

Agenda

Council Meeting
Wednesday 23 November 2022 at 7pm
Gisborne Administration Centre
40 Robertson Street, Gisborne

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Nil

1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Macedon Ranges Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land and waterways. Council recognises their living cultures and ongoing connection to Country and pays respect to their Elders past, and present.

Council also acknowledges local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents of Macedon Ranges for their ongoing contribution to the diverse culture of our community.

2 RECORDING OF LIVE STREAMING OF THIS COUNCIL MEETING

This meeting is being recorded and streamed live on the internet, in accordance with Council's 'Live Streaming and Publishing Recordings of Meetings' policy, which can be viewed on Council's website.

3 PRESENT**4 APOLOGIES****5 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST****6 PETITIONS****7 DEPUTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS TO COUNCIL****8 ADOPTION OF MINUTES****Recommendation**

That Council confirms the minutes of the Scheduled Council Meeting of Macedon Ranges Shire Council held on 26 October 2022 and on 31 October 2022, as circulated.

9 MAYOR'S REPORT**9.1 MAYOR'S REPORT - OCTOBER TO NOVEMBER 2022****Summary**

This report provides an update from the Mayor on recent Council activities and initiatives of a Shire-wide nature.

Recommendation

That Council receives and notes the Mayor's report.

Mayor's report

This report is provided as the outgoing Mayor of 2021-22, as the Mayoral election is scheduled to occur prior to the next council meeting, but after the date of the publication of this agenda.

Coming off the back of a challenging October with the flooding resulting in widespread damage to roads, Council assets, businesses and private property it has been nice to have a few significant events driven by the community to celebrate.

Some items were mentioned verbally at the October meeting, as they occurred after the deadline of the written report so I wanted to highlight them again here.

Events

Councillors were pleased to attend the following events/meetings:

- \$985,710 funding from the Local Sports Infrastructure fund-Female Friendly Facilities category announced at Gilbert Gordon Oval on Saturday 22 October.
- Celebrating Ageing in the Macedon Ranges with awarding of celebration boxes in recognition of the contribution of some of our older residents to celebrate senior citizens week on Tuesday 19 October.
- A Community Investment Evening at the Lancefield Mechanics Institute on 27 October hosted by the Lancefield and Romsey Community Bank.
- Victoria Arya Samaj hosted the Diwali Festival in Carlsruhe on 29 October.
- The opening of the Mountain Writers Festival at Jubilee Hall in Macedon on 5 November.
- 'Hanging out at the Rock' Spring Bliss Festival at Hanging Rock on 5 November.
- Ash Wednesday Play Reading at Macedon Railway Hotel on 5 November.
- Romsey Ecotherapy Park Inc. Annual General meeting on 7 November.
- Rotary Calder cluster lunch for District Governor Amanda Wendy on Saturday 12 November.
- Kyneton Agricultural Show on Friday 18 and Saturday 19 November.

Romsey Ecotherapy Park official event to acknowledge completion

The majority of Councillors were available to attend an onsite celebration of the completion of the Romsey Ecotherapy Park on 26 October. We were joined by staff involved in the

project, both current and prior staff, including Jodi Turner, the Honourable Mary-Anne Thomas MP State Member for Macedon, project sponsors and donors, the landscape architects, representatives from Regional Development Victoria (RDV), and Lancefield Romsey Community Bank and most importantly the Romsey Ecotherapy Park (REP Inc.) Committee, including President Raelene Mottram. The funding contributions to stage 2 and 3 of the park included \$133,000 from RDV, \$113,000 from REP Inc, \$80,000 from Bendigo Bank Lancefield Romsey Community Bank and \$739,855 from Council. We heard of how this project began from a simple idea and moved into advocacy for purchasing the old primary school site and creating a very special play for people of all ages and all abilities to use. A community event to celebrate was arranged for Saturday 19 November. It has been wonderful to see this project come to fruition after many years of planning, fundraising and development.

Macedon and Mount Macedon Community House Opening

Despite the rain and freezing cold weather Councillors and staff were excited to attend the official opening of the Macedon and Mount Macedon Community House on Tuesday 15 November. We were provided with a Welcome to Country by Uncle Ringo, followed by a smoking ceremony, and were entertained by young local bands. This is another project driven by the community who, with the assistance of staff, particularly Hayley Drummond, have transformed a building that was no longer being used by council into a warm and inclusive space for all. The committee, led by Samara Hodgson and Karen Goltz, have obtained registration under the State-run neighbourhood house program and have already begun courses and activities for the community to be involved in, working in partnership with local businesses and other organisations to see this site flourish. A master plan has been created to develop the site further in the future.

Community Funding Scheme and Events and Festivals Grants Ceremony

After moving inside for some warmth the celebrations on 15 November at the Macedon and Mount Macedon Community House continued with the official handing out of certificates to recipients of this year's Events and Festivals Grants and Community Funding Scheme Grants. It has been a few years, due to COVID, since we have been able to come together and celebrate in person. Another great way that ideas from the community can be funded, with a huge diversity of projects and events receiving funding. Congratulations to all involved, thank you to staff for their assistance again. I encourage anyone with an idea for a project to get in contact with staff early to discuss if it may be something that a grant from one of these programs may be able to assist with.

Award for our innovative 4 bin system

Long before the State government had finalised their circular economy policy we knew our community was keen to make a smaller impact on the planet and reduce waste going to landfill.

Over time we have phased in the Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) separate glass kerbside collecting bins resulting in Macedon Ranges achieving the highest landfill diversion rate of any Victorian council. A terrific 74%.

On the night of last month's Council meeting, at the Waste and Innovation Recycling Awards, this initiative won in the category of Most Outstanding WARR (Waste and Resource Recovery) Project. Congratulations to our staff but also to residents for embracing the change and wanting to ensure they put the right things in the right bin. Keep up the great work everyone. We look forward to the outcomes of the Romsey soft-plastics collection trial about to commence to increase our capacity to recycle.

Macedon Ranges Vignerons Association Wine Exhibition

Annually there is a celebration and judging of wines produced in the Macedon Ranges put on by the Vignerons Association. This association works collaboratively to share their knowledge of the industry and support each other's endeavours. The variety of wines produced in the region is astounding and it was wonderful to celebrate together at Newham Mechanics Institute on Wednesday 9 November. Congratulations to all growers, but particularly the winners.

Children's Week 2022

A celebration in recognition of Children's Week 2022 was held at the Woodend Community Centre on 29 October. A Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony was conducted at the commencement of the celebration. Children's Week is an annual event celebrated in Australia across the week of the fourth Wednesday in October. The theme for this year was "All children have the right to a standard of living that supports their wellbeing and healthy development". Many activities were provided for children and I was afforded the opportunity to read a story. Everyone had so much fun.

Lancefield Kindergarten and Maternal and Child Health Centre

On 30 October Council welcomed an announcement by the Honourable Mary-Anne Thomas MP State Member for Macedon that our application for a grant under the *Building Blocks Capacity Building Expansion* stream for the construction of a two room modular to replace the Lancefield Kindergarten had been successful. The new building will also include space for the important Maternal and Child Health service. This will be of great benefit to the children and families of Lancefield and surrounds. The current Playgroup will also be accommodated on the site. Located right next to the primary school this is an ideal location for this facility.

Representative Roles

In the last month Macedon Ranges has been represented officially at:

- Rural Councils Victoria AGM
- Loddon Campaspe Mayors and CEO Forum
- Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee
- Mayors and staff of areas of Distinction and Landscape

Remembrance Day

Councillors paid their respects to those who served and sacrificed in all wars and conflicts at the various Remembrance Day services held throughout the Shire on 11 November. Australians paused for one minute to remember those who gave their lives in service to their country, those who returned home injured or ill, and those who bravely serve our country today.

Victorian Tourism Awards

It is extremely pleasing that Macedon Ranges Shire Council has been announced as a finalist in two separate categories at this year's Victorian Tourism Awards, which showcase the State's leaders in tourism excellence:

- Festivals and Events (for the Macedon Ranges Autumn Festival)
- Local Government Award for Tourism (for Macedon Ranges Shire Council)

We look forward to the announcement which will be made at the gala ceremony in Melbourne on 1 December.

Macedon Ranges Business Excellence Awards 2022 Gala Event

I would like to congratulate the finalists in the Josh's Rainbow Eggs Macedon Ranges Business Excellence Awards. Councillors and staff were pleased to be in attendance at the awards evening at Lancemore Macedon Ranges on 18 November where the winners were announced. These prestigious awards recognise businesses which provide an outstanding service to the Shire and beyond.

Outgoing Mayor 2021/22**Jennifer Anderson****Macedon Ranges Shire Council**

10 RECORD OF MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS AND COUNCIL STAFF**10.1 RECORD OF MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS AND COUNCIL STAFF - OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2022****Summary**

Rule 31(a) of Council's Governance Rules requires a written record of matters discussed at specified meetings of Councillors and Council staff to be reported to the next practicable scheduled Council Meeting and recorded in the minutes of that meeting. This report provides a summary of meetings of Councillors and Council staff held since the last Council Meeting.

Recommendation

That Council receives and notes the record of meetings of Councillors and Council staff, as outlined in this report.

Record of meetings

Type of meeting	Councillor Briefing
Date and time	25 October 2022 9:00am
Venue	Gisborne Administration Centre
Present - Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cr Jennifer Anderson (Mayor) • Cr Rob Guthrie (Deputy Mayor) • Cr Annette Death • Cr Anne Moore • Cr Geoff Neil • Cr Janet Pearce • Cr Mark Ridgeway • Cr Bill West (via Zoom)
Apologies - Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cr Dominic Bonanno (on leave)
Present - officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bernie O'Sullivan, Chief Executive Officer • Rebecca Stockfeld, Director Planning and Environment • Adele Drago-Stevens, Director Corporate • Maria Weiss, Director Community • Shane Walden, Director Assets and Operations • Rob Ball, Manager Strategic Planning and Environment • Evert Grobbelaar, Manager Statutory Planning • Awais Sadiq, Coordinator Statutory Planning

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leanne Khan, Coordinator Strategic Planning • Patricia Clive, Coordinator Governance • Lucy Webb-Wilson, Senior Officer Governance - Council Business • Asok Rao, Strategic Planner • Koko Cheng, Statutory Planning Officer
Apologies officers	NIL
Presenters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Bergin (Eighth Street Planning) • Michael Condon (DELWP) • Erin Letovsky (DELWP)
Items discussed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO & Councillor only session • Draft Rural Land Use Strategy Workshop • Benetas Gisborne Combined Planning Scheme Amendment and Planning Permit Application • Cobaw Forest Storm Debris • Planning Matters • Agenda Review for 26 October Council Meeting • Planning Delegated Committee Agenda Review for 9 November Meeting • Other business
Conflicts of interest declared by Councillors and record of them leaving the meeting when the matter about which they declared the conflict of interest was discussed	<p>Cr Neil declared a conflict of interest with agenda item AO.3 as a family member is on the committee of the dog obedience club.</p> <p><i>Did they leave the meeting?</i></p> <p>He did not leave the meeting as the item was not discussed</p>
Conflicts of interest declared by officers	<p>NIL</p> <p><i>Did they leave the meeting? N/A</i></p>

Type of meeting	Councillor Briefing
Date and time	8 November 2022 8:30am
Venue	Gisborne Administration Centre
Present - Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cr Jennifer Anderson (Mayor) • Cr Rob Guthrie (Deputy Mayor) • Cr Annette Death • Cr Anne Moore • Cr Geoff Neil

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cr Janet Pearce • Cr Mark Ridgeway • Cr Bill West
Apologies - Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cr Dominic Bonanno (on leave)
Present - officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bernie O'Sullivan, Chief Executive Officer • Rebecca Stockfeld, Director Planning and Environment • Adele Drago-Stevens, Director Corporate • Maria Weiss, Director Community • Simon Finlay, Acting Director Assets and Operations • Rob Ball, Manager Strategic Planning and Environment • Evert Grobbelaar, Manager Statutory Planning • Sarah Annells, Manager Safer Communities • Travis Harling, Manager Finance and Reporting • Hayley Drummond, Coordinator Property and Valuations • Christo Crafford, Coordinator Statutory Planning • Allie Jalbert, Coordinator Local Laws • Leanne Khan, Coordinator Strategic Planning • Patricia Clive, Coordinator Governance • Lucy Webb-Wilson, Senior Officer Governance - Council Business • Jack Wiltshire, Strategic Planner
Apologies officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shane Walden, Director Assets and Operations
Presenters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keith MacQueen (LEAD Loddon Murray) • Cassy Borthwick (LEAD Loddon Murray) • Darren Phillipson (LEAD Loddon Murray) • Jude Hannah (LEAD Loddon Murray)
Items discussed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly Councillor Only Session • CEO & Councillor only session • Draft Roadside Footpath Trading Policy Adoption • Final Draft Amess Road Precinct Structure Plan • Presentation by LEAD Loddon Murray • MAV Options Paper (regarding boundaries) • Property Matter – Jackson Street, Macedon

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Matters • Planning Delegated Committee Meeting Agenda Review • Agenda Review for 23 November Council Meeting (2 weeks prior to Council Meeting) • Other business
Conflicts of interest declared by Councillors and record of them leaving the meeting when the matter about which they declared the conflict of interest was discussed	<p>Cr Guthrie had previously advised the Chief Executive Officer in writing of a material conflict of interest in relation to 89 Ross Watt Road (Planning Matters) as he lives opposite the site.</p> <p><i>Did they leave the meeting?</i></p> <p>He left the meeting at 1:25pm and returned at 1:58pm.</p>
Conflicts of interest declared by officers	<p>NIL</p> <p><i>Did they leave the meeting? N/A</i></p>

Type of meeting	Councillor Briefing
Date and time	8 November 2022 8:30am
Venue	Gisborne Administration Centre
Present - Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cr Jennifer Anderson (Mayor) • Cr Rob Guthrie (Deputy Mayor) • Cr Annette Death • Cr Anne Moore • Cr Geoff Neil (via Zoom) • Cr Janet Pearce • Cr Mark Ridgeway • Cr Bill West
Apologies - Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cr Dominic Bonanno (on leave)
Present - officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bernie O'Sullivan, Chief Executive Officer • Rebecca Stockfeld, Director Planning and Environment • Adele Drago-Stevens, Director Corporate • Maria Weiss, Director Community • Shane Walden, Director Assets and Operations • Amy Holmes, Manager Community Strengthening • Rob Ball, Manager Strategic Planning and Environment • Evert Grobbelaar, Manager Statutory Planning

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wendy Le Brocq, Coordinator Customer Service • Awais Sadiq, Coordinator Statutory Planning • Jillian Doyle, Coordinator Emergency Management • Christo Crafford, Coordinator Statutory Planning • Leanne Khan, Coordinator Strategic Planning • Lucy Webb-Wilson, Senior Officer Governance - Council Business • Nicole Wadden, Senior Statutory Planning Officer • Jack Wiltshire, Strategic Planner • Asok Rao, Strategic Planner
Apologies officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patricia Clive, Coordinator Governance
Presenters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Hardy (Rail Institute Alliance) • Marianne Richards (Rail Institute Alliance)
Items discussed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Only Session • CEO & Councillor only session • Customer Service Charter • Fire Season Preparedness Update • Presentation by Priority Rail Initiative –Rail Institute Alliance • 101-105 Willowbank Road Gisborne Combined Planning Scheme Amendment & Planning Permit Application • Planning Matters including: -PLN/2013/349/B -12 Morrow Road East(call-in) -PLN/2022/161 – 86 Brooking Road (call-in) • Other business
Conflicts of interest declared by Councillors and record of them leaving the meeting when the matter about which they declared the conflict of interest was discussed	<p>Cr Guthrie had previously advised the Chief Executive Officer in writing of a material conflict of interest in relation to 89 Ross Watt Road (Planning Matters) as he lives opposite the site.</p> <p>Did they leave the meeting? Yes – left 12:48pm and returned 1:05pm</p>
Conflicts of interest declared by officers	<p>NIL</p> <p>Did they leave the meeting? N/A</p>

11 DIRECTOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT REPORTS

PE.1	WOODEND FIVE MILE CREEK MASTER PLAN
Officer:	Tanya Loos, Biodiversity Strategy Projects Officer
Council Plan relationship:	2. Healthy environment, healthy people
Attachments:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Woodend Five Mile Creek Master Plan final - October 2022 ↓ 2. Report - Woodend Five Mile Creek Ecological Management Plan -V1.3-20220615 (under separate cover)

Summary

Five Mile Creek runs through the centre of the Woodend township and has been the subject of extensive community-based restoration for over twenty years, led by the Woodend Landcare Group with the support of Council and the North Central Catchment Management Authority (NCCMA). This work has significantly improved the environmental assets of the creek and surrounds, primarily via woody weed control and revegetation.

Macedon Ranges Shire Council and Woodend Landcare have worked together to develop the Woodend Five Mile Creek Master Plan (Master Plan) (**Attachment 1**). The Master Plan will guide habitat restoration projects, support grant applications and inform infrastructure needs to improve accessibility to the creek for a broad range of recreational activities for the next ten years or more.

Recommendation**That Council:**

1. **Adopts the Woodend Five Mile Creek Master Plan and presents priority actions for consideration as part of future budget processes;**
2. **Acknowledges and thanks the Woodend Landcare Group for their work in co-developing the Master Plan and their ongoing contribution to improving the environmental health of Five Mile Creek; and**
3. **Notifies submitters of Council's decision.**

Background

Five Mile Creek, given its central location in Woodend, provides significant open space for the community. The creek and its catchment supports a range of threatened flora, fauna and vegetation communities, in particular the threatened Black Gum.

In June 2021, Woodend Landcare received a Council community grant to develop a Master Plan to determine what is next for this vital community and environmental asset. The group approached Council to collaborate in the development of the shared plan. The development of the Master Plan and working group meetings was coordinated by the Environment Unit in close collaboration with representatives from Woodend Landcare.

In August 2021, the Five Mile Creek Master Plan working group was formed. The group has representatives from a number of stakeholders including: Woodend Landcare, Greater

Western Water, NCCMA, Woodend Golf Course, Woodend Rotary, the Macedon Ranges Sustainability Group, Djaara (Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation) and representatives from a number of Council departments (Environment, Open Space and Recreation).

The Master Plan is informed by an Ecological Assessment undertaken by Ecologist, Geordie Scott-Walker in October 2021 (**Attachment 2**) and an Aboriginal Water Assessment undertaken by Djaara in 2020.

PLOT Landscape Architects were appointed to develop the Master Plan. Initial community consultation was undertaken by Woodend Landcare via community survey in November 2021. Stakeholder groups were also invited to provide input – such as community organisations who are based along the creek corridor included the football and netball clubs, Woodend Tennis Club, Woodend Historical Society and the Woodend Pony Club.

Discussion

The objectives in the Master Plan aim to enhance and support community and environmental values, with objectives associated with increasing accessibility, improving township connections and recreational experiences along the creek corridor. In addition, the Master Plan aims to facilitate education through interpretative signage on the social, cultural, historical and environmental aspects in the creek.

The Master Plan establishes a vision for the reserve as well as a series of initiatives to achieve this vision including pathway extensions, environmental improvements, signage and passive recreation infrastructure.

The Master Plan will ensure future actions have the best ecological outcome for the creek and its surrounds and will ensure this work is supported by the local community.

The Master Plan has a special focus on the nationally endangered, Black Gum (*Eucalyptus aggregate*). This species is found nowhere else in Victoria, and Woodend Landcare` has worked to enhance and maintain a biodiverse, natural riparian corridor along Five Mile Creek to ensure its survival. The Master Plan guides revegetation projects and in particular outlines changes to mowing and planting areas that will support remnant Black Gum.

Proposed actions centre upon the community's values for Five Mile Creek, as habitat for the iconic Black Gum and as a much-loved walking and commuting area for Woodend residents. Priority actions include:

- Establish a new mowing regime, mulching, planting and weed control works around Black Gums as outlined in the Black Gum Woodland Enhancement Project
- Water treatment actions (WSUD) such as swales in areas such as north end of Bowen St, the "Billabong" and treatment of the large drain near the tennis court.
- Priority paths and interpretive signage including a Short Loop (Habitat) Walk (0.5km return to information centre) and the Creekside Gathering area – the paths and seating areas around the Visitor Information Area.
- Investigate options to maintain path access under High Street bridge

The implementation of the Master Plan is completely dependent on the provision of funding to undertake the works. Woodend Landcare, Council and other stakeholders like North Central Catchment Management Authority can use the Master Plan to apply for different funding streams available through Council, State and Federal Governments, community environment grants, or other funding programs. Community groups and residents will also be encouraged to take ownership in progressing the plan such as through hosting community planting days to implement the revegetation phases of the Master Plan.

It is intended for the implementation to be staged over a number of years and that all parties will take responsibility for its ongoing implementation. An implementation plan is included within the Master Plan.

Consultation and engagement

Community consultation was undertaken in partnership with Woodend Landcare, and involved two stages.

Stage 1 Consultation

Initial community consultation was undertaken by Woodend Landcare via community survey in November 2021. Stakeholder groups were also invited to provide input – such as community organisations who are based along the creek corridor including the football and netball clubs, Woodend Tennis Club, Woodend Historical Society and the Woodend Pony Club.

In total, 104 responses to the initial community survey were received. What stood out from this initial consultation is the regular use of the creek by residents for both exercise and commuting. Importantly, the natural environment is overwhelmingly people’s favourite thing about Five Mile Creek. The biggest concerns were rubbish, the flooding of the footpath under the bridge and weeds.

The top five wishes for improvements to the creek reserve were (in order):

- (1) Native habitat regenerated
- (2) Fix underpass
- (3) Better/longer/loop walking track
- (4) More picnic tables/seating and
- (5) Bridges/crossing points

Stage 2 community consultation

The draft Master Plan was released for community consultation for four weeks from 15 August to 11 September 2022. It was promoted through a direct mail-out to surrounding residents, signage and information on site and at the Woodend Library, and use of local print and social media. Ten written submissions were received from community members. Additional comments were received at the public display in the Woodend Library.

A summary of feedback received and officer responses are included in the table below. Broadly, a few minor changes were made to the final Master Plan in response to the feedback received. This is a reflection of the extensive community consultation carried out by Woodend Landcare early in the project. Much of the feedback related to the relative urgency of actions on the plan, and subsequently informed the development of the implementation plan.

	Comment	No. of comments	Officer response
General comments	General positive feedback: "overall the plan looks great!" "Thanks for developing this comprehensive master plan!" "I totally support this whole project of retaining and restoring as much of the natural environment as we can. The objectives you list are a crowded	6	Positive feedback gratefully received.

	agenda but worth the effort." "I think overall it looks really good"		
	Support for WSUD options including swales and appropriate revegetation at Jeffery Street, Anne Road, Bowen Street with the addition of Tennyson Street	3	Support for WSUD options and revegetation throughout Master Plan noted.
	More bins and more regularly serviced rubbish bins	3	There are no plans for extra bins. Bins are placed at aggregator areas such as carparks playgrounds and picnic tables that allow vehicle access.
	Use of recycled materials encouraged	2	Additional use of recycled materials for seating added to Master Plan L11
"Clean-up" of creek	If the creek was dredged, made deeper and cleaned up- which should have been done when the removal of the willows occurred, we would have a healthier water flow and no flooding.	2	Five Mile Creek is a Priority River and Stream according to the North Central Catchment Management Authority – and dredging and removal of native vegetation is not permitted as these activities will undermine the natural and cultural heritage values of the creek.
Management of exotic vegetation	Retention of Poplars "Little Europe"	1	Noted. The Master Plan proposes to retain the section of the Poplars known locally as "Little Europe" L03. The Plan proposes to remove new weedy suckers and any outlying populations.
	Removal of all Poplars "Little Europe"	3	Noted. As above.
Paths and access	Improve public access connections to Woodend Golf course	3	Noted and elevated.
	Support for future connections to Hanging Rock	2	Noted. This is part of Council's shared trails plan.
	Maintain path access under High St all year round is regarded as high priority by many residents: "This area is flooded for 8-10 months per year which inconveniences walkers, runners and cyclists and also makes it more dangerous for kids going to and from Woodend Primary School."	9	Noted. Master Plan L04 states "investigate options to maintain path access under high street year round" this will be elevated to very high priority in the implementation plan.
Revegetation, creation of habitat	Support for reduced mowing and improved habitat areas, but some concerns as to how changed management communicated successfully to the public.	5	Support for reduced mowing has been noted. Temporary signage will be erected to explain the staged approach of reduced mowing / increase of revegetation areas focused on the protection and enhancement of threatened Black Gum. Areas

			will be delineated by the application of thick layers of mulch and by appropriate placement of large logs. Added "temporary signage" note to graphic on L11.
Additional seating	There would be significant community support for another localised quiet sitting spot near feature oak tree	1	Support for future revegetation public and public space near feature oak tree noted. Addition of seating near Oak tree on Final Plan L05
	Possibly another picnic table over by the weir? Suggestion to increase plantings between weir and Romsey Rd, including trees to west of path is good	1	Addition of seating near weir, and the word weir added on Final Plan L06
Public artwork	My personal preference is for no art installations (throughout). Strike me as random gimmicks which invite vandalism.	2	Removal of reference to public art installation from Final Plan objectives #8, and from L11.

Collaboration

The Five Mile Creek Master Plan working group was formed to support the development of this plan. The group has representatives from a number of stakeholders including: Woodend Landcare, Greater Western Water, NCCMA, Woodend Golf Course, Woodend Rotary, the Macedon Ranges Sustainability Group, Djaara (Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation) and representatives from a number of Council departments (Environment, Open Space and Recreation).

Innovation and continuous improvement

Ecological consultants and Cultural Heritage consultants were engaged to provide expert advice for the development of the Master Plan.

Relevant law

The Woodend Five Mile Creek is subject to a number of zones and overlays under the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme including Public Conservation and Resource Zone, Public Park and Recreation Zone, and overlays Environmental Significance Overlay, Vegetation Protection Overlay, Land Subject to Inundation Overlay.

Five significant plant species were recorded in the reserve including one listed as Endangered under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999, two listed as threatened under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*, two species of regional significance within the Port Philip and Westernport region.

Council is obliged to manage weed species as outlined in the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*.

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment was undertaken in the development of this Master Plan. The Gender Impact Assessment recommends, that as far as is practical, that:

- multiple channels are used to ensure universal access during community consultation,

- during the detailed design phase of each component ensure that future creek corridor provisions and upgrades are planned to provide equity of access, safety and use for all current and future users, and
- any gender equality impacts on the Master Plan identified through consultation are addressed in the final version of the Master Plan.

Specifically, it is recommended that the:

- Implementation of the Master Plan will continue to provide increased opportunities for participation in passive recreation and the enjoyment of the natural values of Five Mile Creek through the provision of suitable facilities and improvements identified in the Master Plan.

This recommendation will deliver a planned and well-considered range of safe, equitable and accessible improvements to the Five Mile Creek corridor that provides an important community health and wellbeing function as well as improvements to the environmental health of the waterway.

Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies

Restoration and improvement of Black Gum habitat at Woodend Five Mile Creek is a Major Conservation Objective in the state government's *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* Action Statement No.84.

This plan also helps achieve the objectives in the Five Mile Creek project being developed with North Central Catchment Management Authority (North Central Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS) (2021-27).

Relevant Council plans and policies

The development of Master Plan for Woodend Five Mile Creek meets key objectives of Council's Biodiversity Strategy 2018, including: improve biodiversity; extend and connect native vegetation and fauna habitat; enhance the capacity of community groups to undertake conservation actions; and to specifically enhance riparian habitat and create a corridor of native vegetation within the *Campaspe River and Headwaters Waterway Biolink* (MRSC 2018).

Development of a master plan for the creek and its environs was a key action in the recent Cool Changes Woodend Region Climate Change Action Plan (2020).

Financial viability

The implementation of the Master Plan is completely dependent on the provision of funding to undertake the works.

Woodend Landcare, Council and other stakeholders like North Central Catchment Management Authority can use the Master Plan to apply for different funding streams available through Council, State and Federal Governments, community environment grants, or other funding programs. Community groups such as Landcare and resident groups will also be encouraged to take ownership in progressing the plan such as through hosting community planting days to implement the revegetation phases of the Master Plan.

Sustainability implications

The Master Plan will ensure the multiple values of the Woodend Five Mile Creek are managed in a sustainable manner and ensure protection of the natural environment.

Officer declaration of conflicts of interest

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in relation to the subject matter.

Five Mile Creek Master Plan



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Acknowledgement of Country

Macedon Ranges Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land and waterways. Council recognises their living cultures and ongoing connection to Country and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Council also acknowledges local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents of Macedon Ranges for their ongoing contribution to the diverse culture of our community.

Introduction

The Five Mile Creek runs through the centre of the Woodend township and is significant open space for the community of Woodend. The creek and its catchment supports a range of threatened flora, fauna and vegetation communities, in particular the threatened Black Gum.

The Woodend Five Mile Creek has been the subject of extensive community-based restoration for over twenty years, led by the Woodend Landcare Group with the support of Council and the North Central Catchment Management Authority. This work has significantly improved the environmental assets of the creek and surrounds, primarily via woody weed control and revegetation.

Accordingly, the Woodend Five Mile Creek Master Plan (Master Plan) is a shared strategic action plan between Woodend Landcare and Macedon Ranges Shire Council.

The Woodend Five Mile Creek Master Plan will guide habitat restoration projects, support grant applications and inform infrastructure needs to improve accessibility to the creek for a broad range of recreational activities.

The Master Plan will ensure future actions have the best ecological outcome for the creek and its surrounds and will ensure this work is supported by the local community.

The complete Master Plan drawings are provided in Appendix 1. The Master Plan is supported by an Ecological Assessment undertaken of Ecologist, Geordie Scott Walker in October 2021.

The development of the Master Plan for Woodend Five Mile Creek meets key objectives of Council's Biodiversity Strategy 2018, including: improve biodiversity; extend and connect native vegetation and fauna habitat; enhance the capacity of community groups to undertake conservation actions; and to specifically enhance riparian habitat and create a corridor of native vegetation within the *Campaspe River and Headwaters Waterway Biolink* (MRSC 2018).

Objectives

Implementation of the Master Plan will achieve the following objectives:

1. Enhance and maintain a biodiverse, natural riparian corridor along Five Mile Creek that connects with the broader region – building upon the decades of environmental restoration work undertaken by Woodend Landcare.
2. Guide revegetation projects focused on the protection and enhancement of habitat for the endangered Black Gum (*Eucalyptus aggregata*) and other threatened flora species.
3. Improve maintenance and habitat restoration activities by defining planting / mowing areas, levels of care and priorities.
4. Maintain and provide access along the creek by developing walking / cycling tracks that 'loop' and provide connections to longer trails. Provide tracks that give locals and visitors diverse experiences such as wide open spaces, natural and exotic forested areas and opportunities to access the water's edge to watch, enjoy and learn about nature.
5. Provide accessible paths, seating and picnic areas using local, recycled and low embodied-carbon materials as much as possible.
6. Improve water quality in accordance with the *Five Mile Creek Waterway Action Plan* (January 2004) and to ensure overall 'waterway health', with 'water in the right place at the right time' (*Aboriginal Waterway Assessment Dja Dja Wurrung – Five Mile Creek Summary Report* (2019)).
7. Facilitate education through connection with nature, history and future landscapes and the importance of connection to Country. Continue to provide interpretative information on Aboriginal cultural heritage, European history and environmental

values including Dja Dja Wurrung food, fibre and medicine plants, local ecosystems, local plants and animals, and vegetation management techniques.

Background

Woodend is located within the Macedon Ranges Shire, approximately 70 km northwest of Melbourne and is on the custodial lands of the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (DJAARA). The township is surrounded by forests, woodlands and rich agricultural land, with Mount Macedon and Hanging Rock on the outskirts of the town to the east and north, and the Wombat Forest to the west.

Five Mile Creek begins its course on the northern slopes of Mount Macedon and flows into the Campaspe River near Carlsruhe. It is a significant tributary to the Campaspe River that drains 140km north into the Murray River at Echuca.

The creek and its catchment support a range of threatened flora, fauna and vegetation communities. Located in the Central Victorian Upland Bioregion, the ecological vegetation class of Five Mile Creek in Woodend is Swampy Riparian Woodland which is considered Endangered in Victoria, and Valley Grassy Forest, which is considered Vulnerable.

Significantly, Five Mile Creek is home to the endangered Black Gum (*Eucalyptus aggregata*). Black Gum is considered an endangered species under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and the Woodend Five Mile Creek population is the only population in Victoria. The public land along Five Mile Creek protects this significant vegetation as well as providing a wildlife corridor through the township. Platypus and Australian Water Rats (Rakali) have been sighted in the creek.

