

COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA



6:00 pm on Monday March 25, 2024

Livestreaming at <https://www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/about-us/council/council-meetings#live-stream>
Broadcast live on Phoenix FM 106.7 ***

Please note, the March Council Meeting will return to the Bendigo Town Hall. Due to water damage caused by the January storm events, there will be limited gallery seating. If you plan on attending the meeting, seating will be prioritised for those who register to attend.

If you would like to attend, please register your interest through the following link: <https://www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/about-us/council/council-meetings#register-attend-meeting> or call the box office on 5434 6100 no later than 5pm on the day of the meeting.

Copies of the City of Greater Bendigo Council's Agendas & Minutes can be obtained online at <https://www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/about-us/council/council-meetings>

COMMUNITY VISION 2021–2031

Greater Bendigo celebrates our diverse community.

We are welcoming, sustainable and prosperous.

Walking hand-in-hand with the Traditional custodians of this land.

Building on our rich heritage for a bright and happy future.

The community vision is underpinned by five values –
Transparency, sustainability, inclusion, innovation and equity.

COUNCIL PLAN (MIR WIMBUL) – OUTCOMES

The [Council Plan](#) (Mir wimbul) is based on seven outcomes, which are the main focus of the Council Plan.

Each outcome has a set of goals, objectives and actions that will help to achieve the community vision, and indicators to measure achievement against each goal:

1. Lead and govern for all
 2. Healthy, liveable spaces and places
 3. Strong, inclusive and sustainable economy
 4. Aboriginal reconciliation
 5. A climate-resilient built and natural environment
 6. A vibrant, creative community
 7. A safe, welcoming and fair community
-

STAFF VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS

The City of Greater Bendigo's [values and behaviours](#) describe how Councillors and staff will work together to be the best we can for our community.

They are aligned to our strategic documents, such as the Council Plan, which ensure they are meaningful for Council and the organisation.

A shared commitment to living our values and behaviours will help us to build the type of culture we need to be able to work together and support each other to deliver the best possible outcomes for the community.



This Council Meeting is conducted in accordance with the

- Local Government Act 2020
- [Governance Rules](#)

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- 1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**
- 2. TRADITIONAL LANGUAGE STATEMENT**
- 3. OPENING STATEMENT**
- 4. MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION**
- 5. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES**
- 6. LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Council resolved (**Resolution No. 2024-1**) to grant Cr Rod Fyffe OAM leave of absence for the February 2024, March 2024 and April 2024 Council Meetings.

7. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

RECOMMENDED MOTION

That Standing Orders be suspended to allow the conduct of the Community Recognition Section and Public Question Time.

8. COMMUNITY RECOGNITION

9. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

9.1. Public Question Time Guidelines

Council allows up to 30 minutes for question time on any matter except for planning items that are on the agenda tonight or anything that is defamatory, otherwise inappropriate or outside the scope of Council.

If your question is about routine or operational Council requests, you should instead make a request through our [Customer Request system](#).

[Pre registering questions](#) is recommended as this provides more time for a more detailed response to be provided to you at question time. Pre registered questions will also be given priority in accordance with the Governance rules. If a question is asked on the night and we don't have the answer immediately available we may need to take it on notice, and provide a response later.

Regardless, any member of the community may ask a question in person. The preferred format is to state your name, suburb and briefly identify your topic (ie parking or Lake Weeroona Playspace, etc). Then, without preamble or statements, please ask one relevant question only.

To ensure fairness, given time constraints, only one question per community member will be accepted each month, inclusive of pre-registered questions, and questions on the night.

Public Question time is only one of many ways the community is able to communicate with Council, other options include:

- [Customer Request system](#)
- [Let's Talk Greater Bendigo](#)
- [Feedback and complaints process](#)
- [Petitions and joint letters](#)
- [Invitations to the Mayor](#) (and other Councillors)
- [Presentations to Councillors](#)
- Councillor Ward Engagements events, generally held monthly
 - Councillor attendance at many and varied events across the Municipality and over the year
- [Councillor committee membership](#)
- Various methods of contacting the [City](#) and individual [Councillors](#)

Public Question Time is not a requirement of Council under the Local Government Act. This Council has provides for Public Question Time in the Governance Rules adopted by the Council to ensure greater public transparency and accountability. The Council asks that the opportunity to ask a question of the Council in this forum is treated respectfully and within these rules.

9.2. Pre-Registered Questions

10. RESUMPTION OF STANDING ORDERS

RECOMMENDED MOTION

That Standing Orders be resumed.

11. WARD REPORTS

11.1. Eppalock Ward - Cr Evans

11.2. Lockwood Ward - Cr Alden

11.3. Whipstick Ward - Cr Fagg

12. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic) (**the Act**) provides that a relevant person must disclose a conflict of interest in respect of a matter and exclude themselves from the decision making process in relation to that matter including any discussion or vote on the matter at any Council meeting or delegated committee meeting and any action in relation to that matter.

The procedure for declaring a conflict of interest at a Council Meeting is set out at rule 18.2.4 of the Governance Rules.

Section 126 of the Act sets out that a relevant person (Councillor, member of a delegated Committee or member of Council staff) has a conflict of interest if the relevant person has a **general conflict of interest** or a **material conflict of interest**.

A relevant person has a **general conflict of interest** in a matter if an impartial, fair minded person would consider that the person's private interests could result in that person acting in a manner that is contrary to their public duty.

A relevant person has a **material conflict of interest** in a matter if an *affected person* would gain a benefit or suffer a loss depending on the outcome of the matter.

13. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

13.1. Confirmation of Previous Minutes

RECOMMENDED MOTION

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on February 26, 2024, as circulated, be taken as read and confirmed.

Previous minute location:

<https://www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/about-us/council/council-meetings#past-meetings>

14. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

14.1. Petition Response - Petition to Save Bendigo East Pool

Author:	Amy Johnston, Manager, Active & Healthy Communities
Responsible Director:	Stacy Williams, Director Healthy Communities and Environments

Purpose

To respond to a recent petition requesting to retain Bendigo East Swimming Pool as a year-round, heated aquatic facility.

Recommended Motion

That Council advise the lead petitioner that:

1. Bendigo East Swimming Pool remaining as a year-round, heated aquatic facility is not not strategically endorsed in the long term.
2. The Community Aquatic Facilities Strategy outlines the future provision of aquatic services in Greater Bendigo.
3. Council adopted the Community Aquatic Facilities Strategy with an amendment for Bendigo East Swimming Pool to remain open as a non-heated seasonal pool subject to various conditions.

Executive Summary

At the Council Meeting on 28 August 2023, Council adopted the Community Aquatic Facilities Strategy, with the following amendments:

1. Subject to a suitably skilled Community Committee of Management being established, that the Bendigo East Swimming Pool is retained, becoming a non-heated seasonal pool, following the upgrade of Brennan Park Pool;
2. Responsibility for all operations, risk management, asset maintenance, renewal and new investment of the Bendigo East Pool will be the responsibility of the Community Committee of Management;
3. Provision of \$50,000 in annual funding from Council will be provided to the Community Committee of Management; and
4. If a suitably skilled Community Committee of Management is not able to be established, and adhere to the terms of the resolution, that the Bendigo East Swimming Pool is permanently closed.

The Community Aquatic Facilities Strategy (the Strategy) contains a range of key recommendations and site-specific actions that guides the planning and decision making for the City's swimming pools and splash parks.

The Strategy has significant importance in the strategic direction of aquatic services for Greater Bendigo that meet the principles of:

- Equity
- Accessibility
- Promoting Wellbeing
- Partnering
- Sustainability;

In addition, the adopted Strategy recognised and considered the community panel's principles of:

- Creative & innovative process and solutions
- Sustainability & respect
- Community participation, collaboration and empowerment
- Accessible, equitable & inclusive
- Community health & wellbeing

The Strategy acknowledges that Greater Bendigo aquatic facilities have served the community well for many decades but are now in need of modernisation to comply with current industry and community standards and cater for current and future residents with the Strategy outlining this direction.

Council has received a petition to retain Bendigo East Swimming Pool as a year-round, heated aquatic facility which is not recommended in the Community Aquatic Facilities Strategy.

Background

Council received a petition with 1093 signatories to review the detail specific to Bendigo East Swimming Pool, as detailed in the Community Aquatic Facilities Strategy.

Of the petition responses 61% were from Greater Bendigo or Regional – Central Victoria which is defined as any Municipality that shares the boundary with the City.

The petition details are as follows:

'We support the appeal to retain Bendigo East Swimming Pool as a year-round, heated aquatic facility, because it is the only outdoor, public pool in Bendigo shallow enough to stand for its entire length. This is critically important for less confident and able swimmers, such as the disabled, aged and beginners, to feel safe while

swimming. Clients drive many miles to use this specific pool. If this swimming pool is closed, it will discriminate against these vulnerable swimmers and deprive them of the important and enormous benefits to health and well-being that is gained by water exercise. We sincerely request Council to re-examine the decision to cease using Bendigo East Swimming Pool, as detailed in the Community Aquatic Facilities Strategy 2023.'

The Community Aquatic Facilities Strategy contains a range of key recommendations and site-specific actions and guides the planning and decision making for the City's swimming pools and splash parks.

In response to feedback regarding Bendigo East and Brennan Park Pool recommendations within the Strategy, a service review including a community panel was independently facilitated and resulted in principles for decision making from the panel being considered alongside the Community Aquatic Facilities Strategy principles by Council.

Report

Public swimming pools are highly valued by the community and play an important role in contributing to the health and wellbeing of residents. However, pools are high-cost assets and Council has made significant decisions which relate to the running, use, asset maintenance and renewal and funding of our public pools into the future. The adopted strategy aims to give direction to meet the challenges in providing public pools relating to compliance, meeting expectations, needs and funding.

Community Aquatic Facilities Strategy

The 2023 Community Aquatic Facilities Strategy is to guide planning and decision making on the provision, value, costs, opportunities, risks, management and future of the City's public pools over the next 10 years.

The strategy provides information and sets out the priorities for Greater Bendigo's aquatic facilities and will help to secure funding to deliver the identified priority projects for a ten-year period.

The Strategy focusses on diversification of the service offering and limiting duplication which for Greater Bendigo is within the urban catchment.

Programming of aquatic facilities

The construction of aquatic facilities date back to post-war decades with standards and compliance requirements increasing significantly over time in the aquatic industry. The ability to walk the distance of a 50m pool is unique and whilst beneficial

for walking does limit the ability to complete other activities such as diving in line with current standards.

The ability to program a variety of aquatic activities is critical to ensuring diverse use in aquatic facilities as outlined in the Strategy as part of maximising aquatic facility utilisation:

- Fitness and training including clubs
- Warm water exercise recovery, rehabilitation
- Education, learn to swim schools
- Recreation, leisure and adventure fun and play

As an example, Gurri Wanyarra Wellbeing Centre's contemporary design and innovative fit out delivers on the breadth of our community's diverse needs, providing separate learn to swim, warm water and 50m (2 x 25m configuration) pools, delivers a mix of lengths, depths and water temperature to accommodate most activities.

When configured in the 2 x 25m format, the shallow end of the 25m pool provides a standing depth of 1.35m – 1.5m which accommodates the requirements of walking activities, combined with ramp and step entries.

Further options are available at Peter Krenz Leisure Centre with a warm water pool with steps and hoist entry for walking and learn to swim.

The Strategy outlines the need to align with the optimum mix of infrastructure and programming based on the user demand for different activities within the community.

Priority/Importance

A response to the petition within 3 Council meetings.

Options Considered

Option 1 - Current strategic direction: (Recommended)

- Implement adopted Community Aquatic Facilities Strategy

Option 2 – Alter strategic direction:

- Review the adopted Community Aquatic Facilities Strategy

Timelines

Since adoption in August 2023, officers have commenced implementation of the Community Aquatic Facilities Strategy.

Communications/Engagement

During the development of the Community Aquatic Facilities Strategy there was extensive consultation undertaken including a short-term action of a specific service review of Brennan Park and Bendigo East Swimming Pools.

Financial Sustainability

Improvements and upgrades

The Community Aquatic Facilities Strategy outlines the changes required to ensure asset upgrades are financially sustainable, comply with current community and compliance standards and cater for current and future residents with diverse aquatic usage.

Risk Assessment

An adopted strategic position for community aquatic facilities allows Council and the City to seek funding to support future infrastructure investments.

Policy Context

Primary Council Plan Reference

City of Greater Bendigo Council Plan *Mir wimbul* 2021-2025
Outcome 2 - Healthy, liveable spaces and places

Secondary Council Plan Reference(s)

Goal 8 - Targeted investment in services, facilities, and programs to communities most in need

Other Reference(s)

[Community Aquatic Facilities Strategy](#)

Conflict of Interest

No officer involved in the preparation or approval of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Attachments

Nil

15. LEAD AND GOVERN FOR ALL

15.1. Contracts Awarded Under Delegation

Author:	Corinne Fisher, Procurement Officer
Responsible Director:	Jessica Howard, Director Corporate Performance

Purpose

To inform Council of contracts signed under delegation.

Recommended Motion

That Council note the contracts awarded under delegation during the previous reporting period.

Policy Context

Primary Council Plan Reference

City of Greater Bendigo Council Plan *Mir wimbul* 2021-2025
Outcome 1 - Lead and govern for all.

Secondary Council Plan Reference(s)

Goal 1 - Accountable, financially responsible, equitable, transparent decision making.

Conflict of Interest

No officer involved in the preparation or approval of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Attachments

1. Contracts Awarded Under Delegation Council Report February 2024 [**15.1.1** - 1 page]

Capital Contracts							
Contract No	Project	Successful Contractor	Delegated Officer	Date Signed	Price (ex GST)	Practical Completion	Budget
CT000691	Hargreaves Mall Seating Installation	Plantabox Pty Ltd	Brian Westley	22-Feb-24	\$465,243.33	02-Aug-24	\$475,000.00
Service Contracts							
Contract No	Project	Successful Contractor	Delegated Officer	Date Signed	Price (ex GST)	Contract Term & Options	Budget
CT000694	Preparation of a new Greater Bendigo Rural Areas Strategy	Hansen Partnership Pty Ltd	Rachel Lee	12-Feb-24	\$167,500.00	27-Jun-25	\$300,000.00
CT000695	Supply of Road Marking Paint and Products under a Panel Contract Arrangement	Australian Paint Company Pty Ltd, Potters Industries Pty Ltd & Geveko Markings Australia	Brian Westley	29-Feb-24	Schedule of Rates	3 Years with the option of 1 x 24 months	\$100,000.00
Contracts Awarded at Council							
Contract No	Project	Successful Contractor	Delegated Officer	Date Signed	Price (ex GST)	Practical Completion / Contract Term & Options	Budget
CT000692	Kerbside Collection Services Contract (Fortnightly General Waste & Commercial Organics Collection)	Four Seasons Waste Pty Ltd	Andrew Cooney	02-Feb-24	Schedule of Rates	5 Years with the option 1 x 2 years	\$12,500,000.00

15.2. Internal Audit Strategic Plan

Author:	Rebecca Maple, Risk and Assurance Advisor
Responsible Director:	Jessica Howard, Director Corporate Performance

Purpose

The Audit and Risk Committee (the Committee) Charter requires the Committee to review and endorse the City's three-year strategic internal audit plan. The 2024/25 – 2026/27 Strategic Internal Audit Program was endorsed at the February 22, 2024 Committee meeting.

Recommended Motion

That Council endorse and adopt the 2024/25 – 2026/27 Strategic Internal Audit Program.

Executive Summary

The Committee Charter authorises the Committee to endorse the three-year Strategic Internal Audit plan which will then be adopted by Council. The Committee has the authority to make necessary changes throughout year to address new information and risks as they arise.

Background

The City's strategic internal audit program provides independent assurance that the City's risk management, governance, and internal control processes are operating effectively.

AFS and Associates Pty Ltd were appointed as the Internal Auditor from July 1, 2019 for a 5-year period, ceasing on June 30, 2024. The strategic internal audit program is reviewed annually, and a further year developed to ensure a three-year rolling program is in place.

Report

The Committee Charter requires the Committee to oversee the internal audit function including to review and endorse the three-year strategic internal audit plan, the annual internal audit plan and make required changes to the plan as it may arise throughout the year.

The 2024/25 – 2026/27 Strategic Internal Audit Program endorsed at the February 22, 2024 Committee meeting is attached to this report.

Communications/Engagement

The three-year strategic internal audit plan was developed by AFS and Associates Pty Ltd in consultation with the Director Corporate Performance using:

- Strategic, Operational and Fraud Risk registers
- Results from surveys distributed to the Committee, Executive Management Team and Organisational Leadership team.

Financial Sustainability

Provision for Council's internal audit program is included within the Governance Unit's 2024/2025 budget, for an annual amount of \$47,000.

Policy Context

Primary Council Plan Reference

City of Greater Bendigo Council Plan *Mir wimbul* 2021-2025
Outcome 1 - Lead and govern for all

Secondary Council Plan Reference(s)

Goal 1 - Accountable, financially responsible, equitable, transparent decision making

Other Reference(s)

Audit and Risk Committee Charter

Conflict of Interest

No officer involved in the preparation or approval of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Attachments

1. Strategic Internal Audit Program [15.2.1 - 3 pages]

Status of the current Strategic Internal Audit Program

Topic		Timing	Status	Hours
#	2023/24			
1	Native Vegetation removal – management of application and review process (to replace Livestock Exchange Operations)	31 July – 8 August 2023	Complete	75
	Past Issues Follow Up – Waste Management	2-3 October 2023	Complete	20
2	Procurement and tendering processes	2-10 October 2023	In progress	75
	Past Issues Follow up – specific focus to be confirmed*	15-16 April 2024	Scheduled	25
3	Service Review – Livestock Exchange	15-26 April 2024	Scheduled	69
4	Strategy, Business and Service Planning and Implementation Framework and Processes	3-14 June 2024	Scheduled	75
	2023/24 total hours*			339

*excluding Audit and Risk Committee meeting preparation and attendance.

