissions has stated:

*“Line of sight from lift to female toilet screening is provided by the main female toilet door and the cubicle partitions. The only sight we will get are female patrons walking in and out of the toilet entry door and at that point the person actually blocks most of the sightline. There is no need to screen for that as it will not be offensive or a loss of privacy to see females walking in and out of the toilet entry door, it is no different to the male toilet entry door where there is also a point where they can be seen.”*

The NCC contains requirements in relation to the design of toilets. Conditions of any consent would require full plans and details demonstrating compliance with the NCC prior to the issue of any construction certificate.

#### Location of ATM

Concern is also raised in relation to the location of the ATM in relation to both an alcove and the entrance to the female toilet, suggesting that this presents a safety and privacy issue.

The applicant in response to the submission has stated:

*“The location of the ATM is in close proximity to the bistro and pub area that any unwanted activities in the usage of the ATM will bring to the attention of patrons and staff. The ATM will also be under constant CCTV surveillance which deters any unwanted activities. The same goes for any possible loitering. Staff and any other patrons will assist to any uncomfortable suspicious activity. This is an enclosed private business premises with sufficient security during opening hours. It is not the same as a public outdoor facility where it is likely to bring unwanted unsafe activities if it is in a secluded area. The author also states that users of the female toilet may feel uncomfortable having to pass people near the toilet entry door which is an unfounded statement.”*

It is considered that the location of the ATM is unlikely to present any significant safety concern and is not contrary to crime prevention requirements of the DCP noting that it is inside the venue. However, the location is considered to be potentially uncomfortable or awkward in relation to the location of the female toilets. The applicant may wish to reconsider that aspect of the design (including potential opportunity to relocate the ATM within the premises).

### **6.6 Outdoor Dining Area/Beer Garden**

Two submissions received note that there is no outdoor dining area or ‘beer garden’ provided in the design, and that this is a lost opportunity.

There is no requirement in the applicable planning controls that require an outdoor dining area or beer garden to be provided. It is understood from the applicant that the constraints of the site in relation to area available and carpark considerations, along with the nature of the Yass winter weather, meant that an outdoor dining area or beer garden was not included in the design.

This is considered to be a design choice and is therefore not a matter that requires further consideration. It is however also noted that a number of other venues in Yass have either no or limited outdoor dining area or beer garden.

## 6.7 Reuse of the Sign

Within the submissions received there is noted support for the reuse of the sign that adorned the original Commercial Hotel (although it is noted that it does not propose to include the martini glass). The sign could be described as iconic to both the original Commercial Hotel and the Yass streetscape. The preservation and reuse of the sign at demolition of the original Commercial Hotel is consistent with the intention of Council's requests as part of the demolition order and is supported by Council's Heritage Advisor. It is therefore a positive and welcomed inclusion in the proposed development.

## 7. Conclusion

From the assessment of the proposal and consideration of issues raised in submissions, it is recommended that a development consent be issued. Draft conditions are included in **Attachment K**.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

CSP Theme	Our Environment (EN)
CSP Strategy Objective	We have a robust planning framework that protects and maintains our rural character and natural landscapes
Strategies	EN. 9: Our local character is maintained through the protection and preservation of our built, cultural and natural heritage
Delivery Program Action	EN. 9.1: We will encourage and implement progressive urban design, sensitive to environmental and heritage issues and maintaining local character.

## ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Locality Plan [⇒](#)
- B. Plans and Supporting Documentation [⇒](#)
- C. Submissions [⇒](#)
- D. Applicant Response to Submission and Additional Information Request [⇒](#)
- E. s4.15 Assessment Report [⇒](#)
- F. Applicant Clause 4.6 Written Request - Height of Building [⇒](#)
- G. Clause 4.6 Record of Assessment - Height of Building [⇒](#)
- H. Applicant Clause 4.6 Written Request - Floor Space Ratio [⇒](#)
- I. Clause 4.6 Record of Assessment - Floor Space Ratio [⇒](#)
- J. Historic Carpark Site Plans [⇒](#)
- K. Draft Conditions of Consent [⇒](#)

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### 6.3 DEVELOPMENT CONSENT DA240389 - REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION FROM S7.12 DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS - 168 WURUNGUL LANE, GUNDAROO

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#### SUMMARY

To present a request for an exemption from payment of s7.12 development contributions in relation to Development Consent DA240389 for a dwelling house at 168 Wurungul Lane, Gundaroo. It is recommended that the requested exemption is not supported.

#### RECOMMENDATION

*That the requested exemption from the payment of s7.12 development contributions in relation to Development Consent DA240389 for a dwelling house at 168 Wurungul Lane, Gundaroo, is not supported as it would significantly undermine the application of the Yass Valley Development Contributions Plan 2018.*

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- Resources for development assessment are provided for in the current Operational Plan.
- Forfeit in collection of \$15,082.50 in s7.12 development contributions which contributes to infrastructure and facilities in the Yass Valley.
- Potential to significantly undermine the application of the Yass Valley Development Contribution Plan 2018.

#### POLICY & LEGISLATION

- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021
- Yass Valley Development Contributions Plan 2018

#### REPORT

In April 2025 development consent was issued for a dwelling house at 168 Wurungul Lane, Gundaroo (refer **Attachment A**). The site is on land zoned RU1 Primary Production and is approximately 2.5km northeast of the Gundaroo village.

Standard conditions of development consent required the payment of development contributions in accordance with s7.12 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (the Act) and the Yass Valley Development Contributions Plan 2018 (the Contributions Plan).

The contribution rate is determined under the Contributions Plan as follows:

- (i) Cost of works is up to and including \$100,000 – Nil
- (ii) Cost of works is more than \$100,000 and up to and including \$200,000 - 0.5% of that cost
- (iii) Cost of works is more than \$200,000 - 1% of that cost

The estimated cost of works provided by the applicant is \$1,508,250. This results in a contribution payable of \$15,082.50.

In October 2025, at the applicant's request, the development consent was modified to delay the payment of the development contributions from prior to the issue of a construction certificate, to prior to the issue of an occupation certificate. The intent of this was to assist with cashflow.

Council is now in receipt of a request which seeks an exemption from the payment of a development contribution, or a significant reduction in the amount to be paid. (**Attachment B**). This has been requested based on:

- Off-grid infrastructure
- Single dwelling on existing family land
- Minimal use of council services
- Negligible infrastructure impact
- Consistency with other Council approaches.

The Contribution Plan is established under s7.12 of the Act. It applies to most development in the Yass Valley where the cost of undertaking that development exceeds \$100,000. The levy contributes to infrastructure and facilities across the Yass Valley. It is not a direct fee-for-service and is a simplified levy, differing from a development contribution plan established under s7.11 of the Act which attributes the demand generated from individual development to the amount payable.

Section 2.8 of the Contributions Plan determines development which is exempt from paying a contribution, as provided below:

- *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 childcare 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 development approved by development consent DA240389 is not exempt from a development contribution under the s2.8 of the Contributions Plan. The condition of development consent requiring the payment of the contribution is therefore relevant.

The request for exemption draws comparison with the approaches with nearby councils, however this is not relevant to the Yass Valley and would instead be a matter for consideration in preparing any future contributions plan.

The Contributions Plan has been applied consistently to date. An individual exemption outside of the exemptions provided for in the Contributions Plan would significantly undermine the application of the Contributions Plan in the future and therefore should not be supported.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

CSP Theme	Our Environment (EN)
CSP Strategy Objective	We have a robust planning framework that protects and maintains our rural character and natural landscapes
Strategies	EN.6: Growth is strategically planned to ensure liveability
Delivery Program Action	EN 6.1: Forward planning is undertaken to integrate environmental, social, and economic factors for the benefit of the community and region.

- ATTACHMENTS:**
- A. Locality Plan [⇒](#)
  - B. Applicant Request for Exemption [⇒](#)

## 6.4 YASS ROTARY LOOKOUT - 17 IRVINE DRIVE, YASS

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### SUMMARY

That Council reconsiders the resolution of item 6.10 of the meeting of 20 December 2023 which requires the Rotary Club of Yass Inc. to be responsible for maintaining the proposed viewing platform at 17 Irvine Drive Yass post construction.

### RECOMMENDATION

*That:*

- 1. Council agrees to the proposed works as per drawing ID: R 090724 at 17 Irvine Drive, Yass (Lot 35 DP 1045621)*
  - 2. Council provides project management support for the delivery of the Yass Rotary Lookout*
  - 3. Upon satisfactory completion Council accepts from The Rotary Club of Yass the infrastructure into Council's asset register*
  - 4. Council will maintain community assets as detailed within councils adopted Parks and Recreation Asset Management Plan September 2011.*
- 

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Rotary Club of Yass has secured \$82,000 through the Community Investment Benefit Program (CIBP) to fully fund construction of the project.

Ongoing maintenance costs for Council are expected to be minimal for the 2025–26 financial year and into the foreseeable future. This is due to low maintenance materials being selected by Council staff.

Detailed designs have been undertaken for the proposed structure and associated carpark. However, these have been paused, pending the resolution of Council. If Council resolves to accept the long-term maintenance responsibility for this asset, then the detailed design work will be finalised in conjunction with Council staff.

### POLICY & LEGISLATION

- Local Government Act 1993
- Parks and Recreation Asset Management Plan, September 2021

### REPORT

#### 1. Background

The Rotary Club of Yass approached Council in 2023 to seek approval in principle to develop a section of land at 17 Irvine Drive Yass (Lot 35 DP 1045621) for a recreational lookout for residents and tourist to enjoy.

This land is zoned RE1 Public Recreation and is classified as Community land. No Plan of Management (PoM) has been prepared for this site. However, the proposed works can be undertaken without a PoM being prepared for the area as they are in keeping with the broad objectives of Council owned community land.

Under *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021* the proposed works, including the ancillary carpark, are classified as exempt development No Review of Environmental Factor is required under 5.1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* as a result of these works being specified exempt development.

The intention at the time of the Riverview subdivision development was that the Rotary Club of Yass would be permitted to develop and maintain a lookout for passive recreation at 17 Irvine Drive, Yass, providing a viewing area overlooking the township.

The proposed site is already informally used as a lookout area overlooking North Yass, the historic railway bridge, and the Yass River, providing panoramic views of the surrounding landscape.

At its ordinary meeting on 20 December 2023 under item 6.10 council resolved that:

- (1) *Community consultation be undertaken for a period of 28 days regarding the proposed recreational lookout project.*
- (2) *If no significant objections are received the Rotary Club of Yass Inc be permitted in principle to develop and maintain the area subject to formal approval of the project being undertaken.*

## 2. Report

Community consultation for the proposed lookout was undertaken for a period of 28 days. This process was undertaken in May 2024, with all neighbouring property owners consulted. Any concerns raised were noted and addressed through adjustments to the development design.

The Rotary Club has completed the design proposal and landscaping plans, which have been submitted to council for consideration and review. Materials have been amended where appropriate to minimise long term maintenance expenses following Council review.

The design (**Attachment A**) has been developed with the objective of minimising ongoing maintenance requirements, ensuring a long service life, and incorporating materials and features that are resistant to vandalism.

The development includes the following elements:

- a) Clearing the site of woody weeds
- b) Native landscaping
- c) Walking pathways
- d) Picnic shelter
- e) Bench seating
- f) Raised viewing platform
- g) Parking area (Sealed)

The Rotary Club of Yass are now seeking an amendment to the resolution noted above. This amendment seeks to gift the viewing platform to Council upon completion of construction. Once gifted, Council will assume the responsibility for the ongoing maintenance of the asset, and the lookout, carpark and surrounds will be incorporated into Council's assets register.

This amendment is sought as Yass Rotary Club is unable to commit to the long-term maintenance of the facility. As a result, Council staff have worked with the Rotary Club extensively to ensure that maintenance costs and impacts to Council are minimised.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

CSP Theme	Our Infrastructure (IN)
CSP Strategy Objective	We are proud of our liveable and accessible local places and spaces.
Strategies	IN.8: Invest in quality sports and recreation facilities that promote active lifestyles across all ages
Delivery Program Action	IN.8.1: Undertake projects to improve recreation facilities, public toilets and sporting grounds and facilities

**ATTACHMENTS:** A. Yass Rotary Viewing Platform and Carpark - Updated Design Drawings [⇨](#)

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## 6.5 MURRUMBATEMAN PUMP TRACK UPDATE

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### SUMMARY

To provide an update on the Murrumbateman Pump Track project plan.

### RECOMMENDATION

*That the report be noted.*

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### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- Resources for the progression of the project to concept design stage are provided for in the 2025-2026 Operational Plan.
- There is no allocation of funds for the construction of the project.

### POLICY & LEGISLATION

- Local Government Act 1993
- [Yass Valley Open Space Strategy 2024-2036](#)
- [Parks and Playground Strategy 2017](#)
- [Everyone Can Play Guideline](#)

### REPORT

#### 1. Report

Council at its ordinary meeting on 28 August 2025 endorsed the project plan (Attachment A) for the Murrumbateman Pump Track. This document outlines the methodical approach to progressing the planning phase of this project. The plan will guide the process through strategic analysis, community and stakeholder engagement, and formal reporting, ultimately leading to a final recommendation on the preferred site for the proposed pump track.

The current timeline has been delayed due to other competing demands on time and resources within Council. However, this project is an identified priority, and a revised timeline has been prepared to ensure appropriate delivery.

Council staff are continuing to work on the strategic analysis, which has included review of crime prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED), site constraint analysis and industry trends, which will inform the community on the proposed locations for a pump track in Murrumbateman.