Five Mile Creek is identified as a priority biolink in the Macedon Ranges Biodiversity Strategy 2018.

Development of a master plan for the creek and its environs was a key action in the recent Cool Changes Woodend Region Climate Change Action Plan (2020) and in the broader Five Mile Creek project being developed with North Central Catchment Management Authority (North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27).

An Ecological Assessment and an Aboriginal Water Assessment were undertaken as part of the project and the findings have informed the plan throughout.

Community engagement

Woodend Landcare has been working along Five Mile Creek for over 20 years, primarily on woody weed control and revegetation. In June 2021 the group received a Council community grant to develop this Master Plan to determine what is next for this vital community and environmental asset.

In August 2021 the Five Mile Creek Master Plan working group was formed, and is comprised of representatives from a number of stakeholders including: Woodend Landcare, Greater Western Water, North Central Catchment Management Authority, Woodend Golf Course, Djaara and Council departments (Environment and Open Space).

The development of the Master Plan and working group meetings was coordinated by the Environment Unit at Macedon Ranges Shire Council.

Initial community consultation was undertaken by Woodend Landcare who distributed a community survey in November 2021. The survey results demonstrated that the creek is used regularly by residents for both exercise and commuting and that the natural environment is overwhelmingly people's favourite thing about Five Mile Creek.

Consultation on draft master plan

The draft Master Plan was released for community consultation for four weeks from 15 August to 11 September. It was promoted through a direct mail-out to surrounding residents, signage and information on site and at the Woodend Library, and use of local print and social media.

Ten written submissions were received from community members by 11 September 2022. Additional comments were received at the public display in the Woodend Library.

A summary of suggestions and officer responses are included in the table below with only a few minor changes were required on the final Master Plan. This is a reflection of the extensive community consultation carried out by Woodend Landcare early in the project. Much of the feedback related to the relative urgency of actions on the plan, and subsequently informed the development of the implementation plan.

	Comment	No. of comments	Officer response
General comments	General positive feedback: "overall the plan looks great!" "Thanks for developing this comprehensive master plan!" "I totally support this whole project of retaining and restoring as much of the natural environment as we can. The objectives you list are a crowded agenda but worth the effort." "I think overall it looks really good"	6	Positive feedback gratefully received.
	Support for WSUD options including swales and appropriate revegetation at Jeffery Street, Anne Road, Bowen Street with the addition of Tennyson Street	3	Support for WSUD options and revegetation throughout Master Plan noted.
	More bins and more regularly serviced rubbish bins	3	There are no plans for extra bins. Bins are placed at aggregator areas such as carparks playgrounds and picnic tables that allow vehicle access.
	Use of recycled materials encouraged	2	Additional use of recycled materials for seating added to Master Plan L11
"Clean-up" of creek	If the creek was dredged, made deeper and cleaned up- which should have been done when the removal of the willows occurred, we would have a healthier water flow and no flooding.	2	Five Mile Creek is a Priority River and Stream according to the North Central Catchment Management Authority – and dredging and removal of native vegetation is not permitted as these activities will undermine the natural and cultural heritage values of the creek.
Management of exotic vegetation	Retention of Poplars "Little Europe"	1	Noted. The Master Plan proposes to retain the section of the Poplars known locally as "Little Europe" L03. The Plan proposes to remove new weedy suckers and any outlying populations.
	Removal of all Poplars "Little Europe"	3	Noted. As above.
Paths and access	Improve public access connections to Woodend Golf course	3	Noted and elevated.

	Support for future connections to Hanging Rock	2	Noted. This is part of Council's shared trails plan.
	Maintain path access under High St all year round is regarded as high priority by many residents: "This area is flooded for 8-10 months per year which inconveniences walkers, runners and cyclists and also makes it more dangerous for kids going to and from Woodend Primary School."	9	Noted. Master Plan L04 states "investigate options to maintain path access under high street year round" this will be elevated to very high priority in the implementation plan.
Revegetation, creation of habitat	Support for reduced mowing and improved habitat areas, but some concerns as to how changed management communicated successfully to the public.	5	Support for reduced mowing has been noted. Temporary signage will be erected to explain the staged approach of reduced mowing / increase of revegetation areas as per Objective 2 and 3 focused on the protection and enhancement of threatened Black Gum. Areas will be delineated by the application of thick layers of mulch and by appropriate placement of large logs. Added "temporary signage" note to graphic on L11.
Additional seating	There would be significant community support for another localised quiet sitting spot near feature oak tree		Support for future revegetation public and public space near feature oak tree noted. Addition of seating near Oak tree on Final Plan L05
	Possibly another picnic table over by the weir? Suggestion to increase plantings between weir and Romsey Rd, including trees to west of path is good		Addition of seating near weir, and the word weir added on Final Plan L06

Implementation plan

The Master Plan establishes a vision for the reserve as well as a series of initiatives to achieve this vision including pathway extensions, environmental improvements, signage and passive recreation infrastructure.

The Black Gum (*Eucalyptus aggregata*) is found nowhere else in Victoria, and Woodend Landcare has worked for decades to enhance and maintain a biodiverse, natural riparian corridor along Five Mile Creek that supports this species. The Master Plan guides revegetation projects and in particular outlines changes to mowing and planting areas that will support remnant Black Gum.

The Master Plan will ensure future actions have the best ecological outcome for the creek and its surrounds and will ensure this work is supported by the local community.

Priority actions centre upon the community's values for Five Mile Creek, as habitat for the iconic Black Gum and as a much-loved walking and commuting area for Woodend residents, including:

- Establish a new mowing regime, mulching, planting and weed control works around Black Gums as outlined in the Black Gum Woodland Enhancement Project

- Water treatment actions (WSUD) such as swales in areas like the north end of Bowen St, the “Billabong” and treatment of the large drain near the tennis court.
- Priority paths and interpretive signage including a Short Loop (Habitat) Walk (0.5km return to information centre) and the Creekside Gathering Area – the paths and seating areas around the Visitor Information Area.

It is intended for the implementation to be staged over a number of years and that all parties will take responsibility for its ongoing implementation. Refer to Appendix 2 for the detailed implementation and priorities plan.

The implementation of the Master Plan is completely dependent on the provision of funding to undertake the works. Woodend Landcare, Council and other stakeholders like North Central Catchment Management Authority can use the Master Plan to apply for different funding streams available through Council, State and Federal Governments, community environment grants, or other funding programs. Community and resident groups will also be encouraged to take ownership in progressing the plan such as through hosting community planting days to implement the revegetation phases of the Master Plan.

Appendix 1: Woodend Five Mile Creek Master Plan

Appendix 2: Implementation and Priorities Plan

CONTENTS:

- Drawing Number**
PLA463-L01 Vision, Contents & Overall Plan
PLA463-L02 Context Plan
PLA463-L03 Gregory Street to Jeffreys Street
PLA463-L04 Jeffreys Street to High Street
PLA463-L05 High Street to Bowen Street
PLA463-L06 Bowen Street to Russell Avenue
PLA463-L07 Russell Avenue to Romsey Road
PLA463-L08 Enlargement - Creek-side Gathering Area
PLA463-L09 Walking Loops
PLA463-L10 Functional / Management Zones
PLA463-L11 Indicative Details

MASTER PLAN VISION

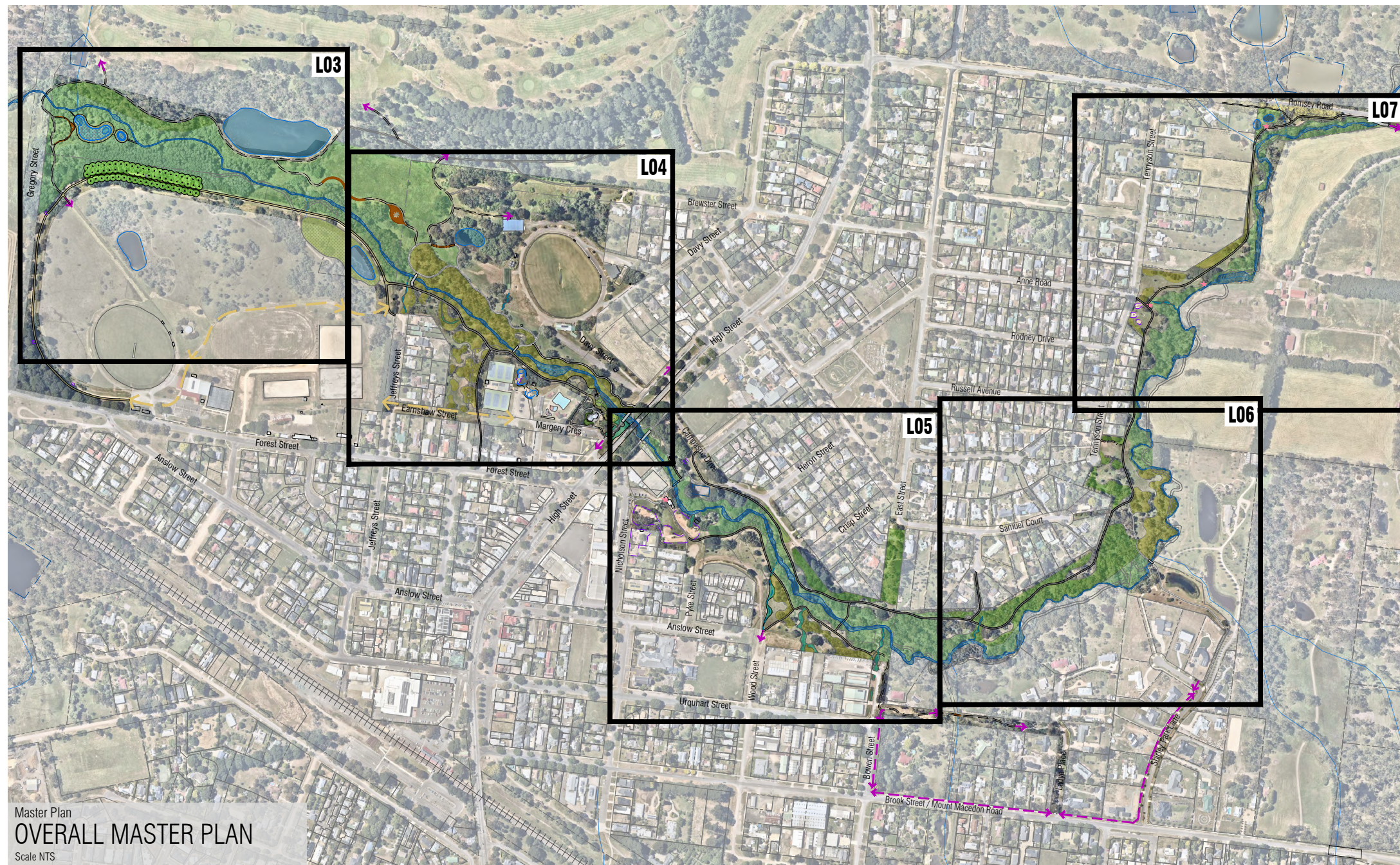
The Five Mile Creek, Woodend Master Plan aims to highlight the unique natural, cultural and historical qualities of the creek and its surrounds. The Plan will help Woodend Landcare and Macedon Ranges Shire Council work together to enhance the creek over the next ten years. The Master Plan will guide water quality habitat restoration projects, support grant applications and inform infrastructure needs to improve accessibility to the creek for a broad range of recreational activities. Projects detailed include current and future projects, dependant on funding.

Implementation of the Master Plan will achieve the following objectives.

1. Enhance and maintain a biodiverse, natural riparian corridor along Five Mile Creek that connects with the broader region – building upon the decades of environmental restoration work undertaken by Woodend Landcare.

2. Guide revegetation projects focused on the protection and enhancement of habitat for the endangered Black Gum (*Eucalyptus aggregata*) and other threatened flora species.
3. Improve maintenance and habitat restoration activities by defining planting /mowing areas, levels of care and priorities.
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5. Provide accessible paths, seating and picnic areas and using local, recycled and low embodied-carbon materials as much as possible.

6. Improve water quality in accordance with the Five Mile Creek Waterway Action Plan (January 2004) and to ensure overall 'waterway health', with 'water in the right place at the right time' (Aboriginal Waterway Assessment Dja Dja Wurrung – Five Mile Creek Summary Report (2019)).
7. Facilitate education through connection with nature, history and future landscapes and the importance of connection to Country. Continue to provide interpretative information on Aboriginal cultural heritage, European history and environmental values including Dja Dja Wurrung food, fibre and medicine plants, local ecosystems, local plants and animals and vegetation management techniques.



Notes

1. This drawing is a Master Plan and is conceptual only and not for construction.
2. This Master Plan is based on aerial photography sourced from Nearmap, GIS data and the EMP (refer below). The location and alignment of paths, water courses, trees, planting and grassed areas and other site features is indicative.
3. The Master Plan should be read in conjunction with the Five Mile Creek Strategic Environmental Works Plan (EMP) prepared by Geordie Scott-Walker February 2022.
4. All permits and approvals from relevant Authorities shall be sought and secured prior to any works on site. Works should be in accordance with the recommendations of the EMP.
5. Implementation of this plan is dependent on funding sought by Council, Landcare and partner agencies.



Client / Project
 Woodend Landcare
 Five Mile Creek, Woodend
 Gregory Street to Romsey Road
 Dja Dja Wurrung Country

Drawing Title
Vision, Contents and Overall Plan

Drawn	Approved	Date	North
AD	RH	20.10.2022	
Scale (A3)	Scale (A3)	Sheet	
nts	nts	1 of 11	

Drawing Number
PLA463-L01 C



Master Plan
LANDSCAPE CONTEXT
Not to scale



FIVE MILE CREEK WALK IMAGES



Landcare plantings (between Wood and Bowen St)



Black Gum Woodland (Jeffreys Street)



Water hole (Visitor Information Centre frontage)



Poplar tree avenue ('Little Europe') at west end of walkway.

Client / Project			
Woodend Landcare Inc Five Mile Creek Woodend Gregory Street to Romsey Road Dja Dja Wurrung Country			
Drawing Title			
Context Plan			
Drawn	Approved	Date	North
AD	RH	20.10.2022	
Scale (A1)	Scale (A3)	Sheet	
nts	nts	2 of 11	
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Drawing Number		Revision	
PLA463-L02		C	



Explore public access connections to Woodend Golf Course as outlined in Woodend Golf Course Master Plan.

Possible future Long Loop Path (3km return to Information Centre). Alignment to be determined on site to minimise impact on native vegetation, above 1:100yr flood level (where possible) and in consultation with Woodend Golf Club.

Possible off-line WSUD Wetland to treat and improve water quality. Feasibility and design subject to hydraulic engineering and as part of Floodplain Woodland Reclamation Project.

Strategic and staged removal of woody weeds along creek corridor over time. Revegetate with indigenous species as part of Floodplain Woodland Reclamation Project (EMP).

Possible future path connection to Woodend Golf Course and walking path on the north side of the creek, with seating and viewing areas.

Possible future path connection including sections of boardwalk to ensure all weather access, to reduce impact on ecological values and to maintain existing drainage lines / floodplain / wet areas.

Retain a section of the exotic poplar 'avenue' ('Little Europe') in medium term. Following Floodplain Woodland Reclamation Project, replace Poplars with non-weedy feature native, exotic or indigenous trees to retain 'avenue' experience. Continue to remove Poplar suckers on grassland side of path.

Investigate options to improve water retention in existing low lying area, and provide overflow outlet to creek. Details subject to hydrological investigation. Ongoing weed removal and regeneration of indigenous grassland, bog and wetland species.

Future path connections to Grassland, Creek and Jeffreys Street. Subject to separate Master Plan for Woodend Racecourse and Recreation Reserve.

Continued on L04



- Notes**
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- Legend**
- MRSC Standard Signage
 - Interpretative Sign - Existing
 - Interpretative Sign - Proposed
 - Directional Bollard
 - Pedestrian / Cycle paths
 - Path continuation
 - Gravel surface
 - Concrete surface
 - Asphalt surface
 - Possible future
 - Future path connections - location subject to separate Master Plan.
 - Gathering Area (such as picnic table/s, shelter, seating, signage)
 - "Little Europe" - Exotic Poplar 'avenue'.
 - Five Mile Creek
 - 1/100 year Flood Level
 - Stormwater drainage infrastructure
 - Waterbody (existing dams)
 - Possible Water Sensitive Urban Design wetland.
 - Informal Seats / Picnic settings

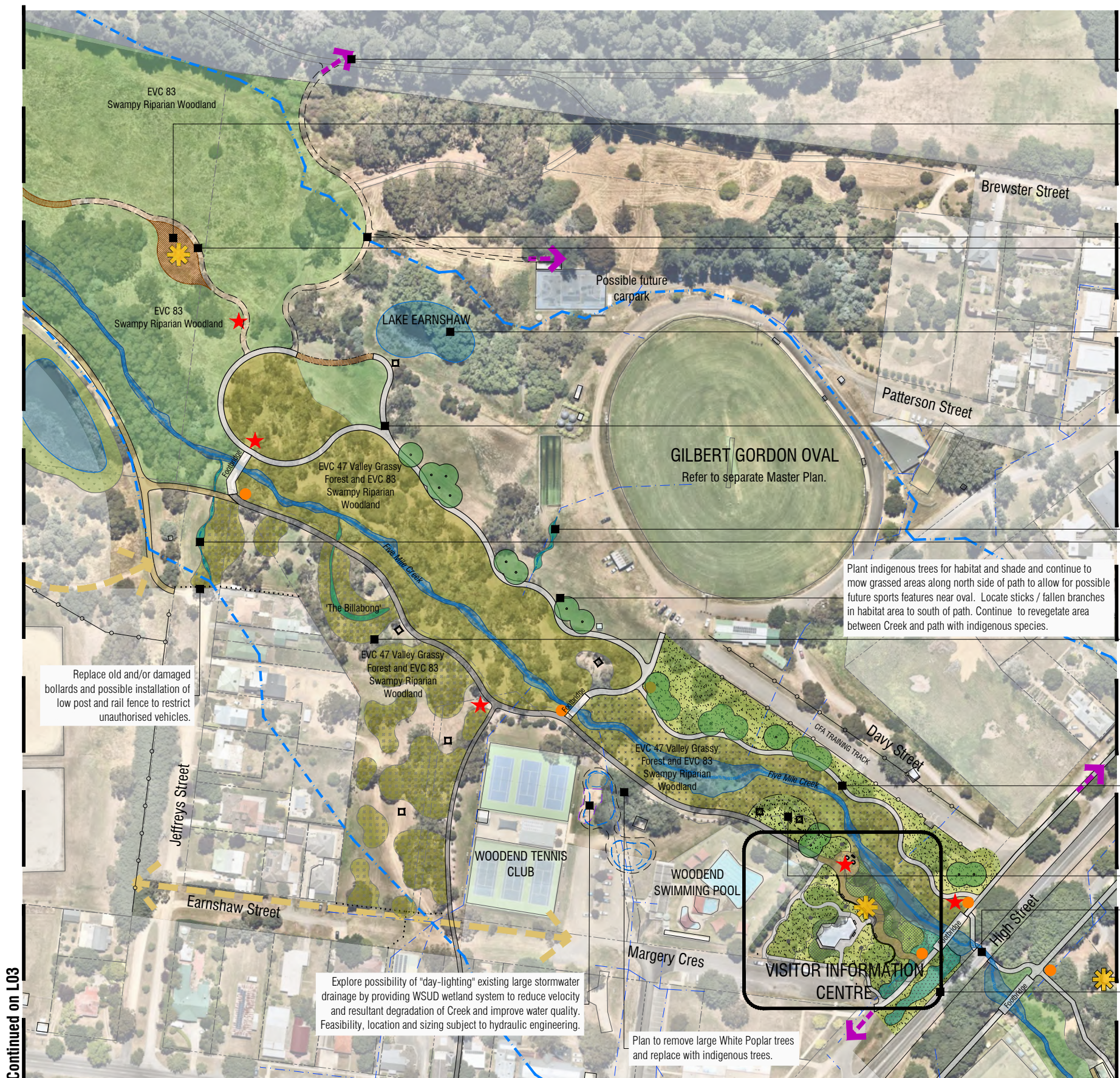


Client / Project
Woodend Landcare
Five Mile Creek, Woodend
Gregory Street to Romsey Road
Dja Dja Wurrung Country

Drawing Title
Gregory Street to Jeffreys Street

Drawn AD	Approved RH	Date 20.10.2022	North
Scale (A1) 1:1000	Scale (A3) 1:2000	Sheet 3 of 11	

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Drawing Number
PLA463-L03



Provide path connections to existing public paths to / from Woodend Golf Course, netball courts, Gilbert Gordon Oval and Lake Earnshaw.

Proposed future 'floodplain meeting place'. Provide information about ecosystem restoration project and management techniques. Possible location for small events, quiet reflection and nature observation.

Possible future Long Loop Path (3km return - concrete / elevated boardwalks). Surrounding area to be revegetated with indigenous species as part of *Black Gum Floodplain Restoration Project* (EMP). Path may include sections of boardwalk to ensure ecological values are not compromised by path access and to maintain drainage lines, floodplain and indigenous bog vegetation.

Support community initiatives to remove weeds, especially willows, to improve water quality and access to Lake Earnshaw.

Provide Short Loop Walk (1km return to Information centre - universal access). Proposed concrete paving provides all-weather path when the surrounding area is wet and a maintenance edge to the revegetation areas. Include connections as per Gilbert Gordon Oval Master Plan. Explore the possible use of local aggregates and coloured concrete to blend into the landscape.

Explore WSUD options to treat water from stormwater channels and drainage pipes. Possible meandering, vegetated open swale to capture sediment and litter, slow water velocity and improve water quality.

Protect remnant Black Gums in accordance with *Black Gum Woodland Enhancement Project* (EMP). Spread timber mulch and plant indigenous species around groups of remnant trees to improve habitat values and reduce mowing. Keep all mulched areas at least 5.0-8.0m from adjacent property boundaries to maintain access and tidy edges. Provide picnic settings in grassed areas.

Provide Short Loop (Habitat) Walk (0.5km return to Information Centre). Proposed concrete path provides accessibility and all-weather path and a maintenance edge to the revegetation areas. Revegetation to include Dja Dja Wurrung food, fibre and medicine plants, with possible digital or other information signage. Remove poplars and other woody weeds to reduce weed suckers. Maintain minimum 5.0m mowed grass clearance to CFA training track.

Grassed area with accessible picnic settings.

Investigate options to maintain path access under High Street year round.

Provide Creek-side Gathering Area along creek with views and access to water. Enhance Visitor Information Centre with feature planting and improve visual and path connections to the creek. Refer to engagement detail on page L08 for further detail.

Replace old and/or damaged bollards and possible installation of low post and rail fence to restrict unauthorised vehicles.

Explore possibility of "day-lighting" existing large stormwater drainage by providing WSUD wetland system to reduce velocity and resultant degradation of Creek and improve water quality. Feasibility, location and sizing subject to hydraulic engineering.

Plan to remove large White Poplar trees and replace with indigenous trees.

Plant indigenous trees for habitat and shade and continue to mow grassed areas along north side of path to allow for possible future sports features near oval. Locate sticks / fallen branches in habitat area to south of path. Continue to revegetate area between Creek and path with indigenous species.

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 4. All permits and approvals from relevant Authorities shall be sought and secured prior to any works on site. Works should be in accordance with the recommendations of the EMP.
 5. Implementation of this plan is dependent on funding sought by Council, Landcare and partner agencies.

- Legend**
- MRSC Standard Signage
 - Interpretative Sign - Existing
 - Interpretative Sign - Proposed
 - Directional Bollard
 - Pedestrian / Cycle paths
 - Path continuation
 - Gravel surface
 - Concrete surface
 - Asphalt surface
 - Possible future
 - Future path connections - location subject to separate Master Plan.
 - Gathering Area (such as picnic table/s, shelter, seating, signage)
 - Five Mile Creek
 - 1/100 year Flood Level
 - Stormwater drainage infrastructure
 - Tree planting in grass (min 3m apart & 3m from any other infrastructure or edges)
 - Waterbody (existing dams/lakes)
 - Possible Water Sensitive Urban Design wetland.
 - Possible Water Sensitive Urban Design swale.
 - Informal Seats / Picnic settings



Client / Project: Woodend Landcare
Five Mile Creek, Woodend
Gregory Street to Romsey Road
Dja Dja Wurrung Country

Drawing Title: **Jeffreys Street to High Street**

Drawn: AD	Approved: RH	Date: 20.10.2022
Scale (A1): 1:1000	Scale (A3): 1:2000	Sheet: 4 of 11

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Drawing Number: **PLA463-L04 C**

Continued on L03

Continued on L05



Investigate options to maintain path access under High Street year round.

Install accessible picnic setting (on available concrete slab if suitable). Limb up exotic trees and remove exotic weed suckers to provide views to creek.

Remove exotic garden weeds between fence and creek and replant with indigenous species.

Staged removal of exotic trees are replacement with indigenous trees.

Plant small sized street trees suitable for near powerlines. Possible planting of steep embankment with indigenous groundcover species to reduce mowing.

Possible planting of open swale drain with indigenous plants suitable for playground environment to improve visual amenity.

Weed control and replacement planting with indigenous species in accordance with EMP.

Ensure no trees under existing powerlines and Power Authority access is maintained where required. Investigate future pedestrian access.

Ongoing weed removal (e.g. Elm suckers and ivy) and re-planting with indigenous species.

Remove pine trees and weeds and replace with indigenous species.

Investigate WSUD option to treat storm water from drainage pipe along Wood St. Possible meandering, vegetated, open swale to capture sediment, slow water velocity and improve water quality.



Informal seating under Oak tree for views of creek.

Possible future footbridge. Short loop walk (approx. 1.5 km return from Visitor Information Centre).

Investigate WSUD options to treat stormwater along Bowen St prior to entering Creek as well as other infrastructure. Ongoing weed removal and revegetation with indigenous species in accordance with EMP. Ensure no large growing trees under existing powerlines and Power Authority access is maintained where required.

Construct path along Bowen Street to connect to Browning Street Reserve and footpath along Brook Street - Mt Macedon Road to Shirley Park entry to creek walkway.

Install vehicle control at street ends.

Investigate future pedestrian access along Browning Street Reserve to Ladye Place. Path may include sections of boardwalk to ensure ecological values are not compromised and to maintain natural drainage lines.

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 3. This Master Plan should be read in conjunction with the Five Mile Creek Strategic Environmental Works Plan (EMP) prepared by Geordie Scott-Walker February 2022.
 4. All permits and approvals from relevant Authorities shall be sought and secured prior to any works on site. Works should be in accordance with the recommendations of the EMP.
 5. Implementation of this plan is dependent on funding sought by Council, Landcare and partner agencies.

Legend

- MRSC Standard Signage
- Interpretative Sign - Existing (Red star)
- Interpretative Sign - Proposed (Yellow star)
- Directional Bollard (Orange circle)
- Pedestrian / Cycle paths (Purple arrow)
- Path continuation (Dashed line)
- Gravel surface (Light brown)
- Concrete surface (Light grey)
- Asphalt surface (Dark grey)
- Possible future (Dotted line)
- Gathering Area (such as picnic table/s, shelter, seating, signage) (Yellow star)
- Five Mile Creek (Blue line)
- 1/100 year Flood Level (Blue dashed line)
- Stormwater drainage infrastructure (Blue dashed line)
- Tree planting in grass / mulch (min 3m apart & 3m from any other infrastructure or edges) (Green circle)
- EVC 47 & 83 enhancement areas (Light green)
- EVC 47 enhancement areas (Medium green)
- EVC 83 enhancement areas (Dark green)
- Possible Water Sensitive Urban Design swale (Blue wavy line)
- Informal Seats / Picnic settings (Black square)

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Client / Project: Woodend Landcare
Five Mile Creek, Woodend
Gregory Street to Romsey Road
Dja Dja Wurrung Country

Drawing Title: **High Street to Bowen Street**

Drawn: AD	Approved: RH	Date: 20.10.2022	North
Scale (A1): 1:1000	Scale (A3): 1:2000	Sheet: 5 of 11	

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Drawing Number: **PLA463-L05 C**

Continued on L07



Continued on L05

- Plant large, locally-native overstorey trees for shade and habitat. Tree species and locations should account for views from nearby houses.
- Define mulched planting areas (mulch and marker posts) to reducing mowing maintenance. Construct path connection between Tennyson Street and existing path. Location to be determined on site.
- Maintain clear, unplanted or mowed area along lot boundaries.
- Install picnic settings and seats in suitable locations, for views, accessibility and in the shade of existing trees (where possible).
- Bush Kinder activities. Enhance areas with local indigenous plant species and natural features for the purpose of environmental connection and nature play.
- Extend planted areas adjacent to the Creek. Locate piles of fallen sticks and branches in planted areas to improve habitat and reduce maintenance of mowed grass areas.
- Protect remnant Black Gums in accordance with *Black Gum Woodland Enhancement Project (EMP)*. Spread timber mulch and/or define areas with marker posts and plant indigenous species, including new Black Gum seedlings. Ongoing mowing of grassed areas. Ensure planting maintains clear sight-lines along paths.
- Shirley Park bridge crossing - Long Loop Walk (approx. 3.5km return to Information Centre).
- Ongoing removal of non-native trees and weed species and replacement with indigenous species. Allow clear mowed area / unplanted mulch along lot boundaries and open grassed areas along path.
- Investigate WSUD option to treat stormwater from drainage pipe before it enters the creek. Possible meandering, vegetated, open swale to capture sediment and litter, slow water velocity and to improve water quality.
- Protect Buxton Gum and other remnant trees and define mowed and revegetation areas (with mulch and marker posts) in accordance with EMP (Woodland Enhancement projects). Ensure planting maintains clear sight-lines along paths.
- Locate fallen branches into planted areas (min 1m from edge) to improve habitat and reduce maintenance in mowed grass areas.
- Footpath connection to Brook Street - Mt Macedon Road and west to Bowen Street entry to creek walkway.

Notes

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3. This Master Plan should be read in conjunction with the *Five Mile Creek Strategic Environmental Works Plan (EMP)* prepared by Geordie Scott-Walker February 2022.
4. All permits and approvals from relevant Authorities shall be sought and secured prior to any works on site. Works should be in accordance with the recommendations of the EMP.
5. Implementation of this plan is dependent on funding sought by Council, Landcare and partner agencies.

Legend

- MRSC Standard Signage
- Interpretative Sign - Existing
- Interpretative Sign - Proposed
- Directional Bollard
- Pedestrian / Cycle paths
- Path continuation
- Gravel surface
- Concrete surface
- Asphalt surface
- Possible future
- Five Mile Creek
- 1/100 year Flood Level
- Stormwater drainage infrastructure
- Tree planting in grass / mulch (min 3m apart & 3m from any other infrastructure or edges)
- EVC 47 & 83 enhancement areas
- EVC 47 enhancement areas
- EVC 83 enhancement areas
- Bush Kinder Activities
- Possible Water Sensitive Urban Design swale.
- Informal Seats / Picnic settings



Client / Project: Woodend Landcare
 Five Mile Creek, Woodend
 Gregory Street to Romsey Road
 Dja Dja Wurrung Country

Drawing Title: **Bowen Street to Russell Avenue**

Drawn: AD	Approved: RH	Date: 20.10.2022
Scale (A1): 1:1000	Scale (A3): 1:2000	Sheet: 6 of 11

Drawing Number: **PLA463-L06 C**



Investigate possible future footpath connection along Romsey Road.
 Install map and way-finding signage.
 Future path connection to Hanging Rock shared trail.
 Existing information signage and seat.

Increase indigenous planting areas between creek and footpath. In the short-medium term maintain 2-3m of mowed grass edge on creek side of path to maintain clear sight-lines.

Plant large overstorey indigenous trees for shade and habitat on west side of creek (where possible) for shade to path. Consider views from houses.

Possible renovation of steel cable fence due to historical significance including signage. Consider removal of wire mesh to allow unimpeded movement of indigenous fauna.



Ensure consistent gravel path surface (such as granitic sand) to improve and maximise accessibility.

Consider future staged removal of cypress trees and replacement with suitable trees. Existing dam wall and weir, large cypress trees, seat and information signage. Add picnic table.

Investigate WSUD option to treat stormwater from drainage pipe (from Tennyson St, Anne Rd and Rodney Drive) before it enters the creek. Possible meandering, vegetated, open swale to capture sediment, slow water velocity and improve water quality. Investigate possible contamination of stormwater inflows from housing such as septic or grey water.