Proposed Strategic Internal Audit Program

	Topic	Timing	Status	Approximate Hours
#	2024/25			
1	Assets – Road Management Plan	July 2024	Not Scheduled	75
2	Social Justice Framework and Equity in decision making	September 2024	Not Scheduled	60
3	Organisational Culture	November 2024	Not Scheduled	75
4	Cybersecurity Risk Management and strategy implementation follow up	February 2025	Not Scheduled	75
5	Service Area Review - Volunteer Management	May 2025	Not Scheduled	55
	Past Issues Follow up – Optional*	Quarterly – on request	Not Scheduled	25*
	Audit and Risk Committee – Material Distribution, Preparation and Attendance	Quarterly	Not scheduled	20 (5 hours per meeting)
	2024/25 total hours			460
#	2025/26			
1	Compliance Framework	July 2025	Not Scheduled	75
2	Service Area Review – Food Safety	September 2025	Not Scheduled	75
3	Privacy and Records Management	November 2025	Not Scheduled	75
4	Managed Growth Strategy	February 2026	Not Scheduled	75
5	Service Area Review – Community Grant and Sponsorship Management	May 2026	Not Scheduled	60
	Past Issues Follow up – Optional*	Annual	Not Scheduled	25*
	Audit and Risk Committee – Material Distribution, Preparation and Attendance	Quarterly	Not scheduled	20 (5 hours per meeting)
	2025/26 total hours			480

Topic		Timing	Status	Approximate Hours
#	2026/27			
1	Service Area Review – Early Years	July 2026	Not Scheduled	75
2	Core Contracts/Outsourced Provider	September 2026	Not Scheduled	75
3	Fleet Management – incl. transition to e-vehicles	November 2026	Not Scheduled	75
4	Innovation, Advocacy and Funding Application Processes	February 2027	Not Scheduled	75
5	Service Area Review – Service area to be advised	May 2027	Not Scheduled	55
	Past Issues Follow up – specific focus to be confirmed	Annual	Not scheduled	25*
	Audit and Risk Committee – Material Distribution, Preparation and Attendance	Quarterly	Not scheduled	20 (5 hours per meeting)
	2026/27 total hours			475
	Total hours			1,415

*Optional Past Issues Follow up – to be scheduled at the request of management with a focus on major and moderate rated previous internal audit recommendations. Low rated risks will only be reviewed at management’s request. 25 hours per topic has been allocated. If no recommendations require review, the topic hours can be carried forward to allow for a greater quantum of recommendations to be reviewed in subsequent quarters.

16. HEALTHY, LIVEABLE SPACES AND PLACES

16.1. 21-25 Shelley Street, SPRING GULLY - 3 Lot Subdivision and Removal of Native Vegetation

Author:	Michael St Clair, Statutory Planner
Responsible Director:	Rachel Lee, Director Strategy and Growth

Summary/Purpose

Application No:	DS/491/2023
Applicant:	R & N W Humpherys
Land:	21-25 Shelley Street, SPRING GULLY 3550
Zoning:	General Residential Zone
Overlays:	Bushfire Management Overlay – Schedule 1
No. of objections:	14
Consultation meeting:	A formal consultation meeting was held at the City offices on 15 November 2023, attended by the Planning Officer, Councillor Alden, applicant and 7 objectors.
Key considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the proposed subdivision is supported by the relevant provisions of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme. • Whether the proposal has sought to avoid and minimise native vegetation removal to the greatest extent possible. • Whether the proposal adequately protects human life from the risks posed by bushfire. • Whether the proposed subdivision accords with the existing and preferred character of Shelley Street, Spring Gully • Objector concerns.
Conclusion:	<p>The subdivision of land within the Bushfire Management Overlay must prioritise the protection of human life. All other considerations are secondary to this.</p> <p>The proposed subdivision has been designed to appropriately manage bushfire risk, with a resultant impact on native vegetation on site to create defensible space. This extent of native vegetation removal is considered acceptable to facilitate the subdivision of the land to meet the purposes of the General Residential Zone.</p> <p>The resultant three lot subdivision of the site will result in an outcome that is consistent with the existing character of the area. The extent of vegetation removal proposed under this application is not fundamental to the preservation of the identified neighbourhood character</p>

	<p>elements for this area of Spring Gully.</p> <p>It is recommended that Council determine to issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit subject to the conditions included at the end of this report, as the proposed subdivision accords with the relevant provisions of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme.</p>
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Recommended Motion

Pursuant to section 61 of the Planning and Environment Act (1987), Council issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit for the *3 lot subdivision of land and the removal of native vegetation* at 21-25 Shelley Street, SPRING GULLY 3550, subject to the conditions at the end of this report.

Report

Subject Site and Surrounds

The site is an irregular shaped allotment located on the southern side of Shelley Street, Spring Gully. The allotment is 5,722 square metres in size and is formally identified as Lot 2 on Plan of Subdivision 828564K. The site contains a single storey dwelling, associated separate garage and other outbuildings. The existing dwelling on site was originally constructed by the current owners of the land in the 1990s. Consistent with this era, the dwelling is a brick veneer with a Colorbond roof. The dwelling is setback 7.7m from Shelley Street and is located centrally along the site's frontage.

The site is extensively vegetated with a mix of native and exotic trees and shrubs. Generally, the immediate area within the site surrounding the existing dwelling consists of planted vegetation, with native vegetation located closer to the boundaries. The topography of the site is characteristic for this area of Spring Gully, consisting of a moderate fall from Shelley Street to the rear of the site (evident in the street photo of the existing dwelling shown at figure 2 below). The lowest point of the site is centrally along the rear boundary as the land falls into a gully leading to Autumn Gully to the south. Figure 1 below shows an aerial image of the subject site and immediate surrounding area.



Figure 1: Aerial image of subject site (shown in orange)



Figure 2: Image of existing dwelling (dated 10 November 2023)

The surrounding area is characterised by the site's location in a developed residential area of Spring Gully. Generally, dwellings are single storey with associated outbuildings on lots that range in size from 326 square metres to 5,000 square metres. The majority of lot sizes are between 1,200 and 1,500 square metres in size. The surrounding dwellings are generally set in well vegetated garden

settings, especially to the southern side of Shelley Street (where the fall of the land reduces the density of dwellings, providing greater area for plantings). Figure 3 shows the built form in the wider surrounding area.

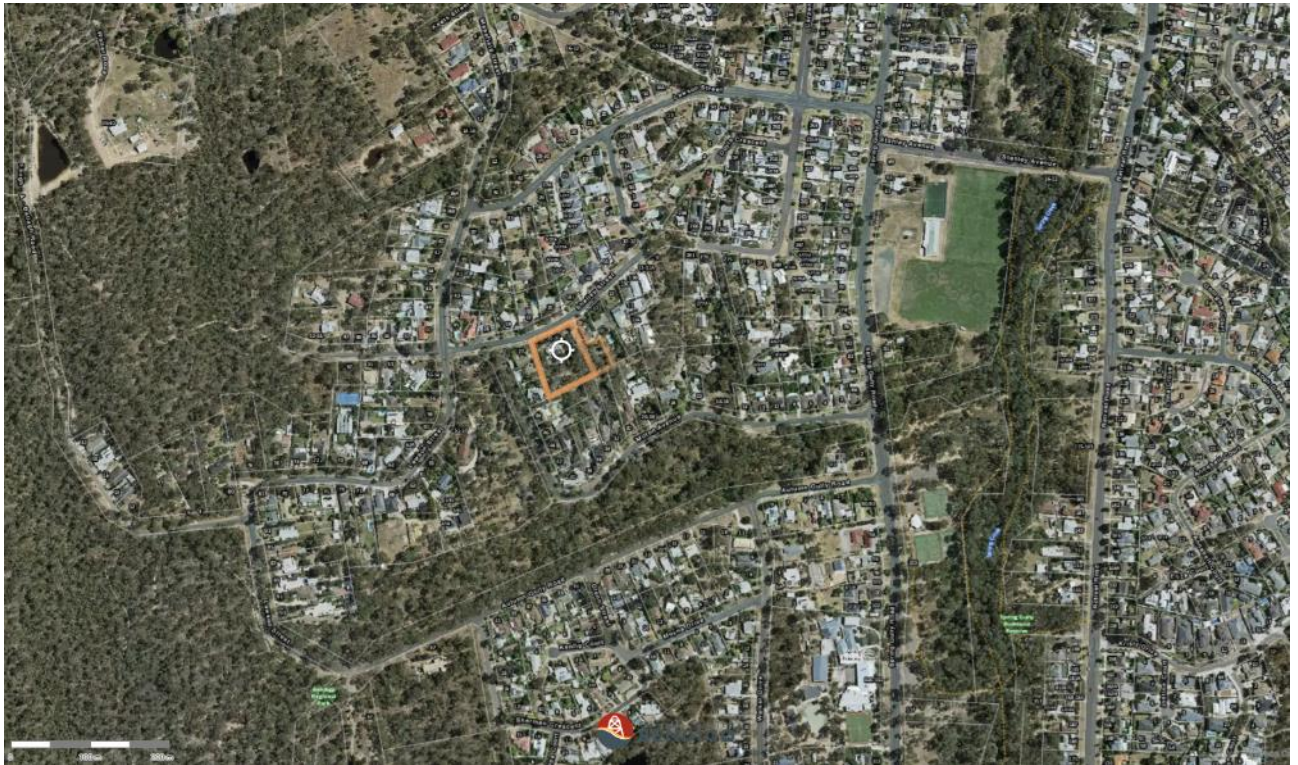


Figure 3: Aerial image of the wider surrounding area

Proposal

The application proposes to subdivide the land into three lots and for the consequential loss of all native vegetation.

Subdivision

Lot 1 is proposed to contain the existing dwelling and outbuildings and will have an area of 2,019 square metres. Access will be retained through the existing crossover to the site.

Lot 2 is proposed to the rear of the existing dwelling. Access is to be provided to the west of the existing dwelling along a 6.0m wide access handle. The lot is proposed to have an area of 2,520 square metres.

Lot 3 is proposed to the side of the existing dwelling (and to the rear of the neighbouring property at 19 Shelley Street). Access is to be provided to the east of the existing dwelling along a 6.3m wide access handle. The lot is proposed to have an area of 1,183 square metres.

Figure 4 below shows the proposed subdivision layout.

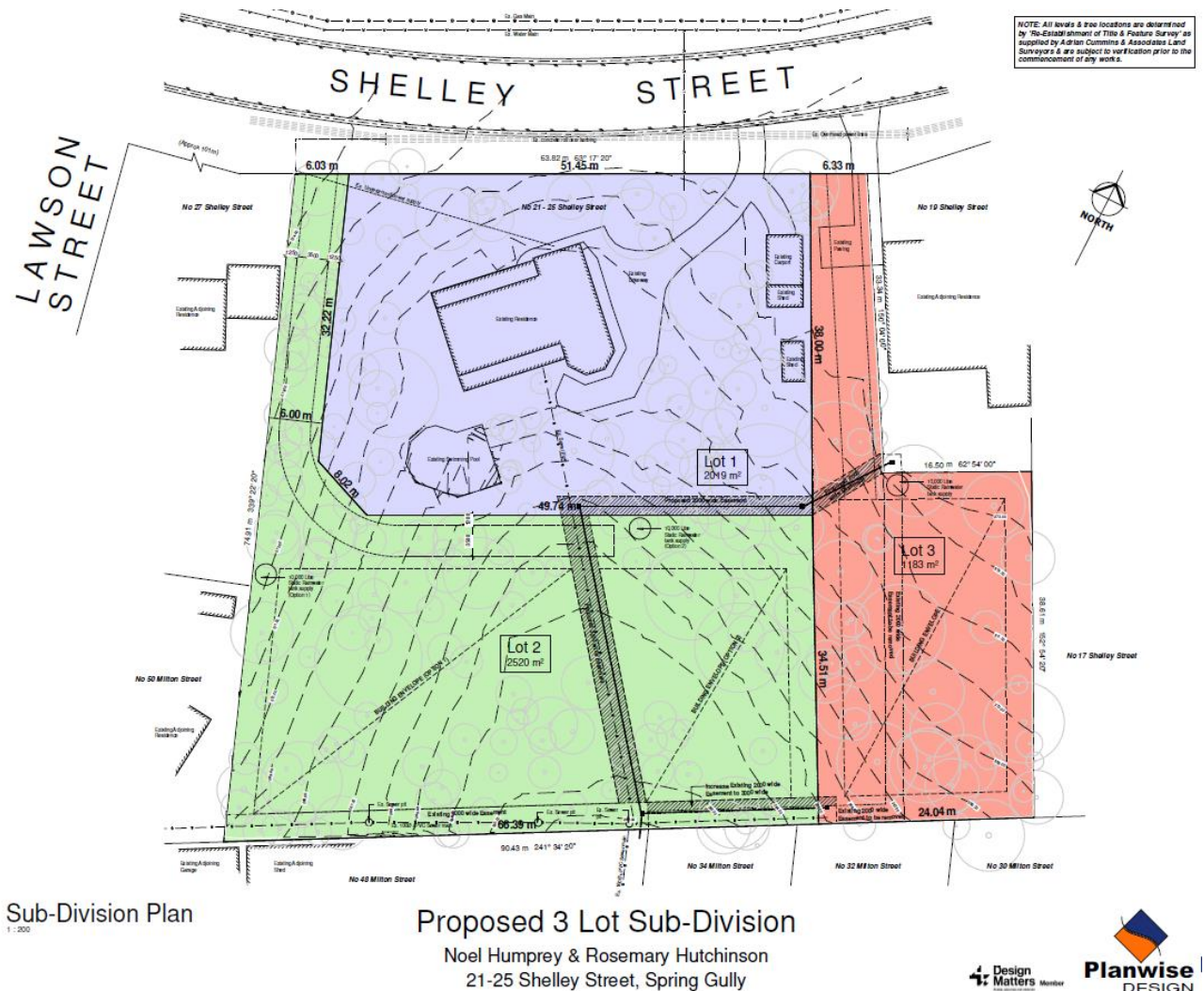


Figure 4: Proposed subdivision layout

Native vegetation removal

The proposed subdivision of the land requires that all native vegetation within the site be assessed as consequential loss due to the operation of the 'Site Area' exemption under Clause 52.17 of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme (see discussion below detailing the operation of this control in respect of this application). The application is supported by a Native Vegetation Assessment which details that the extent of removal is 3,870 square metres (67.6% of the site). Figure 5 below shows the extent of consequential native vegetation impact associated with the proposal.



Figure 5: Extent of consequential native vegetation loss

Planning Controls - Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme

Why is a permit needed?

The following table lists all the relevant planning permit triggers that apply to this application.

Clause	Permit Trigger
Clause 32.08-3 General Residential Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subdivide land.
Clause 44.06-2 Bushfire Management Overlay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subdivide land.
Clause 52.17-1 Native Vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove, destroy or lop native vegetation.

The following clauses are relevant in the consideration of this proposal:

Municipal Planning Strategy

- 02.03 Strategic directions
- 02.03-1 Settlement
- 02.03-2 Environment and landscape values
- 02.03-3 Environmental risks and amenity
- 02.03-5 Built environment and heritage
- 02.03-6 Housing
- 02.04 Strategic framework plans

Planning Policy Framework

- 11.01-1S Settlement
- 11.01-1L-01 Settlement – Greater Bendigo
- 12.01-1L Protection of biodiversity – Greater Bendigo
- 12.01-2S Native vegetation management
- 13.02-1S Bushfire planning
- 13.04-1S Contaminated and potentially contaminated land
- 15.01-1L-01 Landscaping – Greater Bendigo
- 15.01-3S Subdivision design
- 15.01-5S Neighbourhood character
- 15.01-5L-01 Neighbourhood character – Greater Bendigo
- 15.01-5L-12 Spring Gully neighbourhood character
- 16.01-1S Housing supply
- 19.03-3S Integrated water management

Other Provisions

- 32.08 General Residential Zone
- 44.06 Bushfire Management Overlay
- 52.17 Native Vegetation
- 53.01 Public open space contribution and subdivision
- 53.02 Bushfire planning
- 53.03 Residential reticulated gas service connection
- 56 Residential subdivision
- 65 Decision Guidelines
- 71.02-3 Integrated decision making

Policy Context

Primary Council Plan Reference

City of Greater Bendigo Council Plan *Mir wimbul* 2021-2025

Outcome 2 – Healthy, liveable spaces and places

Secondary Council Plan Reference(s)

Goal 7 – Sustainable population growth is planned for

Consultation/CommunicationReferrals

The following authorities and internal departments have been consulted on the proposal:

Referral	Comment
Fire Rescue Victoria (Recommending referral authority)	No objection subject to conditions. Conditions require that the submitted Bushfire Management Plan be endorsed and registered on title through a Section 173 agreement.
Coliban Water (Determining referral authority)	No objection subject to conditions. Conditions require appropriate connection of potable water and reticulated sewerage to all lots.
Powercor (Determining referral authority)	No objection subject to conditions. Conditions require appropriate connection of power services to the site.
Downer (Determining referral authority)	No response received. Standard conditions included below.
Development Engineer (Internal referral)	No objection to the proposal. Standard conditions included that require adequate drainage of the site to manage stormwater flows to pre-development levels.
Traffic Engineer (Internal referral)	No objection to the proposal. No conditions required (access requirements dictated by FRV access requirements enforced through Bushfire Management Plan registered on title).

Public Notification

The application was advertised by way of notice on the site and letters to adjoining and nearby owners and occupiers.

As a result of advertising, fourteen objections were received with the grounds of objection summarised as follows:

- The extent of native vegetation removal proposed and impact on native fauna.
- Loss of bushland character for the area.
- Noise generated as a result of the proposal (traffic, construction).
- Extent of site excavations required.
- Road safety concerns from increase in dwelling numbers in the street.
- Bushfire safety concerns.
- Stormwater management concerns.
- Contamination concerns through historic mining activities in the area.
- Other objector concerns (Council revenue raising, sets precedent in the area, privacy impacts, previous permit history).