The updated timeline proposed:

- Strategic Analysis development –March 2026
- Stakeholder engagement –April 2026
- Review stakeholder engagement – May 2026
- Broader community consultation –June 2026
- Report presented to July council meeting on results

It is noted that as the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Community Engagement Roadshow is tentatively scheduled to be delivered in May 2026; to avoid conflict the broader community consultation will be released in June 2026.

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

CSP Theme	Our Infrastructure (IN)
CSP Strategy Objective	We are proud of our liveable and accessible local places and spaces.
Strategies	IN.6: Preserve and enhance green open spaces, ensuring accessibility, maintenance and natural beauty
Delivery Program Action	IN 6.1 Plan for community facility, sport, recreation, play, open space infrastructure provision and support project delivery

**ATTACHMENTS:** A. Murrumbateman Pump Track Project Plan [⇒](#)

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## 6.6 THE SOUTH EAST AND TABLELANDS STRATEGIC REGIONAL INTEGRATED TRANSPORT PLAN

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### SUMMARY

To present to Council the Final South East and Tablelands Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan 2026.

### RECOMMENDATION

*That Council:*

- 1. Notes the South East and Tablelands Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan 2026.*
- 2. Proactively works with the Canberra Region Joint Organisation to lobby for support for our community transport needs.*
- 3. Proactively lobby our local members for support for our community transport needs particularly for:*
  - a. Yass being identified as a strategic centre in the South East and Tablelands Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan.*
  - b. Full duplication of the Barton Highway.*
  - c. Prioritising funding for the Murrumbateman Bypass.*
  - d. Raising concerns with emerging transport and traffic safety issues including the Shingle Hill Way and Federal Highway intersection.*
  - e. Increased funding for our local and regional road networks.*

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### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil as result of this report.

### POLICY & LEGISLATION

NSW Local Government Act.

### REPORT

#### Background

In December 2022, Transport for New South Wales (TfNSW) published the draft South East and Tablelands Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan (SETSRITP). The draft SETSRITP covers the local government areas of Bega Valley, Eurobodalla, Goulburn Mulwaree, Hilltops, Queanbeyan-Palerang, Snowy Monaro, Upper Lachlan, Wingecarribee and Yass Valley.

The draft SETSRITP was prepared to support the NSW future Transport Strategy and generally outlines how Transport for NSW will respond to transport needs of the region, and how it will plan for future challenges.

Council considered a report on the SETSRITP at its February 2023 Council meeting which raised a number of concerns ([https://yass.infocouncil.biz/Open/2023/02/CO\\_23022023\\_AGN\\_732.PDF](https://yass.infocouncil.biz/Open/2023/02/CO_23022023_AGN_732.PDF)).

Council made a submission to TfNSW on 24/03/2023 raising the concerns identified in the Council report and provided a copy of Council's resolution.

In December 2024, TfNSW issued the final draft of the SETSRITP, which did not address the concerns raised by Council.

A report was presented to the February 2025 Council meeting in relation to the final draft SETSRITP ([https://yass.infocouncil.biz/Open/2025/02/CO\\_27022025\\_AGN\\_919.PDF](https://yass.infocouncil.biz/Open/2025/02/CO_27022025_AGN_919.PDF)).

Council made a submission to TfNSW on 25/02/2025 raising the concerns identified in the Council report and provided a copy of Council's resolution.

## Release of the Final South East and Tablelands Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan

In March 2026, the final version of the SETSRITP was released.

The final release of the SETSRITP did not address all of the issues raised by Council as part of the consultation period.

Although Council hasn't been identified in the plan as a strategic centre, the plan does suggest that Yass is 'Under strategic (centre) investigation'. It is important for Council to continue to lobby to be identified as a strategic centre in the SETSRITP, as future state and federal funding opportunities will possibly favour strategic centres within the region.

The Barton Highway was initially identified as initiative #28 in the draft versions of the plan, which identified developing and delivering priority upgrades to the Barton Highway. However, the final version has been modified and reprioritised, with the Barton Highway Upgrade project now initiative #58. This project is now focussed on developing and delivering the Murrumbateman Bypass with detailed design to enable the full duplication of the Barton Highway.

The bypass of Murrumbateman is a significant and important priority for Council, however the reduction in priority for the delivery of the full Barton Highway duplication is of concern.

With the adoption of the South East and Tablelands Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan (refer Attachment A), Yass Valley Council will look to utilise the plan to maximise the transport benefits for our community.

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION

CSP Theme	Our Infrastructure (IN)
CSP Strategy Objective	We have transport links that connect towns within the region and increase access to significant centres.
Strategies	IN.1: Deliver improved and increased public and community transport services within the region
Delivery Program Action	IN.1.1: Advocate through relevant authorities to ensure adequate public and community transport services

**ATTACHMENTS:** A. Final South East and Tablelands Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan [⇨](#)

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## 6.7 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY, EFFICIENCY AND BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT

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### SUMMARY

This report responds to the resolution made at the 12 November 2025, Extraordinary Council Meeting which stated:

1. *Council defer consideration of proceeding to community consultation on a Special Rate Variation (SRV) until a full review of alternative financial options has been completed.*
2. *Council direct the CEO to prepare a report by the March 2026 Ordinary Meeting outlining:*
  - a. *Further efficiency and cost-saving measures across Council operations;*
  - b. *Opportunities to increase non-rate income, including through Council owned land, commercial partnerships, outsourcing, and Voluntary Planning Agreements;*
  - c. *Verification of the rating database to ensure all properties are correctly classified and rate income is maximised;*
  - d. *Updated growth and revenue projections reflecting approved developments; and*
  - e. *Modelling of a longer-term (4–7 year) SRV option should it still be required.*
3. *Council reaffirm its commitment to transparency, fiscal responsibility, and community confidence by ensuring that any SRV proposal is only pursued once all other practical options have been fully examined and reported to Council.*

### RECOMMENDATION

*That Council:*

1. *Notes the information contained within the report.*
2. *Commits to improving its operational financial position in the short and long term, through the implementation of business improvement initiatives which include but are not limited to:*
  - a) *Continued implementation of the Financial Sustainability Roadmap;*
  - b) *Undertake and implement pricing methodology work in relation to externally restricted funds, namely Waste, Sewer and Water, that explicitly aligns revenue with service costs;*
  - c) *Revised Contributions Framework, including Section 7.11 Plans;*
  - d) *Continued development and implementation of a Property Strategy;*
  - e) *Service Reviews with any proposed changes to current service levels to be presented to Council as they are prepared.*
3. *Directs the CEO, or her delegate, to present a report to the April 2026 Council Meeting, which is inclusive of:*
  - a) *financial modelling and analysis of the estimated impacts of the above business improvement initiatives to address the Long-Term Financial Plan operating deficits;*
  - b) *consideration of a reduced (ie <40%) potential revised SRV application that focuses on improving infrastructure maintenance, renewal and backlog.*

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### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

### POLICY & LEGISLATION

*Local Government Act (1993)*

## REPORT

### 1. Background

Financial sustainability continues to be a sector-wide key risk that constrains Local Government in NSW. Managing ageing assets and infrastructure while rebuilding from the natural disasters of bushfire, COVID droughts and floods, with limited avenues to increase revenue compared to cost increases has put a high level of pressure on the financial health of Yass Valley Council (YVC).

The following factors impacting YVC's financial sustainability are:

- Cost shifting - Councils across the state are increasingly required to do more without any additional resources. LGNSW calculated the total cost shift to councils in NSW at \$1.5 Billion in 2025.
- Increases in costs unpredictably (e.g. Global externalities and Mega-trends)
- Limit in revenue-raising capacity (e.g. Rate Peg)
- Impact of Natural Disasters - COVID-19 and the impact of natural disasters in the last 5 years has resulted in the re-direction of financial resources away from planned priorities.
- Financial Assistance Grant from Federal Government - this has eroded as a percentage of federal taxation revenue from 1% to 0.53%.
- Ageing infrastructure – as reported in Council's 2024-25 financial statements YVC had an Infrastructure Backlog Ratio of 6.23% which is more than three times greater than the OLG benchmark ratio of less than 2% and an Asset Maintenance Ratio of 67.44% in 2024-25 which is below the OLG benchmark of greater than 100%. This shows insufficient investment and assets not being replaced at the rate required.

#### 1.1 Local Government Context

Local Government financial sustainability in New South Wales is severely undermined by structural constraints, driven by restrictive rate pegging and roughly \$1.5 billion in annual cost-shifting from the state government.

The mandatory rate cap fails to cover rising operational costs, creating a widening structural deficit while forcing councils to assume financial responsibility for essential services like libraries and emergency levies. Consequently, this vertical fiscal imbalance has resulted in a \$5.6 billion infrastructure backlog state-wide with deferred maintenance, rendering the current financial model unsustainable.

Over the past decade, Special Rate Variation (SRV) requests have evolved from modest adjustments into massive structural shifts, with approved increases inflating significantly over time. Between 2015 and 2018, most approvals ranged from 10% to 40%, but by the 2019 -2022 period, extreme outliers emerged, such as Balranald's 94.87% approval and Dungog's 97.78% request. This trend culminated in the 2023 - 2026 period, where councils facing high inflation and aging infrastructure frequently sought increases near or exceeding 100%, highlighted by Strathfield's 92.83% approval and Tenterfield's record 104.49% application.

The justification for these applications has simultaneously shifted from funding community amenities to ensuring basic financial survival. Early applications from 2015 to 2018 often targeted specific local projects like swimming pools, tourism hubs, or environmental programs. However, by 2019 to 2022, the focus narrowed toward addressing critical infrastructure backlogs and asset renewals. Most recently, from 2023 to 2026, the language has become increasingly urgent, with councils requesting funds to eliminate operating deficits, repair liquidity positions, and reduce a dangerous reliance on grant funding to maintain essential operations.

[https://www.lgnsw.org.au/common/Uploaded%20files/Cost\\_Shifting/Cost\\_Shifting\\_2025\\_summary\\_report.pdf](https://www.lgnsw.org.au/common/Uploaded%20files/Cost_Shifting/Cost_Shifting_2025_summary_report.pdf)

#### 1.2 Yass Valley Council December 2024 Presentation - Mr Brett Whitworth, Deputy Secretary, Office of Local Government.

Mr Brett Whitworth, Deputy Secretary of the Office of Local Government (OLG), briefed Council in December 2024 on its financial trajectory. He confirmed that the OLG had been closely monitoring YVC for almost 18 months, engaging regularly with the former CEO and Executive team members. While his presence did not constitute a formal intervention, it was made clear that the OLG was taking the situation seriously and expressed concern regarding Council's ability to maintain sufficient liquidity to meet its long-term debt obligations.

A primary concern identified was Council's reliance on internally allocated reserves to meet immediate expenditure. While not a regulatory breach, the Deputy Secretary noted that this is not considered 'good practice' and is unsustainable. During the presentation Mr Whitworth clarified that while recent grants for water supply improve future service quality, they do not improve Council's underlying financial position. Unlike State or Federal governments, Councils cannot operate in a deficit; YVC must reach a point where it no longer requires use of its restricted funds.

The OLG advised an "alert but not alarmed" approach, provided Council "pulls every lever" to address its Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) deficit position. This includes a critical review of service levels, fees, charges, and revenue options including a Special Rate Variation (SRV). Council must balance community expectations for infrastructure, such as the Crago Mill development, against actual affordability to ensure the offices are fit for purpose without further compromising cash reserves.

The Deputy Secretary acknowledged the sobering nature of the message but noted that the Mayor and leadership understand the gravity of these issues. Positive steps had commenced, including the recruitment of the CFO and other key Executive positions to stabilize operations. The OLG remains "alarmed" if major strategic decisions are not made quickly to ensure year-on-year financial health and stability.

### **1.3 YVC Financial Sustainability Roadmap**

Through Council's adoption of the Financial Sustainability Roadmap (FSR), it committed to being a resilient and financially responsible organisation that delivers sustainable infrastructure, quality services, and value to the community now and in the future (Financial Sustainability Roadmap 2025-2029).

Throughout 2025 Council has achieved significant milestones towards addressing its financial challenges including:

- ✓ Crago Mill Stage 2 ceased
- ✓ Improved financial position for the 24/25 FY
- ✓ Improvement in LTFP and level of deficits in 25/26 and outer years
- ✓ Maintaining Employee Costs as predicted
- ✓ In house CFO and Finance Team fully resourced
- ✓ Improvement in cash position in outer years
- ✓ Improved financial management reporting
- ✓ Improved Integrated Planning and Reporting Document Suite
- ✓ Improved engagement with Audit Risk Improvement Committee
- ✓ Improved level of financial information and engagement with Council

The FSR was developed as a sensitive and considered solution, with minimal services impacted. The impacts of the FSR are considerable and more deliberate than other approaches which may be implemented to address the widening gap between revenue and expenditure at YVC. The FSR provides over \$2.8M improvement over the 4 years.

The draft updated Long-Term Financial Plan 2025-2035, in which the impacts of the Financial Sustainability Roadmap are incorporated, together with the resolution to discontinue the Crago Mill Stage Two project, demonstrate significant improvement.

At the 12 November 2025, Extraordinary Council Meeting it was resolved that:

1. *Council defer consideration of proceeding to community consultation on a Special Rate Variation (SRV) until a full review of alternative financial options has been completed.*

2. Council direct the CEO to prepare a report by the March 2026 Ordinary Meeting outlining:
  - a. Further efficiency and cost-saving measures across Council operations;
  - b. Opportunities to increase non-rate income, including through Council owned land, commercial partnerships, outsourcing, and Voluntary Planning Agreements;
  - c. Verification of the rating database to ensure all properties are correctly classified and rate income is maximised;
  - d. Updated growth and revenue projections reflecting approved developments; and
  - e. Modelling of a longer-term (4–7 year) SRV option should it still be required.
3. Council reaffirm its commitment to transparency, fiscal responsibility, and community confidence by ensuring that any SRV proposal is only pursued once all other practical options have been fully examined and reported to Council.