Possible park improvements to Ruby McKenzie Park such as additional signage, playground equipment improvements, additional co-located park furniture such as picnic tables, seats, a shelter, drinking fountain and possible public artworks. Details subject to separate design process.

Ongoing removal of exotic plants along creek corridor.

Continue weed control and revegetation works in accordance with the EMP.

- Notes**
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- Legend**
- MRSC Standard Signage
 - Interpretative Sign - Existing (Red star symbol)
 - Interpretative Sign - Proposed (Yellow star symbol)
 - Directional Bollard (Orange circle symbol)
 - Pedestrian / Cycle paths (Purple arrow symbol)
 - Path continuation (Dashed line symbol)
 - Gravel surface (Brown hatched symbol)
 - Concrete surface (Grey hatched symbol)
 - Asphalt surface (Black hatched symbol)
 - Possible future (Dotted line symbol)
 - Gathering Area (such as picnic table/s, shelter, seating, signage) (Yellow star symbol)
 - Five Mile Creek (Blue line symbol)
 - 1/100 year Flood Level (Blue dashed line symbol)
 - Stormwater drainage infrastructure (Blue dashed line symbol)
 - Tree planting in grass / mulch (min 3m apart & 3m from any other infrastructure or edges) (Green circle symbol)
 - EVC 47 & 83 enhancement areas (Light green shaded area)
 - EVC 47 enhancement areas (Medium green shaded area)
 - EVC 83 enhancement areas (Dark green shaded area)
 - Possible Water Sensitive Urban Design swale (Green line symbol)
 - Informal Seats / Picnic settings (Black square symbol)



Client / Project
 Woodend Landcare
 Five Mile Creek, Woodend
 Gregory Street to Romsey Road
 Dja Dja Wurrung Country

Drawing Title
Russell Avenue to Romsey Road

Drawn	Approved	Date	North
AD	RH	20.10.2022	
Scale (A3)	Scale (A3)	Sheet	
1:1000	1:2000	7 of 11	

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 Drawing Number

PLA463-L07 C

Continued on L06



Master Plan - CONCEPT
ENLARGEMENT - INFORMATION CENTRE CREEK-SIDE GATHERING AREA
 Scale 1:400(@A3)

- Existing CFA training track.
- Short Loop (Habitat) Walk (approx 500m return). Path provides universal access and maintenance edge between revegetation areas and mowed grass.
- Grass
- Staged removal of existing poplar trees along CFA track and replacement with indigenous species trees.
- Proposed Woodend Rotary Centennial Project (rock installation) - actual location and design to be confirmed.
- Main concrete path - explore using local aggregates and coloured concrete to blend into the landscape.
- Feature planting of low-growing indigenous species to maintain views of water with interpretative signs.
- Paths provide universal access between carpark, Information Centre and Creek Edge Gathering Area as well as Short Loop Walks (500m and 1km).
- Feature planting to highlight indigenous species.
- Opportunity for education regarding ecology, biodiversity, and Dja Dja Wurrung food, fibre and medicine plants.
- Path and feature steps directly connecting Information Centre to Creek Edge Gathering Area.
- Existing pedestrian bridge.
- Rock (retaining) wall to allow level paving below and level grassed area above.
- Add to existing feature planting to improve Information Centre surrounds.
- Defined path access from carpark to information centre and creek gathering area.
- Explore water-sensitive-urban-design swale along drainage line to improve water quality and ground-water recharge as well as possible detention with interpretative signage, whilst protecting and possibly relocating existing daffodil beds
- Path access to main town and possible High Street (south) pedestrian crossings (subject to VicRoads design and approval).
- Explore water-sensitive-urban-design swale along drainage line to improve water quality and ground-water recharge as well as possible detention with interpretative signage, whilst protecting and possibly relocating existing daffodil beds

Notes

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Legend

	Concrete paving / path
	Concrete paving / path
	Gravel Area
	Feature planting
	Habitat (EVC) planting
	WSUD swale
	Grass
	Accessible picnic setting on concrete base
	Park seat



Client / Project

Woodend Landcare
 Five Mile Creek, Woodend
 Gregory Street to Romsey Road
 Dja Dja Wurrung Country

Drawing Title

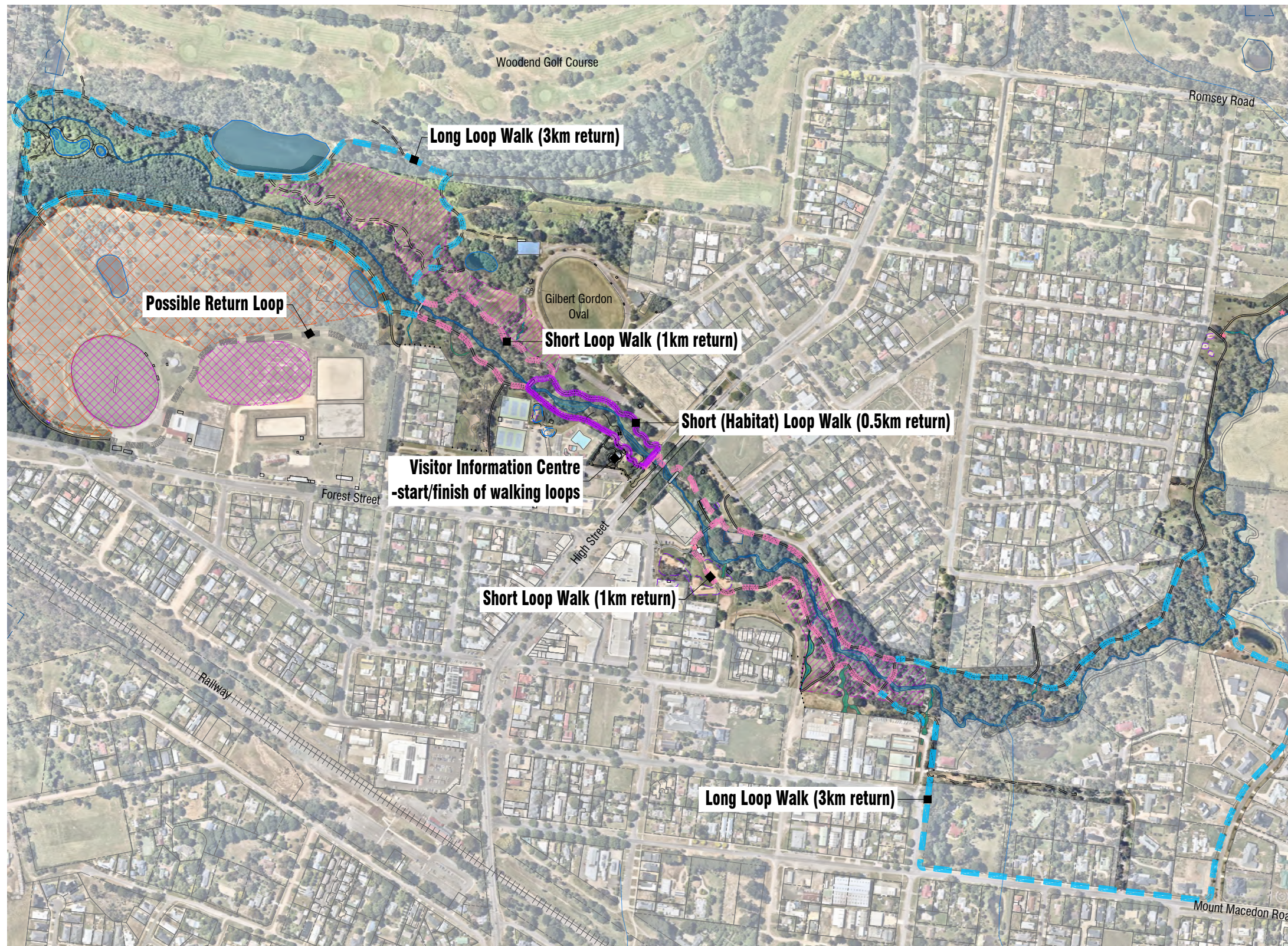
Enlargement - Creek-side Gathering Area

Drawn	Approved	Date	North
AD	RH	20.10.2022	
Scale (A1)	Scale (A3)	Sheet	
1:200	1:400	8 of 11	

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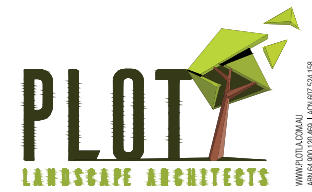
Drawing Number

PLA463-L08 C



- Notes**
1. This drawing is a Master Plan and is conceptual only and not for construction.
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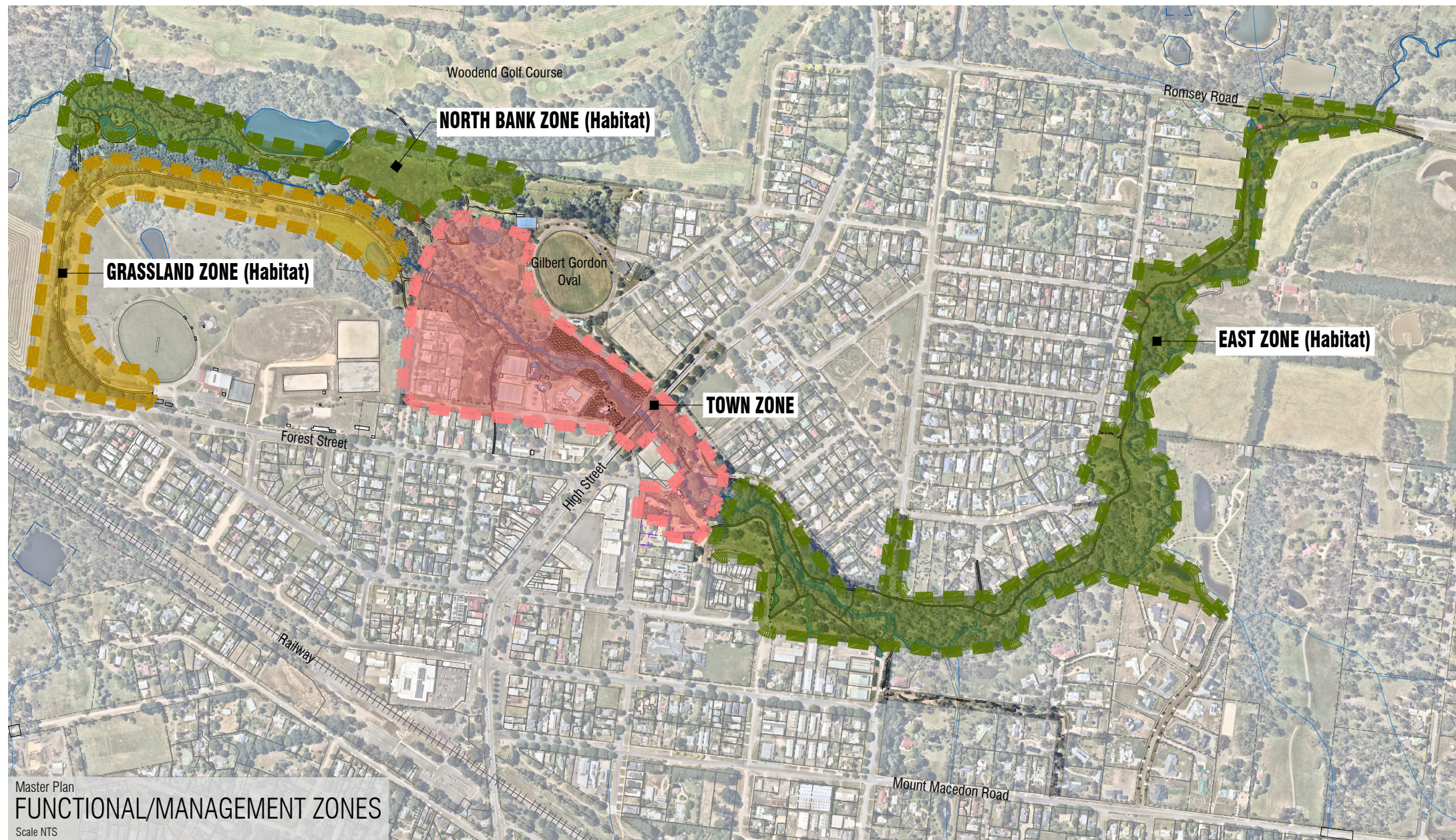
- Legend**
- Short (Habitat) Loop Walk
 - Short Loop Walk
 - Long Loop Walk
 - Possible Walk Loop
 - Current Designated Dog Off Leash Areas (Source: MRSC GIS)
 - Current Designated Timed Dog Off Leash Areas (Source: MRSC GIS)
 - Current Designated Dog Prohibited Areas (Source: MRSC GIS)



Client / Project
 Woodend Landcare
 Five Mile Creek, Woodend
 Gregory Street to Romsey Road
 Dja Dja Wurrung Country

Walking Loops			
Drawn	Approved	Date	North
AD	RH	25.10.2022	
Scale (A3)	Scale (A3)	Sheet	
nts	nts	9 of 11	
Drawing Number			
PLA463-L09			E


Master Plan
WALKING LOOPS
 Scale NTS




Master Plan
FUNCTIONAL/MANAGEMENT ZONES
Scale NTS


Function / Management Zones establish character areas that assist with definition of standards of maintenance and infrastructure provision.


Legend

- 

GRASSLAND ZONE (HABITAT). Zone includes: transition of "Little Europe" to a less-weedy outcome and habitat reclamation; control of woody weeds on grassland side of path; limited access other than on paths; seating and signs.
Typical management includes: habitat restoration; weed control; mowing along path edges; and maintenance of exercise equipment; and possible future picnic table(s), shelter, informal seating, signage.
- 

TOWN ZONE. Zone includes: feature, creekside gathering area; universally accessible path access; short loop walks; habitat restoration zones; signs; and seating and other park furniture.
Typical management includes: habitat restoration; weed control; "township" standard mowing of all grassed areas; feature (civic) plantings.

- 

NORTH BANK ZONE (HABITAT). Zone includes: path and low boardwalk access; woody weed removal and Floodplain Woodland Reclamation; Black Gum Floodplain Restoration; seating; and signs.
Typical management includes: habitat restoration; weed control; mowing along path edges.
- 

EAST ZONE (HABITAT). Zone includes: limited access other than on paths or in parks; seating; and signs.
Typical management includes: habitat restoration; weed control; mowing along path edges; WSUD treatment of stormwater channels & pipes; relocation of branches into planted zones.

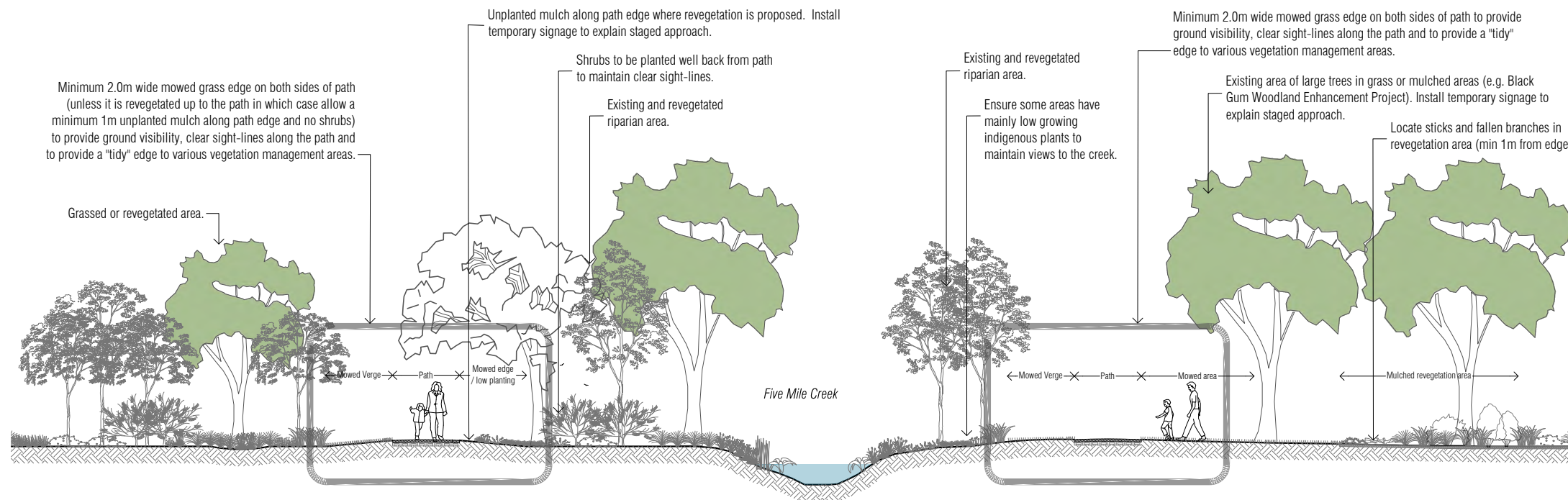


Client / Project: Woodend Landcare
Five Mile Creek, Woodend
Gregory Street to Romsey Road
Dja Dja Wurrung Country

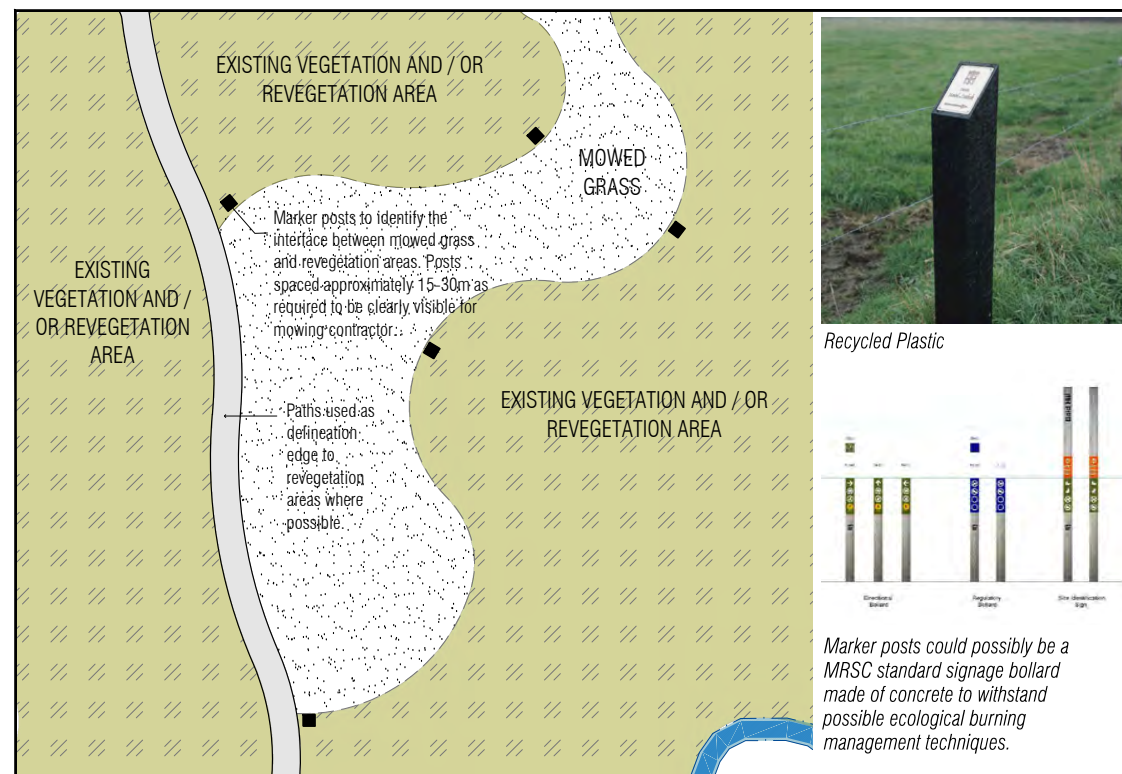
Drawing Title: **Functional / Management Zones**

Drawn: AD	Approved: RH	Date: 20.10.2022	North
Scale (A3): nts	Scale (A4): nts	Sheet: 10 of 11	

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Drawing Number: **PLA463-L10 C**



Master Plan
INDICATIVE DETAIL - MAINTENANCE ALONG PATH EDGES
 Scale NTS



Master Plan
INDICATIVE DETAIL - MAINTENANCE MARKER POSTS
 Scale NTS



Timber post and two-rail fence, or one-rail fence (as per elsewhere along Five Mile Creek)

INDICATIVE DETAIL - FENCING



Timber informal seat (used elsewhere along Five Mile Creek). Provide some with arm rests. Recycled plastic informal seats and log seats to also be used.

INDICATIVE DETAIL - INFORMAL SEAT



Client / Project
 Woodend Landcare
 Five Mile Creek, Woodend
 Gregory Street to Romsey Road
 Dja Dja Wurrung Country

Drawing Title
Indicative Details

Drawn	AD	Approved	RH	Date	20.10.2022
Scale (A3)	nts	Scale (A4)	nts	Sheet	11 of 11

Drawing Number
PLA463-L11 C

Works IMPLEMENTATION AND PRIORITIES PLAN

Project **Landscape Master Plan - Five Mile Creek, Woodend**

Date **Thursday, 20 October 2022**

PLOT Drawing Revisions PLA463-L01 & PLA463-L03_L07-C

PRIORITIES (10 Years)

High	2023-2026 (within the next 3 years)
Medium	2026-2029 (within the next 6 years)
Low	2029-2033 (within the next 10 years or longer)

North Bank Zone

LMP No.	LMP page ref.	Project Description	Priority
NZ-1	L03	Long Loop Path from Dam to Gregory Street & existing path on north side of creek.	Low
NZ-2	L03	Investigate offline WSUD wetland along Creek (off-line)	Low
NZ-3	L03	<i>Floodplain Woodland Reclamation Project</i> - Removal of large woody weeds (trees) and revegetation.	Low
		Floodplain Woodland Reclamation Project - Removal of smaller woody weeds (shrubs and smaller trees).	Medium
NZ-4	L03 and L04	Long Loop Path connection from Short Loop Walk to Dam on north side of creek and possible sections of boardwalk.	Low
NZ-5	L04	Footpath connections to Golf Course.	Medium
NZ-6	L04	<i>Black Gum Floodplain Restoration Project</i> (EMP)	Medium

Grassland Zone

LMP No.	LMP page ref.	Project Description	Priority
GZ-1	L03	Removal of poplars on grassland side of path.	Low
GZ-2	L03	Weed removal and revegetation (in low-lying areas inside path).	High - ongoing
GZ-3	L03	Investigate options to improve water retention in low lying areas.	Medium

Town Zone

LMP No.	LMP page ref.	Project Description	Priority
TZ-1	L04	Short Loop Walk - including connection to Lake Earnshaw.	Medium
TZ-2	L04	Explore WSUD options for drainage swales.	Medium
TZ-3	L04	Black Gum Woodland Enhancement Project (EMP). Protect remnant Black Gums. Spread timber mulch and plant indigenous species. Provide picnic settings.	High
TZ-4	L04	Short Loop Habitat Walk. Removal of weeds and revegetation.	High - ongoing
TZ-5	L04	Provide accessible picnic settings	High
TZ-6	L04 and L05	Investigate options to maintain path access under High Street bridge	High
TZ-7	L04	Creek-side Gathering area - including path connections, feature planting and low stone walls.	Medium
TZ-8	L04	Tree planting along paths for habitat and revegetation between creek and path.	Medium - ongoing
TZ-9	L04	Removal of large White Poplar trees, replace with indigenous trees.	Medium
TZ-10	L04	Explore WSUD options for day-lighting large stormwater drainage.	Low
TZ-11	L04	Replace old and/or damaged bollards.	High
TZ-12	L05	Install accessible picnic setting	High
TZ-13	L05	Remove exotic weeds and replace with indigenous.	High
TZ-14	L05	Removal of exotic trees and replacement with indigenous trees.	Medium - ongoing
TZ-15	L05	Possible planting of open swale with indigenous plants suitable for playground area.	High - ongoing

Ref. PLA463-A_LMP Priorities Plan-5MC Woodend.xlsx

East Zone			
LMP No.	LMP page ref.	Project Description	Priority
EZ-1	L05	Plant small sized street trees and plant steep embankment to reduce mowing.	Low
EZ-2	L05	Weed control and regeneration and replacement planting. Possible future footpath access from East Street to Creek walk.	Low
EZ-3	L05 and L07	Remove exotic weeds and replace with indigenous.	Medium - ongoing
EZ-4	L05	Remove pine trees and replace with indigenous plants	Low
EZ-5	L05	Investigate WSUD option for drainage swale	Medium
EZ-6	L05	Informal seat under existing oak tree	High
EZ-7	L05	Clancy footbridge (project already in process)	High
EZ-8	L05	Investigate WSUD option for stormwater from Bowen St, and revegetation	High
EZ-9	L05	Construct footpath along Bowen Street.	Medium
EZ-10	L05	Install vehicle control barriers at end of Wood St.	Medium
EZ-11	L05	Investigate pedestrian access along Browning Street Reserve.	Low
EZ-12	L06	Locate fallen branches into planting areas.	High - ongoing
EZ-13	L06	Protect Buxton Gum, define mowed areas, continue to revegetate, and install marker posts.	High - ongoing
EZ-14	L06	Investigate WSUD option for drainage swale to improve mowing efficiency.	Medium
EZ-15	L06	Removal of non-native vegetation and replace with indigenous.	Medium - ongoing
EZ-16	L06	Protect Black Gums (Black Gum Woodland Enhancement Project). Extend planted areas adjacent to the creek, locate fallen sticks etc. into planted areas.	High - ongoing
EZ-17	L06	Enhance Bush-Kinder activity areas	High
EZ-18	L06	Install picnic settings and seats along path.	High - ongoing
EZ-19	L06	Plant over-storey native trees for shade and construct path connection between Tennyson Street and existing creek path.	Medium
EZ-20	L07	Improvements to Ruby McKenzie Park.	Out of LMP Scope
EZ-21	L07	Investigate WSUD option for drainage swale. Investigate possible contamination of stormwater.	High
EZ-22	L07	Provide picnic table to dam wall and weir area.	High
EZ-23	L07	Staged removal of Cypress trees and replacement with native trees.	Low
EZ-24	L07	Ensure existing gravel path surface is a consistent material and is accessible.	Medium
EZ-25	L07	Renovation of steel cable fence, including signage.	Low
EZ-26	L07	Plant over-storey native trees for shade and future habitat.	High
EZ-27	L07	Increase indigenous planting areas between creek and footpath.	Medium
EZ-28	L07	Investigate future path connections along Romsey Road (to the east and west).	Out of LMP Scope
EZ-29	L07	Install map and wayfinding signage.	High

Ref. PLA463-A_LMP Priorities Plan-5MC Woodend.xlsx

12 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORTS

Nil

13 DIRECTOR CORPORATE REPORTS

COR.1	ANNUAL COUNCILLOR APPOINTMENTS AND COUNCIL MEMBERSHIPS
Officer:	Lucy Webb-Wilson, Senior Governance Officer - Council Business
Council Plan relationship:	4. Delivering strong and reliable government
Attachments:	Attachment - Councillor appointments to committees - Nov 2022 - Nov 23 ↓

Summary

This report is presented to Council for determining Councillor representation on internal advisory committees and external organisations from November 2022 till November 2023, refer to **Attachment 1**.

Recommendation**That Council:**

1. **Appoints the Councillor delegates from November 2022 to November 2023 to the internal and external committees/organisations as specified in the table in Attachment 1;**
2. **Endorses the ongoing membership to the Victorian Local Governance Association, Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance, Rural Councils Victoria Incorporated;**
3. **Endorses the ongoing membership to the Municipal Association of Victoria; and**
4. **Endorses the ongoing membership to Australian Local Government Women's Association - Victorian Branch.**

Background

Effective representation on relevant external organisations and internal advisory committees is a critical element of Council's advocacy program. Through its membership of and representation on a diverse range of relevant local, regional and state committees and organisations, Council is well placed to represent and advocate for the interests of the Macedon Ranges Shire Council.

Council has established a number advisory committees or been invited to appoint a delegate or delegates to various external committees and organisations of which it is a member, or to which it subscribes.

These committees and organisations collectively assist Council to plan and develop services and programs and set strategic and policy directions. Membership and participation of committees may include residents, industry or sector specialists, Councillors and/or Council officers.

Discussion

Council is represented on a range of internal and external committees and organisations. Ensuring that Council has proper appointment of Councillors to these organisations is important for Council's ability to advocate on behalf of the Shire in the different forums. Delegates to advisory committees or external committees and organisations are encouraged to report issues of significance to Council or the Councillor group following attendance at meetings.

There are some internal advisory committees and external organisations that require the Mayor to attend as Mayor ex-officio. There is also an opportunity for Councillors to participate on a range of committees that are important to the future economic, environmental and social sustainability of the municipality. The current list of Council advisory committees and external organisations for Councillor representation, at **Attachment 1**, outlines the Mayor ex-officio and number of Councillors to be endorsed on the committee or organisation for November 2022 to November 2023. Councillors have considered their interest in being a Council delegate on the various committees prior to this meeting and will determine their nominated delegates during this meeting.

In addition, **Attachment 1** describes the purpose, structure, membership and meeting frequency for internal and external committees.

The Loddon Mallee Waste and Resource Recovery Group Forum and the Local Government Waste Forum no longer exist and so will not require Councillor representation in 2023.

Membership and subscriptions

There are a number of peak bodies and associations that support Victorian Councils and Councillors through representation and advocacy, policy development and advice, and other activities, such as training and professional development. Access to these services is through a membership and/or subscription process. Council subscribes to Municipal Association of Victoria, Victorian Local Governance Association, Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance, Rural Councils Victoria Incorporated, and Australian Local Government Women's Association - Victorian Branch.

Consultation and engagement

Officers from across the organisation have contributed to the preparation of this information.

Collaboration

There has been no collaboration with other councils or agencies in the preparation of this report.

Innovation and continuous improvement

Council's utilises the information and advice gathered through its participation in the various committees, organisations, bodies and associations listed in this report to continuously improve its services and make informed, strategic decisions.

Relevant law

The LGA 2020 provides that Council can establish delegated committees and community assets committees and must establish an Audit and Risk Committee.

In accordance with the Gender Equality Act 2020, a Gender Impact Assessment was not required in relation to the subject matter of this report.

Appointing Councillor representatives to internal advisory committees and external organisations in 2023 to advocate on behalf of the municipal community is consistent with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies

There are no regional, state, or national plans or policies, which are applicable to the preparation of this report.

Relevant Council plans and policies

The subject matter of this report is in alignment with the Council Plan strategic objective *Delivering strong and reliable government*.

Financial viability

The current resourcing and support for the operations of these committees, along with funding of membership are included in Council's 2022/23 Budget.

Sustainability implications

There are no sustainability implications as a result of the preparation of this report.

Officer declaration of conflicts of interest

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in relation to the subject matter.