A formal consultation meeting was held on 15 November 2023 to discuss the issues raised in the objections with the applicant. No resolution was reached as a result of this meeting, with no objections withdrawn.

The objections are discussed through the planning assessment, with Figure 6 showing the properties that objected to the proposal.

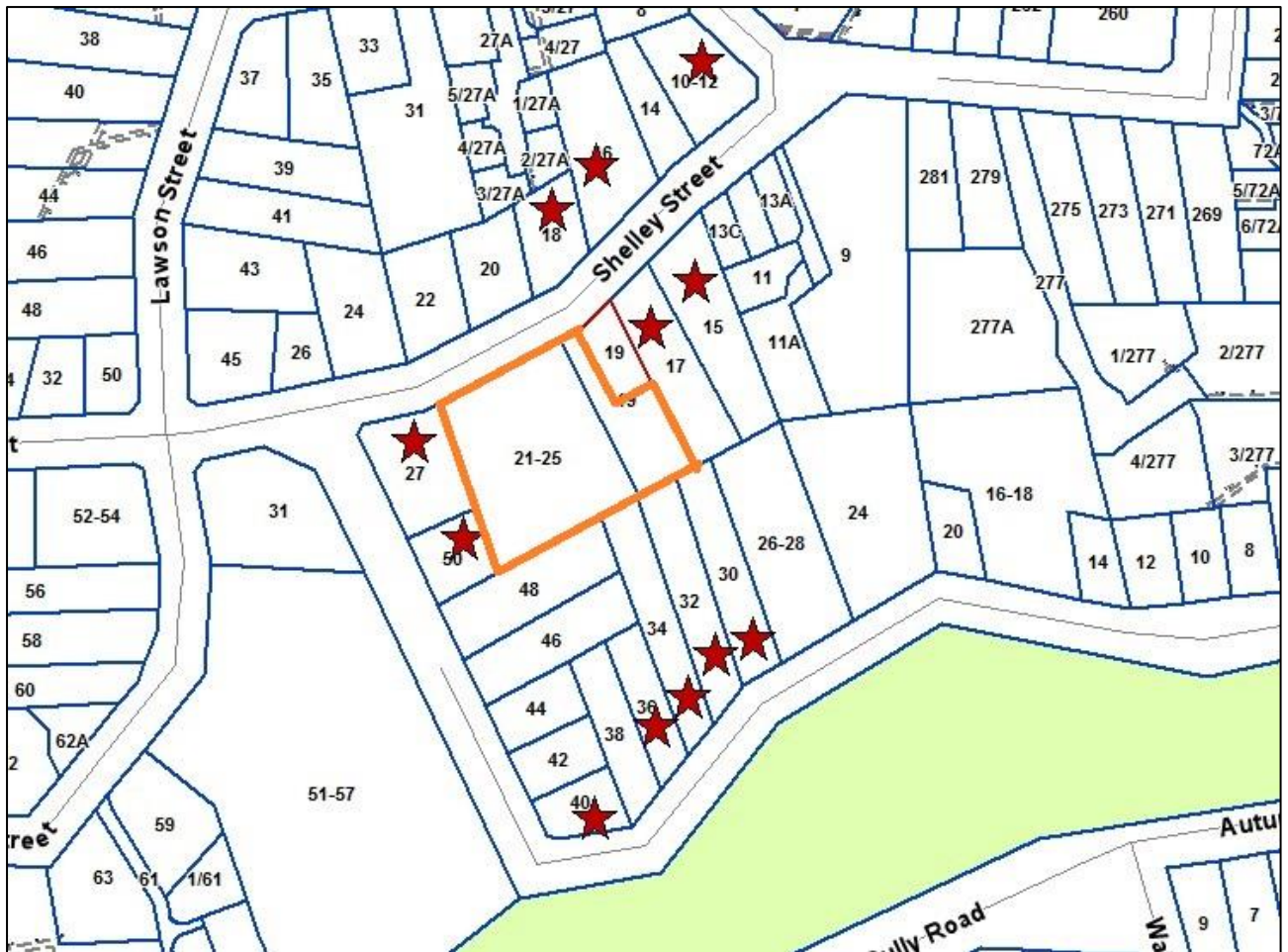


Figure 6: Objector properties (site outlined in orange, objector locations identified by red star)

Planning Assessment

The planning assessment for an application of this nature requires consideration of a broad range of matters. The key matters for consideration are:

- Whether the proposed subdivision is supported by the relevant provisions of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme.
- Whether the proposal has sought to avoid and minimise native vegetation removal to the greatest extent possible.
- Whether the proposal adequately protects human life from the risks posed by bushfire.
- Whether the proposed subdivision accords with the existing and preferred character of Shelley Street, Spring Gully.
- Whether all objector concerns have been addressed.

Any application under the provisions of the General Residential Zone must address the purpose of the zone. This is the primary basis for any decision-making process for the responsible authority.

The purposes of General Residential Zone are as follows:

- *To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.*
- *To encourage development that respects the neighbourhood character of the area.*
- *To encourage a diversity of housing types and housing growth particularly in locations offering good access to services and transport.*
- *To allow educational, recreational, religious, community and a limited range of other non-residential uses to serve local community needs in appropriate locations.*

(emphasis added)

These purposes are referenced throughout the discussion below.

Whether the subdivision is supported by the relevant provisions of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme.

The General Residential Zone requires a subdivision application to be considered against relevant policy within the Municipal Planning Strategy, Planning Policy Framework and against the relevant standards of Clause 56: Residential Subdivision.

The policies relevant to the subdivision of this site from the Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework can be grouped under the following categories:

- Development in areas subject to bushfire risk *
- Impacts to Native Vegetation. *
- Potentially contaminated land. *
- Direction of subdivision to appropriate locations.
- Impacts of subdivision on established and preferred character. *
- Public open space contribution.

Officer assessment is that the proposal accords with all relevant policies under these groupings. This is determined in the assessment contained below (note that the items marked with * above are addressed in the subsequent planning assessment questions further on in this report).

Appropriateness of subdivision in this location

A range of policies within the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme seek to direct growth and new development to appropriate areas within the Bendigo Urban Growth Boundary. This is best summarised by the strategic policy direction to '*Balance the protection of neighbourhood character with the development of a more*

environmentally sustainable urban area based upon the principles of 10-minute neighbourhoods'.

The site is located within an established area of Spring Gully with ready access to the Spring Gully local centre, and the Bendigo City Centre along Carpenter Street. The site enjoys reasonable proximity to the La Trobe University campus. The site is within a 10 minute bicycle ride of Spring Gully (11 minutes to La Trobe), and as such, the subdivision of this site would support the development of 10 minute neighbourhoods in accordance with Clauses 02.03-1 and 11.01-1L-02.

Clause 15.01-3S: Subdivision design provides the main policies that relate to subdivision design. At a high level, this policy seeks to create more compact neighbourhoods that are walkable, provide for a range of housing needs and meet the aspirations of different groups of people.

The subject site, at 5,722 square metres in size, is a very large allotment within the General Residential Zone. The average lot size in the surrounding area is between 1,200-1,500 square metres, with a number of lots within the immediate surrounds being much smaller (down to 326 square metres). The site is therefore assessed as being considerably underdeveloped in its immediate context. The proposed lots sizes are consistent with the established average lot size for the area. Thus, the proposal is generally consistent with the established subdivision character for Shelley Street, Spring Gully.

Subject to the further discussion below, Officer assessment is that the proposed subdivision of the subject site is appropriate in relation to applicable policies within the Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework.

Applicable standards of Clause 56: Residential subdivision

In addition to the applicable policy within the Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework discussed above, the proposed subdivision must be assessed against the standards of Clause 56: Residential Subdivision.

These controls relate to the design of lots, how these lots integrate into the established urban context, how the site integrates with existing transport infrastructure, how water is managed, how construction is managed and how the site will be serviced.

The proposal is seeking approval for three lots. These lots are all proposed to be in excess of 1,000 square metres which are easily able to accommodate a future dwelling which meets required building standards. Future dwellings will be able to be designed with northerly aspects, positioned appropriately from boundaries to not result in privacy or overshadowing impacts.

The proposal will have minimal impact on the urban fabric of the area. The existing dwelling will remain the predominant feature of the site when viewed from the public domain. Both new lots are proposed to be accessed via 6-metre-wide driveways. This width is sized to accommodate the required access in addition to a generous landscaped strip. This will ensure that the garden setting for the area will be maintained as far as practical, with landscaping requirements for the accessways controlled by condition detailed below.

The subdivision of the site will have little impact on the surrounding transport network. The application only seeks to add two dwellings to the area, which will result in a negligible increase to vehicle movements on Shelley Street. The existing road network is easily able to accommodate this minor increase.

Water management was a concern raised throughout objections and is generally a key consideration in subdivision proposals. The City's Development Engineer has reviewed the proposal and confirmed that the site is able to be developed in such a way as to appropriately manage stormwater across the site's boundaries. Objectors raised concerns that the proposal would increase stormwater exiting the site down the gully towards Autumn Gully (resulting in additional overland flow impacting the properties to the south). To ensure that this does not occur, standard engineering requirements are that any development does not result in any additional stormwater impacts above pre-development levels. This is a requirement of this application. Further, Coliban Water has required that the site be appropriately connected to potable water and reticulated sewerage services.

Objectors also raised concerns with potential construction impacts (i.e. noise, sediment runoff etc.). These will be managed via a condition that requires a Construction Management Plan to be prepared and approved by the responsible authority. This plan is required to be prepared in accordance with standard EPA requirements for construction activities to ensure that construction activities do not result in unreasonable impacts on amenity.

The site will be serviced by electricity and telecommunications as standard for suburban development. The site is not required to be connected to gas, with this at the discretion of the developer (noting that recent State Government policy changes require that all new dwellings not be connected to gas).

The proposal is assessed as being compliant with the standards of Clause 56 of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme.

Public open space contribution

Clause 53.01: Public open space contribution and subdivision requires that any person that is seeking to subdivide land make a contribution to the City for public open space. The schedule to this clause stipulates that the site is required to pay 5% of the site value as a public open space contribution. A condition has been included below to require this contribution be paid.

Whether the proposal has sought to avoid and minimise native vegetation removal to the greatest extent possible.

A planning permit is required under Clause 52.17: Native vegetation for the consequential loss of all native vegetation within the site. Concern was raised by a number of objectors to the extent of native vegetation impact proposed. In assessing this aspect of the proposal, it must be noted that there are no other planning controls that apply to the subject site that protect native vegetation (such as the Environmental Significance Overlay, Vegetation Protection Overlay, Neighbourhood Character Overlay, Heritage Overlay etc.).

The purpose of Clause 52.17: Native vegetation is as follows:

- *To ensure that there is no net loss to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation. This is achieved by applying the following three step approach in accordance with the Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017) (the Guidelines):*
 1. *Avoid the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.*
 2. *Minimise impacts from the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation that cannot be avoided.*
 3. *Provide an offset to compensate for the biodiversity impact if a permit is granted to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation.*
- *To manage the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation to minimise land and water degradation.*

The operation of Clause 52.17 is supported by policy contained at Clause 12.01-2S: Native vegetation management.

The *Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation* require that any application for a planning permit that, if approved, would result in the consequential removal of native vegetation (i.e. the ability to remove native vegetation without the need of a planning permit) is to consider the removal of native vegetation under that application.

In respect of this application, the proposal is seeking to subdivide a lot that exceeds 4,000 square metres into individual lots that are all less than 4,000 square metres in size. This proposal would therefore result in future lot owners being able to remove native vegetation without requiring any planning approval through utilising the 'Site

area' exemption under Clause 52.17. As such, it is a requirement of this application to consider the appropriateness of the full removal of native vegetation from the site¹. The 'Site Area' exemption applies to:

- *Native vegetation that is to be removed, destroyed or lopped on land, together with all contiguous land in one ownership, which has an area of less than 0.4 hectares.*
- *This exemption does not apply to native vegetation on a roadside or rail reservation.*

Due to the operation of this exemption in relation to this application, it is not possible to consider the possibility of minimising native vegetation impacts through the placement of building envelopes (or the like). This assessment, therefore, is relatively black and white; is the full-scale consequential loss of native vegetation within the site supported or not?

The proposal requires consideration under the intermediate assessment pathway.

To guide the assessment of the value of the native vegetation within the site, data from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action was reviewed. The site is mapped as being within 'Location 1', with a Strategic biodiversity score of 0.1. This means that the site is mapped as not containing any endangered Ecological Vegetation Classes, and that the existing vegetation has a low value in respect to its contribution to biodiversity across the broader area. This data in effect places the lowest value possible on the native vegetation present on site.

In addition to this value calculation, the condition of the vegetation must be assessed. The submitted Native Vegetation Assessment determined this value as being 43 out of 100. This figure is a measure of how close the vegetation on site is to its mature benchmark for the vegetation classification. With a score of 43, the vegetation within this site has been deemed to be significantly degraded.

As such, the value and condition of the native vegetation has been determined as low.

¹ This requirement to assess the full-scale consequential loss of native vegetation within the site does not mean that all native vegetation must be removed. This process is designed to capture all possible native vegetation offsets that are calculated in the site, resulting in no missed offsets through the operation of the site area exemption once a permit is issued. The applicant and subsequent landowners can elect to retain native vegetation should they choose (and it meets defensible space requirements). If they did elect to retain native vegetation within the site, there would be no requirement for a planning permit in the future to remove this native vegetation (under current planning controls).

With a low vegetation value, the removal of the native vegetation must be considered against the prevailing strategic planning work for the site. There is no specific protection afforded to native vegetation (with the exception of mature vegetation retention encouraged by character policies discussed below), with this evidenced through no specific planning overlays applied to the site to protect vegetation.

The driving strategic planning policies that apply to the site stem from the General Residential zoning of the site. The site is identified for standard residential development, which the site is not achieving at its current lot size of 5,722 square metres, developed with a single dwelling.

As there is no specific policy protecting this vegetation, coupled with policy seeking to further subdivide this land, it is appropriate for this native vegetation to be deemed fully lost.

The applicant has provided evidence that appropriate offsets are available to offset this loss in accordance with the Guidelines.

In accordance with the decision guidelines of Clause 52.17, Officer assessment is that the proposed native vegetation loss is acceptable. It must be noted that this assessment would not change irrespective of whether two lot or three lots (or more) were proposed.

Whether the proposal adequately protects human life from the risks posed by bushfire.

The proposed subdivision of the land requires a planning permit under the provisions of Clause 44.06: Bushfire Management Overlay. The purpose of the Bushfire Management Overlay is:

- *To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.*
- *To ensure that the development of land prioritises the protection of human life and strengthens community resilience to bushfire.*
- *To identify areas where the bushfire hazard warrants bushfire protection measures to be implemented.*
- *To ensure development is only permitted where the risk to life and property from bushfire can be reduced to an acceptable level.*

Any application under the Bushfire Management Overlay must meet the requirements of Clause 53.02. The purpose of this clause is:

- *To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.*

- *To ensure that the development of land prioritises the protection of human life and strengthens community resilience to bushfire.*
- *To ensure that the location, design and construction of development appropriately responds to the bushfire hazard.*
- *To ensure development is only permitted where the risk to life, property and community infrastructure from bushfire can be reduced to an acceptable level.*
- *To specify location, design and construction measures for a single dwelling that reduces the bushfire risk to life and property to an acceptable level.*

Further, the site is located within the BMO Schedule 1 area, which relates to the Greater Bendigo BAL 12.5 areas. This schedule has the effect of stipulating all development within this area as requiring a minimum construction standard of BAL 12.5.

As the site is located within an area which is identified as being at risk to bushfire, the following direction at clause 71.02-3 must be followed in relation to this application:

*The Planning Policy Framework operates together with the remainder of the scheme to deliver integrated decision making. Planning and responsible authorities should endeavour to integrate the range of planning policies relevant to the issues to be determined and balance conflicting objectives in favour of net community benefit and sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations. However, in **bushfire affected areas**, planning and **responsible authorities must prioritise the protection of human life over all other policy considerations**.*

(emphasis added)

The effect of this clause is to prioritise bushfire protection over other policy considerations, including the protection/retention of native vegetation and character impacts. This means that should the proposed subdivision be deemed to prioritise the protection of human life from bushfire risk, that the subsequent native vegetation impacts and resultant impact to character is a lesser (secondary) consideration.

To support the assessment of this aspect of the application, the application was referred to Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV). FRV reviewed the application material and determined that the proposed subdivision layout met stipulated bushfire planning requirements and results in a proposal that adequately protects human life, subject to the inclusion of conditions. This would require the submitted Bushfire Management Plan to be registered on title via a Section 173 agreement, with all future landowners required to comply with these requirements.

The result of this process is to require that future dwellings on lots 2 and 3 be constructed to a Bushfire Attack Level of 12.5 (lowest rating possible), and ensure that water tanks and access are provided in accordance with FRV requirements.

Each lot is also required to be managed as defensible space, with defensible space being either 50 metres around the future dwelling, or to the property boundary (whichever is lesser) due to the surrounding 'modified' vegetation classification. This results in the need for the vast majority of vegetation within the site to be removed. This requires that canopy trees be thinned to provide at least 5 metres of separation between canopies. Further, that all grasses be closely maintained and that shrubs be removed where located under the canopy of a tree.

These requirements will result in significant impacts to vegetation within the site (noting that the bushfire defensible space impacts do not apply to the existing dwelling located on lot 1).

Officer assessment of the requirements at Clause 53.02: Bushfire planning concurs with the position recommended by FRV. The site is located within an area that is significantly modified and managed to reduce the risks from bushfire. The surrounding area is residential in character, with any remaining native vegetation managed to an appropriate level to mitigate serious bushfire risk. The primary fire approach direction from the northwest largely comprises standard suburban blocks cleared of native vegetation. The secondary bushfire approach direction from the southwest is more vegetated, with this characterised by highly managed private land.