The following provides a detailed response to each area identified under point two of the resolution.

## 2. Further efficiency and cost-saving measures across Council operations

### 2.1 Further Service Changes for more Immediate Impact

The decision not to progress the process for a Special Rate Variation (SRV) means that Council is unable to adequately fund continued delivery of current service levels and maintain its infrastructure. Council is unable to fully fund renewals in key asset areas, such as roads. This will result in further deterioration in the condition of these assets.

The report tabled at the November Extraordinary Meeting indicated that ‘Council will need to cut General Fund costs by around \$3.5 million per annum. This will require significant reductions in the services currently being delivered. For reference, Council’s total General Fund operating expenses in 2024-25 was \$27.8 million, it would need to cut these costs by 13% to find the required level of cost reduction’.

In considering, at a high level, services which could change to address the funding gap we have included those predominantly provided via the General Fund. The following is proposed for consideration:

- a) Reduced Facility and Service Accessibility (Estimated Saving: \$500,000)
  - Adjusting the opening hours for Customer Service, Transfer Stations, the Visitor Information Centre, the Library, and the Binalong Pool will directly restrict community access to essential resources.
  - Customer Service & Library: Reduced hours may lead to increased wait times and digital exclusion for residents who rely on physical access for support and internet services.
  - Visitor Information Centre: Reduced hours may lead to reduction in spend within the region, due to reduce physical access for support and advice.
  - Waste: Reduced operation and access.
  - Binalong Pool: Seasonal and daily availability reductions will impact local recreation and health outcomes for the Binalong community.
- b) Resource Reductions in Operational Areas (Estimated Saving: \$970,000)
 

Aligning resources to funding or lowering resources allocated across functions will significantly extend response and processing times. A visible decline in the "public face" is expected.

  - Development Application (DA) Processing: This will result in slower turnaround times, potentially stalling local construction and economic growth. Decreases in assessment times against the Benchmark may result in a Ministerial Improvement Order which will require increased resources and could impact grant success.
  - Road Maintenance: Reduced road maintenance further increases long-term repair costs due to increased asset degradation.

- Community Halls: There will be a drop in access, cleanliness and general upkeep. Some halls may no longer be usable.
  - Open Spaces: The current level of service for the maintenance and mowing of open spaces will be reduced to achieve an operational saving. This would involve reducing the current mowing frequencies, which may not meet community expectations.
  - Ranger Services: Reduce resources allocated to enforcement and monitoring, this will lead to increased risks and slower responses to animal control or public safety issues.
  - Weeds Management: Adoption of minimum service level for biosecurity which is aligned to the current service agreement with Local Land Services (LLS) and Weeds Action Program.
- c) Elimination of Non-Core Resourcing (Estimated Saving: \$370,000)
- Events Support: Withdrawing funding for YVC event and support for community events (excluding basic media promotion) will lead to the cancellation of long-standing local traditions (e.g. Christmas on Comur). This removes a key driver for community social cohesion and local tourism.
  - Strategy Development: Halting non-essential strategy work saves immediate costs but may result in poor planning outcomes, where the Council lacks the frameworks needed to apply for future state or federal grants. This will also decrease long-term financial sustainability e.g. no review of contributions plan.

While these measures achieve a substantial \$1.84 million reduction in expenditure, they represent a fundamental shift in Council's service delivery model. Rather than nuanced and considered implementation of the Financial Sustainability Roadmap, the alternate action will result in a swift reduction of service levels, rather than more considered changes.

The community will receive a marked decrease in responsiveness, asset quality, and local vibrant activity as these changes are implemented.

### **2.1.1 Strategic Risk: Infrastructure Decay and Asset Backlog**

It is important to note that while these \$1.84 million in reductions address immediate cash flow pressures, they do not resolve the underlying issue of Council's aging and deteriorating infrastructure. In fact, reducing allocations for Road Maintenance and Parks & Gardens is likely to accelerate the decline of public assets. By deferring routine maintenance now, Council risks a "compounding debt" effect, where minor repairs today escalate into total asset failures tomorrow.

This strategy manages the current deficit but potentially increases the long-term infrastructure backlog, leaving future generations with a higher financial burden to restore basic safety and service standards.

This will potentially increase Council's liability and number of insurance claims with respect to road conditions, ultimately pushing up insurance premiums.

## **2.2 Service Reviews**

### **2.2.1 Library**

The Library Service Review is currently being undertaken and will not conclude until late May 2026. The report for Yass Valley measured against quantitative targets listed in the NSW Public Library Objectives and Standards shows that YVC is below State targets in a number of areas. Any consideration of service reductions will impact Yass Valley's performance against indicators negatively.

### **2.2.2 Destination**

The Destination Service Review is currently being undertaken and will not conclude until late May 2026. A key consideration in undertaking this review is the opportunity to co-locate the Visitor Information Centre into the Crago Mill Precinct. Any consideration of service reductions with respect to the service will impact service delivery more swiftly than anticipated.

### **2.2.3 Waste**

The waste services review is currently being undertaken and will not conclude until April 2026. Previous reviews have identified that the change in the operations and number of Council's village waste transfer stations will provide Council with a cost saving, due to the ongoing underutilisation and required upgrade costs for each of the transfer stations. Outsourcing of waste collection services forms part of the review.

A joint procurement with South West Regional Waste Management Group (SWRWMG) is planned in the coming 12 months. This will ensure that all waste streams at Councils waste transfer stations are managed as effectively and cost efficient as possible.

### **2.2.4 Roads**

Council currently has three maintenance grading teams maintaining over 600km of unsealed local and regional road networks. Currently, these teams are unable to keep up with the required maintenance requirements. An adjustment to the policy aimed at reducing the service levels through the identification of roads which Council would no longer maintain would ensure compliance with the policy.

Council does not currently have the required R2 Accreditation or internal resources to reintroduce the Road Maintenance Council Contract (RMCC). If R2 accreditation is achieved, a dedicated RMCC team would need to be formed to undertake the additional works for TfNSW on the state road network, otherwise existing road maintenance levels of service would need to be reduced on the Local and Regional road networks to allow time for the additional works to be completed. The maintenance side of the contract is cost recovery only, there is no ability to make a profit from these works. Ordered works as part of the contract allows for overheads and risk to be factored into the proposed works order price, but this is heavily monitored by TfNSW and any cost overruns are borne by Council.

A Roads Review is planned to be undertaken in 2025/26 Quarter 4.

## **2.3 Organisation Restructure**

Council identified the need to ensure alignment between the organisation structure and our newly adopted strategic plans. Council determined that changes were necessary to ensure that our service delivery was efficient and effective. The restructure involved changes to the existing organisational structure, with a clear focus on enhancing service delivery and operational requirements. Any changes to the resources allocated in the current organisation structure will impact FTE.

The Organisation Restructure was not undertaken with a primary purpose of reducing costs. The work was undertaken in response to our current financial position, evolving community expectations, and feedback from the workforce.

## **2.4 Grants and Depreciation**

A critical challenge for Council's financial sustainability is the misconception that grant-funded projects are 'free'.

In reality, every new asset, whether a major infrastructure project like a bridge or smaller community playground, carry the long-term depreciation and maintenance costs that the General Fund must absorb.

For YVC there is tension between renewal vs. new. While grants often favor exciting new builds, they rarely cover the ongoing costs needed to keep them safe and functional.

This leads to "management by good ideas" rather than strategic necessity. For example, the Rail Trail was notably absent from Council's primary strategic documents, such as the Active Transport Plan, yet it bypassed established priorities to enter the Operational Plan via grant opportunities.

Similarly, grant funded Holiday Programs create community expectations for services that Council may not be able to afford once the initial funding cycle ends. Without a strict "asset-neutral" or "renewal-first" policy, accepting these grants inadvertently accelerates the decline of existing core

infrastructure by diverting limited staff resources and increasing the total depreciation burden on an already strained budget.

## **2.5 Other Opportunities**

### **2.5.1 Committees**

Dissolving non-mandatory council committees is a lever which would reduce the significant administrative and resource burden placed on Council staff. Each committee requires a hidden investment of time for the preparation of agendas, drafting of technical reports, attendance at meetings, and the subsequent recording and distribution of minutes.

By removing these bodies, Council can immediately redirect limited staff hours back towards core service delivery and the backlog of operational tasks, such as improved compliance and policy updates, which are currently facing significant delays.

Implications of removing Committee's will likely result in Council becoming less engaged with the community and potentially break any alignment with broader outcomes which the Community and Council seek.

### **2.5.2 RV friendly Town Status**

To remove RV Friendly Town status, Council must formally terminate its agreement with the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA). This process begins with a formal Council resolution to withdraw from the program, typically triggered by a decision to no longer meet the essential criteria, such as providing free or low-cost overnight parking at sites like Joe O'Connor Park or maintaining a public dump point. Once the resolution is passed, a formal notification must be sent to the CMCA National Headquarters to revoke the accreditation and update their digital and print databases.

Following the formal revocation, the Council is responsible for the physical removal of all 'RV Friendly Town' roadside signage previously installed.

Transitioning away from this status allows the Council to repurpose designated areas and adjust fee structures without the constraints of the National RV Strategy guidelines, though it may result in a noticeable decrease in passing motorhome tourism and related local spending.

### **2.5.3 Outsourcing**

Continued service reviews will identify opportunities for improved models of service delivery including outsourcing options.

## **3. Opportunities to increase non-rate income, including through Council owned land, commercial partnerships, outsourcing, and Voluntary Planning Agreements**

Council officers have commenced an overall review of the opportunities relating to non-rate income. Significant potential has been identified in the following areas.

### **3.1 Pricing Methodology – Cost Recovery Water, Sewer & Waste.**

Local governments in New South Wales are responsible for delivering essential water, sewer, and waste services. These services are capital-intensive and require ongoing investment in infrastructure, maintenance, and regulatory compliance. Historically, YVC pricing has not consistently reflected the full cost of service delivery, including depreciation, asset renewal, and future capital requirements. This has resulted in:

- Funds operating in deficits
- Deferred maintenance creating potential infrastructure risks
- Increased reliance on cross-subsidisation of general revenue

Cost recovery requires that service charges fully cover operating and maintenance costs, asset depreciation, financing costs, future capital renewal and replacement. Adopting this principle ensures that current users pay the true cost of services, promoting intergenerational equity and financial sustainability.

Council must consider transitioning to a full cost-recovery model for its water, sewer, and waste services. Currently, the fees charged to the community do not fully cover the operational and capital costs required to deliver these essential utilities. This gap has created ongoing financial pressure and structural deficits within the respective funds. By adopting a structured, phased approach to price increases, Council can ensure long-term financial sustainability, meet regulatory obligations, and maintain the infrastructure standards the community expects.

To address these challenges, it is proposed that Council implement a pricing methodology that explicitly aligns revenue with total service costs. Recognising the potential impact on households and businesses, this will not be an overnight change. Instead, Council will adopt a phased approach, with price adjustments introduced gradually over the next three years. A transition period allows for transparent communication with the community and provides for a gradual increase in fees.

During this time, Council will also review its fee structures to ensure they remain equitable and encourage demand management, such as water conservation and circular economy, while remaining easy for the public to understand.

### **3.2 Increase Fees and Charges**

Part of the Financial Sustainability Roadmap was a commitment to review fees and charges to ensure cost recovery and fairness.

Council have recently proposed new fees for users of Council sporting facilities. Although this did not achieve parity in regard to a User Pays model, it proposed an increase to user fees. This model was not supported by Council. An alternative fee increase, as discussed with key user groups, will be presented to Council in April as part of the overall fees and charges.

Staff have identified opportunities to modify Council's Fees and Charges, particularly in the planning and Compliance areas. A full review of Fees and Charges will be provided as part of the Draft IP&R documents at the Ordinary Meeting of Council April 2026.

#### **3.2.1 Planning Proposals/VPA's/Contribution Plans**

A review and benchmarking exercise for the fees associated with Planning Proposals has commenced. Given this benchmarking, resources and technical expertise required to undertake a Planning Proposal, there is considered to be significant capacity to increase overall fees and charges in this area. Although the number of Planning Proposals is not large (around 5 – 10 per year), increases in these fees and charges will allow for the proper capture of staff resources expended in the assessment and management of these Proposals.

Voluntary Planning Agreements (VPA) are a mechanism by which a developer enters into an agreement to provide for infrastructure related to a development outside of the traditional contributions plan. This allows for developers to provide for outcomes that are not covered in an existing contribution plan.

Council is generally unable to mandate such an outcome, and the initiative needs to come from the developer. Council has entered into a number of VPAs with developers to help facilitate developments. VPAs are generally prepared and reviewed by external legal advisors.

As VPAs are generally for the provision of key services related to the development of land, these are an opportunity to obtain positive outcomes with a nexus to a development rather than delivering Council projects.

Council currently only has a Section 7.12 Contributions Plan under of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. This levies a simple percentage of development costs – generally 1% of value. However, where ongoing population growth, whether from a greenfield or infill

intensification perspective, occurs, contribution plans under Section 7.11 of the Act are more appropriate. These have not generally been implemented by Council previously.

A more sophisticated approach to Contributions Planning is required to be investigated. However, this is not to increase the amount of revenue generated by Council. It is instead required to ensure that the cost of community assets and infrastructure is carried by the future residents who benefit from the new development rather than passing the cost on to existing residents.

A review of our approach to Contributions Planning will be carried out by Council. This will include a review of future growth areas, infrastructure requirements and long-term recreational asset requirements.