Attachment 1 – Councillor Appointments to Committees and Working Groups

Committee and Purpose	Number of Delegates	Meeting frequency	Internal/ External	2021/22 delegate/s	2022/23 delegate/s
<p>Audit and Risk Committee The Audit and Risk Committee is established under Section 53 of the Local Government Act 2020 as an Advisory Committee to Council. Its role is to assist Council in the effective conduct of its responsibilities, and to review and provide advice in good corporate governance, managing risk and improving operational controls. The Committee consists of four independent members and two Councillor delegates. The Committee meets a minimum of four times a year. Meeting minutes are circulated to the Councillors, Executive, Managers and Auditors.</p>	Two (2) Councillor delegates	At least 4 times per annum.	Internal	Cr Neil Cr Ridgway Cr Anderson (substitute) Cr Pearce (substitute)	Cr Neil Cr Ridgway Cr Anderson (substitute) Cr Pearce (substitute)
<p>Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Committee The structure of the committee to appraise the performance of the Chief Executive Officer will be determined in the CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy which is due to be adopted by Council at the December 2021 Council Meeting.</p>	Mayor and two Councillors	Annually	Internal	Mayor Cr Guthrie Cr Death	Mayor Cr Guthrie Cr Death
<p>Macedon Ranges Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee</p>	One councillor observer and one substitute observer	3 times per annum	Internal	Mayor Deputy Mayor (substitute)	Mayor Deputy Mayor (substitute)
<p>Annual Meeting of Braemar College Ltd Braemar College was established in the 1970s by the Newham and Woodend Shire (pre-amalgamation) in conjunction with local churches. Every year, a representative from each organisation is invited in their capacity as shareholders to attend the Annual General Meeting of Braemar College.'</p>	One councillor and one substitute delegate	Meets annually in May	External	Cr Ridgway Cr Neil (substitute)	Cr Ridgway Cr Neil (substitute)

<p>Calder Highway Improvement Committee The Calder Highway Improvement Committee is an Advisory committee to VicRoads and the State Government. The committee advocates for long term investment strategies to deliver improvements to the safety and operation of the Calder Highway from Mildura to Melbourne.</p>	One (1) Councillor delegate and one (1) substitute delegate	Three (3) times annually	External	Cr West Cr Moore (substitute)	Cr West Cr Moore (substitute)
<p>Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA) The CVGA is one of 10 Local Government Alliances in Victoria and represents a partnership of 13 local governments in the region. Based in Castlemaine, CVGA staff work closely with all members and the state and federal governments to strategically reassess and refocus traditional service.</p>	One (1) Councillor delegate and one (1) substitute delegate	Quarterly	External	Cr Death Cr Anderson (substitute)	Cr Death Cr Anderson (substitute)
<p>Goldfields Library Corporation Board The Goldfields Library Corporation is a regional library service serving the City of Greater Bendigo, Loddon Shire Council, Macedon Ranges Shire, and Mount Alexander Shire. Responsibility for the provision and management of the library service rests with the Library Board, which comprises two representatives from each of the four member Councils and is established by the Regional Library Agreement adopted by the member Councils. The responsibilities and authority of the Board include policy determination, strategic planning and service and education.</p>	One (1) Councillor Delegate and one (1) Council officer	Monthly	External	Cr West Cr Guthrie (proxy)	Cr West Cr Guthrie (proxy)
<p>Macedon Ranges Heritage Council This group is a representative group of all Historical Societies in the Shire. The MRHC shares ideas and expertise and provides a focal point for the Macedon Ranges Shire Council.</p>	Two (2) Councillor delegates	Bi-monthly	External	Cr Moore Cr Guthrie	Cr Moore Cr Guthrie

<p>Macedon Ranges Local Safety Committee The Macedon Ranges Local Safety Committee is convened by the local Victoria Police authority and includes representatives of Victoria Police, Council, Cobaw Community Health, Macedon Ranges Health, Kyneton District Health, Central Victorian Primary Care Partnership, Gisborne Secondary College and the office of the local Parliamentary member for Macedon.</p>	One (1) Councillor delegate and one (1) substitute delegate	Monthly	External	Cr Moore Cr Ridgeway (Substitute)	Cr Moore Cr Ridgeway (Substitute)
<p>Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) The MAV is the peak advisory body for councils in Victoria. The objectives of the MAV are to improve community awareness of local government, advocate for and provide leadership and support for the sector. Cr Anderson is on the Board of the MAV representing the North Central Region but the current constitution states she can remain as part of her two-year term even if she is not the nominated representative of Council</p>	One (1) Councillor delegate and one (1) substitute delegate	As needs basis	External	Cr Anderson Cr Pearce (substitute)	Cr Anderson Cr Pearce (substitute) Cr Ridgeway (2nd Substitute)
<p>MAV Emergency Management Committee The Committee provides advice to the MAV on local government emergency management matters identified by the sector in the MAV Strategic Plan, or in response to emergency management sector priority projects.</p>	One (1) Councillor delegate and one (1) substitute delegate	Quarterly	External	Cr Anne Moore Cr Mark Ridgeway (substitute)	Cr Anne Moore Cr Mark Ridgeway (substitute)
<p>Rural Councils Victoria Inc (RCV) RCV represents the interests of rural councils within Victoria it has 38 members. The defined purposes of RCV organisation are to: (1) heighten awareness and understanding of issues that impact on rural communities; (2) assist with building the capacity of rural councils to face challenges; (3) provide leadership on local governance; (4) develop and support rural councils; and (5) develop policy and advocate for rural councils.</p>	One (1) Councillor delegate only for the purpose of voting at the AGM	Annually	External	Cr Neil Cr Pearce (substitute)	Cr Neil Cr Pearce (substitute)

<p>Workspace Australia Workspace Australia Ltd (Workspace) is a community 'not for profit' social enterprise which was established to improve employment opportunities for socially disadvantaged individuals thereby reducing the personal and social costs of unemployment. Workspace provides training and enterprise activities for the benefit of individuals seeking employment in Regional Victoria. Workspace operates a number of Social Enterprises that create employment throughout Central Victoria. Workspace has been operating at the business incubator in New Gisborne since 1998.</p>	<p>One (1) Councillor delegate</p>	<p>Bi-monthly</p>	<p>External</p>	<p>Cr Guthrie</p>	<p>Cr Guthrie</p>
<p>Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee The Macedon Ranges Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMPC) is responsible for providing a strategic and integrated approach to fire management within the shire.</p>				<p>Cr Neil Cr Pearce Cr Anderson</p>	<p>Cr Neil Cr Pearce Cr Anderson</p>
<p>Local Government Working Group On Gambling The group provides an opportunity for councillors and council officers from VLGA member councils to come together to hear from informed speakers about current gambling harm prevention research and policy and consider Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan implications and the regulatory environment.</p>				<p>Cr Death Cr Pearce (substitute) Cr Anderson (substitute)</p>	<p>Cr Death Cr Pearce (substitute) Cr Anderson (substitute)</p>

COR.2	COUNCIL MEETING DATES 2022
Officer:	Lucy Webb-Wilson, Senior Governance Officer - Council Business
Council Plan relationship:	4. Delivering strong and reliable government
Attachments:	Schedule of meetings 2023 ↓

Summary

This report seeks approval of the proposed scheduled Council meeting and Planning Delegated Committee meeting dates and formats for the 2023 calendar year.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Approves the proposed meeting schedule for the period 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023 as outlined in Attachment 1; and
2. Notes that Planning Delegated Committee meetings will be held when required on the dates outlined in the schedule at Attachment 1.

Background

In accordance with Council's Governance Rules (sub-rule 10(a)) *the dates, times and places of scheduled meetings will be fixed by the Council from time to time*. In addition, Rule 79(1) enables the *Council to determine the proposed and preferred format style of meetings*. The scheduled of Council meeting cycle is resolved annually by Council.

This report proposes dates, times and places for scheduled Council meetings and Planning Delegated Committee meetings.

Council meetings are held at the Gisborne Administration Centre, which is the only Council facility that has the capacity to livestream meetings. Meetings have been livestreamed since October 2017 and are available for viewing via Council's website. The Planning Delegated Committee and Submitters Delegated Committee meetings are held online in accordance with Part 9 of the Governance Rules that allows for Council to determine the format of meetings. Planning Delegated Committee and Submitters Delegated Committee meetings are also livestreamed and available for viewing via Council's website.

The purpose of the Planning Delegated Committee is to hear from applicants/land owners and objectors/submitters on statutory and strategic planning matters, including planning applications, and to determine planning matters.

Discussion

The proposed schedule of Council meetings and Planning Delegated Committee meetings for 2023 is outlined in **Attachment 1**. Scheduled Council meetings have typically been held on the fourth Wednesday of each month, with the exception of December, when it has been held on the Second Wednesday of the month. In January neither a Scheduled Council meeting nor a Planning Delegated Committee meeting is held.

Under the *Local Government Act 2020*, sections 26(4) and 26(5) the date for the open Council meeting for the election of the Mayor must be held on a day to be determined by

the Council that is as close to the end of the term of the current Mayor as is reasonably practicable. As the last Mayoral election was held on Tuesday 22 November 2022 the date for the 2023 Mayoral election has been scheduled for Tuesday 21 November 2023.

Meetings of the Planning Delegated Committee are held, if required, online on the second Wednesday of each month, except January, when no meeting is proposed to be held. The November Planning Delegated Committee meeting has been proposed to be held on the second Thursday of that month to avoid the Melbourne Cup and Kyneton Cup public holidays. Meetings of the Submitter Delegated Committee are only held as required.

All meetings commence at 7pm.

Consultation and engagement

Not applicable.

Collaboration

Not applicable.

Innovation and continuous improvement

Not applicable.

Relevant law

All Council meetings are held in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Council's *Governance Rules*.

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment was not required in relation to the subject matter of this report.

Approving the schedule of meetings for 2023 provides members of the municipal community the opportunity to participate in the conduct of public affairs in line with section 18 of *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies

Not applicable.

Relevant Council plans and policies

Not applicable.

Financial viability

Not applicable.

Sustainability implications

Not applicable.

Officer declaration of conflicts of interest

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in relation to the subject matter.

Attachment 1: Macedon Ranges Shire Council Schedule of meeting dates for 2023

Meeting type	Date	Time	Place
Planning Delegated Committee Meeting	Wednesday 8 February	7pm	Online
Scheduled Council Meeting	Wednesday 22 February	7pm	Gisborne Administration Centre
Planning Delegated Committee Meeting	Wednesday 8 March	7pm	Online
Scheduled Council Meeting	Wednesday 22 March	7pm	Gisborne Administration Centre
Planning Delegated Committee Meeting	Wednesday 12 April	7pm	Online
Scheduled Council Meeting	Wednesday 26 April	7pm	Gisborne Administration Centre
Planning Delegated Committee Meeting	Wednesday 10 May	7pm	Online
Scheduled Council Meeting	Wednesday 24 May	7pm	Gisborne Administration Centre
Planning Delegated Committee Meeting	Wednesday 14 June	7pm	Online
Scheduled Council Meeting	Wednesday 28 June	7pm	Gisborne Administration Centre
Planning Delegated Committee Meeting	Wednesday 12 July	7pm	Online
Scheduled Council Meeting	Wednesday 26 July	7pm	Gisborne Administration Centre
Planning Delegated Committee Meeting	Wednesday 9 August	7pm	Online
Scheduled Council Meeting	Wednesday 23 August	7pm	Gisborne Administration Centre
Planning Delegated Committee Meeting	Wednesday 13 September	7pm	Online
Scheduled Council Meeting	Wednesday 27 September	7pm	Gisborne Administration Centre
Planning Delegated Committee Meeting	Wednesday 11 October	7pm	Online
Scheduled Council Meeting	Wednesday 25 October	7pm	Gisborne Administration Centre
Planning Delegated Committee Meeting	Thursday 9 November	7pm	Online
Scheduled Council Meeting (Mayoral Election)	Tuesday 21 November	11am	Gisborne Administration Centre
Scheduled Council Meeting	Wednesday 22 November	7pm	Gisborne Administration Centre
Planning Delegated Committee Meeting	Wednesday 6 December	7pm	Online
Scheduled Council Meeting	Wednesday 13 December	7pm	Gisborne Administration Centre

COR.3	QUARTERLY REPORT FOR PERIOD ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2022
Officer:	Travis Harling, Manager Finance and Reporting
Council Plan relationship:	4. Delivering strong and reliable government
Attachments:	Council Quarterly Report - Q1 2022-23 (under separate cover)

Summary

The Quarterly Report for the period ended 30 September 2022 is presented for Council's consideration and information. This report includes the following:

- Section 1 – Quarterly financial statements, including the mid-year budget position
- Section 2 – Capital works progress report
- Section 3 – Council plan actions – progress report
- Section 4 – Risk management report
- Section 5 – Implementation of Council resolutions
- Section 6 – People, Culture and Performance Report
- Section 7 – Governance schedule
- Section 8 – Councillor expenditure
- Section 9 – Councillor activities in the community

The report also provides a high-level summary of the organisation's performance to 30 September 2022.

Recommendation

That Council notes the Quarterly Report for the period ended 30 September 2022.

Background

The Quarterly Report is provided in accordance with Section 97 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic) ensuring that a statement comparing budgeted and actual revenue and expenditures is presented at an open Council Meeting.

This quarterly report is the first quarterly report reporting on the actions of the most recently adopted Council Plan that links directly to the Community Vision adopted by Council in June 2021.

The themes from the Community Vision have been adopted as strategic objectives of the Council Plan providing a strong link to both the documents. Reporting on the actions of the Council Plan fall under the following strategic objectives.

- Connecting communities
- Healthy environment, healthy people
- Business and tourism
- Deliver strong and reliable government

DiscussionSection 1 and 2 - Financial performance to 30 September 2022

Operating Statement:

The Income Statement reports an operating surplus of \$41,281,000 for the first three months of the financial year to 30 September 2022.

The operating surplus for the three months to 30 September 2022 is \$419,000 favourable to budget. Items contributing to this favourable result are:

Income:

- Higher supplementary and garbage charges raised in the first quarter compared with budget.
- Other income - resulting from June 2021 storm waste (trees debris) being processed and sold (\$1,875,000), and interest income on investments from Council's cash holdings receiving higher rates than forecast (\$144,000 favourable).
- Grants - Operating is \$635,000 favourable due to the June 2021 storm cost recovery.
- Grants - Capital is unfavourable to budget \$807,000 due the timing of projects, delivery of projects and when income (grants) can be recognised. This additional income is offset by the increased expenditure of \$24,400,000 from within the materials and services category of expenditure. The higher-than-expected expenditure relates to contractors undertaking storm recovery work relating to the June 2021 storm event.

Expenditure:

- Materials and Services is unfavourable to budget \$2,330,000 due to costs incurred in processing the June 2021 storm waste (tree debris) for sale.

Capital Works

The Capital Works Statement reports expenditure totalling \$3,138,000 for the three-month period to 30 September. Many of the projects are at the design stage and will be delivered throughout the remainder of the financial year. The capital works budget, including carry forwards for the 2022/23 financial year, totals \$69,678,065.

Council continues experiencing a shortage of contractors and materials. This is being experienced across the entire Local Government sector, and is providing a challenge for the sector to deliver capital works programs. The lack of contractors and materials is also driving up the costs of project delivery, as the remaining contractors delivering projects have an abundance of work and can submit tenders or quotes with considerable price premiums. This was evident in the Council adopted report at the 28 September Council meeting where a number of projects were cancelled and funds reallocated to others to ensure works could be completed.

Cash

The cash balance of \$50,791,000 (includes \$20,000,000 recorded as Other Financial Assets) is higher than the budgeted amount of \$44,384,000. The higher balance is due to the value of carry forward Capital Works projects carried forward into the 2021/22 financial year.

Council remains in a strong financial position at 30 September 2022.

Section 3 to 9 – Quarterly Report to 30 September 2022

Sections three to nine of the report provide Council an update on the progress of Council Plan actions for the 2022/23 financial year, and includes reports relating to People and Wellbeing (formerly People, Culture and Performance) and Risk Management. The report also includes a Governance Schedule and several other reports relating to Councillor expenses and activities.

Consultation and engagement

Officers from across the organisation have contributed to the preparation of the Quarterly Report.

Collaboration

Collaboration with other councils, governments and/or statutory bodies was not required in relation the Quarterly Report.

Innovation and continuous improvement

The Quarterly Report forms part of a legislative requirement, which assists Council to deliver on its priority of strong and reliable government, whilst achieving its vision by following good governance processes and providing transparency to the community.

The Quarterly Report is reviewed by the Executive and incorporates feedback from various levels of management to enhance readability and allow for continuous improvement.

Relevant law

This report has been prepared in accordance with Section 97 of the *Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)* and is compliant with the requirements. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards.

There are no human rights implications resulting from the completion of the Quarterly Report.

Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies

There are no regional, state or national plans or policies to be considered in relation to the subject matter of this report.

Relevant Council plans and policies

Sections 1 and 2 of the Quarterly Report, report on the financial status of Council with relation to the Council Budget. Section 3 of the Quarterly Report, reports Council's progress against each of the actions set out in the *Council Plan 2021-2031*.

Financial viability

The Quarterly Report provides information on Council's operating and financial performance for the quarter ending 30 September 2022. The financial statements within the report indicate that Council remains in a sound financial position.

Sustainability implications

In terms of financial sustainability, the financial statements within the report indicate that Council remains in a sound financial position.

Officer declaration of conflicts of interest

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in relation to the subject matter.

COR.4	CONTRACTS TO BE AWARDED AS AT NOVEMBER 2022
Officer:	Corinne Farley, Coordinator Contracts
Council Plan relationship:	4. Delivering strong and reliable government
Attachments:	Nil

Summary

This report provides details of contracts proposed to be awarded under a delegation from Council, from the date of the last report. Although this report recommends noting the power delegated to Council officers, Council has the power to:

- a) direct that the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) award the contract under the direct delegation from Council; or
- b) specifically delegate the power to the CEO.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Notes that the following contracts will be awarded by Council officers under delegated authority:**
 - (a) **C2023.17 Provision of Cold Premix/Hot Asphalt**
 - (b) **C2023.21 Gisborne Fields Stage 4 Landscaping**
2. **Grants delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer to award the following contracts:**
 - (a) **C2023.24 Supply Panel Quarry Products**

Background information

Council's delegated authority to its officers to award a contract is controlled by the financial value of the contract. The various financial limits of the authority are specified in Appendix six (6) of the Procurement Policy.

Opportunity to review delegated authority

This report provides Council with a summary of proposed contracts which are being advertised and indicates whether delegated authority to award the contract exists.

C2023.17 Provision of Cold Premix/Hot Asphalt

This contract is for the supply and delivery of Cold Premix and Hot Asphalt to the Woodend Operation Centre for Council use in the repair of roads around the Shire. This contract replaces the existing contract which expired on 11 November 2022. This is a three (3) year agreement with an option to extend for a further two (2) years.

The CEO has delegated authority to award this contract.

C2023.21 Gisborne Fields Stage 4 Landscaping

This contract is for Stage Four (4) landscaping works at Gisborne Fields. The works include the creation of a "kickabout" area with casual junior football goal posts, construction of

perimeter post-and-rail fencing and signage, intermittent seating facing inward to open grassed spaces in key locations, and shade canopy trees with pockets of low vegetation.

The CEO has delegated authority to award this contract.

C2023.24 Supply Panel Quarry Materials

This contract is a Supply Panel for the supply and delivery of road maintenance and construction quarry materials. This contract replaces the existing contract which expires on 31 January 2023. This is a three (3) year agreement with an option to extend for a further two (2) years.

The potential five-year contract exceeds the \$1 million financial delegation of the CEO.

Consultation and engagement

The nature of this report does not require any consultation or community engagement.

Collaboration

The nature of this report does not require collaboration with other councils, governments, or statutory bodies.

Innovation and continuous improvement

Council reviews its Procurement Policy regularly, in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*. These reviews consider options for innovation and are part of continuous improvement processes.

Relevant Law

The *Local Government Act 2020* provides for Council to delegate powers to staff, including the power to award contracts.

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment was not required in relation to the subject matter of this report.

Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies

There are no regional, state or national plans and policies that are relevant to the subject matter of this report.

Relevant Council plans and policies

The awarding of contracts is undertaken in accordance with the provisions of Council's Procurement Policy.

Financial viability

Funds for all contracts to be awarded, as listed above, have been provided in the operational and capital works budget and future annual budgets.

Sustainability implications

Council's Procurement Policy requires staff to procure goods, services and works from suppliers who actively employ sustainable practices in their operations.

Officer declaration of conflicts of interest

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in relation to the subject matter.

COR.5	MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA (MAV) OPTIONS PAPER
Officer:	Patricia Clive, Coordinator Governance
Council Plan relationship:	4. Delivering strong and reliable government
Attachments:	MAV Board Regional Groupings Review Options Paper ↓

Summary

The purpose of this report is to consider the Macedon Ranges Shire Council's regional grouping as part of the non-metropolitan Council's representation on the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Board.

Recommendation

That Council

- 1. Endorses the Non-metropolitan Option 1 as the preferred regional grouping for the MAV Board representatives; and**
- 2. Approves the Chief Executive Officer to submit a written response to MAV by 7 December 2022 outlining Council's preference.**

Background

Through the adoption of the MAV Rules 2022, the MAV State Council agreed to reduce the number of delegates elected to the Board from 12 to 10. Consequently, the number of regions need to be reduced to enable delegates to represent both metropolitan and non-metropolitan (rural and regional) Councils.

Under the previous MAV Rules the Board comprised of the President and 12 Board members – 6 from metropolitan grouped Councils and 6 from non-metropolitan grouped Councils. The agreed changes will result in the reduction of one representative from each grouping. The Macedon Ranges Shire Council is currently part of the Rural North Central non-metropolitan group consisting of the following seven Councils:

- Campaspe
- Central Goldfields
- Gannawarra
- Mount Alexander
- Greater Bendigo
- Loddon
- Macedon Ranges

The MAV Board is consulting on the proposed grouping of Councils, assigning each Council to one of the five regional groups of metropolitan Councils, or one of the five regional groups of non-metropolitan Councils. The details of the proposals are set out in Attachment 1.

The MAV has suggested two options for regional groupings of Councils based on the following principles:

- (1) Each region should be of equal electoral size (number of Councils)
- (2) Each region should comprise Councils with common interests, be these spatial or by nature of the Councils' operating environments
- (3) MAV regions should align with other representative structures that engage with Council

There are two options provided for groupings of both metropolitan and non-metropolitan Councils. Macedon Ranges Shire Council is considered a non-metropolitan Council.

Option 1 for non-metropolitan Councils is based on the Regional Development Victoria Regional Partnership existing groupings. This option has five groups ranging from 6 to 12 member Councils in each group. Four groups include 10 member Councils. In this option, Macedon Ranges Shire Council is in the Loddon, Campaspe and Mallee regional group consisting of the following 10 Councils:

- Campaspe
- Central Goldfields
- Gannawarra
- Greater Bendigo
- Loddon
- Macedon Ranges
- Mount Alexander
- Mildura
- Swan Hill
- Buloke

This grouping retains the seven members of the Rural North Central grouping, with the addition of Mildura, Swan Hill, and Buloke.

Option 2 for non-metropolitan Councils is not based on existing regional groupings. The groupings in this option tend to be more geographically aligned with the number of member Councils in each group ranging from 6 to 12 (each group has a different number of member Councils). It is proposed that Macedon Ranges Shire Council is in Central region which consists of the following 10 Councils: Campaspe

- Central Goldfields
- Greater Bendigo
- Loddon
- Macedon Ranges
- Mount Alexander
- Ballarat
- Hepburn
- Moorabool
- Pyrenees

This option proposes a change to the current Rural North Central region by including Councils to the south and west of Macedon Ranges (Ballarat, Hepburn, Moorabool, and Pyrenees) and to the north Gannawarra has been removed, and placed into the proposed Rural North West grouping.

Discussion

Option 1 is consistent with the traditional operating environment of Council due to our memberships of Loddon Mallee / Loddon Campaspe advisory committees and groups. This option continues the existing relationships with Councils in these committees and groups. It is proposed that this is the preferred option for Macedon Ranges Shire Council.

Option 2 includes the two major regional cities Ballarat and Bendigo. Traditionally the MAV groupings and other area committees have split these two cities so as to allow them to provide support and leadership to smaller Councils in their areas. For this reason it is preferred that Council supports Option 1.

Consultation and engagement

Consultation was undertaken with Chief Executive Officers and Mayors in the current MAV Rural North Central non-metropolitan grouping.

Collaboration

Not applicable to this report.

Innovation and continuous improvement

Not applicable to this report.

Relevant law

The Municipal Association of Victoria is subject to the *Municipal Association Act 1907*. Macedon Ranges Shire Council is a member of the Municipal Association of Victoria.

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment was not required in relation to the subject matter of this report.

Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies

The MAV representative groupings are a requirement of the MAV Rules. These Rules were recently amended by the State Council to reduce regional representatives on the Board from 12 to 10.

Relevant Council plans and policies

Not applicable.

Financial viability

Not applicable.

Sustainability implications

Not applicable.

Officer declaration of conflicts of interest

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in relation to the subject matter.



MAV Board Regional Groupings of Councils Review

Options Paper _____



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Foreword



From the MAV President

On behalf of the MAV Board, I am pleased to release this Options Paper and invite feedback from councils on the options presented for the new configuration of the MAV regional groupings of councils.

The need for the review of groupings, follows the decision of State Council to alter the number of regions from 12 to 10 and the number of delegates elected to the MAV Board as Directors from 12 to 10.

The regional groupings were last reviewed in the early 2000s. This review provides an opportunity to consider present-day requirements including how to group councils in a way that best serves the sector and the good governance of the MAV. In future, the MAV Rules 2022 provide for regional grouping reviews to be conducted at least once every six years.

Whilst there are many ways to configure the regional groupings, the Board's identification of options was underpinned by the following principles. The principles, applied as a whole and not on a hierarchy, provide that each regional grouping should have an equal number of councils; each regional grouping should comprise of councils with common interests; and regional groupings should align with other representative structures that engage with councils.

The MAV Rules 2022 continue the requirement for State Council to determine the number of regions, and the Board to determine the configuration of regional groupings and the member councils

within each group. The feedback from councils about location and appropriateness of the regional groupings will be a critical consideration to assist the Board to make its decision.

Given the next MAV Board elections will be held on 3 March 2023, the Board is aiming to make its decision about the regional groupings in December this year. This will provide time for the MAV delegates to prepare for the elections and enable the MAV to make the necessary preparations for the elections as required by the MAV Rules 2022.

As demonstrated during our recent review of the MAV Rules, the MAV Board is committed to consultation with our members and we look forward to engaging with councils about this review. We invite and encourage all councils to provide [feedback](#) on the options proposed for the metropolitan and non-metropolitan regional groupings by Wednesday 7 December 2022.


 A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'David Clark'.

Cr David Clark
MAV President

19 October 2022



1. Introduction

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Rules 2022 (the Rules) were made, subject to Governor in Council approval and publication in the Victoria Government Gazette, at the Special meeting of State Council on Friday 16 September 2022.¹

The Rules create an MAV Board comprised of the President and ten delegates elected to the Board in the office of Director – five from metropolitan councils and five from non-metropolitan councils. Under the former MAV Rules 2013, the MAV Board comprised the President and 12 Board Members – six from metropolitan and six from non-metropolitan councils.

In accordance with the Rules, the MAV Board must now consult participating member councils to determine the regional groupings of councils and classify each member council as belonging to:

- one of the five regional groupings of metropolitan councils; or
- one of the five regional groupings of non-metropolitan councils.

The MAV Board has appointed John Nevins, a former local government CEO and Victorian public sector senior executive, as the independent consultant

to make a recommendation to the Board about the regional groupings of councils following consultation with councils.

A Steering Committee has been appointed to support this project and report to the Board comprising of the MAV President Cr David Clark, and Cr Ruth Gstrein, Deputy President (Rural) and Cr Rohan Leppert, Deputy President (Metro).

This Options Paper invites councils to provide feedback about two options for the regional groupings of metropolitan councils and two options for the regional groupings of non-metropolitan councils.

The MAV Board intends to finalise the review of the regional groupings by making a determination about the classification of each council and the regional groupings in December. This will provide the required time to prepare for the MAV Board elections which will be held on 3 March 2023. Once the determination and classification has been made the Board must, under the Rules, notify each council within 14 days about the decision of the Board.

2. Review Principles

The MAV Board has resolved to apply the following principles in determining which regional grouping a council will belong to:

- each region should be of equal electoral size (number of councils)
- each region should comprise of councils with common interests, be these spatial or by nature of the councils' operating environment; and

- MAV regions should align with other representative structures that engage with councils.

These principles will be applied as a whole and not on a hierarchy.

The Board's intention is to create fairness and equity in the voting system across councils keeping in mind the primary purpose of the regional groupings is to elect the MAV Board Directors.

¹ The MAV Rules 2022 will commence on the day the Rules are published in the Victoria Government Gazette. Councils will be notified when this occurs.

3. Current Regional Groupings

Since the early 2000s there have been 12 MAV Board regions, six covering non-metropolitan Victoria and six covering metropolitan Melbourne. The existing groups are shown in [Attachment 1](#).

As demonstrated in *Table 1: Council Numbers - Current MAV Board Regions* (refer below), there is no consistency in the number of councils in the existing 12 regions. Apart from Mornington Peninsula's membership of the Interface Region, all regional groups are based on geographic location, with each group comprised of a cluster of councils that share municipal boundaries.

3.1 Metropolitan Regional Groupings

The existing six metropolitan regional groupings are made up of 31 councils. The regional groupings vary in resident population size from 672,601 to 989,433. The total combined resident population of these councils is 4,890,986, which represents 74.7 per cent of Victoria's resident population.² Three metropolitan regional groupings have five council members, two have six council members and one regional grouping has four council members.

The Metropolitan Southern Region has the smallest number of council members, with four councils, and represents 13.19 per cent of the Victorian resident population. The Interface Region with its six member councils represents

15.11 per cent of the Victorian resident population. These regions represent at least two per cent more of the Victorian resident population than the three metropolitan Board regions with five council members (Metropolitan Central, Metropolitan South-East, Metropolitan East).

It is of interest to note that the current Interface Region does not include all interface councils. A third of the interface councils are members of other metropolitan regions.

3.2 Non-metropolitan Regional Groupings

The existing six non-metropolitan regional groupings include 48 councils. The regions vary in resident population size from 132,880 to 511,979. In total they have a combined resident population of 1,656,108, which represents 25.3 per cent of the Victorian resident population.³ One non-metropolitan regional grouping has six council members, two regional groupings have seven council members, two regional groupings have eight council members and one regional grouping, Rural North-East, has 12 council members.

The non-metropolitan South Central Region with a resident population of 511,979, equal to 7.82 per cent of Victoria's resident population, is the largest non-metropolitan region based on resident population. This region comprises eight council members based around and incorporating Geelong.

Table 1: Council Numbers – Current MAV Board Regions

Metropolitan MAV Board Region	Number of Councils	Non-metropolitan MAV Board Region	Number of Councils
Metropolitan Central	5	Rural North-West	8
Metropolitan South-East	5	Rural South-West	7
Metropolitan East	5	Rural North-Central	7
Metropolitan Southern	4	Gippsland	6
Metropolitan West	6	Rural North-East	12
Interface	6	Rural South-Central	8
Metropolitan total	31	Non-metropolitan total	48
TOTAL COUNCILS			79

2. Data Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics: Regional Population, 2021

3. Data Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics: Regional Population, 2021



4. Other (Non-MAV Board) Regional Groupings

Victorian councils are members of various regional groups. Several of these are determined by the Victorian government. Most of them are established and driven by councils' shared interests and objectives.

In addition to State Upper and Lower House electoral boundaries (which do not align with council boundaries) examples of State Government-instigated council groupings include:

- Regional Development Victoria's nine Regional Partnerships.
- Department of Health's 28 primary care partnerships (PCPs) - 19 in rural Victoria and nine in the metropolitan Melbourne area.
- The six metropolitan regions under Plan Melbourne.

Most regional groups are driven by councils themselves. For the purposes of this Options Paper more than 20 council groupings were reviewed including:

- LeadWest comprising five councils in Melbourne's West
- G21 Geelong Region Alliance comprising five councils
- Interface Councils comprising ten councils that form a ring around metropolitan Melbourne

- M9 - an alliance of nine inner Melbourne councils
- South East Councils Climate Change Alliance (SECCCA) comprising nine councils
- Northern Councils Alliance (NCA) comprising seven councils
- Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (NAGA) comprising nine councils
- Regional Cities Victoria comprising ten councils
- Association of Bayside Municipalities comprising nine councils
- Timber Towns Victoria comprising 21 councils
- Rural Councils Victoria comprising 38 councils
- Murray River Group of Councils comprising six councils
- North East Local Government Network comprising 12 councils
- Eastern Region Group of Councils comprising six councils
- Inner Southern Metropolitan Mayors Forum comprising six councils.

The size and membership of each group is largely determined by the specific shared purpose(s) of the group.



5. Regional Grouping Options

The draft options for the regional groupings of councils are proposed in sections 5.1 and 5.2. These options have been informed by the following observations and considerations:

- a) the status quo must change. The Rules provide for ten regional groupings – five metropolitan and five non-metropolitan. This necessitates change to the existing 12 regions.
- b) there is no single right way to configure the regional groupings, multiple options exist. The MAV Board will apply the principles in section 2 above.
- c) region configurations do not preclude councils from participating in other regional groups in pursuit of delivering the best possible outcomes for their communities.
- d) spatial connectivity of a regions' member councils continues to be a dominant consideration. Except for Mornington Peninsula's membership of the current Interface Region, spatial connectivity and the associated community and economic interactions this connectivity provides, has been a key feature of existing regions.
- e) there is no consistent Victorian Government regional grouping of councils.
- f) individual councils are members of multiple different regional groups and associations.
- g) the membership of existing council groupings, including those established by the State Government, are primarily structured for the specific purpose or shared interest of each individual group.
- h) the existing regional groupings do not have an equal number of council members. The new groupings will also be unable to have an equal number of councils because 31 metropolitan councils and 48 non-metropolitan councils cannot be evenly divided into five groups each.
- i) there is not and cannot be consistency between metropolitan and non-metropolitan regions in terms of the number of councils in each region.
- j) within each option, some but not all regions can have equal numbers of councils and similar population sizes.
- k) with the Rules requiring each MAV Board Director to regularly meet with the other delegates and participating member councils within the region that they represent, the geographic and landscape features of eastern Victoria impacting the construct of the current Gippsland group of councils are still a significant consideration regardless of recent improvements in online connectivity.