A number of objectors raised concerns with the bushfire impacts of the proposal. The City is unable to directly consider these concerns due to third party review rights not existing under the operation of the Bushfire Management Overlay. However, these concerns have been indirectly covered in the technical assessment undertaken by both the City and FRV in the review of this application.

As such, officer assessment is that the proposal satisfies all bushfire planning requirements.

Whether the proposed subdivision accords with the existing and preferred character of Shelley Street, Spring Gully.

Under the General Residential Zone, and throughout Clause 56, the consideration of character impacts is pervasive. This focusses on the impact of a proposal in relation to both the existing and preferred character stipulated within the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme.

Under clauses 15.01-5S: Neighbourhood character, 15.01-5L-01: Neighbourhood character – Greater Bendigo, and 15.01-5L-12: Spring Gully neighbourhood character the preferred character of the site is articulated. This is detailed as:

- *Maintain the garden setting of dwellings by retaining large trees and planting new trees, including native trees where identified as part of the character.*
- *Maintain the rhythm of dwelling spacing by setting buildings back from at least one side boundary.*
- *Minimise site disturbance and the impact of the building on sloping landscapes by stepping buildings down contours.*
- *Maintain the existing neighbourhood character of this precinct that is drawn from:*
 - *Dwellings mostly developed in the 1950s with consistent siting and front setbacks, spacious side setbacks and horizontal form, resulting from long, low elevations of buildings in relation to height.*
 - *An open spacious streetscape due to no, low or transparent fences.*
 - *Mature native trees.*

The retention of mature trees is a focus of the preferred character of this area. This is achieved through the provision of dwellings in garden settings.

The Bushfire Management Overlay affecting the site contradicts the achievement of this policy, through the need to manage vegetation levels to reduce bushfire risk. As detailed above, this outcome is given priority by the Planning Scheme over the protection of neighbourhood character.

However, this does not mean that native vegetation impacts can be disregarded. The proposal achieves an appropriate balance between bushfire protection and character preservation. The application is seeking a three-lot subdivision, with the existing dwelling proposed to be retained on lot 1. The way the provisions of the Bushfire Management Overlay work mean that there is no requirement for the existing dwelling on lot 1 to adopt the defendable space requirements that will apply to lots 2 and 3. Lot 1 will remain subject to the standard bushfire native vegetation exemptions that exist within the Scheme. This results in the ability for the existing vegetation around the dwelling to be retained/managed as currently undertaken. Whilst the wholesale loss of native vegetation is proposed under this application, this is due to the operation of the 'site area' exemption as detailed above. The applicant has not indicated that they intend to actually remove this vegetation. Should they choose to retain it, there is no condition proposed below that will require removal to occur (just the payment of offsets to account for any removal that might occur in the future without the need for a planning permit).

As such, it is highly likely that the garden setting of the site as it currently presents to Shelley Street will be retained. It is possible that the only visible impacts to the streetscape will be in the construction of two new crossovers, one either side of the

existing dwelling (which will be softened by landscaping conditions detailed below). Further, the defensible space requirement within the lots to the rear will result in a reduction to the existing canopy coverage that will be visible from Shelley Street over the top of the existing dwelling.

This outcome is considered appropriate in the context of Shelley Street. The retention of vegetation surrounding the existing dwelling accords with the policy direction to retain mature trees.

The majority of objections raised concerns with the character impacts of the proposal on their individual outlooks. This ranged from views of the site from the public domain and from views across shared boundaries. The site is relatively visible from surrounding properties due to the topography of the site, with the two new proposed lots located within a natural gully. The existing extent of vegetation within the site is a valued feature of the site. Whilst this concern is valid, the support for the subdivision from a wider policy perspective (especially relating to bushfire) outweighs this internal neighbourhood character impact. It is noted that the proposal is only seeking two additional lots, where more could have been considered. This will result in a relatively low density general residential subdivision, with two new dwellings being constructed on large lots that will provide ample opportunity for an appropriate garden setting to be established around both new dwellings that accords to the defensible space requirements of the Bushfire Management Plan.

Officer assessment is, when considered in conjunction with the requirements of the Bushfire Management Overlay, that the impacts to neighbourhood character are appropriate in relation to the scale of subdivision proposed.

Whether all objector concerns have been addressed.

In addition to the issues detailed above, objectors raised a number of other concerns that require consideration. This section addresses each in turn.

Traffic impacts associated with the subdivision (and subsequent development) of the land

A number of objector concerns related to road safety concerns associated with the subdivision of the land. These specifically relate to additional traffic movements that would result from the addition of two new dwellings into the street. Concern was also raised as to the location of the two new proposed driveways in relation to two crests that exist along Shelley Street, either side of the site.

To confirm the appropriateness of the proposed layout, internal referral to the City's Traffic Engineer was undertaken. The Engineering response deemed that the proposal would not result in an unsafe road environment, with sight lines from

proposed driveway locations appropriate for the low-speed environment of Shelley Street. The street network has sufficient capacity to support the additional traffic movements that would result from the two new dwellings that the subdivision of the land would support.

Potentially contaminated land

Objectors raised concerns that the land may potentially be contaminated from historic mining activities associated with the Bendigo gold rush of the 19th century. Objections flagged that evidence of historic mine shafts exist within the area. Under Clause 13.04-1S: Contaminated and potentially contaminated land, the City is required to be satisfied that the land is not contaminated prior to it approving an application that would allow for an increase in residential development of the land. Historic mining activities have the potential to increase heavy metal contamination in the environment through the treatment of ore extracted from quartz mining.

A review of the City's records of historic mine shaft locations does not show any locations within the site or immediate surrounds. The closest shaft is at a distance of 70m to the north of the site.

Due to the topography of the site, it is unlikely that any treatment of ore occurred within the site. Mining operations resulted in ore being transported downhill to processing facilities where heavy metals were used to extract gold. As the site is located at the top of the hill, it is unlikely that any processing occurred within the site. Further, as the site is located at the top of the hill, any migration of heavy metals through ground water is not likely to have impacted the site. As such, the site is deemed to not be contaminated and suitable for residential use.

Council revenue raising

Objectors raised concern that this proposal was only being considered by the City to facilitate an increase in rates revenue to aid in funding the Council's budget.

In assessing a planning permit application, the City must have regard to the provisions of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme. There are no policies or provisions within the Planning Scheme that relate to a desire to increase the City's rates revenue. Council policy that relates to rates revenue is considered under separate processes that relate to the budget cycle. Policy outcomes detailed throughout the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme are set by Strategic Planning projects and guided by the City's Council Plan *Mir wimbul* 2021-2025.

The appropriateness of the proposed subdivision is required to be considered against the range of policies that have been discussed above in this report. Rates revenue is not within the scope of consideration for planning permit applications.

Sets lot size precedent for area

As detailed above, the proposed lot size will not set a precedent in the area. The proposed lot sizes are consistent with lot sizes that already exist within the immediate area. There are a number of lots in the immediate vicinity that are significantly smaller than those proposed under this application. The presence of smaller lots within the immediate surrounding area is notably part of the existing character of the area that has been considered as part of the character assessment of the proposal.

Privacy impacts

Privacy impacts are not able to be directly considered as part of a subdivision application. Privacy impacts are considered under development applications. In the case of the two lots created as a result of this application, privacy Impacts would be considered as part of any subsequent building permit that would be required for the construction of any dwelling on either lot. These privacy considerations would be assessed in line with the provisions of the Building Regulations 2018.

In assessing this application, the lot size and building envelopes were considered of a sufficient size to easily accommodate the various requirements of the Building Regulations 2018.

Previous permit history

The subject site was subject to an earlier 2019 planning permit that facilitated a boundary realignment and removal of an easement (DS/206/2019). This approval created the current lot alignment for the subject site, by reducing the size of the adjoining property to the east (19 Shelley Street). Concerns raised by objectors were that this permit allowed for the removal of an easement that likely contained infrastructure for stormwater drainage or sewerage. Concern surrounded whether the proposal would adequately manage the required infrastructure for number 19 in addition to the new lots created under this application.

The 2019 permit allowed for the easement to be removed, through the creation of other easements within the site to manage all required services that were located within adjoining lots (as is common practice with subdivision permits).

This application has been referred to all service authorities for comment. Appropriate conditions have been included below that would ensure that all required infrastructure be delivered to service all lots. Easements would be created wherever necessary to protect these assets for each of the lots created and for any

infrastructure that exists within the site that services surrounding allotments (as is standard practice for all subdivision permits).

No service authority, nor the City's engineers, have raised concern with the existing arrangement of services or easements within the site that require rectification through this permit application.

Conclusion

Officer assessment is that the application should be supported, subject to the conditions contained at the end of this report.

The application has come before Council for decision due to the number of objections raised throughout the assessment of the proposal. Objector concerns are detailed above and have been addressed throughout the subsequent discussion in this report.

The key reasons that the application is supported at officer level are summarised as follows:

- The proposed subdivision accords with policy direction for in-fill development within an appropriately serviced location within the General Residential Zone, which has the primary purpose for residential uses within a suburban context.
- The proposed subdivision has been appropriately designed to mitigate bushfire risk to an appropriate standard to prioritise the protection of human life.
- The proposed removal of native vegetation is appropriate to create the required defensible space around the two new dwellings that will be facilitated on lots 2 and 3.
- That the impacts to the existing local character within Shelley Street will be minimal, with the existing dwelling to be retained and the two new lots located to the rear and largely unobservable from the public realm.
- The proposal has adequately addressed all valid objector concerns.
- The proposal is compliant with the Municipal Planning Statement, Planning Policy Framework, General Residential Zone, Bushfire Management Overlay, relevant Particular Provisions and General Provisions of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme.

Options

Council, acting as the responsible authority for administering the Planning Scheme, may resolve to: grant a permit, grant a permit with conditions, or refuse to grant a permit.

Conflict of Interest

No officer involved in the preparation or approval of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Proposed Notice of Decision Conditions

1. LAYOUT PLANS

The subdivision, as shown on the endorsed plans, must not be altered without the prior written consent of the responsible authority.

2. PROVISION OF SERVICES

The owner of the land must enter into agreements with the relevant authorities for the provision of water supply, drainage, sewerage facilities, electricity and gas (where it is proposed to be connected) services to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with the authority's requirements and relevant legislation at the time.

3. EASEMENTS

All existing and proposed easements and sites for existing and required utility services and roads on the land must be set aside in the plan of subdivision submitted for certification in favour of the relevant authority for which the easement or site is to be created.

4. REFERRAL OF PLAN

The plan of subdivision submitted for certification under the Subdivision Act 1988 must be referred to the relevant authority in accordance with section 8 of that Act.

5. PUBLIC OPEN SPACE CONTRIBUTION

- (a) Before the statement of compliance is issued the applicant or owner must pay to the responsible authority a sum equivalent to 5% of the site value of all the land in the subdivision.
- (b) The site value must be determined by an independent valuation of the land undertaken by a suitably qualified practicing land valuer which must be submitted to and approved by the responsible authority. The valuation of the land must be commissioned by and at the full cost of the applicant/owner

Note: This condition can be waived should evidence be provided that public open space has previously been satisfied.

6. LANDSCAPE PLAN

Prior to certification of the plan of subdivision, a landscape plan to the satisfaction of the responsible authority must be submitted to and approved by the responsible authority. When approved, the plan will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. The plan must be drawn to scale with dimensions.

The plan must show:

- (a) Details of surface finishes of pathways and driveways.
- (b) Planting along both sides of each accessway to a minimum width of 1.0m. The planting should:
 - i. Comprise predominately indigenous native species.
 - ii. Be arranged to meet defendable space requirements.
- (c) Planting schedule of all proposed trees, shrubs and ground covers, including botanical names, common names, pot sizes, sizes at maturity, and quantities of each plant

All species selected must be to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

7. LANDSCAPING WORKS

Prior to the issue of statement of compliance, or by such later date as is approved by the responsible authority in writing, the landscaping works shown on the endorsed plans must be carried out and completed to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

8. LANDSCAPING MAINTENANCE

The landscaping shown on the endorsed plans must be maintained to the satisfaction of the responsible authority, including that any dead, diseased or damaged plants are to be replaced.

9. SECTION 173 AGREEMENT – BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Before the statement of compliance is issued under the Subdivision Act 1988 the owner must enter into an agreement with the responsible authority under Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The agreement must:

- State that it has been prepared for the purpose of an exemption from a planning permit under Clause 44.06-2 of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme.
- Incorporate the plan prepared in accordance with Clause 53.02-4.4 of this planning scheme and approved under this permit.
- State that if a dwelling is constructed on the land without a planning permit that the bushfire protection measures set out in the plan incorporated into the agreement must be implemented and maintained to the satisfaction of the responsible authority on a continuing basis.
- Explicitly exclude Lot 1 from the following exemption under Clause 44.06-2 of the Scheme:

“A building or works consistent with an agreement under section 173 of the Act prepared in accordance with a condition of permit issued under the requirements of Clause 44.06-5”.

The landowner must pay the reasonable costs of the preparation, execution and

registration of the Section 173 Agreement.

The agreement must be prepared and registered by the City's solicitors at the cost of the applicant/owner.

ENGINEERING CONDITIONS:

10. DETAILED DRAINAGE

Prior to the certification of the plan of subdivision under the Subdivision Act 1988, plans to the satisfaction of the responsible authority must be submitted to and approved by the responsible authority. When approved, the plans will be endorsed and then will form part of the permit. The plans must be drawn to scale with dimensions. The plans must include:

- (a) Direction of stormwater run-off.
- (b) A point of discharge for each lot.
- (c) Easements as required.
- (d) Stormwater detention.
- (e) Stormwater quality.

11. CONSTRUCTION OF WORKS

Prior to the issue Statement of Compliance, road works, drainage and other civil works must be constructed in accordance with the Infrastructure Design Manual and plans and specifications approved by the responsible authority and must include:

- (a) Underground drainage.

12. SECTION 173 AGREEMENT – ON-SITE DETENTION

If on-site detention is supplied then, prior to the issue of Statement of Compliance, the applicant/owner must enter into an Agreement under section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

Such Agreement must covenant that:

- (a) The owner will maintain each detention or quality system and not modify it without prior written approval from the responsible authority.
- (b) The owner shall allow duly authorised officers of the responsible authority to inspect the systems at mutually agreed times.
- (c) The owner will pay for all costs associated with the construction and maintenance of the system.

The agreement must be prepared and registered by the City's solicitors at the cost of the applicant/owner.

13. PUBLIC ASSETS

Before the development starts, the owner or developer must submit to the responsible authority a written report and photos of any prior damage to public infrastructure. Listed in the report must be the condition of kerb and channel, footpath, seal,

streetlights, signs and other public infrastructure fronting the property and abutting at least two properties either side of the development. Unless identified with the written report, any damage to infrastructure post construction will be attributed to the development. The owner or developer of the subject land must pay for any damage caused to any public infrastructure caused as a result of the development or use permitted by this permit.

14. CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT PLAN

Prior to commencement of works the owner or applicant must submit a Construction Management Plan (CMP) for approval by the responsible authority. This plan shall include, but not be limited to:

- (a) A site-specific plan showing proposed erosion and sedimentation control works.
- (b) Techniques and intervention levels to prevent a dust nuisance.
- (c) Techniques to prevent mud and dirt being transported from the site to adjacent streets.
- (d) The protection measures taken to preserve any vegetation identified for retention.

During construction of works associated with the subdivision, the applicant must employ and provide the protection methods contained in the CMP to the satisfaction of the responsible authority and the Environment Protection Agency.

NATIVE VEGETATION REMOVAL CONDITIONS:

15. NOTIFICATION OF PERMIT CONDITIONS

Before works start, the permit holder must advise all persons undertaking the vegetation removal or works on site of all relevant permit conditions and associated statutory requirements or approvals.

16. PROTECTION OF VEGETATION TO BE RETAINED

Before works start, a native vegetation protection fence must be erected around all patches of native vegetation and scattered trees to be retained on site. This fence must be erected around the patch of native vegetation at a minimum distance of 2 metres from retained native vegetation and/or at a radius of $12 \times$ the diameter at a height of 1.3 metres to a maximum of 15 metres, whichever is greater. The fence must be constructed of star pickets with affixed para webbing to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. The fence must remain in place until all works are completed to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. Except with the written consent of the responsible authority, within the area of native vegetation to be retained and any tree protection zone associated with the permitted use and/or development, the following is prohibited:

- (a) Vehicular or pedestrian access;
- (b) Trenching or soil excavation;
- (c) Storage or dumping of any soils, materials, equipment, vehicles, machinery or waste products;

- (d) Entry and exit pits for underground services;
- (e) Any other actions or activities that may result in adverse impacts to retained native vegetation.

17. OFFSET REQUIREMENT

To offset the removal of 0.387 hectares of native vegetation as shown in Native Vegetation Removal Report LVR_2023_017, the permit holder must secure a native vegetation offset, in accordance with the *Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (DELWP 2017)* as specified below:

General offset

A general offset of 0.137 general habitat units:

- Located within the North Central Catchment Management Authority boundary or Greater Bendigo City Council municipal district
- With a minimum strategic biodiversity score of at least 0.080

18. OFFSET EVIDENCE AND TIMING

Before any native vegetation is removed, evidence that the required offset has been secured must be provided to the satisfaction of Responsible Authority. This evidence is one or both of the following:

- An established first party offset site including a security agreement signed by both parties, and a management plan detailing the 10 year management actions and ongoing management of the site; and/or
- Credit extract(s) allocated to the permit from the Native Vegetation Credit Register.

A copy of the offset evidence will be endorsed by the responsible authority and form part of this permit. Within 30 days of endorsement of the offset evidence by the responsible authority, a copy of the endorsed offset evidence must be provided to the Department Environment, Energy and Climate Action.