This will be a necessary item for the long-term provision of infrastructure and recreation assets and maintenance. However, it will not be a mechanism for short term financial sustainability.

### 3.2.2 Property Strategy

Work is currently underway to develop a YVC Property Strategy which will seek to maximise Councils operational and surplus property for commercial return where possible and appropriate.

It is expected that this work, once complete, will positively impact the Long-Term Financial Plan through strategic property development, acquisitions and disposals.

## 4. Verification of the rating database to ensure all properties are correctly classified and rate income is maximised.

### 4.1 Application of rating categories under the NSW Local Government Act

A property rated for business purposes is vastly different to a property where a business is undertaken. It would be inappropriate, for example, for a construction company based on a rural property that also has a dwelling to be rated as a business premise. This rating determination is grounded in establishing the dominant land use.

The Land and Environment Court (LEC) has established some broad foundations around establishing what the dominant use of land is in *Mangoola Coal Operations Pty Ltd v Muswellbrook Shire Council* (2021). This case related to the imposition of a mining rating on a property that was used predominately for grazing purposes. The Court found that one small portion of the site was used for a mining related purpose, so therefore the imposition of a mining rating was inappropriate, as it was a minor use over the entire site. To extrapolate, having a shed where a roofing company is based, located on the same lot or holding as a house, would make the dominant use residential. Similarly, if a trucking company is on a lot where there is farming activity being undertaken, then that farming activity is the dominant use.

The central finding of this case was the requirement to assess the use of the entire parcel of land as a single entity, rather than dividing it into smaller sections to apply different rating categories. The judgment in *Mangoola* allows for a quantitative assessment (which use takes up more physical space), but also considers the intensity and purpose of the use. The case emphasized that a minor use, even if highly intensive, does not override a much broader, less intensive use (like grazing or farming) if the latter covers significantly more ground.

One other key outcome of this is related to ongoing use. A small hiatus in the dominate use does not alter the dominant use. If, for example, a farm lies fallow for a twelve month period, the long term history needs to be looked at, and short term holds in activity does not automatically mean that a rating needs to be changed – for example, in the above case, simply because grazing operations were suspended for an 18 month period during a drought, it does not follow that it is no longer farming land.

Fully understanding the different rating definitions and how they differ from traditional town planning definitions is required. For example, S.515 of the Local Government Act is explicit in what is considered farmland:

(1) Land is to be categorised as farmland if it is a parcel of rateable land valued as one assessment and its dominant use is for farming (that is, the business or industry of grazing,

*animal feedlots, dairying, pig-farming, poultry farming, viticulture, orcharding, bee-keeping, horticulture, vegetable growing, the growing of crops of any kind, forestry or aquaculture within the meaning of the [Fisheries Management Act 1994](#), or any combination of those businesses or industries) which—*

- (a) has a significant and substantial commercial purpose or character, and*
- (b) is engaged in for the purpose of profit on a continuous or repetitive basis (whether or not a profit is actually made).*

*(2) Land is not to be categorised as farmland if it is rural residential land (noting that rural residential for rating purposes is separate from the rural residential zone)*

Residential is as follows under S.516:

*(1) Land is to be categorised as residential if it is a parcel of rateable land valued as one assessment and—*

- (a) its dominant use is for residential accommodation (otherwise than as a hotel, motel, guest-house, backpacker hostel or nursing home or any other form of residential accommodation (not being a boarding house or a lodging house) prescribed by the regulations), or*
- (b) in the case of vacant land, it is zoned or otherwise designated for use under an environmental planning instrument (with or without development consent) for residential purposes, or*
- (c) it is rural residential land.*

Business under S. 518:

*Land is to be categorised as business if it cannot be categorised as farmland, residential or mining.*

In order to be confident that the dominant use is business, Council would need to inspect the land in question to ascertain whether any farming activities as per the definition were undertaken on site, and whether there is a dwelling on site (or as part of the broader landholding). If either of those is present, then under *Mangoola Coal*, Council would question whether it could legally rate those properties for commercial purposes.

Additionally, under S.518B of the Local Government Act, there is a reference to mixed development land, where an apportionment of business and residential rating can be applied. This relies on the definitions under S.14BB of the *Valuations of Land Act 1916* which is:

*mixed development land means a parcel of land occupied or used solely as the site of one or more buildings comprising—*

- (a) one, or more than one, flat, and*
- (b) one, or more than one, office.*

This definition for rating purposes applies only to mixed use developments such as shop top housing in an urban context.

## **5. Modelling of a longer-term (4–7 year) SRV option.**

### **5.1 Longer term SRV Models**

A review of Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) determinations since 2015/16 indicate that while longer-term Special Variations (4 - 7 years) offer a theoretical roadmap for sustainability, historically they carry a higher risk of partial approval. The Tribunal has found financial projections five to seven years into the future difficult to verify because long-term financial modelling beyond three years were observed as too speculative. Approximately 40% of applications in the 4 - 7year category are either scaled back or rejected entirely.

These extended models are frequently reduced to a more immediate two or three-year period. Applications that were ‘partially approved’ significantly involved durations exceeding three years. The final years were truncated due to forecast uncertainty.

Rather than diverting funds toward unlikely long-term outcomes, we recommend concentrating efforts on a shorter timeframe for more prudent resource allocation.

## **STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

CSP Theme	Our Civic Leadership (CL)
CSP Strategy Objective	Council is an effective, responsible, and innovative organisation.
Strategies	CL.1: Council resources, practices and processes are undertaken in a manner that meets legislative requirements.
Delivery Program Action	CL.1.5: Council Financial Sustainability Improvement Strategy to ensure improvement in the short and long term

**ATTACHMENTS:** Nil

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## 6.8 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP - QUARTERLY UPDATE

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### SUMMARY

A major focus outlined in the Council's Delivery Program is to progress work required to improve Council's Financial Sustainability. In August 2025 Council endorsed the Financial Sustainability Roadmap (FSR) as a key document underpinning its planned progression towards Financial Sustainability. This report provides an update on the implementation of the Action Plan included in the FSR.

### RECOMMENDATION

*That Council receive and note this report outlining the implementation of the Action Plan contained in the Financial Sustainability Roadmap.*

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### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The adopted draft Long Term Financial Plan 2025-35 identifies an average \$5 million deficit in each financial year, the need to borrow funds to fund operations from 2028/29 and a projected level of external borrowings of \$73 million at the end of the 10 year period.

The development and implementation of a Financial Sustainability Roadmap is critical to ensure Council can operate sustainability in the future.

### POLICY & LEGISLATION

*Local Government Act 1993.*

### REPORT

#### 1. Background

In August 2025, Council resolved to adopt the Financial Sustainability Roadmap. The Financial Sustainability Roadmap (FSR) was developed to provide clear and transparent actions to address the financial sustainability of Council and included an Action Plan to be implemented across the four years of the roadmap.

One of the actions contained in the FSR Action Plan was the provision of a quarterly report to Council, to provide an update of the progress of actions identified in the FSR.

#### 2. Financial Sustainability Committee

The Financial Sustainability Committee met on 9 March 2026. This meeting provided an opportunity to review actions completed to date and plan for the next quarter actions.

#### 3. Action Plan Progress Update

A large number of key items from the Action Plan have commenced or been completed in the first quarter and continue in the Second Quarter.

They include:

- Commenced development and implementation of a rolling schedule of service reviews;
- An action plan developed and adopted based on 2024 Customer Satisfaction Survey;
- Concluded consultation on the Organisation Structure Review and commenced implementation;
- Recruitment of Commercial Property position;
- Sourcing Business Improvement Officers to progress Procurement and Contract Management review;
- Community Engagement Platform implemented;
- Line-by-line budget management and review;

- Employee Leave Liabilities – risk assessment completed and leave management process underway;
- Review fund allocation across external restricted reserves;
- Asset AI being implemented to monitor road condition;
- Review to commence on transport asset maintenance program;
- Deferred Maintenance Quantification. Enhanced understanding through the 24/25 Report on Infrastructure Assets;
- Asset backlog identified;
- Position Paper on Grants Management completed with implementation post implementation of the Council Structure;
- Decision made on Crago Stage 2;
- Committee meet to oversee roadmap implementation and performance; and
- Prepare and present Special Rate Variation proposal.

Actions to date have resulted in material financial savings, most significantly \$1.5 million per year as a result of Crago Mill Stage 2 cessation.

Updated Long-Term Financial Plan to be table at the March 2026 Ordinary Meeting of Council

Progression of community consultation with respect to a Special Rate Variation was deferred at the 12 November 2025 Extra-Ordinary Council Meeting.

Council officers continue to focus on the action items which will lead to increased non-rate income and improved internal efficiencies with respect to service delivery, organisation structure and internal processes.

**Attachment A** provides a full update of FSR Action Items to date.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

CSP Theme	Our Civic Leadership (CL)
CSP Strategy Objective	Council is an effective, responsible, and innovative organisation.
Strategies	CL.1: Council resources, practices and processes are undertaken in a manner that meets legislative requirements.
Delivery Program Action	CL.1.5: Council Financial Sustainability Improvement Strategy to ensure improvement in the short and long term

**ATTACHMENTS:** A. Financial Sustainability Roadmap - Qtr 2 Update [⇒](#)

## 6.9 LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2025-35 - UPDATE MARCH 2026

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### SUMMARY

This report provides an update to Council's Long Term Financial Plan 2025-35 to account for resolutions of Council with respect to the discontinuation of Crago Mill Precinct Project – Stage 2 and the inclusion of measures outlined in the Financial Sustainability Roadmap adopted by Council in August 2025.

### RECOMMENDATION

*That Council:*

1. *Endorse the updated the 'Long-Term Financial Plan 2025-35 Update March 2026' to be placed on public exhibition for 28 days for public comment and if no submissions are received, the policy be adopted.*
  2. *Notes the improvement in Council's estimated operating deficit in each of the financial years and improved cash position.*
- 

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This report provides an update to Council's Long Term Financial Plan 2025-35 to account for resolutions of Council with respect to the discontinuation of Crago Mill Precinct Project – Stage 2 and the inclusion of measures outlined in the Financial Sustainability Roadmap adopted by Council in August 2025. The result is improved operating results and cashflow.

### POLICY & LEGISLATION

*Local Government Act 1993.*

### REPORT

#### 1. Background

Council identified that it has a Financial Sustainability challenge and has been looking at a number of measures and actions to improve its financial sustainability.

The 2025-35 Long Term Financial Plan adopted by Council in June 2025, showed an average \$5 million deficit in each financial year across the planning horizon to financial year 2034/35. This plan also highlighted the need to borrow money to fund operations from 2028/29.

Since July 2025, Council have been working on the number of measures and options have been considered to address the financial sustainability of council. Two measures that were undertaken include:

- A review of Stage 2 of the Crago Mill Precinct project
- Development and Implementation of a Financial Sustainability Roadmap

#### 2. Measures adopted by Council

##### *Financial Sustainability Roadmap*

A draft Financial Sustainability Roadmap was presented to Council at its June 2025 meeting. Following this meeting the Financial Sustainability Roadmap was placed on Public Exhibition for 28 days. Following consideration of community submissions, the document was reviewed and updated.

The Financial Sustainability Roadmap was presented to the 28 August 2025 Council meeting '6.7 Council's Financial Future – Financial Sustainability Roadmap'. The Financial Sustainability Roadmap was adopted by Council at this meeting.

##### *Crago Mill Stage 2 Review*

In line with the Financial Sustainability Roadmap, Council completed a review of Stage 2 Crago Mill Precinct Project, to assess whether to proceed with Stage 2 of the project.

This review was presented to Council on 25 September 2025, Item '6.12 Crago Mill Stage 2 Review.'

The following was resolved at the September 2025 meeting with respect to the Crago Mill Stage 2 Review.

**RESOLVED that Council:**

- 1. To discontinue the full completion of Stage 2 of the Crago Mill Precinct Project as currently endorsed, primarily not to proceed with redevelopment of the historic Crago Mill building and building new premises, due to the impact on the Council's current financial position.**
- 2. To demolish the existing administration building as completed in Stage 2 of the current project plan due to the cost of the repairs that would be required to the building to meet current occupation standards.**
- 3. To design and construct the landscaping of the open space as shown on the site plan in ways that enhance environmental and social outcomes. This includes allocation of up to \$500,000 to undertake landscape treatments including the construction of paths, dark sky compliant lighting, seating, fencing and planting schemes which reduce the reliance on irrigation (post establishment), fertiliser, enhance biodiversity and promote flora suitable to Yass's climate and where possible exhibit flora of the region.**
- 4. To allocate up to \$50,000 to construct an appropriate fence around the site for the Historic Crago Mill Building. This may involve environmental and heritage considerations.**
- 5. That the structural assessment and design work related to the Historic Crago Mill Building progresses, allocating \$400,000 for this work.**
- 6. That a report progresses to Council if grant/beneficiary funding sources to undertake further work to the Historic Crago Mill Building become available.**
- 7. Council staff to investigate the feasibility of subdividing the proposed land area identified for the new commercial development, to potentially sell this site.**
- 8. Allocate minimum of 2 years of maintenance funding for the landscaping works.**

### **3. Updated Long term Financial Plan 2035-26**

An updated 'Long Term Financial Plan 2025-35' has been prepared (**Attachment A**). The updated Long Term Financial Plan 2025-35:

- Has the resolution with respect to Crago Mill Stage 2 applied;
- The measures from the Financial Sustainability roadmap; and
- Updated the 2024-25 estimates with 2024-25 actuals.

The outcome of these updates to the Long term Financial Plan '*Long Term Financial Plan 2025-35 Update March 2026*' shows an average deficit of \$2.5 million in each year from 2026-27 across the planning horizon. This is an improvement on the current LTFP which has an average deficit of \$5 million per year.