5.1 Options: Metropolitan Regional Groupings

5.1.1 Metropolitan Option 1

This option is based on a variation of Plan Melbourne's six metropolitan regions, which, except for Mitchell Shire Council, align with the Metropolitan Partnership boundaries. Under this option, Plan Melbourne's Inner Metro Region would be merged with the Inner South East Region into a proposed "Inner Metropolitan South East Region". All other regions in this option match the Plan Melbourne regions. This would result in four metropolitan regional groupings each with six member councils and one metropolitan regional grouping with seven member councils.

The assessment of Option 1 against the review principles outlined in section 2 is as follows:

Principle: Each region should be of equal electoral size (number of councils)

Complies as best able. This option provides for four regional groupings with six councils each and one regional grouping with seven councils.



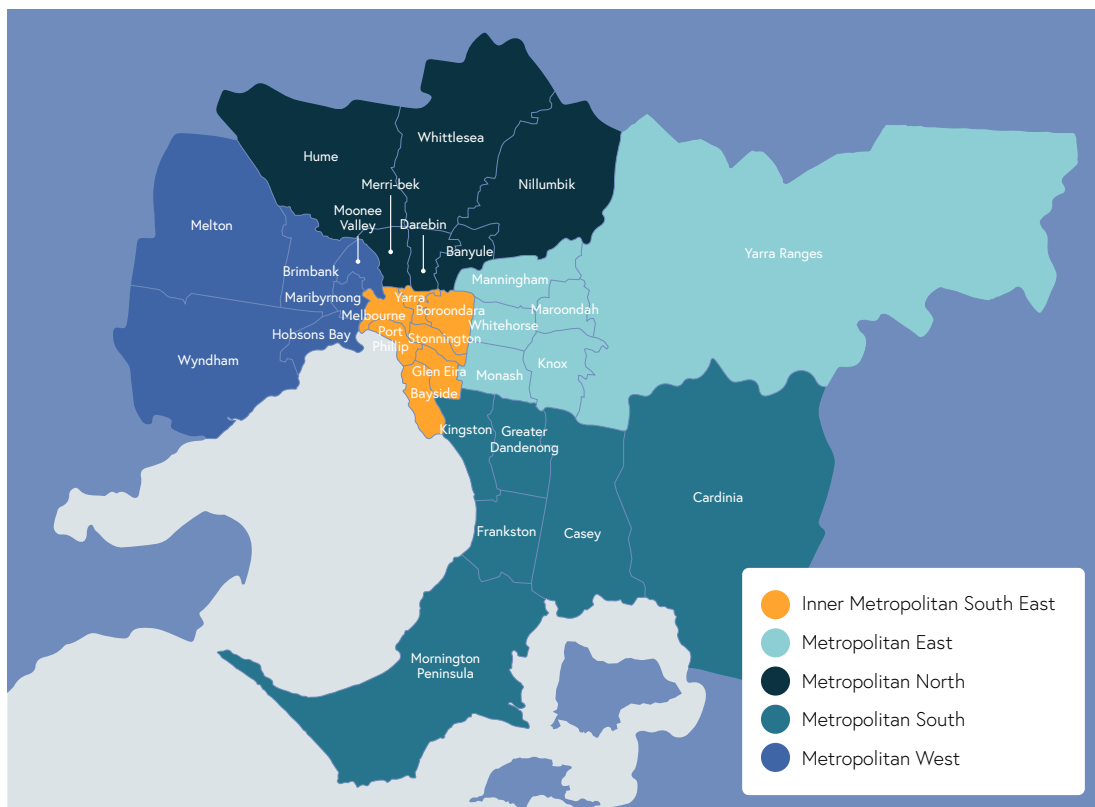
Principle: Each region should comprise of councils with common interests, be these spatial or by nature of the councils' operating environment

This option complies in that all councils in each regional grouping have spatial continuity with associated community and economic interactions across some or all of a region's members.

Principle: MAV regions should align with other representative structures that engage with councils

This option complies as it is based on Plan Melbourne's six metropolitan regions, with the only variation being the joining of two regions.

Metropolitan Option 1



Metropolitan Option 1	Member Councils	Number of Councils
Inner Metropolitan South East (IMSE)	Bayside, Boroondara, Glen Eira, Melbourne, Port Phillip, Stonnington, Yarra	7
Metropolitan East (ME)	Knox, Manningham, Maroondah, Monash, Whitehorse, Yarra Ranges	6
Metropolitan North (MN)	Banyule, Darebin, Hume, Merri-bek, Nillumbik, Whittlesea	6
Metropolitan South (MS)	Cardinia, Casey, Frankston, Greater Dandenong, Kingston, Mornington Peninsula	6
Metropolitan West (MW)	Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melton, Moonee Valley, Wyndham	6
TOTAL COUNCILS		31



5.1.2 Metropolitan Option 2

This option proposes:

- the Metropolitan East Region be the same as Metropolitan South in Option 1
- expansion of the existing Metropolitan Central Region to include Moonee Valley and Maribyrnong Councils
- reconfiguration of the remaining three regions.

This option provides for four regions with six councils and one region with seven councils.

The assessment against the review principles outlined in section 2 is as follows:

Principle: Each region should be of equal electoral size (number of councils)

Complies as best able. This option provides for four regional groupings with six councils each and one regional grouping with seven councils.

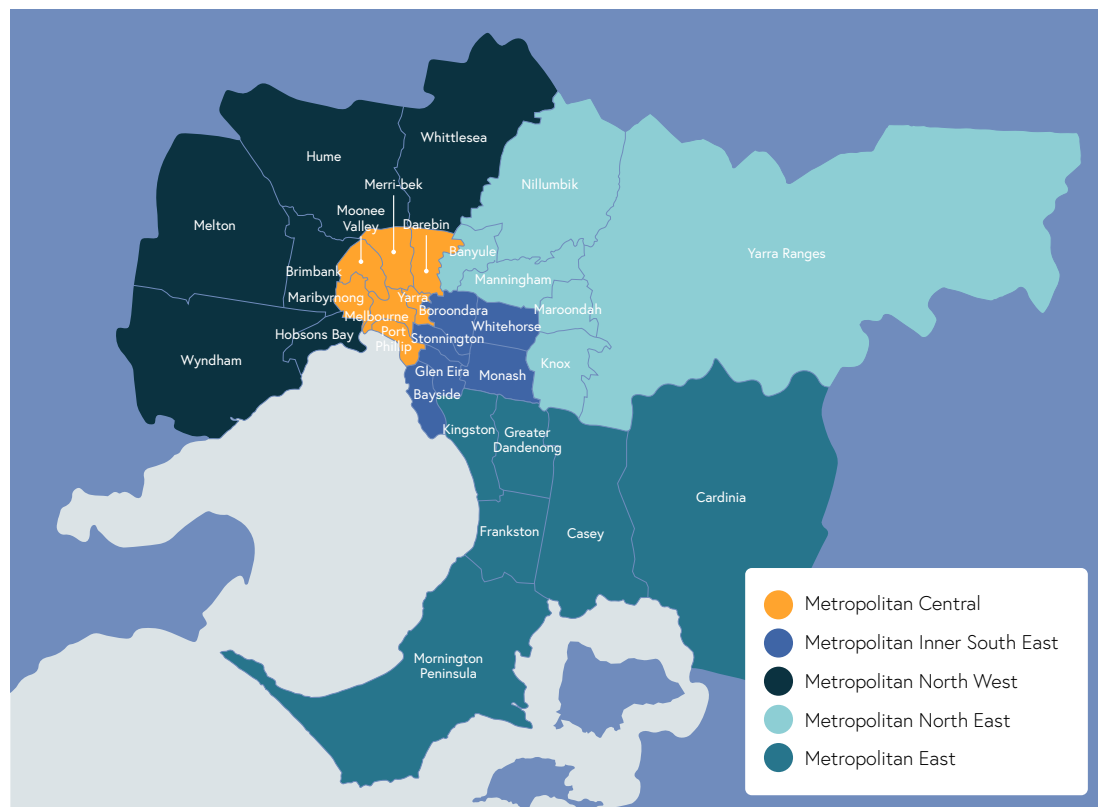
Principle: Each region should comprise of councils with common interests, be these spatial or by nature of the councils' operating environment

This option complies as all councils in each regional grouping have spatial continuity with associated community and economic interactions across some or all of a region's members.

Principle: MAV regions should align with other representative structures that engage with councils

This option is not based on a single existing state or local government grouping of councils. It draws on a range of groupings of metropolitan councils.

Metropolitan Option 2





Metropolitan Option 2	Member Councils	Number of Councils
Metropolitan Central (MC)	Darebin, Maribyrnong, Melbourne, Merri-bek, Moonee Valley, Port Phillip, Yarra	7
Metropolitan North East (MNE)	Banyule, Knox, Manningham, Maroondah, Nillumbik, Yarra Ranges	6
Metropolitan East (ME)	Cardinia, Casey, Frankston, Greater Dandenong, Kingston, Mornington Peninsula	6
Metropolitan Inner South East (MISE)	Bayside, Boroondara, Glen Eira, Monash, Stonnington, Whitehorse	6
Metropolitan North West (MNW)	Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Hume, Melton, Whittlesea, Wyndham	6
TOTAL COUNCILS		31

Metropolitan Options Comparison vs Current

Option 1

Option 2

Current Metropolitan Regions*

MAV Board Region	Number of Member Councils	MAV Board Region	Number of Member Councils	MAV Board Region	Number of Member Councils
IMSE	7	MC	7	MC	5
ME	6	MNE	6	MSE	5
MN	6	ME	6	ME	5
MS	6	MISE	6	MS	4
MW	6	MNW	6	MW	6
				I	6
TOTAL COUNCILS	31	TOTAL COUNCILS	31	TOTAL COUNCILS	31

*Refer to Attachment 1



5.2 Options: Non-metropolitan Regional Groupings

5.2.1 Non-metropolitan Option 1

This option is based on the nine Regional Development Victoria's (RDV) Regional Partnerships and proposes retaining RDV's Gippsland Region and combines the other eight regions to form four regions as follows:

- Goulburn and Ovens Murray Regional Partnership Regions combined.
- Loddon Campaspe and Mallee Regional Partnership Regions combined.
- Wimmera Southern Mallee and Central Highlands Regional Partnerships combined, excluding Golden Plains.
- Great South Coast and Barwon Regional Partnership Regions combined, with Golden Plains included.

The assessment against the review principles outlined in section 2 is as follows:

Principle: Each region should be of equal electoral size (number of councils)

Arguably complies as most reasonably practical. This option delivers one regional grouping (Gippsland) with six councils, three regional groupings with ten councils each and one regional grouping with 12 councils.

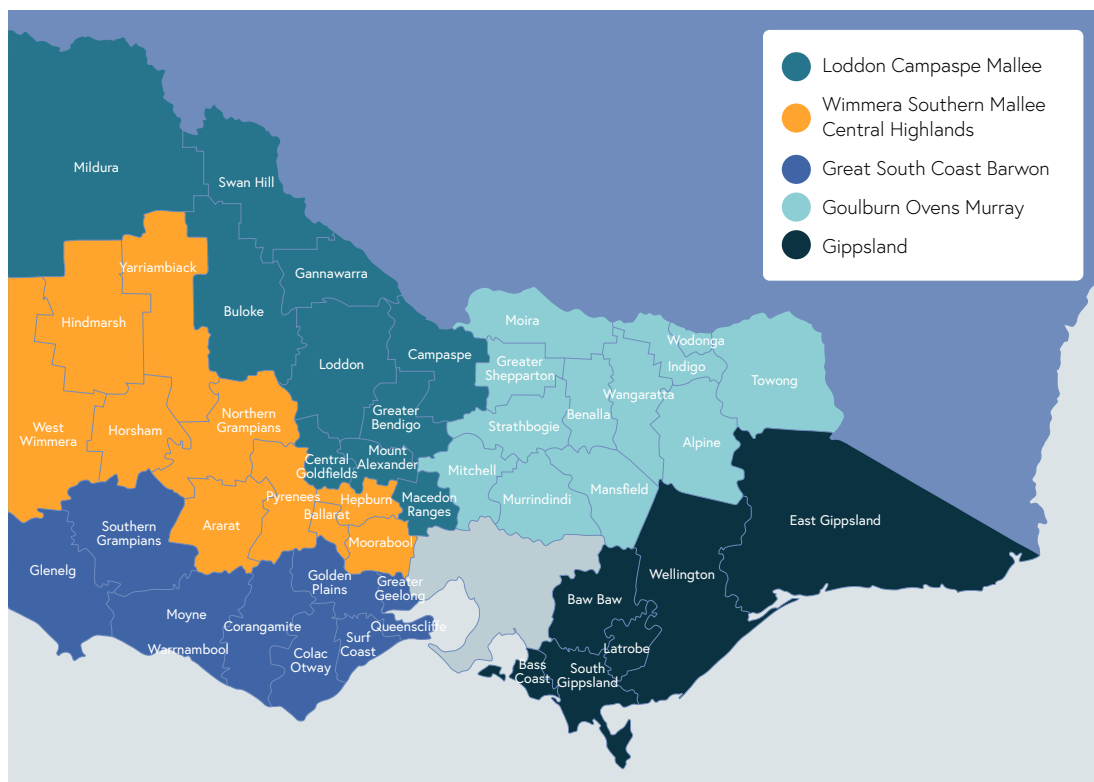
Principle: Each region should comprise of councils with common interests, be these spatial or by nature of the councils' operating environment

This option complies as all councils in each regional grouping have spatial continuity with associated community and economic interactions across some or all of a region's members.

Principle: MAV regions should align with other representative structures that engage with councils

This option substantially complies as it is based on Regional Development Victoria's (RDV) nine Regional Partnership Regions. The Gippsland Region is unchanged and the other eight RDV Regions have been combined to form four MAV Board regional groupings with Golden Plains shifting to a different region.

Non-Metropolitan Option 1





Non-Metropolitan Option 1	Member Councils	Number of Councils
Gippsland (G)	Bass Coast, Baw Baw, East Gippsland, Latrobe, South Gippsland, Wellington	6
Goulburn Ovens Murray (GOM)	Alpine, Benalla, Greater Shepparton, Indigo, Mansfield, Mitchell, Moira, Murrindindi, Strathbogrie, Towong, Wangaratta, Wodonga	12
Great South Coast Barwon (GSCB)	Colac Otway, Corangamite, Glenelg, Golden Plains, Greater Geelong, Moyne, Queenscliffe, Southern Grampians, Surf Coast, Warrnambool	10
Loddon Campaspe Mallee (LCM)	Buloke, Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Gannawarra, Loddon, Greater Bendigo, Macedon Ranges, Mildura, Mount Alexander, Swan Hill	10
Wimmera Southern Mallee Central Highlands (WSMCH)	Ararat, Ballarat, Hepburn, Hindmarsh, Horsham, Moorabool, Northern Grampians, Pyrenees, West Wimmera, Yarriabiack	10
TOTAL COUNCILS		48



5.2.2 Non-metropolitan Option 2

This option proposes:

- the Gippsland and Rural North East regions are the same as Option 1.
- a different configuration for the three other MAV Board regions.

The assessment against the review principles outlined in section 2 is as follows:

Principle: Each region should be of equal electoral size (number of councils)

All regional groupings under this option have a different number of member councils, with the numbers ranging from six to 12.

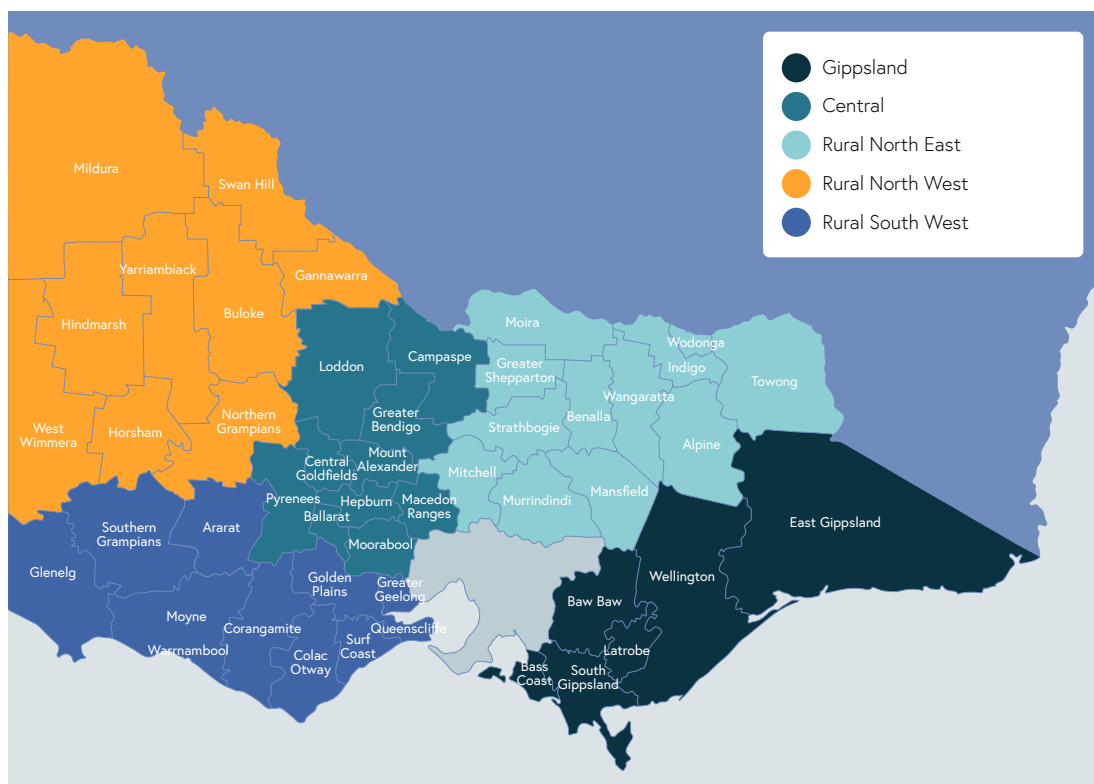
Principle: Each region should comprise of councils with common interests, be these spatial or by nature of the councils' operating environment

This option complies in that all councils in each regional grouping have spatial continuity with associated community and economic interactions across some or all of a region's members.

Principle: MAV regions should align with other representative structures that engage with councils

This option is not based on a single existing State or local government grouping of councils. It draws on a range of groupings of non-metropolitan councils. The Gippsland and Rural North East Regions reflect the existing regional groupings.

Non-Metropolitan Option 2





Non-Metropolitan Option 2	Member Councils	Number of Councils
Central (C)	Ballarat, Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Greater Bendigo, Hepburn, Loddon, Macedon Ranges, Moorabool, Mount Alexander, Pyrenees	10
Gippsland (G)	Bass Coast, Baw Baw, East Gippsland, Latrobe, South Gippsland, Wellington	6
Rural North East (RNE)	Alpine, Benalla, Greater Shepparton, Indigo, Mansfield, Mitchell, Moira, Murrindindi, Strathbogie, Towong, Wangaratta, Wodonga	12
Rural North West (RNW)	Buloke, Gannawarra, Hindmarsh, Horsham, Mildura, Northern Grampians, Swan Hill, West Wimmera, Yarriambiack	9
Rural South West (RSW)	Ararat, Colac Otway, Corangamite, Glenelg, Golden Plains, Greater Geelong, Moyne, Queenscliffe, Southern Grampians, Surf Coast, Warrnambool	11
TOTAL COUNCILS		48

Non-Metropolitan Options Comparison vs Current

Option 1

Option 2

*Current Non-Metropolitan Regions**

MAV Board Region	Number of Member Councils	MAV Board Region	Number of Member Councils	MAV Board Region	Number of Member Councils
G	6	C	10	G	6
GOM	12	G	6	RNC	7
GSCB	10	RNE	12	RNE	12
LCM	10	RNW	9	RNW	8
WSMCH	10	RSW	11	RSC	8
				RSW	7
TOTAL COUNCILS	48	TOTAL COUNCILS	48	TOTAL COUNCILS	48

*Refer to Attachment 1



How to Provide Feedback

Our Members are invited to provide feedback about this Options Paper following a council resolution or if there is no resolution by responding via correspondence from the Mayor or Chief Executive Officer.

Written feedback is requested by 5pm on Wednesday 7 December 2022 and can be emailed to John Nevins via the email address mavboardregions@mav.asn.au.

The written feedback will be published on the MAV's Members extranet site unless requested otherwise.

The MAV Board will consider all feedback. The regional groupings will be determined at a Board meeting in December. All MAV Members and MAV delegates will be advised of the outcome within 14 days of the decision being made.

Queries can be directed to John Nevins by [email](#) or on **0411 191 918**.

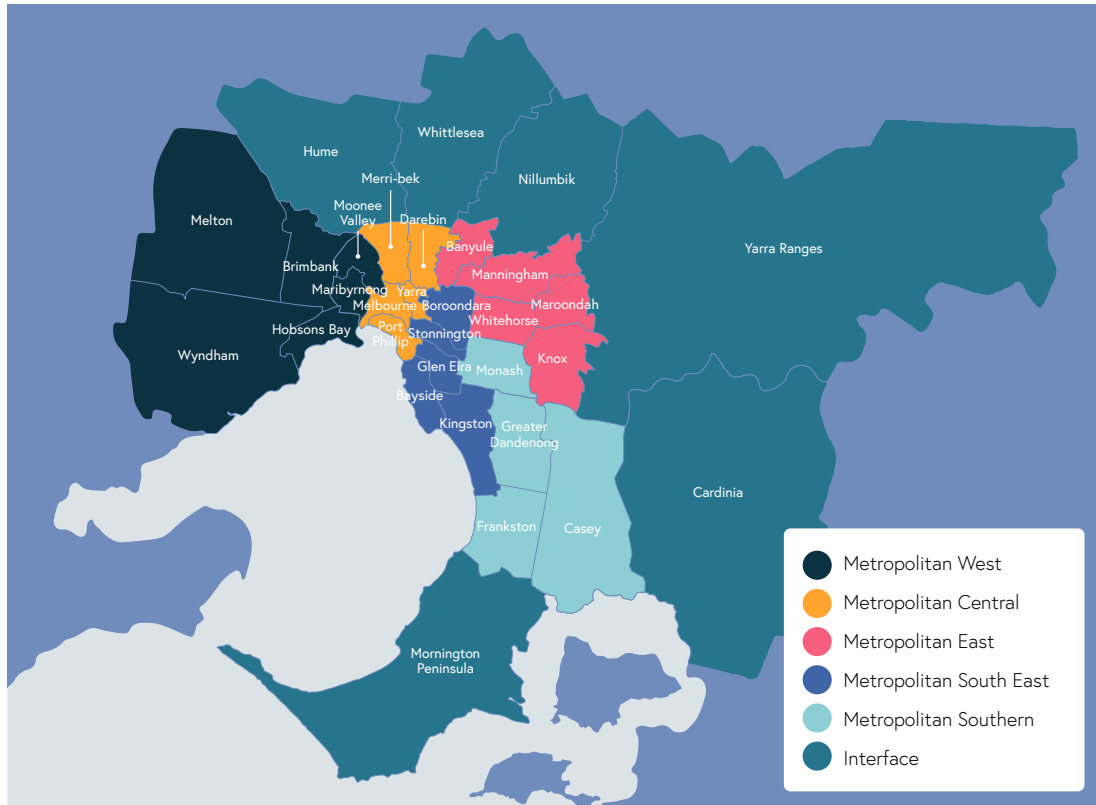
A copy of this Options Paper and the MAV Rules 2022 are available at mav.asn.au.



Attachment 1

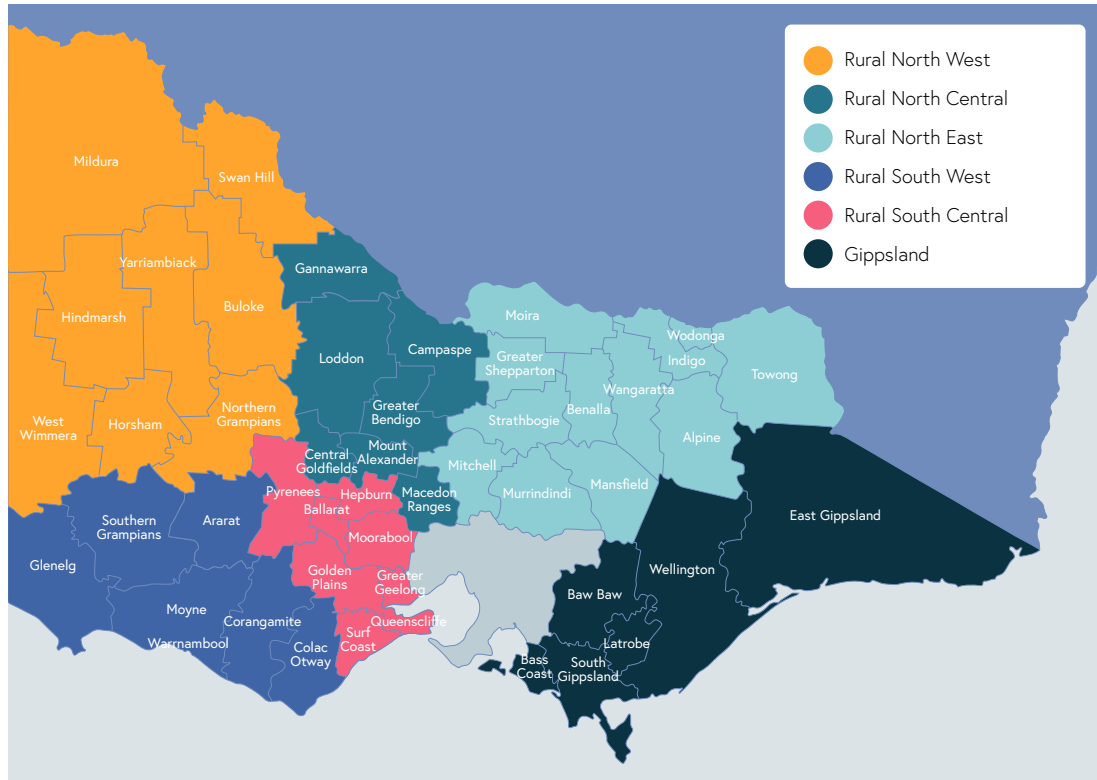
Current MAV Board Regions

Metropolitan Regions





Non-metropolitan Regions





Municipal Association of Victoria
GPO Box 4326, Melbourne 3001
O3 9667 5555
inquiries@mav.asn.au
www.mav.asn.au

14 DIRECTOR COMMUNITY REPORTS

COM.1	RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN - FIRST YEAR REVIEW
Officer:	Maria Loriente, Community Partnerships Officer
Council Plan relationship:	1. Connecting communities
Attachments:	Reconciliation Action Plan - First Year Review - Detailed Progress Table ↓

Summary

This progress report outlines how Council is tracking against the INNOVATE Reconciliation Action Plan 2021-2023 (RAP) in the first 12 months of this two-year plan. It highlights achievements against the RAP and challenges in achieving some actions within the designated timelines.

Recommendation**That Council**

- 1. Notes the actions that have been undertaken in the first year of the INNOVATE Reconciliation Action Plan 2021-2023, as detailed in this report.**

Background

Council endorsed the RAP at the Scheduled Council Meeting on 22 September 2021. In March 2022, as part of the opening weekend of Council's Autumn Festival, the RAP was officially launched by the Mayor at three events on each of the three Traditional Owner Lands that Macedon Ranges Shire Council is located on. Led by the respective Traditional Owners, the launches involved a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony.

Council officers have been working towards the actions listed in the RAP and details of progress forms the body of this report.

Discussion

A detailed record of progress for each action and associated deliverables in the RAP can be found in the **Attachment** to this report.

Summary of highlights 2021-22

- Successfully launched RAP across the three countries, well attended by community
- Two Reconciliation Week Events – Theme “Be Brave. Make Change”
- NAIDOC Week – Screening of The Drover’s Wife: The Legend of Molly Johnson at the Kyneton Town Hall
- Cultural Safety in the Workplace training – two sessions with over 120 staff attending
- Cultural Safety training provided for Councillors and Executive Leadership team.
- Development and implementation of Acknowledgment of Country and Welcome to Country Protocols Fact Sheet

- Commencement of Conversation Circles, a collaboration with Environment team, Parks Victoria and North Central Catchment Management Authority
- Supporting the commencement of a community driven reconciliation group - Truth and Reconciliation Action Group (TRAG)

Guiding RAP Principals

In accordance with the structure recommended by Reconciliation Australia, RAP actions were developed based on the core pillars of Relationships, Respect, Opportunities and Governance. In providing a 12 month progress report on Council's RAP, achievements and challenges are being presented under these four headings.

Relationships

Officers across the organisation have been working with the three Traditional Owner Groups on a project-by-project basis. In particular, Council's Environment team have developed very good working relationships with Traditional Owners on a number of 'Caring for Country' projects.

However, ongoing regular engagement has been challenging. While the Macedon Ranges relates to three different Traditional Owner Groups, their organisations are physically located in Melbourne (Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation), Bendigo (Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation) and Broadford (Taungurung Land and Waters Council). Additionally, there are no Aboriginal Controlled Organisations based in the Macedon Ranges. Officers are currently exploring a process whereby staff will meet with Traditional Owner Organisations on their Country on a regular basis, to discuss and work on issues of mutual interest.

Council delivered two events for National Reconciliation Week which demonstrated a strong community interest in Reconciliation:

- *Community Talk: Truth-telling and Reconciliation held on 31 May, at Kyneton Town Hall, a Public talk, with guest speakers Brent Ryan, Assistant Director Education, Yoorrook Justice Commission and Nicole Findlay, CEO, Reconciliation Victoria. Attendance: 51*
- *Community Round Table Tuesday held 7 June, at Woodend Community Centre with Dennis Batty, Council's RAP Working Group Chair and a Taungurung, Gunai/Kurnai and Palawa man. He shared his personal story before facilitating table conversations. Attendance: 41*

The Community Round Table event resulted in the seeding of a community led group known as Truth and Reconciliation Action Group (TRAG), with membership of approximately 30 residents (18 active members attending regular meetings).

Respect

Cultural Safety Training was offered to all staff, members of the Executive Leadership Team and Councillors. A plan for the ongoing delivery of Cultural Safety training is being developed, as well as the provision of supporting resources.

The Community Development team have initiated monthly lunchbox sessions, focussing on Working with our First Nations People. These sessions provide an opportunity for open dialogue, sharing of information and guest speakers. These sessions will be driven largely by the learning needs and interest areas of staff. The sessions are providing an opportunity to discuss issues and learn how Council is progressing with implementing RAP actions, the

importance of Truth-telling and dealing with the confronting stories, and how staff members can contribute to making the workplace culturally safe.

Council's *Protocols for Recognising Traditional Owners/Custodians* document is progressively being updated. The document is being transformed into a number of fact sheets, to be made available to staff and community. To date, one fact sheet has been developed and implemented, with drafts in progress for the others. This fact sheet has supported the implementation of Acknowledgement of Country protocols across the organisation, including print material, meetings, digital signatures, external websites and intranet, leaving only social media sites to be completed. At public meetings and events, staff or senior leaders provide the Acknowledgement of Country and for appropriate public events, a Welcome to Country is booked with the appropriate Traditional Owner Group.

NAIDOC Week celebrated our First Nations People in July 2022 with the theme GET UP! STAND UP! and SHOW UP! Council facilitated a free screening of *The Drover's Wife: The Legend of Molly Johnson* at Kyneton Town Hall. This thought provoking and truth-telling film, generated significant conversation and provided insight into previously untold history of First Nations People. Registered attendance was 332, with 100 staying for afternoon tea and many adding their names to be informed of future RAP activities and events.

Opportunities

Implementation of the action to improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development has been delayed. Officers are developing culturally safe processes to allow our Indigenous staff to identify if they feel safe to do so. Indigenous staff will then support the development of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment and retention strategy to be in place by June 2023.

The action to Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes has seen changes to Council's procurement practices, as identified in Council's Procurement Policy 2021. Barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses have been removed. Expenditure to known First Nations suppliers for the 2021/2022 financial year was over \$91,000.