19. MONITORING AND REPORTING FOR ONSITE OFFSET IMPLEMENTATION

In the event that a security agreement is entered into as per condition 15, the applicant must provide the annual offset site report to the responsible authority by the anniversary date of the execution of the offset security agreement, for a period of 10 consecutive years. After the tenth year, the landowner must provide a report at the reasonable request of a statutory authority.

REFERRAL AUTHORITY CONDITIONS:

20. COLIBAN WATER

- (a) The owner is required to reach agreement with Coliban Water for the provision of reticulated water supply and sewerage services to Lots 1-3 within the subdivision and comply with any requirements arising from any effect of the proposed development on Coliban Water assets.

Services are to be provided and where necessary, amendments will be required to the existing potable water supply service pipes and property service drains, in accordance with our specifications.

- (b) The reticulated sewer main extension required to service the proposed lots within this subdivision, must be designed, constructed and must be finalised in accordance with Coliban Water's Developer Installed Works process. Sewer mains are required to provide full lot control.

Agreement is required to be reached with Coliban Water for the existing DN100 sewer main that currently services this development site, to be upgraded to a DN150 sewer main for the provision of sewerage services for Lots 1-3 within this subdivision.

- (c) Applications to amend the existing water supply services and/or connections to Coliban's water supply will need to be made through our consent to connect process. For new connections, Coliban Water's approved contractor is to install the water tapplings, meter assemblies and digital data devices (water meters) which will be located in an accessible location within 2.0 metres but no closer than 600mm, inside a title boundary line of each lots fronting a road reserve.
- (d) Applications to amend the existing property service drains and/or connections to Coliban's sewerage services will need to be made through our consent to connect process, prior to the property service drains (sewerage service), being amended and/or connected to Coliban Water assets in accordance with our conditions.
- (e) All private works for water supply and sanitary drainage must be constructed in accordance with the National Plumbing and Drainage Code of Australia being AS 3500, the MRWA Water Metering & Servicing Guidelines 2022 and or any relevant requirements of Coliban Water.
- (f) Before the issue of a Statement of Compliance for any stage of a subdivision under the Subdivision Act 1988, the owner of the land must make payment to Coliban Water of New Customer Contributions (NCCs). These contributions are based upon the number of additional allotments connected (or to be connected) to Coliban Water's water, sewer or recycled water networks. A quote will be supplied to the owner on the referral of the Certified plan of subdivision.
- (g) All Coliban Water assets within the subdivision existing and required, are to be protected by easements created in favour of Coliban Region Water Corporation.
- (h) Please note Under section 165(5) of the Water Act (1989), Coliban Water is not required to ensure that the water pressure is adequate for firefighting. It is important to note that Coliban Water does not guarantee fire flows.

21. POWERCOR

- (a) This letter shall be supplied to the applicant in its entirety.
- (b) The plan of subdivision submitted for certification under the Subdivision Act 1988 shall be referred to the Distributor in accordance with Section 8 of that Act.
- (c) The applicant shall provide an electricity supply to all lots in the subdivision in accordance with the Distributor's requirements and standards.

Notes: Extension, augmentation or rearrangement of the Distributor's electrical assets may be required to make such supplies available, with the cost of such works generally borne by the applicant.

- (d) The applicant shall ensure that existing and proposed buildings and electrical installations on the subject land are compliant with the Victorian Service and Installation Rules (VSIR).

Notes: Where electrical works are required to achieve VSIR compliance, a registered electrical contractor must be engaged to undertake such works.

22. TELECOMMUNICATIONS

- (a) The owner of the land must enter into an agreement with:

- A telecommunications network or service provider for the provision of telecommunication services to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with the provider's requirements and relevant legislation at the time; and
- A suitably qualified person for the provision of fibre ready telecommunication facilities to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with any industry specifications or any standards set by the Australian Communications and Media Authority, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the land is in an area where the National Broadband Network will not be provided by optical fibre.

- (b) Before the issue of a Statement of Compliance for any stage of the subdivision under the Subdivision Act 1988, the owner of the land must provide written confirmation from:

- A telecommunications network or service provider that all lots are connected to or are ready for connection to telecommunications services in accordance with the provider's requirements and relevant legislation at the time; and
- A suitably qualified person that fibre ready telecommunication facilities have been provided in accordance with any industry specifications or any standards set by the Australian Communications and Media Authority, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the land is in an area where the National Broadband Network will not be provided by optical fibre.

23. AUSNET SERVICES (GAS)

The plan of subdivision submitted for certification must be referred to AusNet Services (Gas) in accordance with section 8 of the Subdivision Act 1988.

24. FIRE RESCUE VICTORIA – ENDORSEMENT OF BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Bushfire Management Plan prepared by Living Rural, Version 1.2, dated 05/12/2023 must be endorsed by the Responsible Authority, be included as an annexure to the section 173 agreement prepared to give effect to clause 44.06-5 of the Planning Scheme and must not be altered unless agreed to in writing by CFA and the Responsible Authority.

EXPIRY CONDITION:

25. EXPIRY OF THE PERMIT

- (a) The plan of subdivision is not certified within two years from the date of this permit; or
- (b) The subdivision is not completed within five years from the date of certification of the plan of subdivision.

The responsible authority may extend the time for certification of the plan if a request is made in writing before the permit expires or within six months afterwards.

NOTES

CONSENT FOR WORK ON ROAD RESERVES

The applicant must comply with:

- (a) The Road Management Act 2004.
- (b) Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2005.
- (c) Road Management (General) Regulations 2005.

with respect to any requirements to notify the Coordinating Authority and/or seek consent from the Coordinating Authority to undertake “works” (as defined in the Act) in, over or under the road reserve. The responsible authority in the inclusion of this condition on this planning permit is not deemed to have been notified of, or to have given consent to undertake any works within the road reserve as proposed in this permit.

Attachments

Nil

16.2. 206 Nankervis Road, Mandurang - Extension to Existing Dwelling and Construction of an Outbuilding (Amended Plans to Allow for Design Changes)

Author:	Michael St Clair, Statutory Planner
Responsible Director:	Rachel Lee, Director Strategy and Growth

Summary/Purpose

Application No:	AM/43/2018/B
Applicant:	Marion Blake
Land:	206 Nankervis Road, Mandurang
Zoning:	Rural Living Zone
Overlays:	Bushfire Management Overlay Environmental Significance Overlay – Schedule 1
No. of objections:	Nil
Consultation meeting:	Consultation was not undertaken on the basis that notice of the amended application was not conducted..
Key considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is able to be considered in an amendment application. • Whether the proposed dwelling design is consistent with planning policy relating to urban design and building design in relation to the site context. • Whether the proposed dwelling design has appropriate regard to the existing and preferred rural residential character of Mandurang.
Conclusion:	<p>The amended dwelling design for the subject site is inappropriate in respect of the site context and neighbourhood character in that it has failed to appropriately address Nankervis Road.</p> <p>The proposed design would result in a dwelling that ‘turns its back’ on Nankervis Road that is inconsistent with the rural residential character of Mandurang.</p> <p>The proposal is an unacceptable outcome as it does not accord with the decision guidelines of the Rural Living Zone and the broader planning policy framework as it relates to building design and neighbourhood character.</p> <p>It is recommended that Council determine to refuse to grant an amendment to permit AM/43/2018/A. A refusal on this application will not result in the cancellation of the parent permit, with the current endorsed plan set remaining able to be acted upon by the landowner.</p>

Recommended Motion

That Council issue a Notice of Decision to Refuse to Grant an Amendment to a Permit for the 'extension to existing dwelling and construction of an outbuilding (amended plans to allow for design changes)' at 206 Nankervis Road, MANDURANG VIC 3551, on the following grounds:

1. The proposal is inconsistent with the relevant policy relating to urban design and building design contained within the Planning Policy Framework and the purposes and decision guidelines of the Rural Living Zone in the following manner:
 - a. The dwelling design fails to appropriately address Nankervis Road which is inconsistent with the objective and strategies contained within clauses 15.01-1S: Urban design and 15.01-2S: Building design as the design fails to:
 - i. Provide a dwelling entry from Nankervis Road
 - ii. Provide habitable room windows orientated to Nankervis Road.
 - iii. Provide garage access directly from Nankervis Road.
 - iv. Locate services away from public interfaces.
 - b. The dwelling design fails to appropriately respond to the established and preferred character of Mandurang as detailed within clauses 15.01-5S: Neighbourhood character, 15.01-6S: Design for rural areas, and 16.01-3L: Rural residential development – Greater Bendigo As the design fails to:
 - i. Provide appropriate landscaping treatment to the Nankervis Road frontage.
 - ii. Providing a dwelling entry from Nankervis Road.
 - iii. Provide habitable room windows orientated to Nankervis Road.
 - iv. Locate services away from public interfaces
 - c. The dwelling design in effect turns its back on Nankervis Road.

Background Information

Approval History

The subject site currently benefits from planning permit DR/43/2018, which was issued on 18 October 2018. This permit provided approval for the 'extension to existing dwelling and construction of an outbuilding'. This permit was amended on 16 April 2021, identified as AM/43/2018/A. The current expiry date for this permit requires development to be completed by 18 October 2024.

These permits are generally described as follows:

DR/43/2018

The original permit application that applies to the subject site was initially lodged with the City on 31 January 2018. This application sought to extend the existing weatherboard dwelling on the site and to construct a new shed. The assessment of

this application culminated with a planning permit being issued under delegation on 18 October 2018.

This approval provided for an extension to the southeast of the existing dwelling, as shown in the endorsed floor plan shown at Figure 1 below. This layout retained the existing dwelling's presentation to Nankervis Road, whilst facilitating a new crossover connecting to a double garage presenting to Nankervis Road.

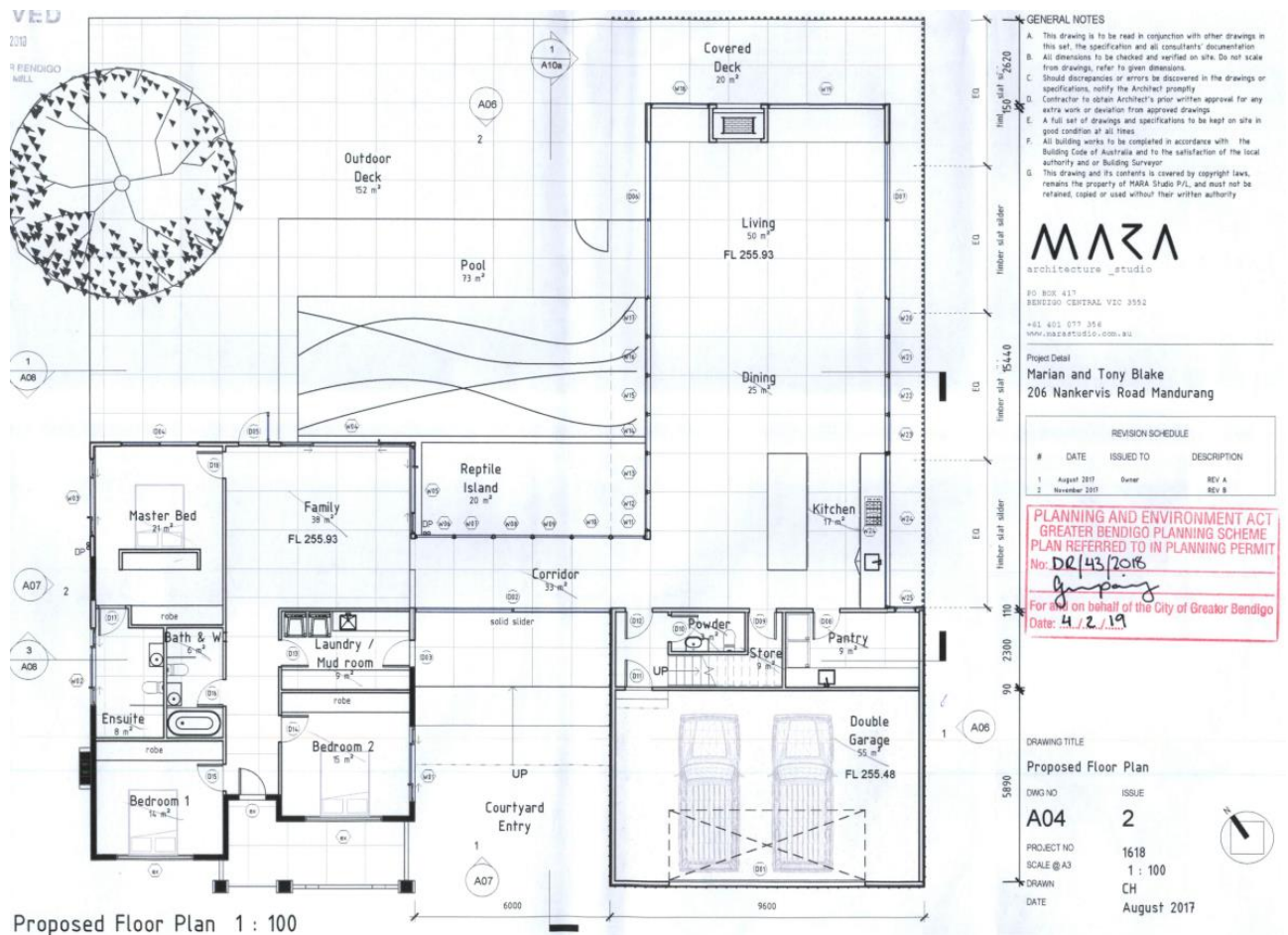
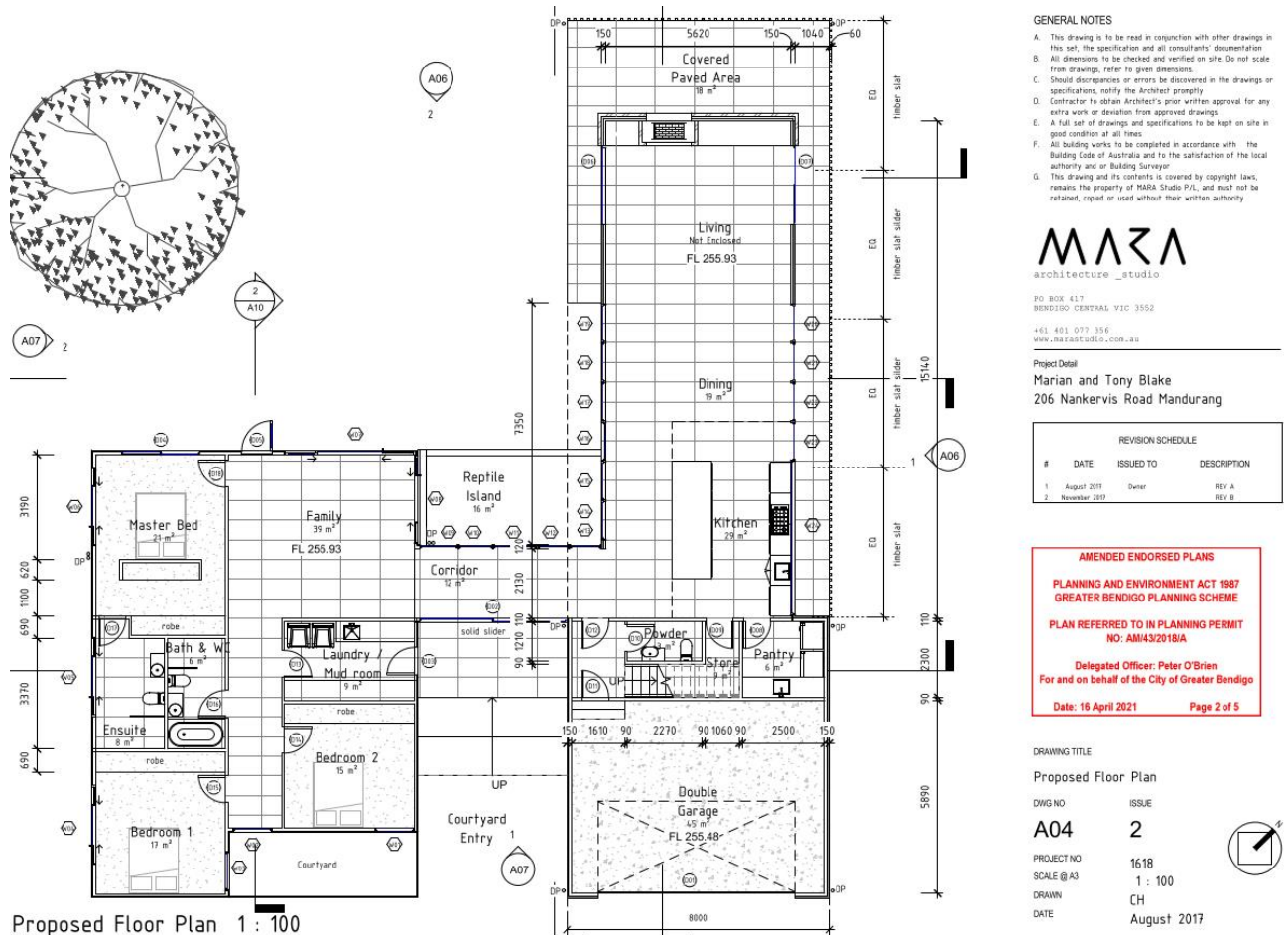


Figure 1: Endorsed Proposed Floor Plan – DR/43/2018

AM/43/2018/A

The first permit amendment application was received by the City on 9 March 2021. This application sought to amend the plans endorsed under the original permit. This amendment was premised on the existing dwelling on site not meeting current building requirements, resulting in the need for its demolition before any works could commence on site. As a result, the proposed dwelling design was altered to facilitate a full dwelling rebuild (knock down, rebuild). The assessment of this amendment culminated with the endorsement of amended plans under delegation on 16 April 2021.

These amended plans generally used the same building footprint as the original approval. The dwelling retained its frontage to Nankervis Road, including direct access from the proposed double garage to Nankervis Road via a new crossover. Figure 2 below shows the endorsed proposed site plan.