Notably, Council's cash position improves across the 10-year planning horizon, minimising the need to borrow funds to operate. In the current Long Term Financial 2025-35 unrestricted funds were negative and above the level of Internal restricted funds from the 2027-28 year. The updated Long Term Financial Plan it is showing a healthier positive balance of unrestricted funds across most financial years.

## **STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

CSP Theme

Our Civic Leadership (CL)

CSP Strategy Objective	Council is an effective, responsible, and innovative organisation.
Strategies	CL.1: Council resources, practices and processes are undertaken in a manner that meets legislative requirements.
Delivery Program Action	CL.1.4: Manage Councils systems, processes and projects in a sustainable way that maximises value for money for ratepayers.

**ATTACHMENTS:** A. Draft - Long Term Financial Plan 2025-35 Update March 2026 [⇒](#)

## 6.10 CRAGO MILL PRECINCT BORROWINGS

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### SUMMARY

To provide advice of the bi-annual review of the Crago Mill loan facility with Westpac Banking Corporation.

### RECOMMENDATION

*That:*

1. Council notes that the bi-annual review of the Westpac Loan facility has been completed.
2. The Mayor and Chief Executive Officer be authorised to execute the updated Business Finance Agreement with Westpac reducing the limit from \$50 million to \$41 million.
3. A report will be provided to a future Council meeting to determine any extension to the interest only period, if offered by Westpac.

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### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council's acceptance of the updated Business Finance Agreement, following the bi-annual review which resulted in reducing the limit of the facility from \$50 million to \$41 million.

The Agreement takes into consideration the resolution in respect to the Crago Mill Stage 2 Review at the ordinary council meeting of 25 September 2025 to "discontinue the full completion of Stage 2 of the Crago Mill Precinct Project as currently endorsed, primarily not to proceed with redevelopment of the historic Crago Mill building and building new premises, due to the impact on the Council's current financial position." The resolution also included a number of other workstreams for the site, including demolition of the existing administration building.

### POLICY & LEGISLATION

*Local Government Act 1993*

### REPORT

#### 1. Annual Review

Westpac Bank have undertaken their bi-annual review of the Crago Mill loan facility (Business Finance Agreement). To assist in this review the following documents were provided by Council:

- Audited copy of 2025 Financial Statements
- Monthly Financial Management Report as presented to the December Council meeting including the capital expenditure attachments and the most recent at the time Crago Mill CMP cashflow
- Update on the Financial Sustainability Roadmap
- Update on the sale of any assets
- Update on Crago Mill Development Stage 1
- Update on the status of Crago Mill Development Stage 2
- Confirmation of requirements of the amount required to complete demolition, stabilisation of Crago Mill, fencing, landscaping etc.

The review was completed in early February, and the key outcome was the limit of the Bank Bill Business Loan be reduced to \$41 million.

An updated Business Finance Agreement has been prepared, received 9 March 2026, ready for signing. To sign the agreement, it requires a resolution of Council to use the Council Common Seal to be affixed,

along with the date of the resolution of Council, and for the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer to sign the agreement.

The balance of the loan facility as at 28 February 2026 is \$32,472,853.46.

**2. Interest only loan period – potential extension**

Council staff are currently working with Westpac to explore opportunities to extend the interest only period for a further 12 months.

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

CSP Theme	Our Civic Leadership (CL)
CSP Strategy Objective	Council is an effective, responsible, and innovative organisation.
Strategies	CL.1: Council resources, practices and processes are undertaken in a manner that meets legislative requirements.
Delivery Program Action	CL.1.5: Council Financial Sustainability Improvement Strategy to ensure improvement in the short and long term

**ATTACHMENTS:** Nil

## 6.11 MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

### SUMMARY

This monthly financial report provides information about Council's financial position at the end of February 2026 with the full year and year-to-date budgets reflecting the budgets adopted as part of the Second Quarter Budget Review (QBR2). The report also includes a variance analysis against the full-year and budget year to date. An Investment and Borrowing Report is prepared and is presented to Council as a separate report.

### RECOMMENDATION

*That the Monthly Financial Report for February 2026 be noted.*

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This report shows the Council's year-to-date financial position for the 2025-26 Financial Year, as at the end of the reporting month.

### POLICY & LEGISLATION

*Local Government Act 1993.*

### REPORT

#### 1. Consolidated Income Statement

##### Operating Result from Continuing Operations:

This result includes capital grants and contributions. The Actual Year to Date (YTD) result is a \$9.5M surplus and is approximately \$1.8M less than the YTD budget.

##### Net Operating Result Before Capital Grants and Contributions:

This result excludes capital grants and contributions. The Actual YTD result is a \$5.0M surplus and is \$0.4M greater (favourable) when compared to the YTD budgeted surplus.

Results are shown with the recognition of Rates and Annual Charges revenue for the full year. Calculating this revenue on a pro-rata basis to the end of February, the results would show a Net Operating Result Before Capital Grants and Contributions as a deficit of \$3.0M.



#### February 2026 Report

Income Statement	QBR2 25-26			QBR2 YTD x Actuals		QBR2 Full Year x Actuals	
	Full Year	YTD	Actual 25-26	\$	%	\$	%
<b>Consolidated</b>							
<b>Income from continuing operations</b>	-56,981,301	-43,726,034	-35,949,135	7,776,899	-17.8%	21,032,166	-36.9%
Rates and Annual charges	-24,148,021	-24,235,621	-24,219,772	15,849	-0.1%	-71,751	0.3%
User charges and fees	-6,332,946	-4,440,219	-3,492,425	947,795	-21.3%	2,840,522	-44.9%
Other revenues	-463,690	-321,789	-235,592	86,197	-26.8%	228,099	-49.2%
Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	-12,808,806	-6,624,272	-1,960,276	4,663,996	-70.4%	10,848,530	-84.7%
Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	-10,157,223	-6,927,723	-4,552,799	2,374,924	-34.3%	5,604,424	-55.2%
Interest and investment income	-1,318,989	-879,326	-735,518	143,808	-16.4%	583,470	-44.2%
Other income	-751,627	-297,085	-298,963	-1,879	0.6%	452,664	-60.2%
Net gain/loss from the disposal of assets	-1,000,000	0	-453,791	-453,791		546,209	-54.6%
<b>Expenses from continuing operations</b>	48,047,222	32,234,190	26,356,210	-5,877,980	-18.2%	-21,691,012	-45.1%
Employee benefits and on-costs	15,238,190	9,722,593	9,071,254	-651,339	-6.7%	-6,166,936	-40.5%
Materials and services	18,649,820	13,300,816	8,294,216	-5,006,600	-37.6%	-10,355,604	-55.5%
Borrowing costs	2,375,102	1,509,616	1,315,050	-194,566	-12.9%	-1,060,052	-44.6%
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	10,812,132	7,208,088	7,208,088		0.0%	-3,604,044	-33.3%
Other Expenses	971,977	493,077	467,601	-25,476	-5.2%	-504,376	-51.9%
<b>Operating result from continuing operations</b>	<b>-8,934,080</b>	<b>-11,491,845</b>	<b>-9,592,926</b>	<b>1,898,919</b>	<b>-16.5%</b>	<b>-658,846</b>	<b>7.4%</b>
<b>Net Operating Result Before Capital Grants and Contributions</b>	<b>1,223,143</b>	<b>-4,564,122</b>	<b>-5,040,127</b>	<b>-476,005</b>	<b>10.4%</b>	<b>-6,263,270</b>	<b>-512.1%</b>

All figures in this table are shown as they appear in the council's management accounting system. **Income is shown as negative**, and **expenses are shown as positive** numbers. The green figures indicate a favourable variance against the budget, while the red figures indicate an unfavourable variance against the budget. Note that favourable and unfavourable variances do not mean a change to the budget is required at this stage.

## 2. Income Statement Variance Analysis

### 2.1 Income

Operating Grants and Contributions is \$4.6M below the YTD budget primarily due to \$3.8M Transport grants budgeted not yet received or recognised.

Capital Grants and Contributions is \$2.3M lower than the YTD budget and is primarily due to Transport grants and specific purpose grants for the water supply network budgeted not yet received or recognised offset by a higher level of s64 Water Supply and Sewer Network contributions being \$1.9M higher than Budget.

Net gain/loss from disposal of assets is \$0.4M above the YTD budget due mainly to the sale of plant and equipment, including vehicles. Noting though, the actuals only include the proceeds from the sale of council's plant and equipment; the calculation for the actual gain/loss will be updated as part of the preparation of Council's financial statements.

### 2.2 Expenses

Employee benefits and on-costs are \$0.6M (\$0.4M in salaries and wages) below the YTD budget primarily due to timing of recruitment.

Materials and Services are \$5.0M below YTD budget due to timing of expenses:

- \$1.3M for Property rental and equipment hire
- \$1.0M for Contractors
- \$0.4M Raw materials and consumables
- \$0.3M for Repair and maintenance
- \$0.3M for Consultants
- \$0.2M for Electricity and Heating

Borrowing Costs are \$0.2M below the YTD budget due to the timing of drawdowns of loans compared to the budgeted expectations.

### 3. Income Statements for each fund

The following Income Statements are for each Council Fund.

#### General Fund



February 2026 Report							
Income Statement							
General fund	QBR2 25-26	QBR2 25-26	Actual 25-26	QBR2 YTD x Actuals		QBR2 Full Year x Actuals	
	Full Year	YTD		\$	%	\$	%
<b>Income from continuing operations</b>	<b>-41,876,432</b>	<b>-31,300,464</b>	<b>-24,225,972</b>	<b>7,074,492</b>	<b>-22.6%</b>	<b>17,650,460</b>	<b>-42.1%</b>
Rates and Annual charges	-16,552,996	-16,552,996	-16,358,239	194,757	-1.2%	194,757	-1.2%
User charges and fees	-3,452,124	-2,449,104	-2,544,077	-94,973	3.9%	908,048	-26.3%
Other revenues	-463,690	-321,789	-235,530	86,259	-26.8%	228,160	-49.2%
Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	-12,808,806	-6,624,272	-1,960,276	4,663,996	-70.4%	10,848,530	-84.7%
Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	-5,974,277	-4,477,277	-1,639,578	2,837,699	-63.4%	4,334,699	-72.6%
Interest and investment income	-884,911	-589,941	-735,518	-145,578	24.7%	149,393	-16.9%
Other income	-739,627	-285,085	-298,963	-13,879	4.9%	440,664	-59.6%
Net gain/loss from the disposal of assets	-1,000,000	0	-453,791	-453,791		546,209	-54.6%
<b>Expenses from continuing operations</b>	<b>36,089,694</b>	<b>24,846,924</b>	<b>19,580,286</b>	<b>-5,266,638</b>	<b>-21.2%</b>	<b>-16,509,408</b>	<b>-45.7%</b>
Employee benefits and on-costs	12,555,825	7,944,823	7,239,561	-705,262	-8.9%	-5,316,264	-42.3%
Materials and services	12,935,384	10,083,634	5,603,907	-4,479,726	-44.4%	-7,331,477	-56.7%
Borrowing costs	1,800,000	1,107,718	1,051,544	-56,174	-5.1%	-748,456	-41.6%
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	7,826,508	5,217,672	5,217,672		0.0%	-2,608,836	-33.3%
Other Expenses	971,977	493,077	467,601	-25,476	-5.2%	-504,376	-51.9%
<b>Operating result from continuing operations</b>	<b>-5,786,738</b>	<b>-6,453,540</b>	<b>-4,645,685</b>	<b>1,807,855</b>	<b>-28.0%</b>	<b>1,141,052</b>	<b>-19.7%</b>
<b>Net Operating Result Before Capital Grants and Contributions</b>	<b>187,539</b>	<b>-1,976,263</b>	<b>-3,006,107</b>	<b>-1,029,844</b>	<b>52.1%</b>	<b>-3,193,647</b>	<b>-1702.9%</b>

#### Sewer Fund



February 2026 Report							
Income Statement							
Sewer	QBR2 25-26	QBR2 25-26	Actual 25-26	QBR2 YTD x Actuals		QBR2 Full Year x Actuals	
	Full Year	YTD		\$	%	\$	%
<b>Income from continuing operations</b>	<b>-3,890,164</b>	<b>-3,565,539</b>	<b>-4,309,333</b>	<b>-743,794</b>	<b>20.9%</b>	<b>-419,169</b>	<b>10.8%</b>
Rates and Annual charges	-2,985,956	-3,025,556	-3,002,030	23,526	-0.8%	-16,074	0.5%
User charges and fees	-144,000	-96,000	-172,169	-76,169	79.3%	-28,169	19.6%
Other revenues	0	0	0				
Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	0	0	0				
Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	-561,532	-311,532	-1,135,134	-823,602	264.4%	-573,602	102.1%
Interest and investment income	-198,676	-132,450	0	132,450	-100.0%	198,676	-100.0%
Other income	0	0	0				
Net gain/loss from the disposal of assets	0	0	0				
<b>Expenses from continuing operations</b>	<b>3,001,503</b>	<b>1,871,264</b>	<b>1,398,576</b>	<b>-472,688</b>	<b>-25.3%</b>	<b>-1,602,927</b>	<b>-53.4%</b>
Employee benefits and on-costs	663,942	439,559	126,298	-313,261	-71.3%	-537,644	-81.0%
Materials and services	1,266,239	703,937	574,662	-129,274	-18.4%	-691,577	-54.6%
Borrowing costs	143,770	109,400	79,247	-30,153	-27.6%	-64,523	-44.9%
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	927,552	618,368	618,368		0.0%	-309,184	-33.3%
Other Expenses	0	0	0				
<b>Operating result from continuing operations</b>	<b>-888,661</b>	<b>-1,694,275</b>	<b>-2,910,757</b>	<b>-1,216,482</b>	<b>71.8%</b>	<b>-2,022,097</b>	<b>227.5%</b>
<b>Net Operating Result Before Capital Grants and Contributions</b>	<b>-327,129</b>	<b>-1,382,743</b>	<b>-1,775,623</b>	<b>-392,880</b>	<b>28.4%</b>	<b>-1,448,494</b>	<b>442.8%</b>