An investigation into development of the Lancefield Megafauna site into an Interpretation Centre has determined this not feasible. Further opportunities for economic and educational outcomes will continue to be sought, however Council will continue to support the Megafauna Festival in October annually.

There have been a number of activities in establishing natural resource management opportunities, led by the Environment team. The following reflects the work they have achieved:

Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation

- Conservation Circle with Parks Victoria and North Central Catchment Management Authority
- Attendance at the Aboriginal Water Assessment for the Upper Coliban
- Discussions around cultural burning with Djandak
- Cultural food planting at Malmsbury Common with Djandak

Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation

- Barringo Reserve – detailed cultural assessment

- Barrm Birrm – engagement over cultural heritage assessment (pending)
- Engagement of Narrap Team for works along waterway reserves

Taungurung Land and Waters Council

- Engagement over cultural interpretation signage at Bald Hill
- Engagement over tracks at Black Hill Reserve

Governance

The RAP Working Group (RWG) has been established to provide oversight of and support to implementing RAP actions. The RWG commenced in December 2021 and has continued regularly thereafter. The group comprises internal staff and two external First Nations representatives. Its terms of reference remain in draft form - while these have been presented to all three Traditional Owner groups, they have yet to be endorsed by all.

Each member of the group reports on RAP achievements, challenges and learnings. The RWG is committed to achieving RAP actions genuinely and authentically, to progress Reconciliation.

As the RAP moves into its second year, the reconciliation journey continues and officers are now commencing the preparation for developing the next RAP.

Conclusion

In the 12 months since the RAP was endorsed by Council, a significant number of actions have been implemented on and before time. The Macedon Ranges community, in particular, has embraced Council's RAP, as evidenced by their support of the launches, Reconciliation Week events and the NAIDOC Week event.

However, a combination of factors, including COVID restrictions and staff resourcing challenges, have seen delays in the implementation of some actions. The RWG is aware of these delays and is encouraged by Council's commitment to ensure all actions will be implemented.

Consultation and engagement

Both formal RWG meetings and informal meetings with individual RWG members has formed the basis of consultation, as strategies to deliver RAP actions are formed and implemented. The Chair of the RWG, in particular, has been generous with his time in providing advice on the RAP's implementation.

Monthly Lunchbox Sessions with staff have provided an opportunity to provide updates on RAP implementation, as well as support and reinforce the practice of protocols for recognising Traditional Owners. The staff attending are very engaged and frequently share their own learnings with the group.

As part of the Community Round Table event during Reconciliation Week, members of the community were involved in conversations about what Reconciliation looks like for them. These conversations revealed an overwhelming desire for more information (including signage) about our Traditional Owners. The desire for more information included interest in opportunities to engage with local Truth-telling. Officers have noted these requests, and will seek to provide these opportunities as part of future programming

Collaboration

A representative from First Peoples – State Relations Group (Department of Premier and Cabinet) is a member of the RWG. She provides advice to the RWG to assist with implementing RAP actions.

Innovation and continuous improvement

As Council officers continue to implement RAP year two actions and begin preparations for the development of a new RAP, expert advice will be sought in 2023 to improve delivery of current and future actions.

Relevant law

A Gender Impact Assessment has been conducted in relation to the subject matter of this report, to ensure Council meets its obligations under the *Gender Equity Act 2020*. It was determined that this progress report concerning Council's Reconciliation Action Plan could be defined as gender neutral, as RAP actions have not actively considered gender as a focus, but are designed to deliver a range of outcomes for First Nations Peoples that do not include or exclude on the basis of gender.

Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies

Both the federal and state government have policies in place that, while not directly impacting on Council's RAP, provide a supportive policy environment for its implementation. They include:

- The Australian Government's proposal to introduce a First Nation's Voice to parliament; and
- The Victorian Government's policy of developing a Treaty with Traditional Owners and Victoria's First Nations Peoples in partnership with the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria and through the establishment of the Yoo-rook Justice Commission.

Relevant Council plans and policies

Council's RAP is associated with the Connecting Communities strategic objective. It is in line with the strategic priority of continuing to deliver improved outcomes for and recognition of our First Nations People.

Financial viability

The implementation of RAP actions is resourced within Council's allocated budget.

Sustainability implications

There are no sustainability implications impacted by the outcomes of this report.

Officer declaration of conflicts of interest

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in relation to the subject matter.

INNOVATE Reconciliation Action Plan 2021-2023 (RAP) Actions

RELATIONSHIPS

Building strong relationships with Traditional Owners and local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples based on trust and respect is foundational for advancing reconciliation. It enables greater understanding and partnerships and ensures that any actions are relevant and meaningful. Facilitating respectful relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and all Macedon Ranges residents supports a more inclusive community.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	STATUS	TIMELINE	PROGRESS COMMENTS	UPDATED RESPONSIBILITY
1. Develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, communities and organisations to support positive outcomes	Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.	In Progress	June 2022	Written proposal to meet twice yearly on Country with each of the Traditional Owners has been sent to all Traditional Owner organisations. Awaiting responses.	Community Partnerships Officer
	Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Planning	June 2023	This action will develop from proposal above and should be achieved within the timeline.	Community Partnerships Officer
2. Celebrate and participate in National Reconciliation Week by providing opportunities to build and maintain relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and other Australians	Organise a community National Reconciliation Week event each year to raise awareness and engagement in our local community.	In Progress	27 May-3 June 2022-23	Planning and implementation for 2022 complete. Two main events. 31.05.22 Community talk: Truth-telling and Reconciliation - Attendance:51 Community Members plus staff, management and executive. 07.06.22 Community Round Table - Attendance:41 Community Members plus staff, management and executive and Councillors.	Community Partnerships Officer
	Register our National Reconciliation Week events on Reconciliation Australia's National Reconciliation Week website.	In Progress	27 May-3 June 2022-23	Two events registered and listed for 2022	Community Partnerships Officer
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external National Reconciliation Week event.	In Progress	27 May-3 June 2022-23	RAP Working Group members invited to all Reconciliation Events	Chair, RAP Working Group
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate National Reconciliation Week.	In Progress	27 May-3 June 2022-23	Invitation issued to all staff, management, executive and Councillors to participate in events.	Manager Community Strengthening
	Provide opportunities for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to participate with their cultures and communities during National Reconciliation Week	Delayed	27 May- 3 June annually	General invitation issued to all staff - we have not yet provided an avenue for First Nations staff members to identify. With a new Manager in People Risk and Wellbeing, this will progress and is scheduled to be in place by December 2022.	Manager Community Strengthening
	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	In Progress	27 May- 3 June annually	Reconciliation Week 2022 - information sent to all staff via email and included in Weekly CEO Message and all staff meeting.	Manager Community Strengthening
	Explore hosting a youth event during National Reconciliation Week	In Progress	27 May- 3 June annually	Five members of Youth Services Leaders in the Loop participated in Community Round Table events and are keen to continue to be involved in the action group and planning for events moving forward.	Coordinator, Youth Development
	Develop a model and partnerships for supporting football-netball clubs in Macedon Ranges shire to conduct an Indigenous round, as part of Reconciliation Week.	Planning	December 2022	Planning commenced with Sport & Recreation Team, Bendigo Football Netball League and Riddell District Football League. Riddells District Football Netball League have committed to planning an inaugural Indigenous Round in partnership with Council for the 2023 season.	Community Partnerships Officer

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	STATUS	TIMELINE	PROGRESS COMMENTS	UPDATED RESPONSIBILITY
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Develop, implement and review a communications plan to promote our Reconciliation Action Plan to all internal and external stakeholders.	Completed	November 2021	Communication Plan developed as part of the RAP Launch on all three Traditional Owner Countries in March 2022.	Community Partnerships Officer
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publically by developing a Council-endorsed statement of reconciliation that is displayed on our website and in our customer service centres.	In Progress	November 2021	A dedicated Reconciliation page has been created on the website, other communication and print collateral to be displayed in public spaces is in process of being designed and created.	Community Partnerships Officer
	Implement strategies to engage our staff in reconciliation.	In Progress	June 2022	Monthly Lunchbox session commenced in October 2022, lead by Community Development with staff input into areas of interest, topics for discussion and guest speaker invitations.	Manager Community Strengthening
	Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	In Progress	December 2022	Discussions have occurred with external organisations, key stakeholders and community groups regarding this issue. The development of a community led group will further add to this and Council Officers will continue to have involvement.	Manager Community Strengthening
	Collaborate with RAP and other like-minded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation including identifying collaborative opportunities with Reconciliation Victoria.	In Progress	December 2022	To date we have met with Sunbury Cowbaw Health and are seeking other opportunities with other RAP organisations to work collaboratively. RAP Circle groups have been established by Reconciliation Australia and staff will participate to connect with networks.	Manager Community Strengthening
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Conduct a review of Human Resources policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	In Progress	January 2022	Collation/discovery of the organisations policy/procedures etc. has been completed and tabled with executive. A new code of conduct and policy statements will be developed; with a new Manager in People Risk and Wellbeing, this will progress and is scheduled to be in place by December 2022.	Manager People, Risk and Wellbeing
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.	In Progress	June 2022	Officers are developing culturally safe processes to allow our Indigenous staff to identify if they feel safe to do so; with a new Manager in People Risk and Wellbeing, this policy development will progress and is scheduled to be in place by December 2022.	Manager People, Risk and Wellbeing
	Develop, implement and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.	In Progress	June 2022	Council has an Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and with the development of an anti-discrimination policy and engagement with our Indigenous staff, this will be developed by June 2023.	Manager People, Risk and Wellbeing
	Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.	In Progress	June 2022	Cultural Safety Training has been and will continue to be made available for staff and senior leaders. This training incorporates information about the effects of Racism.	Manager People, Risk and Wellbeing

RESPECT
 Respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights acknowledges their position as Traditional Owners of the land and First Nations people. Respect is key to building strong relationships and by demonstrating and building respect in the community it will enable all Macedon Ranges residents to appreciate and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, histories and cultures.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	STATUS	TIMELINE	PROGRESS COMMENTS	UPDATED RESPONSIBILITY
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	Review the cultural learning needs within our organisation.	Completed	June 2022	A review of the organisations training needs has been completed.	Manager People, Risk and Wellbeing
	Consult with local Traditional Owners on the development and implementation of a cultural learning strategy that incorporates Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung cultural awareness training.	Planning	June 2023		Manager People, Risk and Wellbeing
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness training strategy which is integrated into Council's Learning and Development Strategy.	Planning	June 2023		Manager People, Risk and Wellbeing
	Raise awareness of, and provide training on, Land Use Activity Agreements from the Recognition and Settlement Agreements and cultural heritage requirements under the Cultural Heritage Act.	Planning	June 2023		Manager People, Risk and Wellbeing
	Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, Human Resource managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.	Planning	June 2023		Manager People, Risk and Wellbeing
	Incorporate awareness of cultural protocols into our corporate induction process.	Planning	June 2023		Manager People, Risk and Wellbeing
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Implement, review and update our Organisational Protocols for recognising Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples.	In Progress	February 2022	Work on the Fact Sheets has commenced. Fact Sheet: Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country has been published and others are in progress.	Manager Community Strengthening
	Have an Acknowledgment of Country on all staff email signatures.	Completed	June 2023	This is in place for all staff with a Digital Signature Policy and Corporate email signature template which must be used by all staff.	Manager Communication and Engagement
	Develop a standardised Acknowledgment of Country to be used across all kindergartens.	Completed	June 2023	Acknowledgement of Country occurs with each kindergarten group daily in each of Council's eight kindergarten services.	Manager Children, Youth & Family Services
	Have an Acknowledgment of Country on all online external-facing communications (e.g. tourism website, Council website, intranet, social media site page guideline areas etc.).	In Progress	June 2023	In place across all sites and reviewed quarterly; it is still to be rolled out on all social media platforms.	Manager Communication and Engagement
	Have an Acknowledgment of Country on Council print material where possible.	Completed	June 2022	In place - reviewed quarterly and with new content.	Manager Communication and Engagement
	Staff and senior leaders provide an Acknowledgment of Country or other appropriate protocols at all public events.	Completed	February 2022	In place and protocols followed at all public events.	Manager Communication and Engagement
	Increase staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgment of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	In Progress	February 2022	Process to review protocols and transfer into Fact Sheets has commenced, Fact Sheet: Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country has been published and distributed to all staff across the organisation. This is reinforced in Meetings, and all staff meetings.	Manager Community Strengthening
	Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	Completed	June 2023	In place. Fact Sheet identifies each Traditional Owner Organisation contact details and when to engage.	Community Partnerships Officer
	Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	In Progress	June 2023	In place and followed by leaders and staff across the organisation.	Community Partnerships Officer

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	STATUS	TIMELINE	PROGRESS COMMENTS	UPDATED RESPONSIBILITY
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	In consultation with Traditional Owner groups, organise at least one internal and external NAIDOC Week event.	In Progress	June 2022	The Drover's Wife the Legend of Molly Johnson screened at Kyneton Town Hall. Attendance: 332 Community Members plus staff, management and executive and Councillors. Approximately 100 people stayed for afternoon tea and engaged in conversation.	Manager Community Wellbeing
	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	In Progress	June 2023	Invitation sent to all RAP Working Group members.	Chair, RAP Working Group
	Review Human Resources policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	Not Started	June 2023		Manager People, Risk and Wellbeing
	Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff.	In Progress	June 2023	Staff invited by CEO to attend NAIDOC event in 2022.	Manager People, Risk and Wellbeing

OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities, particularly related to economic development, are central to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' self-determination. Increasing economic opportunities will support individual autonomy and a greater ability for people to determine their future. Creating opportunities will also allow Council and the community to benefit from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' unique histories, cultures and knowledge systems. Respect is key to building strong relationships and by demonstrating and building respect in the community it will enable all Macedon Ranges residents to appreciate and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, histories and cultures.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	STATUS	TIMELINE	PROGRESS COMMENTS	UPDATED RESPONSIBILITY
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	In Progress	June 2022	Officers are developing culturally safe processes to allow our Indigenous staff to identify if they feel safe to do so. The new Manager in People Risk and Wellbeing is progressing this.	Manager People, Risk and Wellbeing
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	Delayed	June 2022	This action is dependent on the process of facilitating a safe way for Indigenous staff to identify.	Manager People, Risk and Wellbeing
	Develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy which is integrated into Council's Workforce Strategy.	Not Started	December 2022		Manager People, Risk and Wellbeing
	Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	Not Started	December 2022		Manager People, Risk and Wellbeing
	Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	Not Started	December 2022		Manager People, Risk and Wellbeing
	Increase the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed in our workforce.	Not Started	December 2022		Manager People, Risk and Wellbeing

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	STATUS	TIMELINE	PROGRESS COMMENTS	UPDATED RESPONSIBILITY
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	Completed	December 2021	This strategy has been built into Council's Procurement Policy 2021: <i>A wide range of suppliers are encouraged to compete for Council work. The focus for new work need not always be with the larger more familiar businesses. Other types of organisations offering business diversity include:</i> •Green suppliers; •Local, small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and Social enterprises; •Ethnic and minority businesses (e.g. Indigenous Business); and •Volunteer and community organisations.	Manager Finance and Reporting
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy which is integrated into Council's procurement policy.	Completed	December 2022	This has been embedded into Council's Procurement Policy 2021.	Manager Finance and Reporting
	Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	In Progress	December 2022	Indigenous businesses printed Council's RAP and provided Cultural Safety Training. Other opportunities are currently being investigated.	Manager Finance and Reporting
	Investigate Supply Nation and Kinaway membership.	In Progress	December 2022	Membership is only available to Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander business owners. The list of approved businesses are available on the Kinaway website. Information about Indigenous Businesses to be distributed to staff.	Manager Finance and Reporting
	Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	In Progress	December 2022	This has been embedded into Council's Procurement Policy 2021 and is in progress, a tracking system for these creditors is being developed to enable required reporting.	Manager Finance and Reporting
10. Establish natural resource management opportunities on Council-managed reserves.	Develop a program with Traditional Owners to map cultural heritage values and develop Aboriginal cultural heritage land management agreements or similar agreements for Council reserves.	In Progress	November 2021- November 2023	This has commenced and is in place across the three Traditional Owner organisations and has included Conservations Circles, cultural assessments and interpretation signage.	Coordinator Environment
	Initiate the process to develop Aboriginal cultural heritage land Management agreements or similar agreement with the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung.	Not Started	May 2023		Coordinator Environment
11. Investigate and develop opportunities for economic and educational outcomes	Undertake a feasibility study to establish the Lancefield Megafauna Interpretation Centre that engages with and includes local Aboriginal histories and cultures.	Not Proceeding	June 2022	Will not to be completed as written. The Community Funding Scheme has provided funding to the Lansfield Neighbourhood House to support the Mega Fauna Festival 2022.	Coordinator, Arts and Culture
	Incorporate a preference for Reconciliation projects into the Community Funding Scheme.	In Progress	June 2023	This has been included in the Review of the Community Funding Scheme and proposed to be included in the Category: Community Cultural and Environmental Projects Grants.	Coordinator, Community Development

GOVERNANCE

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	STATUS	TIMELINE	PROGRESS COMMENTS	UPDATED RESPONSIBILITY
12. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RAP Working Group.	In Progress	November 2021- November 2023	The RAP Working Group is well established and has commitment from staff and two First Nations community members.	Community Partnerships Officer
	Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RAP Working Group.	In Progress	November 2021	The Terms of Reference has been presented to the the three Traditonal Owners, a response is yet to be confirmed from all. We are continuing to build stronger relationships with each of the Traditonal Owner Organisations.	Community Partnerships Officer
	Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	In Progress	October 2023	The working group has continued to meet, with regular meetings scheduled for 2022; planning for the meeting dates for 2023 is underway.	Community Partnerships Officer
13. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation and develop business cases for each year's implementation.	In Progress	December 2021-2022	Appropriate udget bids are put up each year to facilitate the implemenation of the RAP.	Community Partnerships Officer
	Engage our senior leaders and other staff, at least four times per year in the delivery of RAP commitments.	In Progress	October 2023	RAP frequently discussed at Executive Level facilitated by the RAP champion.	Chair, RAP Working Group
	Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	Completed	January 2022	A tracking system has been established, it is updated and reviewed regularly with the Working Group and responsible officers.	Community Partnerships Officer
	Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	Completed	December 2021	Director Community has been appointed RAP Champion and has been involved in promotion of the RAP, attended various events and advocates at an Executive level.	Chair, RAP Working Group
14. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	In Progress	30 September 2022-23	The first RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire has been completed and submitted to Reconciliation Australia.	Community Partnerships Officer
	Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.	In Progress	October 2023	Reporting process has been defined and an annual report will be provided to Council to update status of Actions in November each year. Quarterly reports to be made through the Councillor Bulletin.	Chair, RAP Working Group
	Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.	In Progress	May 2022-23	A reporting process has been defined; reporting to Community will follow annual reporting to Council in November.	Manager Communication and Engagement
	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	In Progress	May 2022-23	Reconciliation Australia's website statement demonstrates that this process is now automatic: "All organisations that either have an endorsed RAP or are currently developing a RAP are invited to participate."	Community Partnerships Officer
15. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	Planning	January 2023	Planning has already commenced for the development of Council's next RAP.	Community Partnerships Officer

COM.2	SMALL PROJECTS GRANTS
Officer:	Melissa Telford, Community Project Officer
Council Plan relationship:	1. Connecting communities
Attachments:	Nil

Summary

The Small Project Grants program supports projects and initiatives that:

- support local needs;
- are unlikely to be funded by other Council funding programs; and
- align with Council Plan priorities.

Council's Small Project Grants budget for 2022/23 is \$30,000 and not-for-profit groups can apply for a maximum of \$1,500 per application.

Applications are assessed against set criteria outlined in the Small Project Grants guidelines. Funding recommendations are presented monthly at a Scheduled Council meeting for review and/or approval.

Three applications have been received, seeking a total of \$4,500 in funding. The applications have been evaluated against the eligibility criteria and all are deemed to be eligible.

Recommendation

That Council approves the awarding of a \$1,500 Small Project Grant to:

- 1. Lancefield Cricket Club for their upright freezer and pie/food warmer project;**
- 2. The Mount Players Inc for their project 'The publishing of a book on 50 years of The Mount Players'; and**
- 3. The Kyneton District Business & Tourism Association Inc. for their Christmas Decorations project.**

Background

The Small Projects Grants program (previously known as the Community Grants program) has been operating since 2018. Unlike other funding schemes, the program is open for applications year round, except during the caretaker period leading up to a Council election.

Eligibility criteria

The Small Project Grants program provides incorporated, community-based not-for-profit groups operating or established within the shire the opportunity to submit one application per year for funding. The program is also available to non-government and government schools for projects that are outside of the accepted responsibilities of the school and the Victorian Government.

The Small Project Grants guidelines, available on Council's website, outline the eligibility requirements of applicants and the assessment methodology. The document also provides guidance on the projects or activities that will/will not be funded through the program.

Assessment Process

Applications are initially reviewed to determine eligibility. Eligible applications are assessed and scored against the program criteria, based on the responses provided in the online application form. However, eligibility does not guarantee funding.

Where applications are deemed ineligible, they are not assessed and scored.

The assessment criteria and scoring matrix are outlined in the guidelines, to assist applicants with the preparation of their applications. Eligible applications are assessed according to six criteria as detailed below:

Score	Criteria	Details
Pass/Fail	Demonstrating eligibility	Compliance with Section 6 of the guidelines
20%	Describing your project	A brief description of the project aim
10%	Unlikely to be funded by other funding programs	The project timing/scale/amount of funding sought is not compatible with other funding programs
30%	Demonstrating community need and benefit	Why the group needs to do the project? How the community will benefit from the project/activity?
20%	Supporting Council Plan priorities	Promotes or contributes to the achievement of one or more Council Plan priorities
20%	Demonstrating good project planning	The project group practices good governance, considers risks, complies with regulations or similar and has an appropriate budget

Application summaries and funding recommendations are presented to Council at a Scheduled Meeting for consideration.

Discussion

Three applications have been received, seeking a total of \$4,500 in funding. The three applications have been evaluated against eligibility criteria and meet program requirements.

Applicant	Project description	Amount requested	Recommendation
Lancefield Cricket Club	Upright freezer and pie/food warmer. This will support the group to replace old equipment that is broken and inefficient and support the group and others that use the facility to hold community gatherings and events.	\$1,500	\$1,500
The Mount Players Inc.	The publishing of a book on 50 years of The Mount Players. This will support the group to cover the costs of donating 15 copies to various organisations within the shire.	\$1,500	\$1,500

Kyneton District Business & Tourism Association Inc. T/as Business Kyneton	Christmas Decorations. This will support the group to purchase additional materials for a Christmas display that they have erected in previous years in the gardens adjacent to the Mechanics Institute in Kyneton. Materials to be purchased include; fabric to decorate an existing 4.5m metal Christmas tree, replacement of lights due to vandalism and replacement of old plastic decorations with wooden decorations.	\$1,500	\$1,500
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Consultation and engagement

Information regarding the Small Project Grants program is publicly accessible on Council's website. Officers consult with applicants regarding their applications and seek internal advice as necessary. In particular, Council's Economic Development and Tourism team were consulted with regards to the Christmas Decorations project, providing advice that supported the application.

Collaboration

Council has not undertaken collaboration with other councils, governments and/or statutory bodies in relation to these applications.

Innovation and continuous improvement

Council is committed to innovation and continuous improvement in relation to the Small Project Grants. Officers regularly review the promotion of the program and seek out new ways to encourage new and diverse community groups to access this small grants program.

Relevant law

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment has been conducted in relation to the subject matter of this report. The Gender Impact Assessment was conducted to ensure Council meets obligations under the *Gender Equity Act 2020*. It was determined that all of these applications could be defined as gender neutral, as they have not actively considered gender for their projects or promoted gender equity, but are designed to support a range of community members and groups that do not include or exclude on the basis of gender.

Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies

Nil.

Relevant Council plans and policies

The Small Project Grants program supports Council's priorities of connecting communities, promoting healthy environments and healthy people and delivering strong and reliable government.

Financial viability

Council's Small Project Grants budget for 2022/23 is \$30,000. Grants of up to \$1,500 are available for eligible projects. Five Small Project Grants have been allocated to-date in 2022/23, with a total of \$22,500 remaining in the budget, prior to the review of applications contained within this report.

Should these three Small Project Grants be endorsed as per the officer's recommendation, \$18,000 will remain available for allocation to other eligible projects until 30 June 2023.

Sustainability implications

There are no social, economic or environmental sustainability implications to be considered in relation to this report.

Officer declaration of conflicts of interest

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in relation to the subject matter.

COM.3	COMMUNITY SERVICE PLANNING
Officer:	Naomi Scrivener, Manager Community Wellbeing
Council Plan relationship:	2. Healthy environment, healthy people
Attachments:	Consultation report - Jeder Institute (under separate cover)

Summary

This report provides an update on progress and details of the transition arrangements of clients, staff and volunteers, following Council's decision in August 2022 to transition out of direct service delivery in all funded Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) services.

Recommendation

That Council notes:

- 1. The progress undertaken in preparing to transition out of direct service delivery in all funded Commonwealth Home Support Programme services by 30 June 2023; and**
- 2. That a further report will be provided at the conclusion of the transition process, to inform Council of the outcomes.**

Background

At the Scheduled Council Meeting held on Wednesday 24 August 2022, Council decided to change the way it would support older residents in the future, resolving to transition out of direct service delivery in all funded CHSP services at the end of the 2022/23 financial year.

All clients receiving a CHSP service received a hand delivered letter, detailing Council's decision, including a 'frequently asked questions' resource and a point of contact for any queries. Additionally, the letter informed clients that Council would be undertaking community consultation, to help inform the transition process and future investment in supports for older people.

An initial all staff meeting, followed by individual staff consultation occurred over the month of September.

Officers have been liaising with the Commonwealth, to work with them through the transition process. The Commonwealth will seek and secure the providers to deliver CHSP services locally. Once this is confirmed Council will, work closely with the allocated providers to support clients to transition across. Council submitted a transition plan in September, which is being considered by the Commonwealth.

Discussion

Community consultation outcomes

Council engaged Jeder Institute as a neutral party, to design and implement a process of community engagement, in relation to Council's future investment in aged care and positive-ageing initiatives, as well as identifying what current clients' needs are in relation to the transition to a new service provider.

The following questions were asked of the community:

- What role could Council have in supporting senior community members?
- How can Council be more involved with senior members of the community?
- What kind of programs, activities and events can Council provide or support for older people in the community?
- If you or someone you know is currently receiving home support services, what do you need from Council to support you in the transition period?
- Do you have any other ideas or suggestions you would like to share with us?

Consultation methods/distribution of materials included:

- Surveys – online and hard copy
- Place-based events e.g. farmer markets
- Interactive workshops with older people – six sessions
- Meetings with service groups and organisations
- Social media posts
- Posters and postcards distributed through the shire

392 participants engaged in the consultation, with 310 responding to the survey and 82 attending community workshops, meetings or drop-in sessions. Respondents included current clients, carers, community groups and seniors club representatives.

A report summarising this consultation lists six key themes identified as being most important to participants (**Attachment: Consultation report - Jeder Institute**):

- Advocacy and support
- Accessing social events
- Health, in particular mental health
- Support for existing groups
- Infrastructure
- Transport

These themes are consistent with those identified through the Positive Ageing Plan consultation undertaken in 2019/20 (947 participants) and the Village Connect Project consultation undertaken in 2021/22 (147 participants). The outcomes of all three consultations will be considered in making recommendations for future reinvestment and guiding the transition process for current clients.

Further to this, it has been identified that those transitioning to a new service provider require support in navigating the system, and would benefit from further communication on what the transition will entail. Clients will be informed of the transition process and timing, once the Commonwealth engages a service provider. Individualised support will be provided as required.

Internal staff consultation outcomes

Individual meetings with all impacted staff occurred in September 2022. The aim of these meetings was to discuss the change and impact, identify the staff member's intentions and support needs, and discuss redeployment and redundancy provisions.

Staff identified further information and clarity to support the transition was:

- Further information on redundancy
- Navigating the job market for opportunities in the local region.
- CV building, interview skills.

Officers are working with internal resources and external agencies to support these requests.

Community Support Volunteers were also provided the opportunity to discuss the impact of the change, provide feedback and identify any individual needs through the transition. Volunteers have indicated the following:

- The majority would like to continue to volunteer with Council
- They would be open to discussing volunteering with the new service provider into the future

Transition to new service provider

The Commonwealth Government has been informed of Council's resolution to cease CHSP services as of 30 June 2023. This has initiated the transition process and the Commonwealth will now seek suitable alternative service providers.

A transition plan was submitted and is pending approval from the Department of Health (DOH). It is anticipated that Council will receive notification of the endorsement of the transition plan in late November 2022. The proposed transition plan, developed by officers, recommends a staged transition commencing from February 2023. This option minimises the risk of service failure and allows us to test the new provider's capacity and capability to deliver.

Council officers will meet with Commonwealth representatives regularly over the coming months, to ensure that the transition is progressing and ensuring a platform to advocate for current client's needs. Once alternative providers are identified, officers will engage them to implement the transition plan.

Possible future investment in positive-ageing initiatives to be consider through transition

There are key themes across the three consultations from 2019 – 2022, with older people indicating that they would like to see Council support and invest in connection, advocacy, health and wellbeing, and transport/infrastructure. Officers will now work on identifying positions and activities that align with these key themes.

Consultation and engagement

As detailed above.

Collaboration

As detailed above, Council has been collaborating with the Commonwealth Government in relation to the transition process.

Innovation and continuous improvement

Council has undertaken a number of consultations over recent years, which will enable innovation and continuous improvement in relation to future investment in aged care and positive-ageing initiatives.

Relevant lawIndustrial obligations

Council has industrial obligations to staff to ensure notification of change and consultation and engagement on significant decisions that impact the workplace. The changes resulting from Council's decision to exit services have triggered these obligations, and Council has been clear on its position around engagement of staff and notification of unions. The decision to exit the program has triggered redundancy provisions of Council's Enterprise Agreement, including the exploration of redeployment opportunities, where suitable for affected staff.

Human Rights

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

Gender impact

In accordance with the Gender Equality Act 2020, a Gender Impact Assessment has been conducted in relation to the subject matter of this report.

Community Wellbeing employees

The decision to transition out of services has staffing implications. A total of 89 per cent of staff in the Community Wellbeing department are female. According to Women in Super:

- 34 per cent of single Australian women over 60 live in income poverty (compared to 27 per cent of men).
- Women comprise 47.4 per cent of the workforce.
- Based on full-time earnings, Australian women earn 14.1 per cent less than men and form 67 per cent of part-time workers, pushing the pay gap even further.
- Almost twice as many women than men spend more than five hours a day caring for children or elderly parents.
- Women retire with 24 per cent less super than their male counterparts.

It is envisioned that for those who want to continue to work in the aged care industry, there will be positions available across the region. There is currently an Australia-wide shortage of aged care workers, and this is mirrored in our region.

Officers will continue to work with current staff in ensuring that they are well informed to consider other roles, and advocate for employees to gain advice in relation to superannuation, outplacement support and any other individual considerations that may be required.

Clients

Over 70 per cent of Council's current clients identify as female. Australian women live, on average, four years longer than men, and with statistically lower superannuation balances - they run out of super much earlier. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that some will reside alone, and that some will be in financial stress. Given this, Council will need to ensure, to the best of its ability, that the transition process takes into consideration clients' individual needs, especially those who are more vulnerable of any gender.

Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies

There are no regional, state or national plans or policies to be considered in relation to this report.

Relevant Council plans and policies

- Council Plan 2021-2031 Strategic Objective Healthy environments and healthy people
- Support our community to ensure better access and connection for facilities and services - Continue to monitor the implication of aged care reforms on Council's role in supporting older people in the community. The outcomes of the consultation identify how the community would like Council would like to invest into the future to support older people.
- *PARTICIPATE Positive Ageing Plan 2020-2025* - Priority Action Area 2: *Living well in the community*. Future investment into and advocacy related to Councils positive ageing initiatives are in direct response to the strategies in this plan.

Financial viability

The decision to cease providing CHSP services requires the commitment to resources to support an effective transition process. Any outside of approved budget requirements will follow a transparent and appropriate approval process, to be determined post endorsement of the Commonwealth endorsed transition plan.

It is recommended that Council's Audit and Risk Committee receive a review report at the end of the transition process, which summarises all costs and addresses any lessons learned.