Proposed Floor Plan 1 : 100

Figure 2: Endorsed Proposed Floor Plan – AM/43/2018/A

Concurrent with assessment of this amendment, the applicant sought an extension of time to the permit expiry. This application was approved, with the current expiry requiring that development be completed by 18 October 2024. It is expected that an extension of time request will be lodged in due course for consideration outside of the current amendment application.

AM/43/20218/B

The current amendment application was received by the City on 15 May 2023. This amendment application seeks to amend the endorsed plans as a result of a redesign of the proposed dwelling. The specifics of these changes are described below. In essence, these changes seek to remove the dwelling's orientation to Nankervis Road and provide this primary frontage to an internal driveway area.

Should the outcome of this application be refusal, the landowner would still be able to act on planning permit AM/43/2018/A.

Report

Subject Site and Surrounds

The site is a regular shaped allotment located on the northwestern side of Nankervis Road, Mandurang. The allotment is 8,094 square metres in size and contains a single storey weatherboard dwelling in the southern portion of the site, which is setback 6.04m from the front boundary. Two outbuildings are located immediately adjacent to the dwelling. A dam is located in the northern portion of the site, with the balance of the land largely cleared of vegetation. The northern portion of the site has been extensively landscaped and now presents as a manicured lawn area to the north of the proposed dwelling site. Earthworks have been undertaken along the east and west boundaries of the site to create earth bunds of approximately 1.0-1.2m in height. These have been further planted out with indigenous plants to create a private yard area that has no connection to Nankervis Road to the east whilst also increasing privacy to the private land to the west. The result of this landscaping is to provide a private yard for the dwelling, framing views to the north from the proposed dwelling location across manicured lawns to the dam at the northern end of the site. Figure 3 (below) shows an aerial image of the subject site.



Figure 3: Aerial image of subject site (Nearmap.com dated 20 October 2023)

Figure 4 (below) shows the current presentation of the dwelling to Nankervis Road.



Figure 4: Photo of existing dwelling as it presents to Nankervis Road (Image date 2 February 2024)

The surrounding area is characterised by rural residential style development, with large dwellings constructed in a semi-rural style with large shedding. Most lots are in the vicinity of 8 hectares in size, which results in the subject site being small in comparison. Most dwellings are well setback from Nankervis Road, contributing to the rural residential character of the area. Figure 5 shows the broader context for the site.



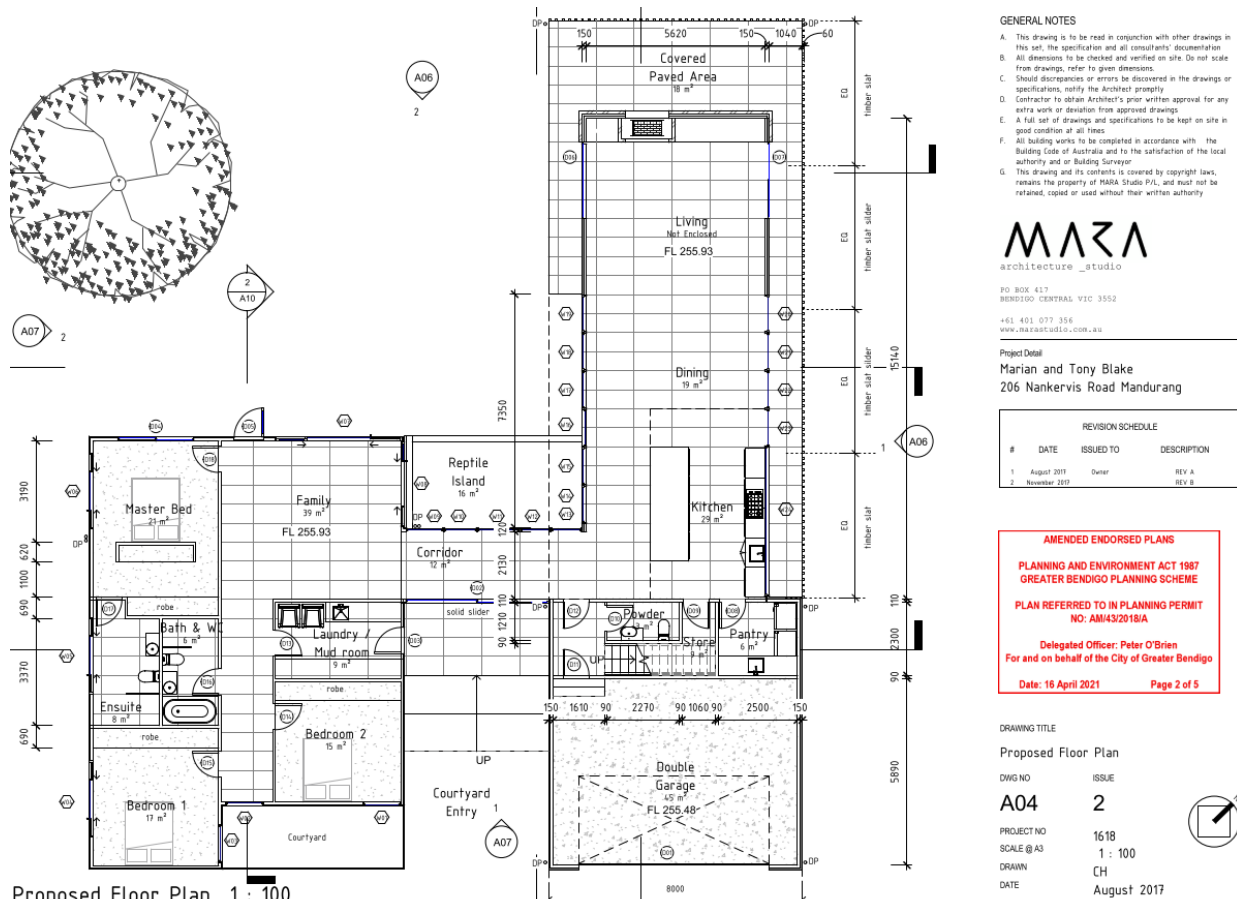
Figure 5: Aerial image of the site and surrounding area (Nearmap.com dated 20 October 2023)

Proposal

The application seeks to amend the plans endorsed under planning permit AM/43/2018/A.

The changes are substantial in scale, in effect redesigning the proposed dwelling. Notably, the dwelling has been reorientated 90 degrees to provide entry from the internal driveway to the southwest of the dwelling rather than fronting onto Nankervis Road to the southeast. All internal spaces have been relocated to further preference northerly solar access.

These changes are shown in Figures 6 and 7 below. Figure 6 shows the endorsed plans under AM/43/2018/A and Figure 7 shows the proposed plans submitted with this layout.



Proposed Floor Plan 1 : 100

Figure 6: Endorsed Proposed Floor Plan – AM/43/2018/A

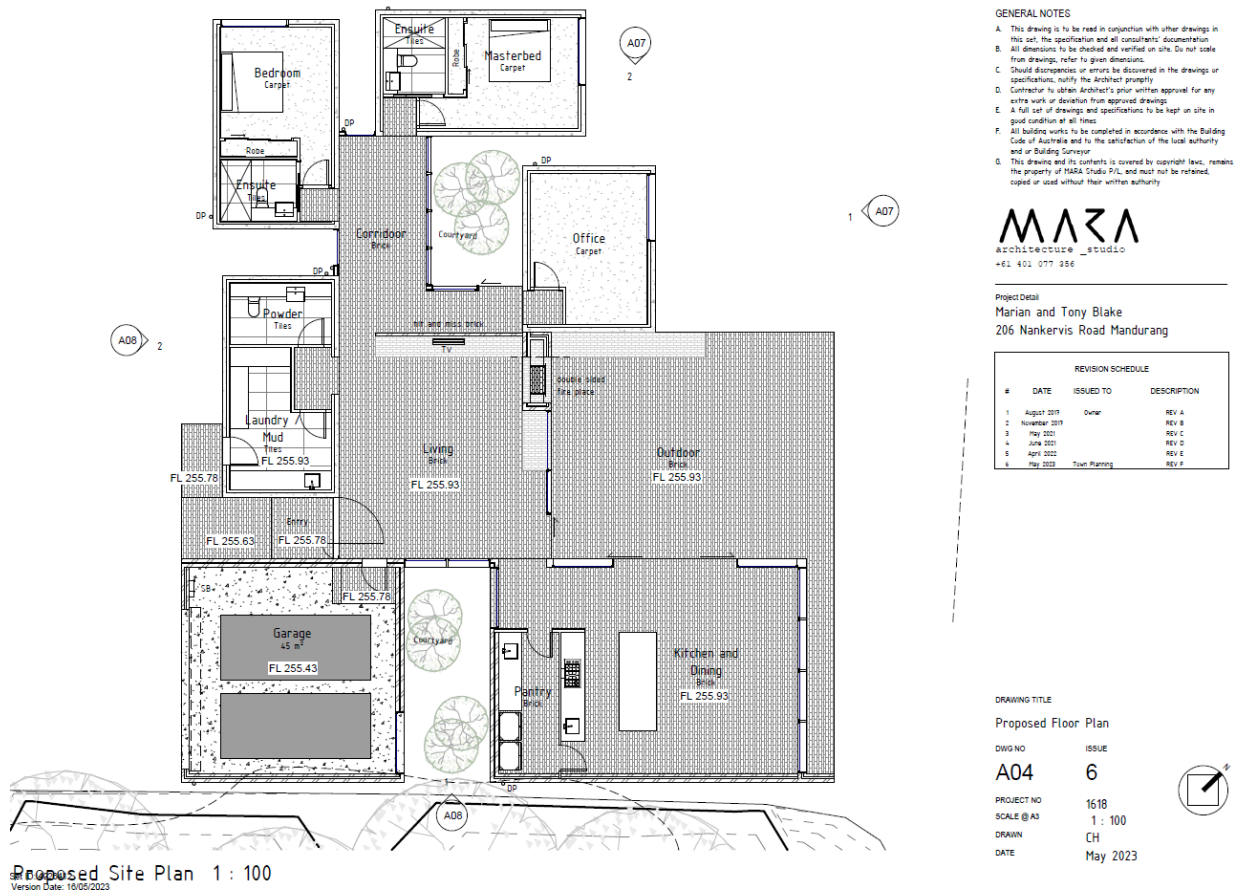


Figure 7: Proposed Floor Plan submitted under AM/43/2018/B

The key elevations for the proposed dwelling are to the south towards Nankervis Road. The changes to this elevation are shown in Figure 8 (endorsed south elevation) and Figure 9 (proposed south elevation) below.

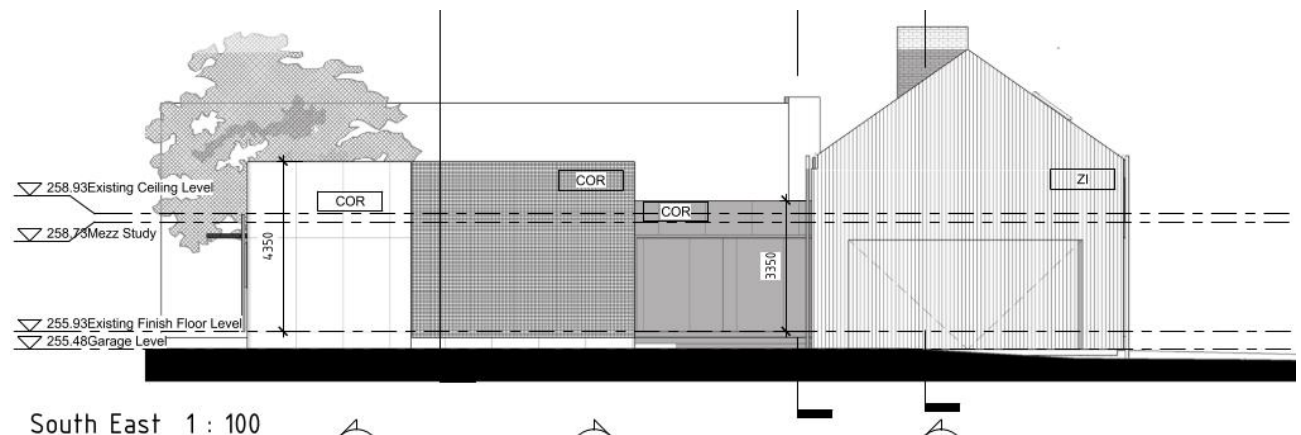
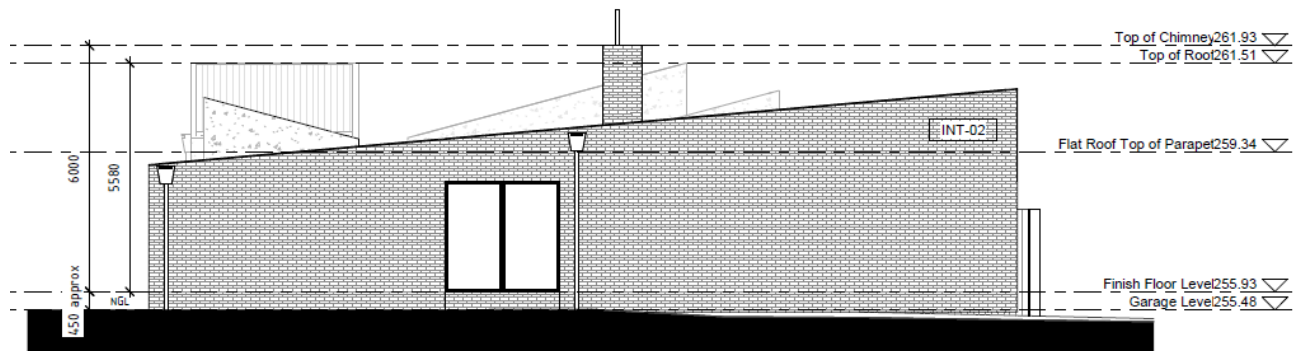


Figure 8: Endorsed south elevation – AM/43/2018/A



South Elevation 1 : 100

Figure 9: Proposed south elevation under AM/43/2018/B

Planning Controls - Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme

Why is a permit needed?

The following table lists all the planning permit triggers that applied to the original application (DR/43/2018). These planning permit triggers remain unchanged since this original permit was assessed.

Clause	Permit Trigger
Clause 35.03-4 Rural Living Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct a building or construct or carry out works associated with a section 2 use.
Clause 44.06-2 Bushfire Management Overlay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct a building or construct or carry out works associated with accommodation.

The following clauses are relevant in the consideration of this permit amendment application:

Municipal Planning Strategy

- 02.03: Strategic directions
- 02.03-3: Environmental risks and amenity
- 02.03-5: Built environment and heritage

Planning Policy Framework

- 11.03-6S: Regional and local places
- 15.01-1S: Urban design
- 15.01-2S: Building design
- 15.01-5S: Neighbourhood character
- 15.01-6S: Design for rural areas
- 16.01-1S: Housing supply

16.01-3L: Rural residential development - Greater Bendigo

Other Provisions

35.03: Rural Living Zone

Clause 65: Decision Guidelines

Policy Context

Primary Council Plan Reference

City of Greater Bendigo Council Plan *Mir wimbul* 2021-2025

Outcome 2 – Healthy, liveable spaces and places

Secondary Council Plan Reference(s)

Goal 7 – Sustainable population growth is planned for

Consultation/Communication

Referrals

The following internal department has been consulted on the proposal:

Referral	Comment
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Referral	Comment
Urban Design	<p>Current dwelling design not supported.</p> <p><u>Design response to the neighbourhood character</u> The proposed design does not respond appropriately to the existing neighbourhood form and character.</p> <p>Dwellings proposed within proximity to a major road must address the street frontage to ensure that the residential nature of the building is easily understood.</p> <p>This could be achieved by making the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocate the garage door to face the street. • Provide additional or larger windows to the street facing elevation. • Provide a pedestrian entrance facing the street with a roof overhang to protect from the weather. • Provide landscaping with an entrance path and planting. • Include identification of the building such as a street number. <p><u>Building services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please relocate the mechanical services to ensure they are not visually dominant when seen from the street. • Screening the mechanical services would be an acceptable alternative.

Public Notification

The application was not advertised.

City officers have fundamental concerns with the proposal which result in the proposal not being supported on policy grounds. Opportunity was provided to the applicant to amend the submitted plans to meet local and State policy, with the applicant indicating that they did not wish to amend the plans. The applicant indicated a preference that the plans as submitted be assessed, with the ultimate decision on the merits of the design to be made by Councillors at a Council meeting.

As a result, notice was not undertaken.

Planning Assessment

In considering this amendment application, the following matters must be considered:

- What is able to be considered with this amendment application.
- Whether the proposed dwelling design an appropriate response in relation to the existing rural residential character of the area.

What is able to be considered with this amendment application.

Section 72 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* provides for a landowner to seek an amendment to a permit from the responsible authority. The assessment for an application to amend a permit must focus only on the amendment itself. It is not able to consider the aspects of the proposal that have already been considered under the original approval and subsequent amendments.

In relation to this application, the following items are not able to be considered:

- **Use of land for a dwelling** – Whilst the site is under the minimum lot size threshold of 8 hectares for which the use of the land requires a permit, the site benefits from existing use rights due to the existing nature of the dwelling on site.
- **Demolition of the existing dwelling** – Under the Rural Living Zone and the Bushfire Management Overlay, there is no provision that requires a planning permit be issued for the demolition of the dwelling.
- **Consideration of Bushfire Management Overlay** – The suitability of the site for development of a dwelling under the BMO was considered under the original permit. The site was deemed to adequately manage bushfire risk, subject to compliance with relevant bushfire mitigation measures detailed within the endorsed Bushfire Management Plan.
- **Consideration of Environmental Significance Overlay** – All proposed works are located outside the extent of the Environmental Significance Overlay that affects the site. As such, no planning permit was triggered under the original planning permit or any subsequent amendment application.

The focus of this application relates to the proposed design changes to the dwelling. These changes are considered solely under the controls of the Rural Living Zone. The appropriateness of these changes is assessed below.