Water Fund



February 2026 Report

Income Statement				QBR2 YTD x Actuals		QBR2 Full Year x Actuals	
Water	QBR2 25-26	QBR2 25-26	Actual 25-26	\$	%	\$	%
	Full Year	YTD					
<b>Income from continuing operations</b>	<b>-8,878,706</b>	<b>-6,524,032</b>	<b>-4,963,846</b>	<b>1,560,186</b>	<b>-23.9%</b>	<b>3,914,860</b>	<b>-44.1%</b>
Rates and Annual charges	-2,273,068	-2,321,068	-2,409,518	-88,450	3.8%	-136,450	6.0%
User charges and fees	-2,736,822	-1,895,115	-776,179	1,118,936	-59.0%	1,960,643	-71.6%
Other revenues	0	0	-62	-62		-62	
Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	0	0	0				
Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	-3,621,414	-2,138,914	-1,778,087	360,827	-16.9%	1,843,327	-50.9%
Interest and investment income	-235,402	-156,935	0	156,935	-100.0%	235,402	-100.0%
Other income	-12,000	-12,000	0	12,000	-100.0%	12,000	-100.0%
Net gain/loss from the disposal of assets	0	0	0				
<b>Expenses from continuing operations</b>	<b>5,333,793</b>	<b>3,307,480</b>	<b>2,856,282</b>	<b>-451,197</b>	<b>-13.6%</b>	<b>-2,477,510</b>	<b>-46.4%</b>
Employee benefits and on-costs	927,327	621,341	773,029	151,688	24.4%	-154,298	-16.6%
Materials and services	2,259,349	1,249,786	755,139	-494,646	-39.6%	-1,504,210	-66.6%
Borrowing costs	431,332	292,497	184,258	-108,239	-37.0%	-247,074	-57.3%
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	1,715,784	1,143,856	1,143,856		0.0%	-571,928	-33.3%
Other Expenses	0	0	0				
<b>Operating result from continuing operations</b>	<b>-3,544,913</b>	<b>-3,216,552</b>	<b>-2,107,564</b>	<b>1,108,988</b>	<b>-34.5%</b>	<b>1,437,349</b>	<b>-40.5%</b>
<b>Net Operating Result Before Capital Grants and Contributions</b>	<b>76,501</b>	<b>-1,077,638</b>	<b>-329,477</b>	<b>748,162</b>	<b>-69.4%</b>	<b>-405,977</b>	<b>-530.7%</b>

Stormwater Management



February 2026 Report

Income Statement				QBR2 YTD x Actuals		QBR2 Full Year x Actuals	
Stormwater Management	QBR2 25-26	QBR2 25-26	Actual 25-26	\$	%	\$	%
	Full Year	YTD					
<b>Income from continuing operations</b>	<b>-60,000</b>	<b>-60,000</b>	<b>-59,461</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>-0.9%</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>-0.9%</b>
Rates and Annual charges	-60,000	-60,000	-59,461	539	-0.9%	539	-0.9%
User charges and fees	0	0	0				
Other revenues	0	0	0				
Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	0	0	0				
Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	0	0	0				
Interest and investment income	0	0	0				
Other income	0	0	0				
Net gain/loss from the disposal of assets	0	0	0				
<b>Expenses from continuing operations</b>	<b>505,018</b>	<b>330,957</b>	<b>166,892</b>	<b>-164,064</b>	<b>-49.6%</b>	<b>-338,126</b>	<b>-67.0%</b>
Employee benefits and on-costs	185,706	124,885	0	-124,885	-100.0%	-185,706	-100.0%
Materials and services	85,204	50,000	10,820	-39,180	-78.4%	-74,384	-87.3%
Borrowing costs	0	0	0				
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	234,108	156,072	156,072		0.0%	-78,036	-33.3%
Other Expenses	0	0	0				
<b>Operating result from continuing operations</b>	<b>445,018</b>	<b>270,957</b>	<b>107,431</b>	<b>-163,526</b>	<b>-60.4%</b>	<b>-337,587</b>	<b>-75.9%</b>
<b>Net Operating Result Before Capital Grants and Contributions</b>	<b>445,018</b>	<b>270,957</b>	<b>107,431</b>	<b>-163,526</b>	<b>-60.4%</b>	<b>-337,587</b>	<b>-75.9%</b>

Domestic Waste



February 2026 Report

Income Statement				QBR2 YTD x Actuals		QBR2 Full Year x Actuals	
	QBR2 25-26 Full Year	QBR2 25-26 YTD	Actual 25-26	\$	%	\$	%
Domestic waste management							
<b>Income from continuing operations</b>	<b>-2,276,000</b>	<b>-2,276,000</b>	<b>-2,390,523</b>	<b>-114,524</b>	<b>5.0%</b>	<b>-114,524</b>	<b>5.0%</b>
Rates and Annual charges	-2,276,000	-2,276,000	-2,390,523	-114,524	5.0%	-114,524	5.0%
User charges and fees	0	0	0				
Other revenues	0	0	0				
Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	0	0	0				
Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	0	0	0				
Interest and investment income	0	0	0				
Other income	0	0	0				
Net gain/loss from the disposal of assets	0	0	0				
<b>Expenses from continuing operations</b>	<b>3,117,214</b>	<b>1,877,566</b>	<b>2,354,173</b>	<b>476,607</b>	<b>25.4%</b>	<b>-763,041</b>	<b>-24.5%</b>
Employee benefits and on-costs	905,390	591,985	932,366	340,380	57.5%	26,976	3.0%
Materials and services	2,103,644	1,213,460	1,349,687	136,227	11.2%	-753,957	-35.8%
Borrowing costs	0	0	0				
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	108,180	72,120	72,120		0.0%	-36,060	-33.3%
Other Expenses	0	0	0				
<b>Operating result from continuing operations</b>	<b>841,214</b>	<b>-398,434</b>	<b>-36,350</b>	<b>362,084</b>	<b>-90.9%</b>	<b>-877,564</b>	<b>-104.3%</b>
<b>Net Operating Result Before Capital Grants and Contributions</b>	<b>841,214</b>	<b>-398,434</b>	<b>-36,350</b>	<b>362,084</b>	<b>-90.9%</b>	<b>-877,564</b>	<b>-104.3%</b>

4. Statement of Financial Position

The Council's consolidated statement of financial position as at 28 February 2026 shows the following;

- total cash and cash equivalents of \$23.0M,
- investments of \$19.2M, and
- total borrowings of \$44.0M (includes the \$32.4M loan for the Crago Mill Precinct project).

February 2026 Report – Consolidated



February 2026 Report

Statement of Financial Position	Consolidated
<b>Asset</b>	<b>759,858,000</b>
<b>Current assets</b>	<b>57,215,758</b>
Cash and cash equivalents	23,041,292
Investments	19,200,000
Receivables	11,007,306
Contract assets and Contract cost assets	3,852,042
Inventories	115,118
<b>Non-current assets</b>	<b>702,642,242</b>
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	695,642,242
<i>Capital work in progress</i>	56,423,567
<i>Plant and equipment</i>	3,838,618
<i>Land</i>	73,130,578
<i>Infrastructure</i>	560,615,996
<i>Other assets</i>	1,633,482
Investment properties	7,000,000
<b>Liabilities</b>	<b>-56,688,248</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>	<b>-10,193,403</b>
Payables	-2,714,379
Borrowings	-153,754
Contract Liabilities	-4,886,503
Employee benefit provisions	-2,438,767
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>	<b>-46,494,845</b>
Borrowings	-43,776,298
Employee benefit provisions	-298,326
Provisions	-2,420,221
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>703,169,752</b>
<b>Equity</b>	<b>-703,169,752</b>
Accumulated surplus	-344,598,012
IPPE revaluation reserve	-358,571,740

**5. Reserves Balances**

The reserves balance report shows the current balance for each of the council’s reserves.

Externally restricted reserves are those that are only available for specific use by the Council due to a restriction placed by legislation or third-party contractual agreement. Internally restricted reserves are internally allocated by the resolution or policy of the elected Council.

Total cash and investments totalled \$42.2M at the end of February 2026. Total restricted (external and internal) reserves totalled \$40.2M at the end of February. The Crago Mill Reserve was originally established to separately identify and report excess funds drawn down from the loan facility. These excess funds have now been fully utilised.

Total of Externally restricted, Crago Mill and internally restricted reserves is showing less than the level of cash on hand.

<b>Reserve</b>	<b>\$M</b>
Externally restricted funds	\$34.8*
Crago Mill Reserve	\$0
Internally Restricted funds	\$5.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$40.2</b>

\*External restricted funds include the recognition of \$2.5M advanced annual charges for Sewer, Domestic Waste and Water. Calculating this revenue on a pro-rata basis to the end of February, the results would show \$32.3M external restricted funds and \$37.7M total Reserve, which is within the \$42.2M total cash and investments.

February 2026 Report Consolidated



February 2026 Report

Reserves balance report	Balance	
	Jun-25	Feb-26
<b>External restrictions</b>	<b>29,999,746</b>	<b>34,807,593</b>
Domestic waste management	1,932,396	2,038,866
S64 Developer contributions – sewer fund	3,515,905	4,651,039
S64 Developer contributions – water fund	8,496,429	10,274,516
S7.11 Developer contributions – general	1,303,287	1,304,694
S7.12 Developer contributions – general	4,988,006	3,086,816
Sewer fund	4,793,470	6,413,959
Specific purpose unexpended grants – general fund	2,155,427	4,679,959
Stormwater Management	18,063	66,704
Water Fund	2,796,763	2,291,040
<b>Crago Mill Reserve</b>	<b>-2,552,791</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Internal restrictions</b>	<b>7,329,045</b>	<b>5,414,088</b>
Binalong pool	21,475	21,475
Carry over works	0	0
Comur street rehabilitation	20,362	20,362
Electricity Savings Reserve	96,720	96,720
Employees leave entitlement	1,034,756	1,033,223
Land and assets	1,452,451	1,452,451
Murrumbateman Library School Ground	123,179	123,179
Plant and vehicle replacement	1,174,426	1,413,351
Quarry rehabilitation	766,203	766,203
Roads	44,818	44,818
Victoria Park	201,723	298,225
Financial Assistance Grant (received in advance)	2,248,851	0
Local Government Elections	57,934	57,934
Wind Farms Community Enhancement Fund	86,147	86,147
<b>External + Internal restriction + Crago Mill</b>	<b>37,328,791</b>	<b>40,221,682</b>
<b>Total cash, cash equivalents and investments</b>	<b>37,017,000</b>	<b>42,241,292</b>
<b>Unrestricted and unallocated cash, cash equivalents and investments</b>	<b>-311,791</b>	<b>2,019,610</b>
<b>External restriction + Crago Mill Reserve</b>	<b>27,446,955</b>	<b>34,807,593</b>
<b>Total cash, cash equivalents and investments less External restriction + Crago Mill Reserve</b>	<b>9,570,045</b>	<b>7,433,698</b>

## 6. Outstanding Debts – Rates

As of early March, the balance for rates in arrears is \$3.0M, an improvement of \$0.5M to the arrears reported in February), with the details outlined below.

Years			
Current - 2026	Unpaid - 2025	Unpaid - 2024	Unpaid before 2023
1,253,659.32	1,137,492.42	385,941.98	268,060.22

Analysing the Rates arrears:

- Current – 2026 level of arrears relates to the first three instalments for the period of Jul 25 – Feb 2026.
- Our analysis of the available data from 2021, show that there are 24 rate payers who have not paid any rates from this date. The total amount due for these 24 rate payers for the period 2021-current is \$261,658.
  - The average aggregate arrears balance being \$10,900
  - The highest aggregate arrears balance being \$22,459
  - The lowest aggregate arrears balance being \$4,970
  - The total valuation of arrears aged beyond the last five financial years 2021 and prior, currently stands at \$58,104 for the same 24 rate payers

Steps are being taken to address the level of arrears:

- Continued sending of Overdue/reminder notices to be sent following respective instalment deadlines. (e.g. the third instalment overdue notices are planned to be sent during March 2026)
- Rates Instalment notices sent each quarter. Should there be any arrears, these are highlighted.

## 7. Capital Expenditure

The total capital expenditure (CAPEX) budgeted for the year is \$41.3M (Attachment A). The year-to-date (YTD) budget for February 2026 was \$33.9M, and actual expenditure was \$18.9M. The variation is due to timing of the capital works.

## 8. Crago Mill Progress Report

The latest Cashflow Report for the Crago Mill Project is at **Attachment B**.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

CSP Theme	Our Civic Leadership (CL)
CSP Strategy Objective	Council is an effective, responsible, and innovative organisation.
Strategies	CL.1: Council resources, practices and processes are undertaken in a manner that meets legislative requirements.
Delivery Program Action	CL.1.5: Council Financial Sustainability Improvement Strategy to ensure improvement in the short and long term

- ATTACHMENTS:**
- A. Capital Expenditure Report to 28 February 2026 [⇒](#)
  - B. Crago Mill Progress Report (CMP) [⇒](#)

## 6.12 INVESTMENT AND BORROWING REPORT

### SUMMARY

In accordance with clause 212 *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005*, this report provides a summary of Council's investments for the period 1 to 28 February 2026. In accordance with paragraph (1) (b), it can be certified that the investments listed have been made in accordance with the Act, the Regulations and Council's Investment Policy.