Sustainability implications

There are no further social, economic or environmental sustainability implications to be considered in relation to this report.

Officer declaration of conflicts of interest

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in relation to the subject matter.

15 DIRECTOR ASSETS AND OPERATIONS REPORTS

AO.1	WOODEND INTEGRATED TRANSPORT PLAN
Officer:	Harry Rehal, Traffic and Road Safety Engineer
Council Plan relationship:	1. Connecting communities 2. Healthy environment, healthy people
Attachments:	Woodend Integrated Transport Plan (under separate cover)

Summary

Council has developed a draft Woodend Integrated Transport Plan, which provides a detailed overview of traffic and transport issues within the Woodend Township and develops a 10-year priority-based recommendations program to improve active transport and existing traffic and transport issues

Recommendation

That Council endorses the Woodend Integrated Transport Plan.

Background

The Woodend Township is approximately 60 kilometres northwest of the Melbourne CBD, with access to the Calder Freeway, which connects to Kyneton in the north, Daylesford to the west and Gisborne to the south.

In 2021 the Woodend population was approximately 8,200 people. It is forecast to grow by over 1,000 to approximately 9,310 by 2036. This growth will ultimately lead to an increase in movement to and through the Woodend Township area.

To ensure planning and delivery to meet future transport demand, Council adopted the Woodend Town Structure Plan and Neighbourhood Character Study in 2014. This document established strategies and objectives and provided broad direction for the future sustainable development of Woodend Township.

In line with the Woodend Town Structure Plan and Neighbourhood Character Study recommendations and action items, Council officers commenced the Woodend Integrated Transport Plan in October 2021. The Macedon Ranges Shire Council and the Department of Transport (DOT) jointly funded this project.

This study aims to understand the current and future transport needs of residents and visitors and to produce an evidence-based priority list of transport improvements and planning for active and vehicle transport. This report will provide a direction for the future sustainable development of Woodend over the proceeding 15-20 years.

The Woodend Integrated Transport Plan summarises the existing conditions and reports issues related to integrated transport. The Plan identifies gaps and opportunities between current levels of service and community expectations, provides recommendations to improve road safety and plans for future transport needs for all modes of transport. A key component of this Plan involves reviewing the Macedon Ranges Shire's adopted strategies, policies, traffic data and feedback from the community through the public consultation phase.

Discussion

As part of this community vision, community consultation was undertaken as part of the Woodend Integrated Transport Plan to understand community values, investigate the issues associated with traffic and transport within the municipality, and engage them in this long-term strategic transport plan.

The consultation process involved the following:

- Online Community Survey
- Stakeholder Meeting

Key findings are included in this report's '*Consultation and engagement*' section.

Consultation and engagement

Online Community Survey

As part of the consultation process, officers provided opportunities to the community to provide feedback through an online portal in 2021 and an in-person stakeholder meeting in 2022.

The online community survey opened in October 2021 and ran until mid-December 2021.

Key Issues Raised

A total of **63** respondents provided feedback. Officers identified the following critical issues as part of the community consultation:

- Performance at the intersection of Urquhart Street and High Street (Coles)
- Bicycle and pedestrian connectivity
- Flex bus stops and operating hours.

Of the **63** respondents, **36 (57%)** raised issues relating to Urquhart Street and High Street intersection (Coles) and other High Street matters.

The survey results show that **31%** of respondents were concerned directly with the performance of the intersection of Urquhart Street and High Street, and **25%** raised concerns about bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure. A graphical representation of the online survey result is presented below in Figure 1.

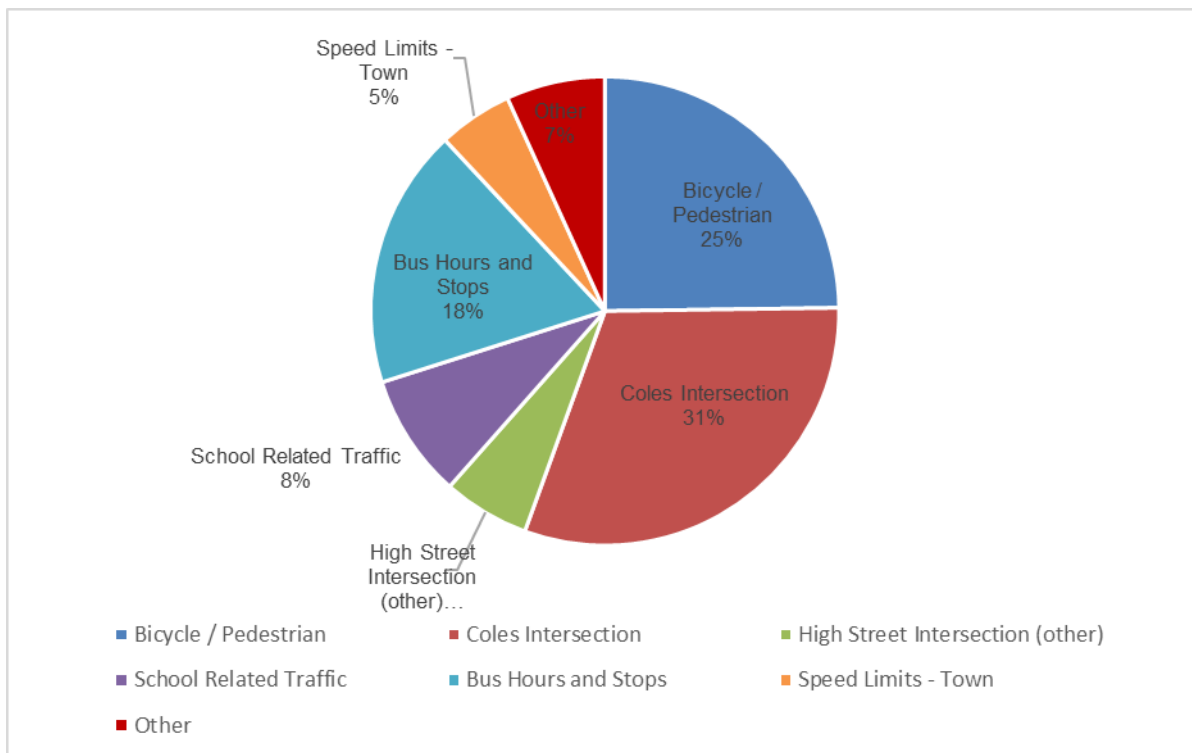


Figure1: Graphical Representation of Survey Outcomes

Stakeholder Meeting

As part of this Plan, the project team comprising Council officers, consultants and representatives from the Department of Transport (DoT) facilitated a workshop on 7 July 2022 with key stakeholders to present the following:

- Background and purpose of traffic study;
- Movement and place;
- Current and future road improvement projects (both DoT and Council);
- Key traffic observations and findings; and
- Traffic and transport gaps.

The workshop informed stakeholders of current and future projects and allowed them to incorporate their feedback into the study.

The following stakeholders were invited to participate in the workshop:

- Disability Support Group
- Woodend Bike Riding Group
- Woodend Neighbourhood House
- Wombat Mountain Bike Club
- Organs Coaches
- Braemar College
- Woodend Primary School
- St Ambrose Primary School
- Old Lancefield Road community group

- Macedon-Woodend Scout Group (an amalgamation of 1st Macedon and 2nd Woodend Scout groups)
- 1st Woodend Scouts Group
- Woodend Traders Association
- Macedon Ranges Sustainability Group (includes Transport Action Group and Farmers)
- Woodend Farmers Market
- Woodend Landcare
- Woodend Senior Citizens.

Members received invitations by email, phone and posted notices at key public locations such as Coles supermarket, Woodend Library and Neighbourhood House.

Council received an apology email from Macedon Ranges Sustainability Group (as they were overseas) and the Woodend Traders Association (due to Covid).

The following members of the key stakeholders participated in the workshop:

- Old Lancefield Road Resident's Group
- Organs Coaches
- Braemar College
- Woodend Bike Riding Group
- Woodend Neighbourhood House.

Officers presented the findings of the Plan to these key stakeholders and sought feedback. Attendees agreed with the results and also provided additional information, such as:

- Improving pedestrian crossings on the High Street service lane and Forest Street
- Providing bicycle racks in key locations
- Providing designated bicycle lanes on the south side of High Street past Woodend Station

Summary of Key Findings

The following summarises key findings of this Plan and provides a basis for proposed recommendations to achieve key Council objectives.

Road Network

Intersection assessments along High Street intersecting with Forest Street, Anslow Street, and Urquhart Street demonstrate that the existing road network is congested, specifically for side-road traffic entering High Street.

The current level of traffic travelling on High Street during the peak periods and the existing infrastructure along High Street, e.g. predominately priority controlled intersections, provides little relief/gaps for side road traffic. Community feedback also suggests that the intersection of High Street a/ Urquhart Street (at the Coles supermarket) experiences operational deficiencies.

It is noted that this assessment considers only the existing intersection performances from the locations mentioned and does not consider the impact of future development or growth on the network. There is therefore a need to understand how the High Street corridor and overall network will operate due to future developments.

Active Transport

Based on the survey and assessment, the report identifies that pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure within Woodend is considered lacking. Whilst dedicated on-road bicycle lanes on High Street provide for some connectivity through the Woodend CBD; there is a need to provide for further connectivity onto major cycling routes and corridors.

As identified through the Active Transport Group, several strategies should be undertaken to enhance cycling and walking through Woodend. These include allocating more road space for pedestrians and cyclists and providing additional shared and cycle lanes, reducing speed along High Street and pedestrian infrastructure at key roads within Woodend.

It is vital to understand the 'missing links' in terms of the quality of existing infrastructure needed to facilitate these upgrades and to achieve these objectives, and to know how these fit in with the overall pedestrian and bicycle network for Macedon Ranges.

Public Transport

In Woodend, train and bus services provide public transport.

The Woodend train station is located within the central business district (CBD) and provides V/Line services for Melbourne and Bendigo. The majority of the train passengers arrive at the station by car.

Buses currently operate as a Flexi Ride bus service, providing on-demand bus services as required. Data for the Flexi Ride bus service provided by the Department of Transport (DoT) between July 2018 and March 2020 revealed the following:

Peak monthly demand - 420 fares.

This translates to a daily peak of approximately 14 daily fares on average.

Demand was weighted towards concession fares.

Daily demands comprised 1-2 full fares and 6-13 concession fares (depending on the time of the year).

A member from Organs Coaches confirmed that concession holders such as elderly passengers and school children mainly use bus services in Woodend.

There have been ongoing requests from these user groups to increase the bus facilities in Woodend. This request was also evident in the feedback provided through the online community survey.

Feedback from the community, particularly at GemLife Woodend (Over 50's Lifestyle Resort), noted concerns over the availability of nearby bus stops, with residents expected to walk up to 500m to the nearest bus stop. The Victorian public transport and land use policy considers 400 metres as safe walking distance between public transport and the key location. However, the policy also states to improve the accessibility for the disabled and elderly residents, the bus stop should be planned within 200m metres from the key locations. Therefore, the Council recommended Department of Transport to review the existing bus infrastructure and how it best fits the community needs.

The bus and train occupancies are currently generally low. Therefore, to cater for future population growth and development, it is recommended to advocate for higher frequency services to Melbourne and to expand bus services into future growth areas.

Road Safety

The Plan has been prepared in alignment with Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030. The vision of Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030 is to reduce the risk of injury and

death on all roads and paths so that people of all ages feel confident to travel on the road network safely.

Any future changes within the Woodend Township will follow a 'Safe Systems' approach which is key element of Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030. Any future transport planning within the area should acknowledge this.

The strategy also flagged key actions/focus items for the municipality, which include (but not limited to):

- Undertaking a review and reducing vehicle speeds in activity centre areas;
- Identifying high-risk crash locations by undertaking a review of available crash data; and
- Implementing engineering works to improve conditions for pedestrians/cyclists of all abilities at key activity centre areas.

Vehicles Crash Statistics

Crash data was extracted from the Road Crash Information System (RCIS) and reviewed for the last five (5) years to November 2020 to understand the severity of vehicle crashes and potential problematic locations around the Woodend Township.

Overall, crash data for the Woodend region identified 16 recorded incidents occurring over five years. The crash statistics provided the following observations:

(a) Incidents within the Township

Three serious injuries and seven other injury crashes have been reported. The common trend between all these crashes was intersection-related crashes that occurred at arterial road/local road intersections (e.g. High Street).

(b) Incidents outside the Township

One fatal, three serious and two other injury crashes have been recorded on the road outside the main township. All these crashes occurred on arterial roads, which the Department of Transport manages.

Note:

A review of the crash incidents as mentioned above indicate that most incidents within the Woodend township resulted from driver behaviour, not necessarily poor design outcomes. Locations with multiple incidents suggest that the existing conditions may not be optimal and may be conducive to creating an accident.

Collaboration

This Plan is a collaboration between the Council and the Department of Transport. Officers prepared this report with the assistance of external stakeholders (feedback provided from the consultation and engagement process with Woodend community members and key selected stakeholders) and internal staff, including key contributions from the Strategic Planning team.

Innovation and continuous improvement

The Woodend Integrated Transport Plan reflects Council's commitment to identify and address the community's concerns about traffic and transport, infrastructure development and population growth in Woodend now and into the future. Officers have worked closely with the appointed transport consultant who developed a number of recommendations in align with the Victorian transport planning and with innovative ideas.

Relevant law

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment was not required in relation to the subject matter of this report.

Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies

State and Local Planning Policies provide a framework for future development within Woodend by providing the directions, objectives and strategies for activity centre development and transport planning.

An overview of key planning policies and objectives affecting land use within Woodend is presented in the following subject matter, along with relevant transport policies influencing transport and accessibility.

These include:

- Transport Integration Act 2010;
- Victorian Transport Plan 2008;
- Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018-28;
- Pedestrian Access Strategy 2010;
- Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030
- Movement and Place in Victoria;
- Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme;
- Macedon Ranges Shire Walking and Cycling Strategy 2014
- Woodend Structure Plan and Neighbourhood Character Study 2014;
- Macedon Ranges Shire Council Plan 2021-2031.

Relevant Council plans and policies

The Woodend Integrated Transport Plan will seek to improve connectivity and movement, and provide transport choices to the community, including walking facilities and bike paths. It relates to two of the *Council Plan 2021-2031* strategic objectives: Connecting Communities and Healthy Environment, Healthy People

Financial viability

Woodend Integrated Transport Plan identified 28 recommendations focusing on various areas and modes of traffic and transport.

The Plan's recommendations are categorised into short, medium and long-term goals based on complexity. These goals are coloured in three different colours and tabulated as below:

Recommendation Type	Stakeholder involvement	Likely Delivery timeframe	Likely level of costs
Short-term	Low stakeholder involvement, such as local Council and local interest groups.	1 - 3 years	\$10,000- \$200,000
Medium-term	Medium stakeholder involvement includes both local and state governments	4 - 7 years	\$200-500K
Long-term	High stakeholder involvement refers to multiple local and state agencies.	7 years +	More than \$500K

Project priority

The priorities for the short, medium and long term recommendations have been ranked from 1 to 5.

The tables provided on the subsequent pages illustrate the full list of the 28 recommendations for the Woodend Township. These are also illustrated on the township map in Figure 2 below.

Notwithstanding the full list of 28 recommendations, the following highlights the key priorities identified from this study.

Short-Term Priorities (1 to 3 years):

Priority Ranking	Recommendations	Likely Cost
1	Undertake a review of pedestrian access alongside roads, namely to provide pedestrian refuge and DDA-compliant pram ramps.	\$20,000
2	Undertake a review of speed limits/reductions within Woodend Township and along activity centres	\$25,000
3	High Street service lane upgraded to wombat crossing	\$45,000 *
4	Pedestrian refuge crossing at the intersection of Romsey Road and Avenue of Honour	\$45,000 *
5	Pedestrian refuge crossing at Forest Street and High Street	\$110,000 *
6	Undertake a review of crossing points around schools and consider local area traffic management (LATM) treatments where appropriate	\$30,000
7	Undertake a review of the northern car park train station access with the intent of formalising the service road access	\$25,000 (Cost sharing with Vic Track)
8	Review bus-stop locations within Town and investigate how this aligns with future developments and key activity centres	\$25,000
9	Advocate for further funding for pedestrian and cycling connectivity with others	Officer time
10	Advocacy of Northern Diagonal interchange with the Department of Transport for an additional exit ramp to Ave of Honour	Officer time

Note: * High-level estimates.

As shown above, these short-term recommendations would require a funding requirement of \$325,000 from the future Council budget in the next three financial years from FY23/24 to FY25/26.

Please note that for items 6 to 8 listed in the short-term recommendations, officers will explore opportunities through external grants offered by TAC and DoT authorities based on appropriate funding criteria.

Medium-Term Priorities (4 to 7 years):

Priority Ranking	Recommendations	Likely Cost
1	Proposal to upgrade Urquhart Street / High Street intersection (To be delivered by the Department of Transport)	\$3 Million *
2	Undertake an audit of walking and cycling infrastructure within the Township	\$25,000
3	Continue advocacy for further funding for pedestrian and cycling connectivity with others (following up from Short Term priorities)	Officer time
4	Continue advocacy of Northern Diagonal interchange with the Department of Transport for an additional exit ramp to Ave of Honour (following up from Short Term priorities).	Officer time

Note : * High level estimates

Long Term Priorities (beyond 7 years):

Priority Ranking	Recommendations	Likely Cost
1	Undertake a survey / develop a database highlighting all existing footpaths within Woodend to identify missing links.	\$25,000
2	Develop a database of all on-road and off-road bicycle lanes to identifying missing links	Officer time
3	Implementation of dedicated bicycle lane on south of High Street past station and pedestrian crossing on Quarry Road- 1km, in coordination with Department of Transport	\$250,000 *
4	Implementation of Bicycle-lane on Anslow Street (full-length)	\$60,000 *

Note: * High level estimates

The officers will submit an annual business case for future funding for the remaining medium and long-term recommendations.

Sustainability implications

Transport has significant environmental impacts. Transport is the second largest and fastest-growing source of carbon emissions. Local air pollution has a detrimental impact on respiratory health, especially for the young and elderly.

The Woodend Integrated Transport Plan offers an opportunity to diversify the transport modes and improve active transport – reducing the reliance on fossil fuel.

The Woodend Integrated Transport Plan has identified many recommendations; however, it is acknowledged that a finite level of resources is available to Council to implement these recommendations in any single financial year.

Officer declaration of conflicts of interest

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in relation to the subject matter.

AO.2	REPORT IN RESPONSE TO PETITION REQUESTING THE SEALING OF NOONAN GROVE AND CHRISTIAN STREET WOODEND
Officer:	Istvan Marton, Coordinator Engineering Designs and Investigations
Council Plan relationship:	2. Healthy environment, healthy people
Attachments:	1. Legal Advice 2. Victoria Government Gazette 23 September 2004 G39

Summary

This report responds to a petition received by Council to seal a portion of Noonan Grove, Woodend between Ashbourne Road and 19 Noonan Grove, and Christian Street between Noonan Grove and Corinella Street Woodend.

At the Scheduled Council Meeting of 27 April 2022, as part of Resolution 2022/35, Council requested this report to be received by Council at the August 2022 Scheduled Council Meeting. The Council noted in the August 2022 Scheduled Council Meeting the delay in presenting the report due to the requirement for further investigation.

Recommendation

That Council :

- 1. Proceed with undertaking the next steps to prepare a detailed Special Charge Scheme for sealing of the unsealed section of Noonan Grove for future Council consideration; including further public consultation and direct contact with benefiting residents as outlined in the Special Charge Scheme for Infrastructure Works Policy (2018) and this report;**
- 2. Not proceed with the sealing of the unsealed section of Christian Street, Woodend; and**
- 3. Advise the first-named petitioner of this Council resolution.**

Background

Council received a petition with 34 signatories on 27 January 2022 requesting the sealing of Noonan Grove and Christian Street, Woodend. The petition claims that the Council approved the subdivision around Beaumont Place connecting to the west end of Noonan Grove, which resulted in increased traffic flow from this development through to Ashbourne Road. The petition also claims the completion of the Woodend train station carpark has resulted in people travelling down Corinella Road to access Ashbourne Road via Christian Street.

It is also mentioned in the petition that during the summer months, the extra traffic flows from the Beaumont Place development generate fine dust on Noonan Grove every time a car passes, which allegedly penetrates houses leading to extra cleaning and laundry costs.

At the Scheduled Council meeting on 27 April 2022 (Resolution 2022/35), Council resolved:

That Council:

- 1. Receives and notes the report***
- 2. Refers the petition to the Director Assets and Operations for investigation and requests a report back on the matter by August 2022;***
- 3. Notifies the petition organisers accordingly.***

Council deferred the report at the 24 August 2022 meeting, where Council resolved:

That Council defer the item for consideration at a future Scheduled Council Meeting.

Discussion

Noonan Grove, between Ashbourne Road and 19 Noonan Grove, is an unsealed road classified as Category 4* (“unsealed collector”). Christian Street, between Noonan Grove and Corinella Road, is also an unsealed road classified as Category 5# (“Unsealed access”).

* - Classification of road hierarchy in Council’s Road Management Plan (Table 1.1, pg 14)

[Road Management Plan - Macedon Ranges Shire Council \(mrsc.vic.gov.au\)](http://mrsc.vic.gov.au)

Council Officers undertook a recent traffic survey for Noonan Grove and Christian Street and considered these normal post-COVID conditions. Officers do not anticipate a further increase within either street.

There are 21 lots currently abutting this section of Noonan Grove. Officers undertook traffic counts between 17 - 31 May 2022, to verify the claims in the petition. The observed average number of vehicle movements is 360 per day, consistent with the current categorisation and maintenance status of this section of the road.

Located just south of the Woodend railway line, Noonan Grove will experience very low or no increase in future traffic volume. No further developments are proposed connecting to Noonan Grove, with no significant future traffic impact.

Seven lots are currently abutting this section of Christian Street. Traffic counts were also undertaken during the same period as Noonan Grove, resulting in an average of 57 vehicle movements per day. This observed number of vehicle movements per day is also consistent with the current categorisation and maintenance status of this section of the road.

The traffic survey shows that Christian Street carries significantly lower vehicle numbers. This was confirmed anecdotally by a resident living along this stretch of road. Based on the evidence and anecdotal data, the predominant road use of Christian Street is by the immediate residents. There is no evidence of significant commuter cut-through traffic movements, which the petition claims.

Similar to Noonan Grove, Christian Street is located just south of the Woodend railway line, and therefore, Christian Street will experience very low or no increase in future traffic volume. Whilst Christian Street provides access to Woodend railway station, most traffic comes via Corinella Road, resulting in the low traffic count on Christian Street.

For Christian Street, there is insufficient support to implement a special charge scheme under the *Special Charge Scheme for Infrastructure Works Policy (2018)*.

Council Officers obtained legal advice on the definition of special benefits, who would be considered to be receiving these special benefits and the need for reasonableness in cost

distribution. Officers received this advice (Attachment 1) on 6 September 2022. Also attached (Attachment 2) is a copy of the *Victoria Government Gazette No. G 39 Thursday 23 September 2004* which relates to Section 163(2C) of the Local Government Act in relation to Special Rates and Special Charges which is referred to in the legal advice.

In the next stage of implementing the *Special Charge Scheme for Infrastructure Works (2018)*, officers will proceed with the following tasks:

1. Follow the steps in Section 5.4 of the Macedon Ranges Shire Council's *Special Charge Scheme for Infrastructure Works Policy (2018)*.
2. Identify a reasonable cost distribution formula to include residents on neighbouring streets who receive a special benefit.

The *Special Charge Scheme for Infrastructure Works Policy (2018)* details the requirement to prepare the special charge scheme for further consultation.

In this next phase, officers will undertake a more detailed concept design plan, specifications, construction standards with a detailed cost estimate.

Officers will complete the design and undertake further consultation with benefiting property owners. Council will contact residents by a letter drop, including the formula to apportion costs for each benefiting property and how this cost might be paid should the Scheme be accepted.

The consultation letter will contain a survey to obtain the decision of each benefiting land owner as outlined in *Special Charge Scheme for Infrastructure Works Policy (2018)*, whether to accept the apportioned cost and their decision on this matter.

If required, officers will present a Council report seeking permission to give formal public notice of its intention to declare the Special Charge Scheme. If this occurs, officers will provide public notices and advise all benefiting landowners as per Local Government Act 2020.

Officers have not provided an opinion on the prioritisation or need for these works. Any works would only continue based on the application of the *Special Charge Scheme Policy (2018)*, legal advice (Attachment 1) and as part of the Council's normal budget considerations.

The Policy details the requirement to prepare the special charge scheme for further consultation. In this next phase, officers will undertake a more detailed concept design plan, specifications, construction standards and a detailed cost estimate with specific apportionment for each affected dwelling.

Consultation and engagement

Following Council's resolution of April 2022, the first named petitioner was advised of Council's resolution. Officers have also been in touch with the first-named petitioner following the August 2022 Scheduled Council Meeting.

Officers undertook preliminary consultation as outlined in Council's *Special Charge Scheme for Infrastructure Works Policy (2018)* with letters regarding the proposed special charge scheme hand delivered or mailed out, depending on the mailing address, on 16 June 2022.

The letter included the following details:

- an outline of potential proposed works,
- estimate of costs to each affected land owner, and
- sought an indication of support or not of the special charge scheme

During the three-week consultation process, there were also a few phone calls and emails received by officers who responded with clarifications to the enquiries.

The outcome of this consultation process after three weeks was as follows:

Within Noonan Grove,

- 21 letters sent
 - nine (9) replied YES,
 - four (4) replied NO and
 - eight (8) did not reply (therefore deemed to be a NO response)
- result: 42.8% support.

In Christian Street,

- seven letters sent
 - one (1) replied YES,
 - two (2) replied NO and
 - four (4) did not reply (therefore deemed to be a NO response)
- result: 14.2% support.

In the week commencing 18 July until 1 August 2022, the lead petitioner emailed Council advising that there would be additional responses from those residents who were previously away. Officers have received another 5 YES responses for Noonan Grove and 1 YES for Christian Street.

The updated outcome of the consultation process, which includes the late responses, is shown below:

Within Noonan Grove,

- 21 letters sent
 - fourteen (14) replied YES,
 - four (4) replied NO and
 - three (3) did not reply (therefore deemed to be a NO response)
- result: 66.67% support.

In Christian Street,

- seven letters sent
 - two (2) replied YES,
 - two (2) replied NO and
 - three (3) did not reply (therefore deemed to be a NO response)
- result: 28.6% support.

As outlined in the Council's *Special Charge Scheme for Infrastructure Works Policy (2018)*, given that Noonan Grove achieves 66.6% support, Council should consider proceeding to the next phase under the Policy.

For Christian Street, there is insufficient support to implement a special charge scheme under the *Special Charge Scheme for Infrastructure Works Policy (2018)*.

Collaboration

Nil

Innovation and continuous improvement

Nil

Relevant law

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment was not required relating to the subject matter of this report. Officer will need to complete an assessment as part of the next steps.

Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies

Nil

Relevant Council plans and policies

“Healthy environment, healthy people” – should either road in the future be proposed to be sealed, it would reduce resident summer dust concerns.

Financial viability

If the Council considered a Special Charge Scheme for Noonan Grove, the following costs would be considered for both Council and benefiting residents. The estimated total construction cost for Noonan Grove is approximately \$700,000. The apportionment of costs between Council and benefiting residents will be part of the next phase of the Special Charge Scheme.

For Christian Street, the overall total construction estimate is \$437,000. However, the sealing of this road will not progress due to insufficient resident support.

For both roads, the cost estimate was calculated using the road construction works rates (July 2022).

Sustainability implications

Nil

Officer declaration of conflicts of interest

All officers involved in preparing this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest relating to the subject matter.



Maddocks

Lawyers
Collins Square, Tower Two
Level 25, 727 Collins Street
Melbourne VIC 3008
Australia

Telephone 61 3 9258 3555
Facsimile 61 3 9258 3666

info@maddocks.com.au
www.maddocks.com.au

DX 259 Melbourne

Email Letter



Date
6 September 2022

Email
[Redacted]

To
[Redacted]

Organisation
[Redacted]

Email
[Redacted]

Our Ref MRH:9081926

Dear [Redacted]

Special Charge Scheme Policy

We refer to our meeting on 30 August 2022 and your email sent on 31 August 2022.

You have asked us to provide a brief summary of issues relevant to special charge schemes, with particular reference to the special charge scheme which is being proposed for Noonan Grove, Woodend (**the Proposed Special Charge Scheme**). It appears as though three streets – Sproule Place, Beaumont Place and Long Court – can only access Council’s public road network by travelling along Noonan Grove. It is in these circumstances that consideration is being given to whether liability to pay the special charge should be confined to those who own properties abutting Noonan Grove or whether the liability to pay should extend not only to those who own properties abutting Noonan Grove but to those who own properties abutting each of the three streets referred to above.

Set out below is a summary of the general issues relevant to special charge schemes, interspersed with observations about the Proposed Special Charge Scheme:

1. a council may declare a special charge for the purpose of funding the construction of a road. As much is clear from s 163(1) of the *Local Government Act 1989 (the LGA)*.

In devising a special charge scheme, the council must ensure that the total amount of the special charges will not exceed the amount calculated in accordance with the formula set out in s 163(2A) of the LGA. It is to be noted that there are Ministerial Guidelines relevant to this formula. We have attached a copy of the Ministerial Guidelines to this email letter for your convenience;

2. a council must follow the procedure set out in the LGA when declaring, and, in turn, levying, a special charge.

The procedure for declaring a special charge includes the giving of public notice about the proposed special charge scheme, and sending a copy of the public notice to each person who will be liable to pay the special charge (see further s 163(1A), (1B) and (1C)). Submissions and objections can then be made.

If Council’s contribution to the cost of the works (the construction of the road) is to be less than one third of the total costs, and a majority of those who will be liable to pay the special charge objects, the special charge scheme cannot proceed (see generally s 163B). In other

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words, there is a majority right of veto in circumstances where Council's contribution to the construction of the road is less than one third of the total cost.

The procedure for levying the special charge involves sending a notice to those liable to pay. Ordinarily those liable to pay make payment by instalments.

3. a person upon whom the special charge is levied has a right to apply to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (**VCAT**) for a review of the Council's decision to impose the special charge. Such an application must be made within 30 days of the date of issue of the notice levying payment (see s 185(2)(a)).

Importantly, there are limited grounds upon which to make an application. The grounds are set out in s 185(2)(b) of the LGA. The two grounds commonly relied upon by applicants are that:

- 3.1 they will not derive a special benefit from the works; and
- 3.2 the basis of distribution of the special charge upon those who are liable to pay is 'unreasonable'.

4. it is clear from various VCAT decisions (and, in particular, from the decisions in *Dixon v Alpine SC* [2006] VCAT 502 and *Potato Products (Aust) Pty Ltd v Casey CC* [2009] VCAT 52) that:

- 4.1 a special benefit will exist where the person required to pay the special charge derives a benefit which is not shared by others or which is in addition to or greater than (that is, is over and above) that which is derived by persons not required to pay the special charge;
- 4.2 benefit, and not need, is the criterion;
- 4.3 the special benefit may be direct or indirect in form; and
- 4.4 it is unnecessary to show that the degree of special benefit among different contributors will be equal.

In a special charge for road construction it will generally be the case that only those who own properties abutting the road to be constructed will derive a special benefit. This is because their benefit will be truly special, given the impact on their amenity and property values compared with the amenity and property values of others. That said, we have found some cases in which those in proximity to proposed works have been found to enjoy a special benefit notwithstanding that they did not own land abutting the site of the works. *Hirst v Surf Coast SC* [2008] VCAT 1544, *Cameron v Surf Coast SC* [2011] VCAT 714 and *Bannister v Mornington Peninsula SC* [2016] VCAT 1986 are three such cases. So too is *Loibl v Greater Geelong CC* [2017] VCAT 1804, which was concerned with a special charge for the sealing of a road. It appears as though VCAT accepted that those owning properties in streets running off the unsealed road would enjoy a special benefit from the proposed works.

In these circumstances, we accept that, in road construction cases, there will be exceptional circumstances in which non-abutting landowners will derive a special benefit and can properly be made liable to pay the special charge. Having reviewed the plan attached to your 31 August email, we agree that, in respect of the Proposed Special Charge Scheme, those owning land in the three streets that intersect only with Noonan Grove will derive a special benefit and can and should be made liable to pay the special charge. After all, they cannot travel anywhere without traversing Noonan Grove.