Whether the proposed dwelling design is an appropriate response to the existing and preferred rural residential character of the area.

The site is located within the Rural Living Zone. The purpose of the Rural Living Zone is as follows:

- *To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.*
- *To provide for residential use in a rural environment.*

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

To ensure these purposes are met, the Decision Guidelines of the Rural Living Zone require (amongst other things) to consider the following:

- *Whether the site is suitable for the use or development and whether the proposal is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.*
- *The impact of the siting, design, height, bulk, colours and materials to be used, on the natural environment, major roads, vistas and water features and the measures to be undertaken to minimise any adverse impacts.*
- *The impact on the character and appearance of the area or features of architectural, historic or scientific significance or of natural scenic beauty or importance.*

These decision guidelines lead to two general aspects of the amendment application that must be considered. These relate to the building design in its urban context and the appropriateness of the design in the existing rural residential character of the area.

Building Design

There are a range of policies within the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme that must be considered in designing a dwelling within a rural residential setting. These primarily are drawn from the following clauses:

15.01-1S: Urban design

- *Require development to respond to its context in terms of character, cultural identity, natural features, surrounding landscape and climate.*
- *Ensure the interface between the private and public realm protects and enhances personal safety.*
- *Ensure development supports public realm amenity and safe access to walking and cycling environments and public transport.*
- *Ensure that development, including signs, minimises detrimental impacts on amenity, on the natural and built environment and on the safety and efficiency of roads.*
- *Promote good urban design along and abutting transport corridors.*

15.01-2S: Building design

- Ensure a comprehensive site analysis forms the starting point of the design process and provides the basis for the consideration of height, scale, massing and energy performance of new development.
- Ensure development responds and contributes to the strategic and cultural context of its location.
- Minimise the detrimental impact of development on neighbouring properties, the public realm and the natural environment.
- Improve the energy performance of buildings through siting and design measures that encourage:
 - Passive design responses that minimise the need for heating, cooling and lighting.
 - On-site renewable energy generation and storage technology.
 - Use of low embodied energy materials.
- Ensure the form, scale, and appearance of development enhances the function and amenity of the public realm.
- Ensure buildings and their interface with the public realm support personal safety, perceptions of safety and property security.
- Ensure development considers and responds to transport movement networks and provides safe access and egress for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.
- Ensure development provides landscaping that responds to its site context, enhances the built form, creates safe and attractive spaces and supports cooling and greening of urban areas.

(emphasis added)

This list of policy objectives is comprehensive and provides a framework for how a building should be designed to integrate with the wider area in which it is located.

It is noted upfront that there is direction within the Planning Scheme for improving energy efficiency of buildings. This application has been primarily designed by the applicant to produce a house that is highly energy efficient, utilising solar passive design principles. A predominate northerly aspect has been sought, with living spaces designed with large windows to the north. The orientation of the site results in these northern windows being directed away from Nankervis Road, running along the site's southeastern boundary.

Whilst this energy efficient design response is encouraged, it must not be to the detriment of how the dwelling will integrate with the public realm, given the need to balance competing policy objectives. This is best reflected through the policy statement of:

Ensure the form, scale, and appearance of development enhances the function and amenity of the public realm.

The public realm associated with this location relates to Nankervis Road. Nankervis Road is a local road, which provides access between Mandurang and Mandurang South, providing a key transport corridor for the area. The road is a typical rural road providing two-way vehicle movements along an 80 km/h speed-controlled road. The site is located 600m to the south of the main intersection within Mandurang of Nankervis Road with Mandurang/Sedgwick Road.

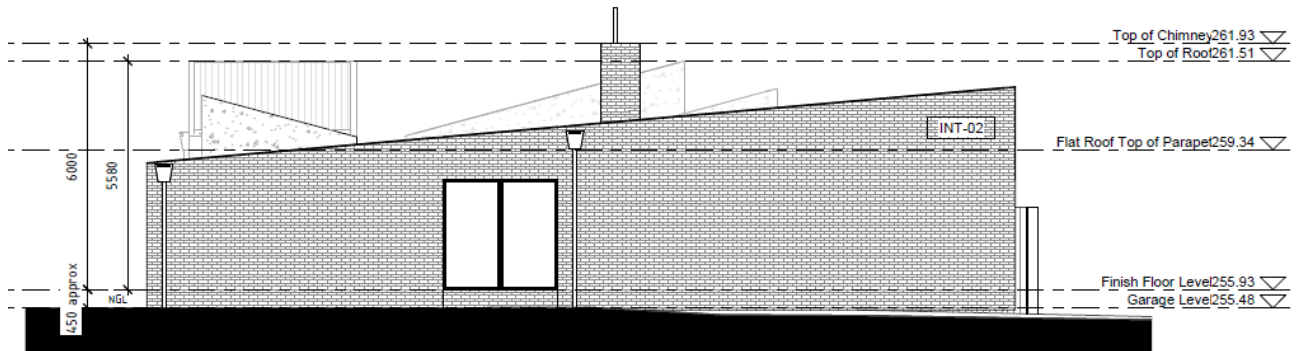
This stretch of Nankervis Road contains the main area of residential development associated with the Mandurang township. As a key transport corridor, good urban design outcomes are sought by policy. Good urban design is detailed within the *Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017)*. This document, under objective 1.5.1, requires:

Provide for a level of active frontage and lot access appropriate to the street function and building use patterns.

In applying this principle to the subject site, this is intended to result in windows from habitable rooms and front door access from the Nankervis Road frontage. This would result in the dwelling presenting to Nankervis Road with an active frontage, which is completely missing in this design.

The plans endorsed under AM/43/2018/A were designed with these principles in mind. A courtyard entryway is provided centrally along the road frontage, with a double garage orientated to the road to the right and bedrooms to the left.

The plans submitted under this amendment application seek to relocate the dwelling entry and the double garage to the southwest elevation of the building, which presents to the internal driveway. The new design in effect turns its back on Nankervis Road, instead proposing a solid brick wall. This wall is not moderated by any articulation other than a recessed courtyard. A skillion roof is proposed, which slopes from right to left when viewed from Nankervis Road. The side of the roof is obscured by the brick wall presenting to the road. This results in the elevation shown in Figure 9 above and replicated at Figure 10 below.



South Elevation 1 : 100

Figure 10: Proposed south elevation under AM/43/2018/B

This outcome is contrary to good urban design outcomes, resulting in a building that has no interaction with the public domain along Nankervis Road. This is an undesirable planning outcome.

The applicant has acknowledged that this outcome is not a good outcome and has proposed to soften this interface with landscaping. As the dwelling is only setback 8.4m from the Nankervis Road boundary, this treatment would likely result in a screening hedge that further reduces any activated connection. Further to this, landscaping should not be relied upon as there are no guarantees that it will be retained.

The application was referred to the City's Urban Designer for comment (see response above). The design in its current form was not supported due to its lack of address to the street frontage to ensure that the residential nature of the dwelling is easily understood. Design changes were suggested that would result in an acceptable urban design outcome (see above).

These changes were suggested to the applicant as a way of putting forward a potential solution to the concerns raised. The applicant advised that they were unwilling to consider these changes, advising that they wished for the plans in their current form to be considered. The applicant was advised that this would result in officer support not being given to the proposal, with the ultimate decision on the application to be made in the Council chamber. The applicant indicated a preference for the merits of this proposal to be decided by Councillors, informed by officer assessment.

Officer assessment is that the proposed dwelling design is unacceptable from an urban design perspective as it does not result in an activated frontage to Nankervis Road in accordance with policy within the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme.

Neighbourhood Character

In relation to neighbourhood character considerations, the policies within the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme that must be considered are drawn from clauses 15.01-5S: Neighbourhood character, 15.01-6S: Design for rural areas, and 16.01-3L: Rural residential development – Greater Bendigo.

These policies all reinforce each other, with the local policy detailed at clause 16.01-3L: Rural residential development – Greater Bendigo providing a clear direction for what is to be achieved on the site. This requires that development:

Design the dwelling to fit in with the surrounding rural living or rural residential character or preferred character of the area.

This clause requires the responsible authority to consider:

Whether the dwelling and associated buildings fit into the character of the surrounding area.

The surrounding area is characterised by three distinct development eras. The first relates to the initial agricultural development of the area to support Bendigo's initial development. This development era resulted in the agricultural land development pattern of the area. This is evidenced through the farm dwellings dating from the turn of the 19th century and their associated outbuildings. The existing dwelling on site is associated with this initial development character. The dwellings that resulted from this era of development are a mix of well setback dwellings and dwellings that are positioned immediately adjacent to the road network (such as the 6.04 metre setback of the existing dwelling on this site). In the instances where a dwelling is located in close proximity to a road corridor, these dwellings all directly address the road corridor.

The second character type is associated with rural residential development that occurred throughout the 1980s and 1990s. This typology is generally characterised by large single storey brick veneer dwellings on large allotments (generally of 8 hectares in size). These dwellings are generally well setback from the road network and are set in well-established garden settings.

The third character type results from recent rural-residential development. This phase has occurred over the last 10 years. These dwellings are generally architecturally designed, contemporary dwellings. These dwellings are predominately well setback from road corridors and are a result of further subdivision of the land surrounding Mandurang over recent years. Due to the recent nature of these dwellings, garden settings have yet to be established.

The proposed dwelling is consistent with this third character type, with the design being contemporary in nature. However, this site does not benefit from the deep setback that exists for all other instances of this development type.

In the context of this development, the contemporary nature of the proposed building is in keeping with the third character type discussed above. What is not in keeping is the orientation of the dwelling. In all character types discussed above, where a dwelling is in proximity to a road corridor, dwellings all directly address the road corridor. This occurs through the positioning of the front door having direct connection to the road corridor in addition to a number of windows from habitable rooms (either bedrooms or living spaces). Front verandahs are also widely expressed.

The dwelling proposed here does not have any of these features. It instead proposes a blank brick wall to Nankervis Road. An attempt to soften this has been made through the provision of some minor articulation through the placement of a courtyard. This approach is unsatisfactory in creating the required connection needed to assimilate the dwelling into the existing character of the area.

To further reduce the connection of the site to Nankervis Road, it is expected that the landscaping treatment that has occurred to the north along the side of the balance of the lot will extend along the side of the proposed dwelling. This will result in the site being totally obscured from the public domain. The resultant site interface will be an earthen wall, planted out with indigenous native vegetation, which largely obscures the proposed dwelling from view. The only connection would be via the driveway crossover at the southern extremity of the site.

This would result in an enclosed site, which is not in keeping with the predominate rural residential character that exists throughout the surrounding area. Officer assessment is that the proposal is not in keeping with the established and preferred character for Mandurang.

Conclusion

The Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme seeks to encourage appropriately located residential development that is consistent with the established and preferred character of the area.

This amendment application seeks to amend the endorsed plans for the site by extensively redesigning the proposed dwelling. The outcome of this redesign would be a dwelling that has no connection to the immediately adjacent Nankervis Road. This outcome is not consistent with established building design principles and does not accord with the established character for Mandurang.

It is recommended that Council determine to refuse to grant an amendment to permit AM/43/2018/A as the proposal presents an unacceptable response with regards to the decision guidelines of the Rural Living Zone and the broader planning policy framework as it relates to building design and neighbourhood character.

Refusal of this application will ensure that the rural residential character of Mandurang is supported and protected from inappropriate dwelling development.

Options

Council, acting as the responsible authority for administering the Planning Scheme, may resolve to: grant a permit, grant a permit with conditions, or refuse to grant a permit.

Conflict of Interest

No officer involved in the preparation or approval of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Attachments

Nil

16.3. Excision and transfer of part of Council's Reserve on Strathfieldsaye Road to Coliban Water for sewer pump station

Author:	Ian McLauchlan, Manager Engineering
Responsible Director:	Brian Westley, Director Presentation and Assets

Purpose

To respond to a request for the excision, re-reservation and transfer of a 560m² part of the City of Greater Bendigo (City) freehold parcel (Reserve 3\PS540789) located on Strathfieldsaye Road, to facilitate construction of a Coliban Water sewer pumping station.

Recommended Motion

That Council:

1. Note that under section 116 of the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic) (the Act), Council may transfer or exchange land, without public notice, to any public body. A public body means any government department, municipal Council or body established for a public purpose by an Act of Parliament. For this purpose, Coliban Water is considered a public body.
2. Note that a market valuation, for the purposes of the transfer of this Council owned asset, was obtained from qualified independent valuer.
3. Approves the excision, re-reservation and transfer of a 560m² parcel of land from Reserve 3\PS540789 (as shown on the attached plan of subdivision PS918015U) (the Land) to Coliban Water, conditional upon:
 - a. The City receiving payment of \$83,000 from Coliban Water, with the funds raised to be returned to the City's Land and Building Reserve.
 - b. The City receiving reimbursement from Coliban Water of all administration and legal fees associated with the transfer of the Land.
 - c. The City approving a landscape plan prior to the construction of the proposed sewer pump station, or other development upon the Land.

Report

In 2004 the City acquired an area of land located between Axe Creek and Mannes Lane along Strathfieldsaye Road, Strathfieldsaye (see Attachment 1). The acquired

land is comprised of Crown Allotments 13, 14 and the Reserve. These parcels were acquired to support future development of new recreational facilities to service the expanding Strathfieldsaye Township, as subsequently reflected within the Strathfieldsaye Township Plan 2010.

The Reserve has been created for the purposes of future public open space with the intent that it would ultimately be developed to provide additional sporting/recreational facilities for the expanding Strathfieldsaye Township.

Planning for the development of the Reserve has not yet commenced, however consideration is being given to its potential future use.

The City has been requested to consider the excision and transfer of a 560m² component of Reserve 3\PS540789 (the Land), to accommodate construction of a Coliban Water Sewer Pumping Station (SPS). The SPS would service land which is subject to future residential development within the nearby Strathfieldsaye Urban Growth Boundary (UGB).

A primary consideration of the proposal is that provision of a single SPS at the proposed location achieves significant operational efficiencies through alleviating the requirement for construction of several independent pump stations within the confines of nearby active and future development sites.

The concept of amalgamating multiple pump station facilities into the single SPS has been developed in collaboration between Coliban Water, the City and relevant developers. This proposal is considered to offer a varying level of benefit to all parties involved, including:

- Reduced upfront capital costs for single SPS construction versus the requirement to construct several smaller satellite SPS facilities.
- Reduced ongoing SPS operational and maintenance costs.
- Increased residential lot yield through condensed SPS footprint.
- Ability to accommodate future development connections from peripheral land.
- Improved residential amenity and environmental outcomes through SPS rationalisation and positioning.
- Facilitation of further residential growth and development within the UGB.
- Capacity to cater for future Reserve development.

A concept design for the SPS and associated reticulated mains network has been prepared by Tomkinson (see Attachment 2). This layout identifies the proposed location of the SPS and the associated land, contained within the existing UGB, which would benefit from this facility. Further connections to the SPS may be possible should the UGB be expanded, or ancillary areas of land beyond the current UGB be identified for future development.

Once constructed, the SPS is expected to have capacity to support development of up to 1152 new residential allotments, dispersed across the area within the UGB as shown within Attachment 2.

The requested 560m² area of the Reserve as shown within Attachment 3, will accommodate a primary underground pump station, Surface control systems and an ancillary underground 200KL storage system. This additional holding capacity is required for network balancing, to avoid potential downstream overflow events, via controlling/regulating the rate of effluent discharge to downstream pump stations during peak times.

At the time of its acquisition in 2004, all three allotments (CA13, 14 and the Reserve) were subject to a lease back arrangement, permitting their use by the former landowner for agricultural purposes. The lease agreement will require amendment to reflect the reduced land area available for this activity as well as an appropriate notice period ahead of the transfer of the Land.

Under section 116 of the Act, Council may transfer or exchange land, without public notice, to any public body. A public body means any government department, municipal Council or body established for a public purpose by an Act of Parliament and includes Coliban Water. A market valuation, for the purposes of the transfer of this Council owned asset, was ascertained by a qualified independent valuer. Any funds raised through the transfer of the Land would be returned to the City's Land and Building Reserve, and the City will require reimbursement of all legal and administrative costs incurred in association with the transfer.

Previous Council decision dates: Council resolved to acquire the Reserve at its ordinary meeting on 16 August 2004.

Priority/Importance

A decision regarding the positioning and/or configuration of the new SPS facility(s) is a high priority in the context of active residential developments within this precinct, given the anticipated lead time to complete required detailed design and subsequent construction.

The inability to identify a preferred SPS arrangement will likely contribute to further delays in commencement of new residential developments within the UGB.

Options Considered

Three options were considered in response to the request for excision and transfer of part of the Reserve to accommodate the proposed SPS. These included:

Support the requested transfer of the Land and construction of a single combined SPS:

- Reduced upfront capital costs for single SPS construction versus requirement to construct several smaller satellite SPS facilities.
- Reduced ongoing SPS operational and maintenance costs.
- Increased residential lot yield through condensed SPS footprint.
- Ability to accommodate future development connections from peripheral land
- Improved residential amenity and environmental outcomes through SPS rationalisation and positioning.
- Facilitation of further residential growth and development within the UGB.
- Capacity to cater for future Reserve development.

Refusal to transfer the Land but seek to establish the proposed SPS on an alternate site:

- Coliban Water and developers may seek to acquire an alternate parcel to accommodate the proposed SPS facility for the precinct. This site would most likely be further isolated from the Reserve, hence may result in additional costs being incurred in the future if/when a sewerage connection for the Reserve is pursued.
- Depending on where this SPS facility may ultimately be located, future connection of surrounding parcels within the UGB may also be impractical. This may therefore lead to additional pump stations being required in association with future development in this precinct.

Separate pump stations servicing individual development(s) stages:

- Individual developments within the UGB may be able to proceed through utilisation of independent pumping systems within the confines of their development boundary. This may result in several pump stations being constructed within this precinct. Such construction carries a significantly increased capital cost (for developers) as well as a higher ongoing operation, maintenance and renewal costs for Coliban Water, once these assets are inherited.
- The requirement to set aside areas of developable land to accommodate these multiple pump station facilities will result in a reduced yield within the defined UGB.