### RECOMMENDATION

*That the Investment & Borrowings Reports, covering the period 1 to 28 February 2026 be noted.*

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The investment portfolio assists with Council's cash flow and funding of projects identified in the Operational Plan and is accordance with Council's Investment Policy.

### POLICY & LEGISLATION

- Section 625 *Local Government Act 1993*
- Clause 212 *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005*
- Council's Investment Policy

### REPORT

#### 1. Council Loans

Council has five loans with a balance of \$44.0M owing on 28 February 2026, with details outlined in Table A.

**Table A – Council Loans**

General Loan	Principal as at	Interest rate	Comment
*Sewer - CBA Loan for Sewer Infrastructure	2,816,089.18	4.82%	20 years, repaid in 2035/36
*Water - NAB Westpac Dam Wall	7,413,681.53	5.36%	20 years amortisation, 10 years term Aug 2032
*Water - Yass to Murrumbateman water supply (Tcorp)	856,658.61	2.55%	10 years, full repaid in 2029
*Water main and pump station upgrades (Tcorp)	468,071.33	2.55%	10 years, full repaid in 2029
Crago Mill funding facility (Westpac)	32,472,853.46	5.80%	20 years, full repaid 2043 - Variable rate (2.17%+BBSR)
<b>Total balance as at 28/02/2026</b>	<b>44,027,354.11</b>		
*Interest Rates are fixed			

-

## 2. Summary of movements in Council Investments

Council Cash, Cash Equivalent, and Term Deposit Investments at 28 February 2026 are detailed in Table B.

**Table B – Council Working Accounts and Investments**

Investment Type	Acc/Deal	Market Value \$	Credit rating	Date Lodged	Maturity date	Term (Days)	Rate
<b>Cash Working Accounts</b>	<b>Ref.</b>						
NAB Working Account1	082-939 51	17,703,260.54	A1+/AA-	n/a	n/a	at call	RBA Cash Rate
Tcorp Strategic Cash Facility	778	5,721,942.05	AAA	n/a	n/a	3 day call	3.66%
		<b>23,425,202.59</b>					
<b>Term Deposits &lt; 12 Months</b>							
Investment Type	Acc/Deal	Market Value \$	Credit rating	Date Lodged	Maturity date	Term (Days)	Rate
NAB	10989493	1,000,000.00	A1+	31/10/25	02/03/26	122	4.15%
NAB	10977607	1,000,000.00	A1+	04/09/25	03/03/26	180	4.15%
NAB	10977609	1,000,000.00	A1+	04/09/25	03/03/26	180	4.15%
Credit Union Australia	CN096802	1,000,000.00	A2	13/10/25	13/04/26	182	4.28%
Heartland Bank	CN095281	1,000,000.00	A-3/BBB	30/07/25	27/04/26	271	4.20%
Bank of Queensland	CN097497	1,000,000.00	A2	12/11/25	13/05/26	182	4.25%
NAB	10974278	1,000,000.00	A1+	18/08/25	15/05/26	270	4.10%
Heartland Bank	CN095881	1,000,000.00	A-3/BBB	28/08/25	25/05/26	270	4.20%
NAB	10960550	1,000,000.00	A1+	26/05/25	26/05/26	365	4.20%
NAB	10960551	1,000,000.00	A1+	26/05/25	26/05/26	365	4.20%
NAB	10960552	1,000,000.00	A1+	26/05/25	26/05/26	365	4.20%
Bank of Queensland	CN096143	1,000,000.00	A2	08/09/25	05/06/26	193	4.05%
Mystate Bank	CN098058	1,000,000.00	A2/BBB+	08/12/25	09/06/26	183	4.60%
Credit Union Australia	CN096711	1,000,000.00	A2	07/10/25	07/07/26	273	4.28%
Bank of Queensland	CN099384	1,000,000.00	A2	24/02/26	25/08/26	182	4.65%
Heartland Bank	CN095882	1,000,000.00	A-3/BBB	28/08/25	28/08/26	365	4.20%
NAB	10982974	1,200,000.00	A1+	30/09/25	30/09/26	365	4.25%
Mystate Bank	CN098263	1,000,000.00	A2/BBB+	17/12/25	16/09/26	273	4.60%
Heartland Bank	CN098552	1,000,000.00	A-3/BBB	12/01/26	12/01/27	365	4.75%
		<b>19,200,000.00</b>					
<b>Total Short Term</b>		<b>42,625,202.59</b>					

The value of term deposits in February remained at \$19,200,000 with the following movement:

- One term deposit with a value of \$1,000,000 matured and was re-invested with the same Institution.

Yass Valley Council's working account currently has a balance of \$17,703,260.54. Approximately \$9M will be invested in a range of term deposits by the end of March 2026.

The summary of Term deposit Movements is outlined in Table C.

**Table C – Term Deposit Movements**

<b>Term Deposit Movements January to February 2026</b>				<b>\$</b>
Balance as at 31 January 2026			%	19,200,000.00
	<b><i>Term Deposit Reinvested</i></b>			
	<b>Old Ref.</b>	<b>New Ref.</b>		
Bank of Queensland	CN095880	CN099384	4.65%	1,000,000.00
				<b><i>1,000,000.00</i></b>
	<b><i>Term Deposit Matured</i></b>			
				-
	<b><i>New Term Deposit</i></b>			
				-
				-
<b>Balance as at 28 February 2026</b>				<b>19,200,000.00</b>

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

CSP Theme	Our Civic Leadership (CL)
CSP Strategy Objective	Council is an effective, responsible, and innovative organisation.
Strategies	CL.1: Council resources, practices and processes are undertaken in a manner that meets legislative requirements.
Delivery Program Action	CL.1.5: Council Financial Sustainability Improvement Strategy to ensure improvement in the short and long term

**ATTACHMENTS:** Nil

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## 6.13 FINALISATION OF ADDITIONAL EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST - ADVISORY COMMITTEES

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### SUMMARY

Council, at its Meeting of 27 February 2026, proceeded to resolve Committee Membership for the Economic and Development Advisory Committee and the First Nations Advisory Committee (**Resolution 37/2026**). Given there were limited expressions of interest received for the Sport and Open Space Advisory Committee and Access and Age-Friendly Access Committees, Council further resolved to:

- 1. Defer the appointment of members to the Access and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee and Sport and Open Space Advisory Committee until Council identifies key stakeholders and writes to them.**
- 2. Recirculate the offer to nominate for the Access and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee and the Sport and Open Space Advisory Committee once key stakeholders have been identified.**

This report seeks to now finalise the appointment of Committee Members to the Access and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee and Sport and Open Space Advisory Committee.

### RECOMMENDATION

*That Council:*

1. *Appoint the following community members to the Access and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee*
  - *Lauren Jackson Brown*
  - *Andrew McGrath*
  - *Andrew Hennell*
  - *Simon McGrath*
2. *Appoint the following community member to the Sport and Open Space Advisory Committee*
  - *Phil Barnes*
  - *Andrew McGrath*
  - *Annaliese Caston*
  - *Tim Clayton*
  - *Carly Saeedi*
  - *Bronson Sainsbury*

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### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no budget or financial delegation granted with any Advisory Committee. Committee members attend on a voluntary basis, some in person and some online. Councillors attending these Committee meetings are eligible to claim travel expenses as per the Councillor Expense and Facilities Policy, which is included in the Councillor expenses budget.

### POLICY & LEGISLATION

All members of Advisory Committees are subject to the Yass Valley Council Code of Conduct and the requirements to disclose pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests. Each community representative is considered a volunteer of Council and is therefore required to undergo Code of Conduct training prior to their first meeting.

### REPORT

The below table summarises the Advisory Committees this report is seeking to appoint community representatives to:

Advisory Committee	Councillor Representative/s	No. Community Representatives (per ToR's)	Names of Applicants	Responsible Directorate
Access and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee	Cr Flanery Cr Butler (alt)	10 community representatives from diverse demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Andrew McGrath</li> <li>• Andrew Hennell</li> <li>• Simon McGrath</li> <li>• Lauren Jackson Brown</li> </ul>	Corporate and Community
Sport and Open Space Advisory Committee	Cr Flanery Cr Butler (alt)	10 representatives from local sporting groups and user groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Andrew McGrath</li> <li>• Annaliese Caston</li> <li>• Tim Clayton</li> <li>• Carly Saeedi</li> <li>• Bronson Sainsbury</li> <li>• Phil Barnes</li> </ul>	Planning and Environment

As a result of the Resolution provided by Councillors at the 27 February 2026 Council Meeting, the following groups were specifically contacted via email with a link to the Nomination Form and Committee Guidelines:

**Sport and Open Space Advisory Committee targeted approaches:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yass Rotary</li> <li>• Yass Community Garden</li> <li>• Yass Bosson Buddies</li> <li>• Binalong Community Club</li> <li>• Yass Football Club</li> <li>• Mountain Trails Adventure School</li> <li>• Murrumbateman Little Athletics</li> <li>• Yass Magpies Rugby League Junior and Senior</li> <li>• Yass Netball Association</li> <li>• Yass Touch Association</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yass Swimming Club</li> <li>• Yass District Cricket Association</li> <li>• Yass Roos AFL</li> <li>• Yass Rams Rugby Union</li> <li>• Yass Junior Cricket Association</li> <li>• Murrumbateman Tennis Club</li> <li>• Murrumbateman Pony Club</li> <li>• Binalong Brahams Rugby League</li> <li>• Gundaroo Junior Cricket</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

**Access and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee targeted approaches:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yass Valley Aged Care</li> <li>• RSL LifeCare Thomas Eccles Garden</li> <li>• RSL LifeCare Linton Village</li> <li>• Care4all</li> <li>• Yass Apex Units</li> <li>• Valmar Support Services</li> <li>• Yass Aged Care &amp; Community Transport</li> <li>• Flair Community Care</li> <li>• Gunning Community Care</li> <li>• Yass Hospital</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Health Centre</li> <li>• Berinba Public School</li> <li>• Binalong Public School</li> <li>• Bowning Public School</li> <li>• Gundaroo Public School</li> <li>• Mt Carmel</li> <li>• Sutton Public School</li> <li>• Wee Jasper Public School</li> <li>• Yass High School</li> <li>• Yass Public School</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

It is unfortunate that following further contact with community bodies, schools and sporting groups, only a total of 2 additional expressions of interest were received. Therefore, these Committees have not fulfilled a complete complement of membership per their Terms of Reference which enables further appointments to be made if required over the course of the term.

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

CSP Theme	Our Civic Leadership (CL)
CSP Strategy Objective	Council is an effective, responsible, and innovative organisation.
Strategies	CL.2: Governance provides a sound basis for decision making.
Delivery Program Action	CL.2.1: Decisions made in accordance with LG Act and Regulations

- ATTACHMENTS:**
- A. Expression of Interest - Access and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee - Lauren Jackson Brown - **Confidential**
  - B. Expression of Interest - Sport and Open Space Advisory Committee - Phil Barnes - **Confidential**
  - C. Expression of Interest - SOSAC and AAFAC - Andrew McGrath - **Confidential**
  - D. Expression of Interest - Access and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee - Andrew Hennell - **Confidential**
  - E. Expression of Interest - Access and Age-Friendly Advisory Committee - Simon McGrath - **Confidential**
  - F. Expression of Interest - Sport and Open Space Advisory Committee - Annaliese Caston - **Confidential**
  - G. Expression of Interest - Sport and Open Space Advisory Committee - Tim Clayton - **Confidential**
  - H. Expression of Interest - Sport and Open Space Advisory Committee - Carly Saeedi - **Confidential**
  - I. Expression of Interest - Sport and Open Space Advisory Committee - Bronson Sainsbury - **Confidential**

## 6.14 AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION - NATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2025

### SUMMARY

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) is the peak national body representing local councils across Australia. The 2026 National General Assembly (NGA) of ALGA will be held in Canberra between 23 - 25 June 2026. The events commence with the Regional Forum on 23 June 2026. It is proposed that the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, one Councillor and the Chief Executive Officer attend the NGA including the Regional Forum.

### RECOMMENDATION

*That:*

1. *The Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councillor (to be determined) and the Chief Executive Officer (or their delegate) attend the Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly 2026 incorporating the Regional Forum.*
2. *The Mayor is authorised to attend as Council's voting delegate.*

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The 2025-26 Budget has \$83,000 allocated for elected members expenses which covers a broad range of expenses, including conference attendance and training requirements. As at the end of February 2026, \$13,697 has been recorded as expenditure against this budget line.

Costs for attendance are as follows:

- NGA Registration early bird available until 30 April 2026 - \$990/person
- NGA Late Registration - \$1125/person
- Regional Forum or Urban Forum- \$555/person (if only attending the forum)
- Regional Forum or Urban Forum - \$350/person (if also attending the NGA)
- General Assembly Dinner - \$245/person (Thursday 25 June, 2026, 7pm -10pm)
- Day Registrations – Wednesday 24 June 2026 - \$570/person
- Day Registrations – Thursday 25 June 2026 - \$570/person

Given that the NGA will be held in Canberra it is not proposed to book accommodation for this event. In terms of travel, transport to and from the event can be provided via carpooling with the Chief Executive Officer.

### POLICY & LEGISLATION

The NGA is the key national agenda setting forum for local government with hundreds of delegates from across the country connecting to share their united voice to improve outcomes in the sector.