5. In a number of decisions (including *Elnick Pty Ltd v Wyndham CC* [2004] VCAT 2271, the *Potato Products* case and *Allen v Mornington Peninsula SC* [2016] VCAT 1609) VCAT has said that:



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- 5.1 an applicant can only succeed in challenging the method of apportionment if they can demonstrate that the method is unreasonable – it matters not that there is another method which would be more reasonable;
- 5.2 the method of apportionment need not achieve ultimate mathematical equity;
- 5.3 the methodology for apportionment should be understandable and workable, so that the concept of reasonableness is not an absolute; and
- 5.4 the ground of review is only concerned with appointment among those who have been made liable to pay, as distinct from the community more generally.

Traditionally, special charges for road construction have focused on a benefit unit calculated according to frontage (or a combination of frontage and area) and referable to access and amenity. This has assumed that only abutting landowners are liable to pay the special charge.

In those exceptional cases where a special benefit exists (or will exist) notwithstanding an absence of abuttal, it seems to have been accepted that there can and should be a differentiation in the calculation of benefit units. *Bannister's* case involved a special charge scheme for the construction of a path network in and near the Somers township. Those owning properties with a direct abuttal to the path paid the special charge on the basis of four benefit units being applicable. Those owning properties on the opposite side of the road to the path paid the special charge on the basis that two benefit units were applicable, while others who owned properties more distant from the path network paid the special charge on the basis that one benefit unit was applicable.

Similarly in *Loible's* case – that case which is most analogous to the Proposed Special Charge Scheme – owners of properties in streets running off the street to be sealed paid a special charge assessed by reference to only half of one benefit unit. By contrast those who owned properties fronting the unsealed street paid a higher special charge because a full benefit unit was assessed as applicable.

In the context of the Proposed Special Charge Scheme this means that it will be perfectly appropriate to distinguish between those owning properties on Noonan Grove and those owning properties on the three streets. A lesser benefit unit (or number of benefit units) should be factored in for the latter, since it properly be assumed that the degree of their special benefit will be less – they will not have anywhere near the same uplift in their amenity or property value.

6. The critical considerations in relation to any special charge scheme are, then, those featured above. All have a basis in the LGA.

Council's Special Charge Scheme for Infrastructure Works Policy (**the Policy**) can and should be taken into account in devising and implementing the Proposed Special Charge Scheme but is not determinative of anything.

For example, the Apportionment Principles set out in Section 5.5 of the Policy can and should be taken into account. If, though, there are grounds for departing upon what is said in that Section the departure should be made. As with any policy adopted by Council, the Policy is no more than a general guide. Council can and should have regard to but is free to adopt a different approach if the circumstances justify it.

Yours sincerely





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GENERAL

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Local Government Act 1989

SECTION 163(2C)

Special Rates and Special Charges:
Calculating Maximum Total Levy
Ministerial Guideline**INTRODUCTION**

1. This Guideline is made under section 163(2C) of the **Local Government Act 1989** (the Act). It relates to the application of sections 163(2), 163(2A) and 163(2B) of the Act. It specifically addresses the calculation of the maximum total amount that may be levied as a special rate or special charge (referred to as the “*maximum total levy*”).
2. Some terminology used in this Guideline should be noted:
 - a. “**Scheme**” refers to a special rate or special charge scheme.
 - b. “**Works or services**” refers to the functions or powers being exercised by the Council for which it is proposed to levy a special rate or charge.
 - c. “**Property**” refers to property in the form of land.
3. The calculation of the *maximum total levy* requires the following:
 - a. Calculation of the “*total cost*” of the works or services,
 - b. Calculation of the “*benefit ratio*”, which depends on reasonable estimates of:
 - “*Total special benefits*” to properties included in the scheme,
 - “*Total special benefits*” to properties not included in the scheme (if any), and
 - “*Total community benefits*” (if any).

STEPS IN CALCULATION

4. The following steps apply to the calculation of the maximum total levy.
 - A. DEFINE PURPOSE
 - B. ENSURE COHERENCE
 - C. CALCULATE TOTAL COST
 - D. IDENTIFY SPECIAL BENEFICIARIES

- E. DETERMINE PROPERTIES TO INCLUDE
- F. ESTIMATE TOTAL SPECIAL BENEFITS
- G. ESTIMATE COMMUNITY BENEFITS
- H. CALCULATE THE "BENEFIT RATIO"
- I. CALCULATE THE MAXIMUM TOTAL LEVY

A. Define Purpose

5. The purpose, or purposes, of the proposed works or services should be clearly defined at the outset. The purpose should describe the reasons why the proposed works or services are proposed.
6. The description of the purpose would normally take account of the following:
 - a. Reasons why the works or services are considered necessary or appropriate, noting any relevant background information.
 - b. Who has proposed that the works or services be undertaken and including the following information;
 - If the works or services have been proposed by the council, the relevant council policy or resolution.
 - If the works or services were requested by a person or people other than the council, an indication of whether those people are proposed to be included in the scheme and what reasons they have given for requesting the works or services.
7. A scheme may serve multiple purposes and can be proposed by multiple parties.

B. Ensure coherence

8. For the purposes of calculating the maximum total levy, and therefore total cost and benefit ratio, the works or services for which the special rate or charge is proposed should have a natural coherence.
9. Proposed works or services can be considered to have a natural coherence if:
 - a. They will be physically or logically connected, or
 - b. They will provide special benefits, of a related nature, to a common, or overlapping, group of properties.

C. Calculate total cost

10. The "*total cost*" is the aggregate cost of defraying expenses related to providing the works or services and establishing the scheme.
11. The following should apply to the calculation of the "*total cost*":
 - a. Costs included in the *total cost* must be for purposes in section 163(1) of the Act, and
 - b. Costs included in the *total cost* may only be for expenses listed in section 163(6) of the Act, and
 - c. Costs included in the *total cost* should be based on actual expenses that have been incurred, or reasonable estimates of expenses expected to be incurred. (For example, any interest should be based on estimated actual interest costs rather than on prescribed penalty interest rates).
 - d. Costs included in the *total cost* may relate to known activities but not to activities that are purely speculative or hypothetical in nature. (For example, provision for incidental costs related to the proposed works might be included but not costs related to possible legal proceedings that may or may not occur)

D. Identify special beneficiaries

12. The council should identify, as far as possible, which properties will receive a special benefit from the proposed works or services. A “*special benefit*” is considered to be provided to a property if the proposed works or services will provide a benefit that is additional to or greater than the benefit to other properties.
13. It is important to note that, while special benefits are considered to accrue to properties, the actual measurable benefits are provided to the owners and/or occupiers of the properties (see also paragraph 23.a).
14. Special benefits should be benefits that are either tangible benefits to the owners or occupiers of the properties that are not remote, or they should be clear benefits to those owners or occupiers that were identified in the defined purpose of the works or services (paragraph 5). Types of benefits included as special benefits generally include services provided for the properties, identifiable improvements in physical or environmental amenity, improved access, improved safety or economic benefits.
15. A special benefit may be considered to exist if it would reasonably be expected to benefit the owners or occupiers of the property. It is not necessary for the benefit to be actually used by the particular owners or occupiers of a specified property at a particular time in order for a special benefit to be attributed to the property.

E. Determine properties to include

16. Having identified which properties will receive *special benefits*, the council must decide which properties to include in the scheme. The properties included in the scheme will be those that are required to pay the special rate or charge.
17. If a property will receive a *special benefit* but is not included in the scheme, the calculation of the benefit ratio will result in the council paying the share of costs related to the special benefits for those properties.
18. The council is not required to levy a special rate or charge on any or every property that will receive a *special benefit*. A property with a special benefit may be excluded from the scheme for any of the following reasons:
 - a. The council is unable to levy a special rate or charge on the property,
 - b. The owner of the property has already contributed to the costs of the works through a development levy,
 - c. The council considers that there are particular advantages for the municipality in excluding the property from the scheme,
 - d. The council considers that the special benefits for the property are marginal and would not warrant including the property in the scheme, or
 - e. Any other reason that the council considers appropriate.

F. Estimate total special benefits

19. Total special benefits can be defined to include two parts, as follows:
$$TSB = TSB(in) + TSB(out)$$
 - **TSB** is the estimated total special benefit for all properties that have been identified to receive a special benefit.
 - **TSB(in)** is the estimated total special benefit for those properties that the council proposes to include in the scheme.
 - **TSB(out)** is the estimated total special benefit for those properties with an identified special benefit that the council does not propose to include in the scheme.
20. In estimating the total special benefits for properties that will be included in the scheme, particular attention should be paid to:
 - a. The identified purpose of the proposed works or services, and
 - b. Specific benefits relevant to the type of works or services proposed.

21. There is no single or prescribed method for estimating total special benefits. However, whatever method is used, it is essential that the comparative weightings attributed to different types of benefits are reasonable and are applied consistently by a Council. It is also essential that consistent weightings are used between those properties that are included in the scheme and those that are not included.
22. It is particularly important to note that, while it may sometimes be useful to estimate special benefits on a property by property basis, this is not always necessary. The calculation of the benefit ratio only requires aggregate estimates of total special benefits for properties included in the scheme and for properties excluded from the scheme.
23. The following matters should be noted in calculating "total special benefits"
- a. While changes in property values are considered to be an indication that a special benefit exists, this is generally derived from benefits provided to the owners or occupiers of the property. To avoid double counting, changes in property values should not normally be included in the calculation of total special benefits.
 - b. Where the services or works proposed under a scheme include benefits to people who are servicing or accessing properties that are identified as having special benefits, the benefits to those people may be included as special benefits to the properties rather than as community benefits.
- G. Estimate total community benefit**
24. Before calculating the benefit ratio, a Council must consider if the proposed works or services will provide "community benefits". Not all schemes have community benefits.
25. **Community benefits** are considered to exist where the works or services will provide tangible and direct benefits to people in the broader community. These will generally derive from the provision of facilities or services that are generally available to people, other than owners or occupiers of properties with special benefits.
26. Where there is a use or amenity value to people in the broader community that is a clear, tangible and direct, the Council should attribute a community benefit. The council should also attribute a community benefit where it identified in the defined purpose of the works or services (paragraph 5).
27. Councils should use a method of estimating community benefits that is reasonable and consistent in comparison to the estimates of special benefits. In making these estimates, care should be taken to avoid double counting. If a benefit is identified as a special benefit it should not also be counted as a community benefit.
- H. Calculating the benefit ratio**
28. The benefit ratio is calculated as follows:
- $$\frac{TSB(in)}{TSB(in) + TSB(out) + TCB} = R$$
- **TSB(in)** is the estimated total special benefit for those properties that the council proposes to include in the scheme
 - **TSB(out)** is the estimated total special benefit for those properties with an identified special benefit that the council does not propose to include in the scheme.
 - **TCB** is the estimated total community benefit,
 - **R** is the benefit ratio.
- I. Calculating the Maximum Total Levy**
29. Having calculated the total cost and the benefit ratio, the Council is required to calculate the maximum total levy, in accordance with section 163(2A) of the Act.

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$$R \times C = S$$

- **R** is the benefit ratio
- **C** is the total cost
- **S** is the maximum total levy.

30. A council may not levy a special rate or charge to recover an amount that exceeds the maximum total levy. However, a council may decide to levy a lower amount.

SCHEME TYPES

31. The principles and processes outlined in this guideline will apply differently in different types of schemes recognising that complexities and variances occur with each scheme.
32. In general there are three main types of schemes:
- a. Works Schemes, that involve the construction of an item, or items of infrastructure,
 - b. Service Schemes, that provide a particular service or bundle of related services, and
 - c. Special Purpose Fund Schemes, where the monies raised by the special rate or charge go into a fund for a specified purpose and may include a mixture of works and/or services.

A. Works Schemes

33. Works schemes are schemes that involve the construction of an item, or items, of infrastructure, such as roads, (including road pavement, footpath, kerb and channel, etc) drains or car parks.
34. Benefits to be taken into account in a works scheme are usually related to improved amenity, safety, environment or usage value. As with all schemes, any benefits identified in the defined purpose should be taken into account in estimating total special benefits and total community benefit.
35. Consideration of the special benefits and community benefits should take account of changes in usage that are realistically expected to occur following the construction of the works.
- a. Future benefits should be limited to those that can arise under existing laws, planning schemes, permits and approvals.
 - b. Future benefits should be limited to benefits that may arise within reasonable timeframes.

ROADS

36. The construction of a road may generally include the various components of a road, such as the road pavement, kerb and channel, drains and drainage pits, nature strips and street trees, signage, line marking, traffic management devices, and footpaths.
37. When estimating the total special benefits associated with the construction of a road, a Council may take account of the following:
- a. The primary purpose for which the road is being constructed,
 - b. Improved access to properties by owners, occupiers, visitors and services,
 - c. Improved safety such as improved traffic delineation, improved sight distance, road surface and road width, reduced road flooding,
 - d. Improved physical or environmental amenity for the owners or occupiers, which may result from such works due to landscape treatments, removal of open drains and stagnant water, reduced property flooding, removal of dust,
 - e. Impact on any community facilities that may derive a special benefit from the works.

Where properties with special benefits have been excluded from the scheme, these factors should be applied consistently to those properties, wherever relevant.

38. When estimating the level of community benefit associated with the construction of a road, a Council should take account of:
- a. The primary purpose for which the road is being constructed,
 - b. Actual and expected usage of the constructed works, with a possible exception where the users are accessing or servicing properties with special benefits,
 - c. Expected impacts on projected road usage from factors such as growth, major development or traffic generators that are located outside of the scheme works,
 - d. Road function/classification and subsequent design standards and the extent that those standards are influenced by the degree of community usage of the works over and above that, may be attributed to properties within a scheme,
 - e. Extent of other works such as bicycle lanes and parking lanes, increasing the standard above that that would normally apply if only providing local property access.

DRAINS

39. In drainage schemes or works involving drainage infrastructure, the key criteria for assessing total special benefits includes an assessment of discharge and protection benefit to properties. This may relate to properties included in the scheme as well as properties not included in the scheme.
40. Factors that may be considered to provide a community benefit include improved drainage capacity, improved environment amenity due to such matters as water quality, reduction in erosion, reduction in flooding and improved health and hygiene.

B. Service Schemes

41. Service schemes are schemes that provide a particular service or bundle of related services that provide a special benefit.
42. Benefits to be taken into account in service schemes are primarily the special benefits to the direct users of the services. When estimating total special benefits and any community benefits for service schemes, the following consideration may apply:
- a. Who requested the service and what is its primary purpose?
 - b. Which group of people might be reasonably expected to pay for the service if it were commercially available?

RETAIL PROMOTIONS

43. Where services are provided for purpose of promoting or supporting business activities, such as in retail centres or shopping strips, the affected businesses would frequently be considered to be the main, or sole, beneficiaries. This will be particularly appropriate where the scheme has been proposed by business associations and the services are tailored to the needs of the affected businesses.
44. Any benefits for customers of the businesses that are included in the scheme would normally be included in the total special benefits to those businesses, in accordance with paragraph 23.b.

SERVICES GENERALLY AVAILABLE

45. Special rate and charge schemes are not generally used for services that are generally available to other people. This is because special rates and charges are only applicable where there is a special benefit.
46. However, there may be cases where a higher level of service is required for a particular area or group of properties and it may be appropriate to levy a special rate or charge. This might apply, for example, where ratepayers require maintenance of the road adjoining their

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properties at a higher standard than is generally provided for roads of a similar type and classification.

47. In such cases, it is important to ensure that the special rate or charge does not apply to the portion of the service that is generally available to other people. Therefore, the calculation of the *maximum total levy*, the *total cost* and the *benefit ratio* should be restricted to that part of the service that is over and above the level of service generally available to other people.

C. Special Purpose Fund Schemes

48. Special purpose fund schemes are where the monies raised by the rate or charge go into a fund to be used for a specified purpose. In these schemes, the precise services and/or works are not fully specified in advance and a process is therefore established to allocate the funds raised. An example of this type of scheme could be a shopping centre promotion scheme, where a council directs and empowers a committee to allocate the funds.
49. Particular care should be taken when defining the purpose of special purpose fund schemes as the calculation of the *maximum total levy*, the *total cost* and the *benefit ratio* need to be based on the defined purpose.
50. When estimating total special benefits and any community benefits a council should consider the defined purpose of the scheme. It should also take account of advice in this guideline relevant to the types of works or services proposed or planned under the scheme.
51. It is essential that any funds raised under a special purpose fund scheme are utilised fully in accordance with the defined purpose of the scheme.

Dated 9 September 2004

Responsible Minister:
CANDY BROAD MLC
Minister for Local Government

AO.3	KETTLEWELLS - EMERGENCY RESPONSE SITE
Officer:	Simon Finlay, Manager Open Space and Recreation
Council Plan relationship:	2. Healthy environment, healthy people
Attachments:	Nil

Summary

This report presents to Council a proposition to amend a temporary Planning Permit at 1 Joyces Road, Monegeetta, (Kettlewells) to allow the site to operate as required to support emergency response in the Shire and the broader region.

Recommendation

That Council

- 1. Endorses, in principle, the continued use of 1 Joyces Road, Monegeetta, for emergency response purposes: and**
- 2. Commences the process to seek a Planning Permit amendment to allow the ongoing use of 1 Joyces Road Monegeetta for emergency response purposes.**

Background

The significant storm event of 9 – 10 June 2021 resulted in a high volume of tree failures across the Shire that blocked roads and damaged public and private assets. The clean-up resulted in the establishment of a green waste processing site. Initially established at 1041 Ashbourne Road, Fern Hill (private land), a site was subsequently established on Council land at 1 Joyces Road Monegeetta (Kettlewells) to process the green waste. Council owns this 24-hectare site, and part of the site is quarried for gravel by Council.

Council's ability to temporarily utilise and provide the Kettlewells site for processing green waste resulting from the 2021 storm has significantly benefited Council, other Local Government Areas (LGAs), Crown Land managers and the State Government. The production of usable products (beyond mountains of mulch) for affected communities is a model for future replication and brings multiple benefits. Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV), formerly Bushfire Recovery Victoria has produced numerous social media videos espousing the merit and value of the reuse initiative.

The June 2021 storm has highlighted that having land to 'bump in' a green waste processing plant or other emergency response activities is essential as a component of large-scale natural disaster response.

Discussion

1041 Ashbourne Road – Fern Hill

In the days after the storm, officers identified a private property (1041 Ashbourne Road, Fern Hill) with the capacity to stockpile and process green waste from public land. This land was close to areas heavily impacted by the storm.

Officers and contractors quickly mobilised the site. In a discussion with ERV, officers decided to treat the vegetation waste as a product, developing mulch and firewood.

The site had numerous operational challenges, including managing the large volume of trucks entering and leaving the site, environmental management, the site's Rural Conservation zoning and noise impacts on nearby residents. Due to stormwater runoff, contractors created a temporary dam to minimise the downstream effects on other landowners. A 12-month temporary planning permit was issued for the activity.

ERV cost recovery covered the bulk of the site's running costs. As the enormity of the storm damage emerged, ERV started to contemplate if this was the best site to process the green waste from private property and other Local and State Government land. Due to complications at Ashbourne Road, Council and ERV investigated other available Shire land that might support green waste processing.

Processing of green waste at Ashbourne Road, Fern Hill, concluded in October 2021, though decommissioning and site rehabilitation is still underway.

Kettlewells (Council quarry site, Monegeetta)

Council's site at 1 Joyces Road, Monegeetta, is an operational quarry (known locally as 'Kettlewells') producing gravel since the early 1980s. Council and ERV identified this site as suitable for establishing a green waste processing plant. It had significantly fewer operational challenges compared to the Ashbourne Road site. Subsequently, a temporary Planning Permit was issued to allow site establishment for the processing of green waste on part of the site. This activity does not affect the operations of the quarry.

The Kettlewells site has processed green waste since September 2021 (in addition to ongoing quarrying activities). The establishment of processing at this site is in partnership with the State Government and includes green waste processing from Macedon Ranges Shire Council and several other Local Government Authorities (LGA's). Products from Ashbourne Road and Kettlewells have benefitted LGA's and their storm-affected communities through the provision of free materials, including:

- mulch;
- firewood;
- tree stakes;
- fencing;
- landscaping products;
- kindling;
- saw dust; and
- provision of tree root balls to support fish habitat in dams, rivers and streams.

Processing of green waste at this site presented some localised operational issues. The primary issue is the site deliveries and the impacts of dust, vehicle speed and noise on nearby residents. The site operates with traffic travelling one-way, entering Kettlewells Road and exiting via Joyces / Chintin Roads. The identified issues were addressed through communication with drivers and road watering to minimise dust. ERV has identified that they are willing to contribute funding for sealing of Kettlewells Road, which would minimise the issues experienced to date. This can only occur once storm recovery operations are complete.

The partnership between Council and the State Government in establishing the Kettlewells site is a huge success. It is identified as a state-wide model for future storm response and treatment of storm and natural disaster green waste.

Kettlewells has processed a massive volume of public and private green waste from Macedon Ranges, Hepburn, Moorabool and Yarra Ranges local government areas and Crown Land throughout Central Victoria managed by DELWP and Parks Victoria. To date, the site has produced goods commercially valued at approximately \$27m and provided these free or at low cost to residents in storm-affected communities.

Kettlewells – Future Emergency Response Management Site

In a world experiencing climate change, the June 2021 storm event highlights the need for all levels of Government to prepare for the management and recovery from these events by having available land for processing. Of specific importance are the learnings of this event, the value provided to affected communities and the need for suitable sites to be established throughout Victoria to cope with emergency storm response.

The learnings outlined above have prompted early discussions at the officer level between Council and ERV to investigate the possibility of establishing Kettlewells as a permanently available site for emergency response management. Onsite infrastructure, funded through ERV to enable the site to function, includes water storage tanks (fire management), a concrete slab for siting a temporary weighbridge and site sheds. These can all remain on site.

ERV has identified that the ability to continue using this site is strategically important to the State's natural disaster recovery. The site is also strategically important to Council as an asset in managing localised storm events that may not trigger ERV involvement. This proposal does not require an investment of Council funds to realise the opportunity. However, purchase of a weighbridge could be prudent to allow instant mobilisation of the site as required. The weighbridge is important in quantifying the green waste delivered and enabling Council to quantify volumes which assists in claims for cost recovery.

Issues and Challenges

Kettlewells is a Council owned site; its primary purpose is quarrying gravel material used in road construction under an Extractive Industries Licence (Work Authority Permit). The site of the current green waste processing plant is above material likely to be quarried in the future. At the current rate of quarrying, officers estimate that this part of the site would be required for quarrying in 10-15 years.

If the site is available for future emergency response purposes and the quarrying activity needs to move to the current processing site, it is feasible to relocate the emergency response management activities into the 'spent quarry pit'. This allows for the continuous operation of both activities as required.

Should Council have the appetite to allow the establishment of a part of the site for future State and MRSC emergency response management, sealing of Kettlewells Road will go a long way to addressing impacts experienced by nearby residents. ERV has proposed a significant contribution to seal the road as part of the decommissioning of the site regardless of any future use of Kettlewells for emergency response purposes.

A temporary (2-year) Planning Permit expiring 24 March 2024, allows the green waste processing to occur at the site. The Planning unit has advised that amending the temporary Planning Permit to allow ongoing emergency response management at the site on an as-needs basis would not be onerous. A review of other Council-owned land has not identified any other suitable sites for establishing these activities. Purchase of private land could be considered, though is unlikely to present a better option than the Kettlewells site.

Consultation and engagement

Internal consultation regarding the site management and current quarrying operations has been undertaken. This has determined that quarrying and emergency response activities are not mutually exclusive and can co-exist at this site.

An amendment to the current Planning Permit would go through the standard advertising process and allow community members to contribute.

Collaboration

The establishment of current green waste processing at Kettlewells has been in collaboration with and support of ERV. This site has supported a regional response to the June 2021 storm involving numerous Local Government Areas. Implementing this initiative is recognised as a highly successful collaboration between State and Local Government.

Innovation and continuous improvement

The establishment of the Kettlewells site and its operation as a zero-waste enterprise for development of useable products to benefit affected communities demonstrates innovation. In partnership with ERV, Council has played a lead role in establishing a prototype for future large-scale storm damage response.

All material transported to the site was repurposed into useable products. As the site developed, the nature of products produced evolved and use of potential waste by-products such as sawdust to pig farmers and tree root balls utilised to assist in the creation of fish breeding habitats in rivers and dams demonstrated continuous improvement.

Relevant law

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment was not required in relation to the subject matter of this report.

Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies

Nil

Relevant Council plans and policies

Nil

Financial viability

This proposal has little to no direct cost to Council as it is about allowing emergency response activities to occur at the site in the future on an as-required basis.

Council could consider purchasing a weighbridge to house at the site to allow immediate site operations to commence as required. The cost of this initiative is in the order of \$200,000 plus some ongoing maintenance and calibration costs. There is potential that if this were pursued it could be 'hired' to other affected areas, including ERV if Macedon Ranges was not part of the affected area.

Sustainability implications

This proposal has a positive sustainability impact in that a potential waste product has been repurposed into multiple products that benefit affected communities.

Officer declaration of conflicts of interest

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest relating to the subject matter.

AO.4	CAPITAL WORKS MONITORING
Officer:	Jeetendra Dahal, Manager Assets and Project Management Office
Council Plan relationship:	4. Delivering strong and reliable government
Attachments:	Nil

Summary

This report provides transparency on cost escalations and adjustments on infrastructure projects and seeks further funding or scope reduction.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Adopts the following changes to the FY22/23 budget relating to the following infrastructure projects:**
 - (a) **Pohlman Street, Kyneton, Footpath Construction – increase the budget for this project by \$32,699 from \$192,550 to \$225,249;**
 - (b) **Three Chain Road, Karlsruhe, Road Section Reconstruction – increase the budget for this project by \$285,000 from \$445,000 to \$730,000;**
 - (c) **Mission Hill Road, Baynton, Culvert Upgrade Works – change the scope to design and investigation, decreasing the project budget from \$319,785 to \$60,015 returning \$259,770 to the budget;**
 - (d) **Martins Lane, Nulla Vale, Culvert Upgrade Works – change the scope to design and investigation, decreasing the project budget from \$175,000 to \$25,000 returning \$150,000 to the budget;**
 - (e) **Main Road East side, Romsey, Footbridge Construction Works – change the scope to design and investigation, decreasing the project budget from \$130,000 to \$30,000 returning \$100,000 to the budget;**
 - (f) **Riddells Creek Footbridge Renewal – increase the budget for this project by \$116,451 from \$64,549.00 to \$181,000.00;**
 - (g) **Ross Street, Malmsbury, Bridge Renewal Design – provide \$50,000 for design and investigation works; and**
2. **Notes that recommendation 1 (above) currently provides a capital works surplus of \$172,259.98 to the financial year 2022-2023 budget. Officers will continue to manage the overall infrastructure project program within the initial overall infrastructure project program 2022-2023 budget.**

Background

During Financial Year 2021/2022, there were significant price rises across many building materials. The Master Builders Association reports that between March 2020 and March 2022, steel products increased by over 40% and timber products by over 20%. In addition, labour increased significantly.

The Council budget build process begins in October of the previous year. This means pricing is already outdated by nine months before the budget year starts. Some infrastructure projects will not be tendered until over twelve months after the initial estimates were set. Officers allow a reasonable cost escalation on project costs; however, the cost increases experienced were outside this estimate.

Some tenders are coming as high as 30% over budget. This is not sustainable, and there is no budget to cover these unexpected increased costs.

The other impact of the current construction-led recovery is a shortage of contractors. Council has experienced tenders with either one response or zero responses and/or non-compliant tender responses.

The combination of cost increases and contractor availability require Council critically review all project impacted by these factors.

Discussion

Each year, Council announces a commitment to expend a defined amount of money to deliver specific infrastructure projects through the budget. In real terms, our dollar purchases less than forecasted. This presents three potential actions to remain within budget:

- (1) value managing the project to deliver the expected outcome within the provided budget;
- (2) over-expending the budget; or
- (3) reducing the number of infrastructure projects delivered.

The second potential option is unacceptable within Council’s legislative and moral responsibilities. The last is achievable by critically reviewing over-budget infrastructure projects and determining which must proceed and which must be cancelled.

The concept is that in critically reviewing which infrastructure projects are funded and which are not funded, the intent is to have the unfunded infrastructure projects cover the increase in costs for the project determined to continue.

In determining which project proceeds, even though over budget, the following items need to be considered:

- Associated grant funding with acquittal requirements
- Immediate asset reliability and functionality

Officers will attempt to ‘value manage’ the project to deliver the expected outcome within the provided budget – this will generally occur before going to tender or if a tender response is above budget. This will happen as part of normal council operations.

This month, officers identified the following over-budget infrastructure projects or projects requiring scope change:

Infrastructure Project	Progress with Construction	Reason for Progression or Non-progression	Change to the Budget - () is an additional cost to the budget
Financial Position following previous decisions		Bring forward \$146,639.98 balance resulting from the resolution of the October 2022 Scheduled Council Meeting	\$146,639.98

Pohlman Street, Kyneton, Footpath	Yes	Increase the budget as this is a high priority in the Shire Wide Footpath Plan and deferred from last financial year	(\$32,699)
Three Chain Road, Carlsruhe, Road Section Reconstruction	Yes	Increase the budget as this section of road is a high priority as it is a high use road creating a current risk for road users and has speed restrictions to 40km/h (normal speed limit is 100km/h). The construction contract must be awarded as soon as possible to guarantee contractor commitment and ensure delivery in this financial year.	(\$285,000)
Mission Hill Road, Baynton	No, limited to design and investigation only.	\$319,785.00 budgeted for design and construction, reduced to \$60,015.00 with a change of scope limited to design and investigation only.	\$259,770
Martins Lane, Nulla Vale Culvert Upgrade Works	No, limited to design and investigation only.	\$175,000.00 budgeted for design and construction, reduced to \$25,000.00 with a change of scope limited to design and investigation only.	\$150,000
Main Road East side, Romsey Footbridge	No, limited to design and investigation only.	\$130,000.00 budgeted for design and construction, reduced to \$30,000.00 with a change of scope to design and investigation only.	\$100,000
Footbridge Renewal (Riddells Creek Footbridge)	Yes	Budget \$64,549.00 however, the initial tenders are \$181,000.00	(\$116,451)
Ross Street, Malmsbury	Yes	\$50,000.00 for design and investigation.	(\$50,000)
Total			\$172,259.98

The budget surplus resulting from the suggestions above is \$172,259.98.

Consultation and engagement

Within individual infrastructure projects, there will be identified stakeholders. Project Sponsors will liaise with stakeholders of projects that are the subject of this report.

This report is an initiative to ensure transparency in decision-making for infrastructure projects. By publically providing this report in the Scheduled Council Meeting agenda, the community can understand the decisions being made in a timely manner and without the need to await a quarterly, six monthly or annual report.

Collaboration

Council officers are sharing initiatives across many neighbouring Councils – all report similar challenges and impacts resulting from current economic conditions.

Innovation and continuous improvement

This is an innovative approach to the problem of unprecedented infrastructure project price increases. Council would typically address project budget issues via the mid-year budget review. An agile response is required in response to the current economic environment. Preparing a report such as this, for presentation to Scheduled Council Meetings throughout this financial year, provides resolutions with minimal lost time.

Relevant law

There is not a specific law relating to information provided within this report

In accordance with the Gender Equality Act 2020, a Gender Impact Assessment was not required in direct relation to the subject matter of this report. Officers have noted gender impact within each business case for infrastructure projects and referred to these regarding determining recommendations for infrastructure project tenders over budget.

Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies

Not Applicable

Relevant Council plans and policies

The Council plan relevant to this report is delivering strong and reliable government. Transparently providing timely information for the community should provide confidence in how Council is adapting its infrastructure project delivery within budget.

Financial viability

The processes described in this report detail how Council is adapting its infrastructure project delivery to ensure it is within budget.

Sustainability implications

There are no direct sustainability impacts resulting from this report.

Officer declaration of conflicts of interest

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in relation to the subject matter.

16 NOTICES OF MOTION AND RESCISSION

No. 53/2022-23: NOTICE OF MOTION - DEVELOPMENT PLAN OVERLAY, SCHEDULE 24 (DPO24)

I, Councillor Geoff Neil, give notice that at the next Meeting of Council to be held on 23 November 2022, I intend to move the following motion:

That Council requests a report within two (2) scheduled Council meetings regarding the Development Plan Overlay, Schedule 24 (DPO24) that applies to three areas within Lancefield. The report will examine the feasibility and options of removing DPO24, including any indicative timelines, costs and resources associated with each option.

17 URGENT BUSINESS

18 CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

Nil