### REPORT

#### 1. Background

At its meeting on 26 February 2026, Council resolved:

***RESOLVED that Council submit the following motions to the Australian Local Government Association for consideration at the 2026 National General Assembly of ALGA:***

- ***Establish a dedicated national fund specifically for the repair, replacement, and upgrade of ageing Olympic-style swimming pools operating as council-managed public assets (Motion 1)***
- ***Increase the Financial Assistance Grants to 1% of Federal Taxation Revenue (Motion 2)***

- **Advocate for Council access to the National Messaging System for targeted emergency alerts (Motion 3)**
- **Restoration of Funding for The Green Army or similar grassroots program supporting First Nations & Council collaborations (Motion 4)**
- **Introduction of a national standard for tree management practices conducted by energy infrastructure maintenance bodies and their contractors (Motion 5)**

The motions have been lodged for consideration for inclusion in the NGA.

Given that ALGA is the peak national body representing local councils across Australia and that the conference is held in Canberra, it is proposed that Council attend.

## 2. Conference

The theme for this year's NGA, Stronger Together: Resilient. Productive. United, underscores the pivotal role councils play in shaping the nation's future and delivering national priorities.

The conference can be viewed [here](#).

It is proposed that Council support the attendance to the NGA of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, a Councillor and the Chief Executive Officer. It is also proposed that the Mayor be Council's voting delegate.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

CSP Theme	Our Infrastructure (IN)
CSP Strategy Objective	We have transport links that connect towns within the region and increase access to significant centres.
Strategies	IN.1: Deliver improved and increased public and community transport services within the region
Delivery Program Action	IN.1.1: Advocate through relevant authorities to ensure adequate public and community transport services

**ATTACHMENTS:** Nil

## 6.15 OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT - JOINT ORGANISATIONS

### SUMMARY

The State Government is currently refreshing the Joint Organisations (JOs) framework ahead of new proclamations. This report seeks Council's formal endorsement of a response to the Minister, confirming that Yass Valley Council intends to remain a member of the **Canberra Regional Joint Organisation (CRJO)**. This position aligns with Council's commitment to regional advocacy and long-term financial sustainability.

### RECOMMENDATION

*That:*

1. *Council authorises the Chief Executive officer and Mayor, to prepare a response to the Minister advising that Council supports the Joint Organisation concept with a focus on shared decision-making for common issues amongst the member Councils, and which Community benefit outweighs cost and effort; and*
2. The response to the Minister includes a request for sustained investment from the NSW State Government to ensure the JO framework remains a viable support system for rural councils rather than an additional administrative burden.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

YVC's annual membership fee for CRJO for the current year is \$26,958.

The fees are calculated on a formula which includes a fixed amount and a population-based amount, hence YVC's annual membership fees are lower than most other councils in CRJO.

### POLICY & LEGISLATION

*Local Government Act 1993 as amended by the Local Government Amendment (Regional Joint Organisations) Act 2017*

### REPORT

Following a review of the regional governance model, the Minister for Local Government has invited councils to provide feedback on the JO framework refresh. The JO program is designed to encourage collaboration and shared services amongst councils in close geographic proximity and across Local Government Areas (LGAs). The CRJO currently provides a platform for 10 member councils to collaborate on strategic planning, priority infrastructure, and regional advocacy, representing a combined population nearing one million people.

The Hon Ron Hoenig MP, Minister for Local Government, has written to Mayors and General Managers requesting Councils to provide notice of their intention to retain membership of a JO by Tuesday, 31 March 2026.

Yass Valley Council has been a member of the CRJO since its establishment in 2018. Since this time funding originally provided by State Government has been paired back. The cost of the CRJO membership for Yass Valley Council in 25/26 is \$26,958.

Canberra Joint Region Organisation currently consists of the following members:

1. Bega Valley Shire Council
2. Eurobodalla Shire Council
3. Goulburn Mulwaree Council
4. Hilltops Council
5. Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council
6. Snowy Monaro Regional Council
7. Snowy Valleys Council

8. Upper Lachlan Shire Council
9. Wingecarribee Shire Council
10. Yass Valley Council

Along with a number of associate members and affiliate members.

#### **Strategic Alignment & Advocacy**

Membership in the CRJO allows Yass Valley to leverage a unified regional voice. By partnering with larger regional centres and the ACT, Council ensures its local needs are amplified at both State and Federal levels.

#### **Financial Sustainability & Efficiencies**

The JO model acts as an avenue to support Council's financial roadmap. Benefits include:

- **Joint Procurement:** Cost savings through collective tendering for waste management, audit services, and planning.
- **Resource Sharing:** Access to high-level regional technical expertise that would be cost-prohibitive for a single rural council to maintain.

#### **Future Funding Requirements**

While the model is effective, Council should highlight a critical need for the State Government to provide dedicated, direct funding to JOs. Sustained investment from the State is essential to ensure the JO framework remains a viable support system for rural councils rather than an additional administrative burden.

It is the recommendation of this report that Council reaffirms its commitment to membership of the CRJO and that Council respond to Minister Hoenig's outlining this position with a request for direct JO funding from the NSW State Government.

### **STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

CSP Theme	Our Civic Leadership (CL)
CSP Strategy Objective	Council is an effective, responsible, and innovative organisation.
Strategies	CL.3: Council actively participates in regional bodies such as CRJO to identify innovations and opportunities for our region.
Delivery Program Action	CL. 3.1 Council actively participates in CRJO and regional interest groups to identify and action opportunities for our region

**ATTACHMENTS:** A. Yass Valley Council - letter from The Hon Ron Hoenig [⇒](#)

## 6.16 REQUEST TO SELL LOTS 1 & 2 DISCOVERY DRIVE STAGE 3, YASS

### SUMMARY

To recommend the sale of lots 1 and 2 of Stage 3, Discovery Drive, Yass. This land has previously been identified as an extension to the existing Discovery Drive residential development and forms part of land which has a recently approved Development Modification (DA035019D). Stage 3 comprises 7 new residential lots in total with the remaining lots proposed to be taken to the market upon completion of services infrastructure.

### RECOMMENDATION

*That Council:*

1. *Approve Lot 3 DP 1079585 (Stage 3 Discovery Drive, Yass) to be developed in accordance with DA035019D for disposal by open market sale*
2. *Approve the construction of enabling works for Lots 1 and 2 to be taken to the market as a first stage of the development with an estimated cost of \$50,000 to be charged against the Commercial Property Development Internally Restricted Fund in accordance with the purpose of that Fund.*
3. *Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to appoint a licensed real estate Agent to manage the sale of Lots 1 and 2 on behalf of Council upon completion of the enabling works.*
4. *Requests that the Chief Executive Officer to bring any offers received for Lots 1 and 2 back to Council for resolution, together with an independent valuation and the advice of the selling Agent, in accordance with Section 377(1)(h) of the Local Government Act (NSW) 1993.*
5. *Directs the proceeds of the sale of Lots 1 and 2 of Stage 3 Discovery Drive, Yass be placed in the Commercial Property Development Internally Restricted Fund to be applied to the purposes of that Fund.*

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Land sales can assist with improving Council's financial position.

### POLICY & LEGISLATION

- *Local Government Act 1993*
- *Yass Valley Local Environment Plan 2013*
- *GM-CP-27 - Property Acquisition & Disposal Policy*

### REPORT

#### 1. Introduction

Recent reviews undertaken of land assets as reported to Council in November 2020 and November 2024, assessed the following:

- *Confirming the land classification (Operational or Community) under the Local Government Act 1993*
- *Confirming the land use zoning under the Yass Valley LEP 2013*
- *Reviewing Deposited Plans for any restrictions or reserve status*
- *Determining whether a current lease is in place for the land*

The subject land is held in unencumbered freehold title by Council and has previously been included in a schedule of surplus land approved in principle by Council for disposal.

#### 2. Property Acquisition & Disposal Policy

Council's *Property Acquisition & Disposal Policy* provides a framework for property acquisition or disposal. The policy requires Council to undertake regular reviews of its property portfolio, with the objective of minimising cost and maximising usage of land for the benefit of the community now and into the future.

The policy provides for the disposal of land not required for a community or operational purpose to be disposed of by:

- Open market sale (including auction); or
- Expressions of interest; or
- Select tender; or
- Open tender; or
- By negotiation

### 3. Identified land

The subject land is comprised in Lot 3 DP1079585 and has an area of 8,428 square metres. The land is classified as Operational and is zoned R1 General Residential – refer Schedule 4 of the Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013. A modified Development Application for the land has been approved for subdivision into seven (7) residential lots with a cul-de-sac head to terminate Discovery Drive and a shared pathway connecting Discovery Drive with Hume Street via an unformed section of Reddall Street. **Refer Attachment A.**

A review of the land and its associated servicing requirements has identified that Lots 1 and 2 require minimal expenditure to provide connections to existing services, while the remaining lots will require more substantial preparatory works to comply with the conditions of the modified Development Approval. Accordingly it is proposed to proceed with the development and sale of the land in two stages, being Lots 1 and 2 in Stage 1 and the remaining five lots in Stage 2. The staging of the development in this way is considered to be a permissible administrative matter complying with the terms of the Development Application.

Lots 1 and 2 require an initial expenditure of an estimated \$50,000 on preparatory works in order to place the lots on the market for sale.

### 4. Disposal of the land

The lot is located within Yass township adjacent to an existing residential development area and the most appropriate disposal method is considered via open market sale managed by a suitably experienced licensed real Estate Agent. In preparation for sale, subject to Council approval, the following works will be undertaken:

- Subdivision of Lot 3 DP1079585 into three (3) lots, being Lots 1 and 2 together with a balance title to be further subdivided in Stage 2
- Extension of the existing footpath across the frontage of Lots 1 and 2
- Connection of Lots 1 and 2 to existing water, sewer and electricity services

Upon completion of these works the advice of the selling agent, together with an independent valuation, will be used to determine an appropriate benchmark price when the lots are ready for sale. In view of the volume of activity in the residential land sector currently, this is considered the most prudent approach.

This report requests the approval of Council to proceed as outlined above. Any offers for Lots 1 and 2 considered suitable for acceptance will be presented for the approval of Council, including an updated valuation and the selling agent's recommendation, when received.

Council has recently established the Commercial Property Development Internally Restricted Fund, the defined purpose of which is to facilitate and fund the following:

- Development of a Yass Valley Council Property Strategy
- Undertake studies, assessments or proposals for commercial development or sale of Council land
- Activities relating to commercial property development

The cost of the enabling works listed above will be charged against the Commercial Property Development Internally Restricted Fund in accordance with the purpose of that Fund as an offset against the proceeds of sale.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

CSP Theme	Our Environment (EN)
CSP Strategy Objective	We have a robust planning framework that protects and maintains our rural character and natural landscapes
Strategies	EN. 8: Plan for the provision of a variety of affordable and quality and housing types
Delivery Program Action	EN 8.1 Forward planning is undertaken to integrate environmental, social, and economic factors for the benefit of the community and region.

**ATTACHMENTS:** Nil

## 7.1 PLANTING OF SHADE TREES IN MILES FRANKLIN PARK

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Councillor Allan McGrath has given notice that at the Ordinary Council Meeting on 26 March 2026, he will move the following motion.

### **MOTION**

*That Council arrange the planting of a suitable selection of shade trees in appropriate locations at the Learn to Ride facility in Miles Franklin Park*

Councillor: Allan McGrath

**ATTACHMENTS:** Nil

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## 8.1 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE - CR ALVARO CHARRY

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### SPRINGDALE SOLAR FARM

#### **Question 1**

*Noting advice that staged approval was granted in July 2025 and that pre-construction works are permitted, has Council been formally advised by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) whether those works constitute lawful commencement for the purposes of preventing the consent from lapsing, and if so, on what date commencement was deemed to have occurred?*

#### **Question 2**

*Given that a Traffic Management Plan has been lodged and is under assessment by DPHI, what advice has Council received regarding its current status, and are any heavy vehicle movements expected through Sutton village during the pre-construction phase?*

#### **Question 3**

*What baseline road condition or dilapidation assessments have been undertaken in consultation with Council prior to pre-construction activity, and what role does Council have in monitoring ongoing road safety impacts within Sutton village?*

#### **Question 4**

*In accordance with the consent's Community Communication Strategy requirements, what operational mechanisms are currently in place for Sutton residents to raise concerns relating to traffic, road safety, dust or access impacts, and what is Council's role in escalating those concerns to DPHI?*

#### **Question 5**

*What is the current status of the Springdale Solar Farm Voluntary Planning Agreement between the proponent and Council, including whether it has been executed, when contributions are expected to commence, and how environmental protection of local waterways is addressed within the consent conditions?*

### **Consolidated Response to Questions 1-5**

Council have been advised verbally by the applicant that the project is not proceeding and that no commencement has occurred. Therefore the applicant considers that consent has lapsed for the project, although no formal correspondence has been received at the time of writing this report and the Major Projects page on the NSW Planning Portal still indicates that the project has been approved.

**ATTACHMENTS:**    Nil

**9.1 MINUTES OF THE BANGO WIND FARM COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT FUND ADVISORY COMMITTEE HELD ON 28 JANUARY 2026**

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**REPORT**

As per the Terms of Reference, the Advisory Committee provides advice and recommendations to Council only, with no decision-making delegations. Therefore, actions identified in the attached minutes will require the formal approval by Council before any commitment or adjustment to the Operational Plan/Budget is made.

Accordingly, the minutes are presented for information.

**RECOMMENDATION**

*That the minutes of the Bango Wind Farm Community Enhancement Fund Advisory Committee meeting held on 28 January 2026 be noted.*

**ATTACHMENTS:** A. Minutes of Bango Windfarm Enhancement Fund Committee - Wednesday 28 January 2026