Timelines

This decision materially impacts planning and/or commencement of future stages of residential development within this precinct. Subject to Council support, Section 35

transfer of the land to Coliban may be completed within six months, following preparation of a formal plan of subdivision.

Once the Land is transferred, design and construction of the SPS facility is likely to take 6 to 18 months.

Communications/Engagement

In response to the requested Land acquisition, internal consultation has been undertaken between City's Engineering, Active and Healthy and Property Units.

Pursuant to section 116 of the Act, no public consultation regarding the proposed transfer of land to Coliban Water is required.

Subject to Council's decision, notice will be required to be given to the current lease holder regarding the reduction in land over which current agricultural and grazing activity may be conducted.

Financial Sustainability

All costs associated with the City's valuation of the Land and its subsequent excision, acquisition and transfer will be met by Coliban Water or the lead developer who may be selected to deliver this project on their behalf. Costs associated with subsequent construction of the sewer pump station will also be met by Coliban Water or a lead developer.

In addition to reimbursement of its legal and conveyancing costs, the City will receive payment of the agreed land value (currently \$83,000). Any funds raised through the transfer of the Land would be returned to the City's Land and Building Reserve.

The estimated lost lease revenue is negligible (i.e. \$9.38 per annum).

Risk Assessment

Excision of the subject land will not jeopardise or adversely impact the future development of the balance of the Reserve or provision and configuration of facilities therein.

The process for considering transfer of the Land has been undertaken in accordance with the statutory requirements outlined within the Local Government Act 2020.

Policy Context

Primary Council Plan Reference

City of Greater Bendigo Council Plan *Mir wimbul* 2021-2025

Outcome 1 - Lead and govern for all

Outcome 2 - Healthy, liveable spaces and places

Secondary Council Plan Reference(s)

Goal 1 - Accountable, financially responsible, equitable, transparent decision making

Goal 7 - Sustainable population growth is planned for

Other Reference(s)

Local Government Act 2020

Strathfieldsaye Township Plan 2010

Conflict of Interest

No officer involved in the preparation or approval of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

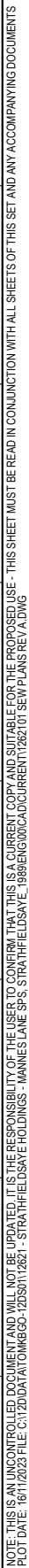
Attachments

1. Plan of Subdivision No. P S 540789 M [**16.3.1** - 2 pages]
2. Coliban Water Sewerage Pumping Station and Connection design extract [**16.3.2** - 9 pages]
3. Attachment 3 - Proposed Plan of Subd Sec 24 A V 2 [**16.3.3** - 2 pages]

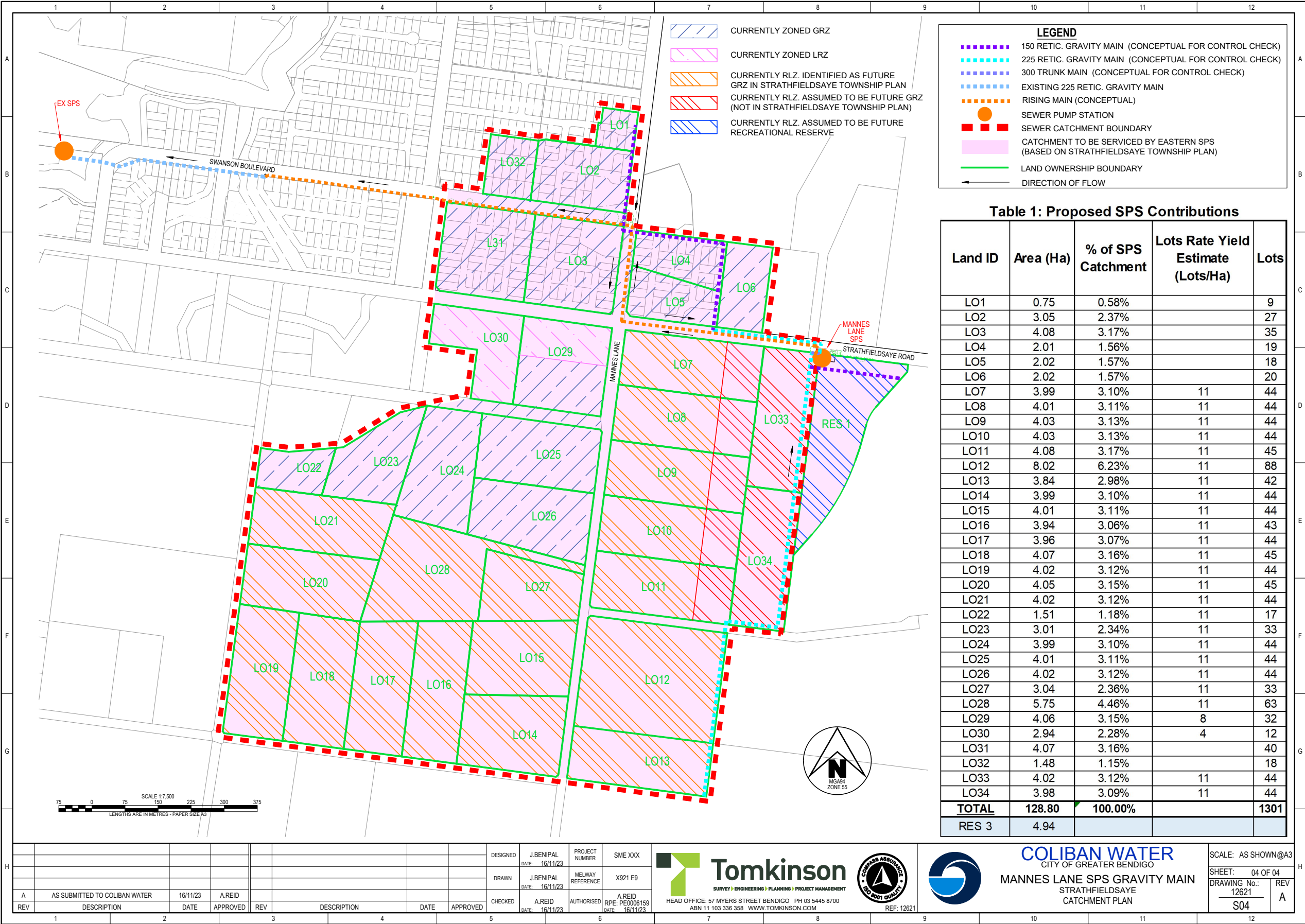
Delivered by LANDATA®, timestamp 18/08/2021 20:46 Page 1 of 2

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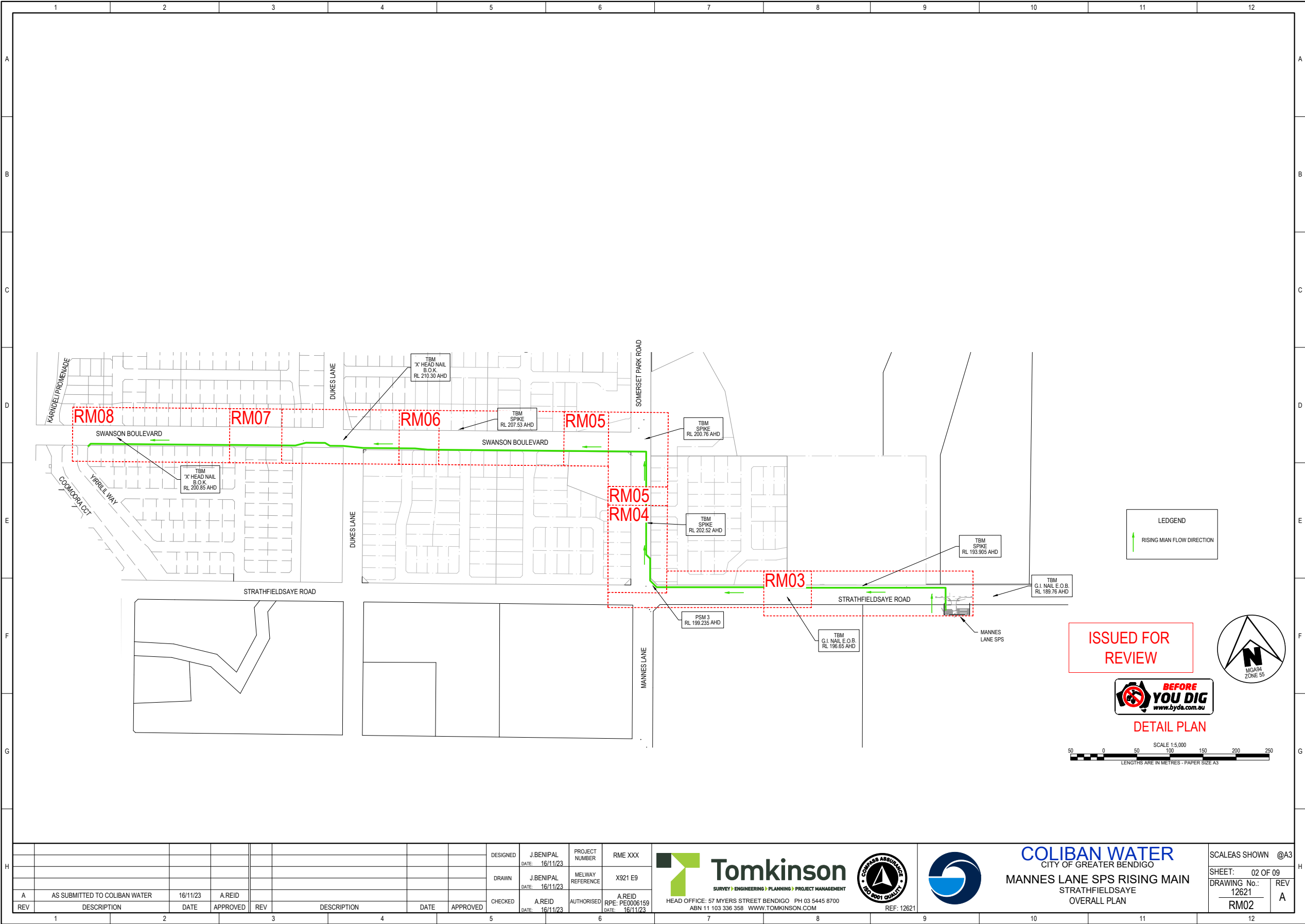
PLAN OF SUBDIVISION		Stage No. 	LTO use only EDITION 1	PS 	PS540789M 07/10/2008 \$1467.60 PS
Location of Land Parish: STRATHFIELDSAYE Township: Section: 10 Crown Allotment: 1, 2(PART) & 3 Crown Portion: LTO base record: DCMB Title References: Vol 1226 Fol 090 Vol.10922 Fol.694 Vol.10922 Fol.695 Last Plan Reference: PS 533993 D Postal Address: MANNES LANE STRATHFIELDSAYE 3551 AMG Co-ordinates: E 266340 (Of approx. centre of plan) N 5922360 Zone 55		Council Certification and Endorsement Council Name: CITY OF GREATER BENDIGO Ref: 1140/04 1. This plan is certified under section 6 of the Subdivision Act 1988. 2. This plan is certified under section 11(7) of the Subdivision Act 1988. Date of original certification under section 6 6/6/04 3. This is a statement of compliance issued under section 21 of the Subdivision Act 1988. Open Space (i) A requirement for public open space under section 18 Subdivision Act 1988 has has not been made. (ii) The requirement has been satisfied. (iii) The requirement is to be satisfied in Stage. Council Delegate <u>DLL</u> Council seal Date 2/10/08			
Vesting of Roads or Reserves					
Identifier		Council/Body/Person			
ROAD R1 ROAD R2 RESERVE No. 3		CITY OF GREATER BENDIGO ROADS CORPORATION CITY OF GREATER BENDIGO			
Notations					
Depth Limitation: DOES NOT APPLY		Staging This is is not a staged subdivision Planning Permit No. PP 1140/04			
CREATION OF A RESTRICTION: UPON REGISTRATION OF THIS PLAN THE FOLLOWING RESTRICTION IS CREATED: LAND TO BE BENEFITED: ALL LAND IN THIS PLAN LAND TO BE BURDENED: LOTS 1, 2, 3, 5, 13 AND 14 DESCRIPTION OF RESTRICTION: EXCEPT WITH WRITTEN CONSENT OF COUNCIL, NO DWELLINGS, OUT-BUILDINGS, UTILITY SERVICES OR ANCILLARY WORKS SHALL BE CONSTRUCTED ON LOTS 1, 2, 3, 5, 13, AND 14 OUTSIDE THE "DESIGNATED BUILDING ENVELOPES" AND EFFLUENT DISPOSAL FIELDS AS DEFINED IN CITY OF GREATER BENDIGO PLANNING PERMIT No. 1140/04		LOT 4 AND LOTS 7 TO 12 HAVE BEEN OMITTED FROM THIS PLAN. Survey:- This plan is / is not based on survey. To be completed where applicable. This survey has been connected to permanent marks no(s). 3, 4. In proclaimed Survey Area no.			
Easement Information					
Legend: A - Appurtenant Easement E - Encumbering Easement R - Encumbering Easement (Road)					LTO use only Statement of Compliance / Exemption Statement Received <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Date 7/10/2008
Easement Reference	Purpose	Width (Metres)	Origin	Land Benefited/In Favour Of	LTO use only PLAN REGISTERED TIME 5.10PM DATE 15/10/2008 Sam Giordano Assistant Registrar of Titles Sheet 1 of 2 Sheets
GEOFF SHAW & ASSOCIATES CONSULTING LAND SURVEYORS 8 HOPETOUN STREET BENDIGO, 3550 PH 054-430320			LICENSED SURVEYOR (PRINT) <u>GEOFFREY JOHN SHAW</u> SIGNATURE <u></u> DATE 3/10/2008 REF 4648/04 VERSION 4		DATE <u>2/10/08</u> COUNCIL DELEGATE SIGNATURE Original sheet size A3

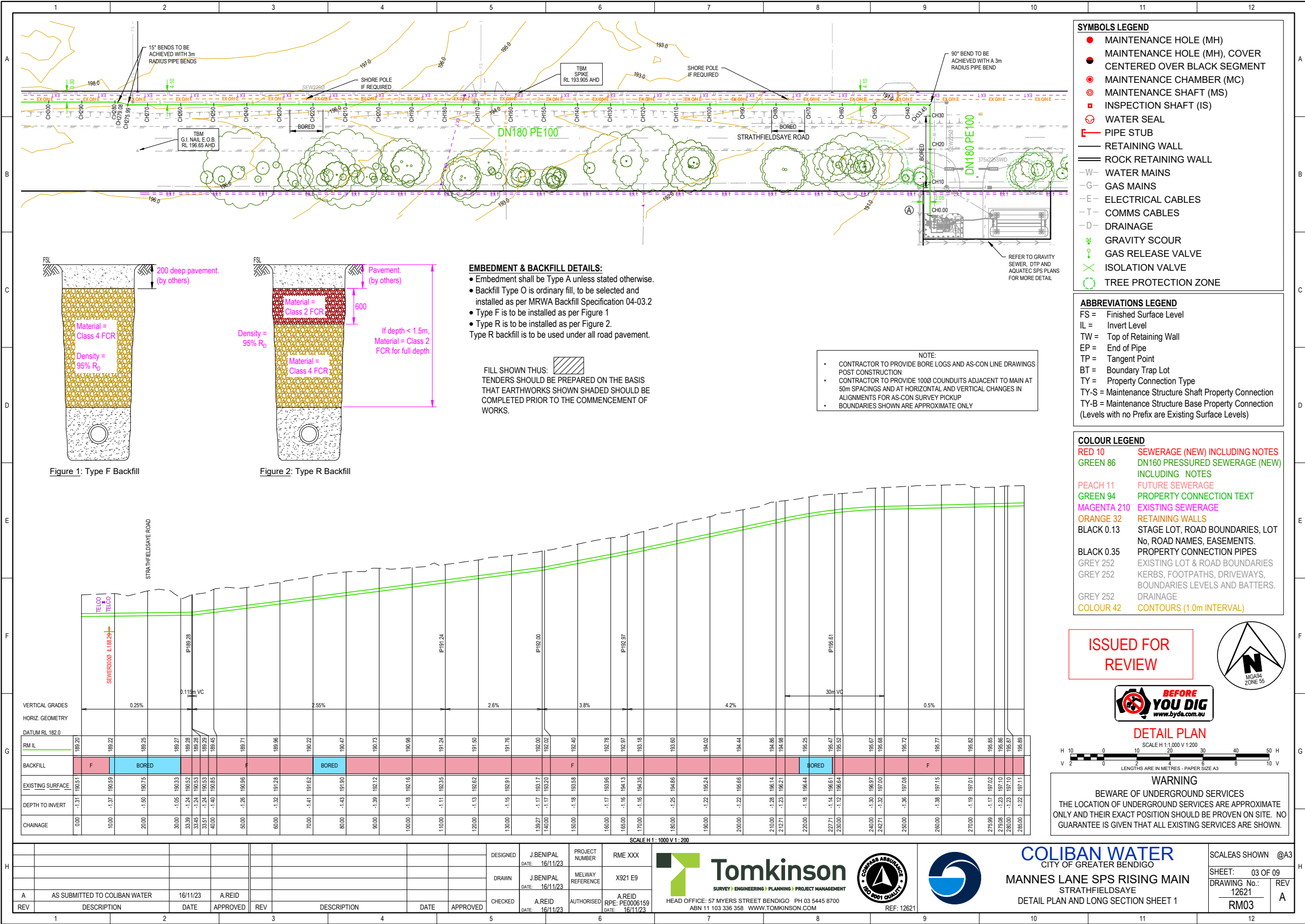




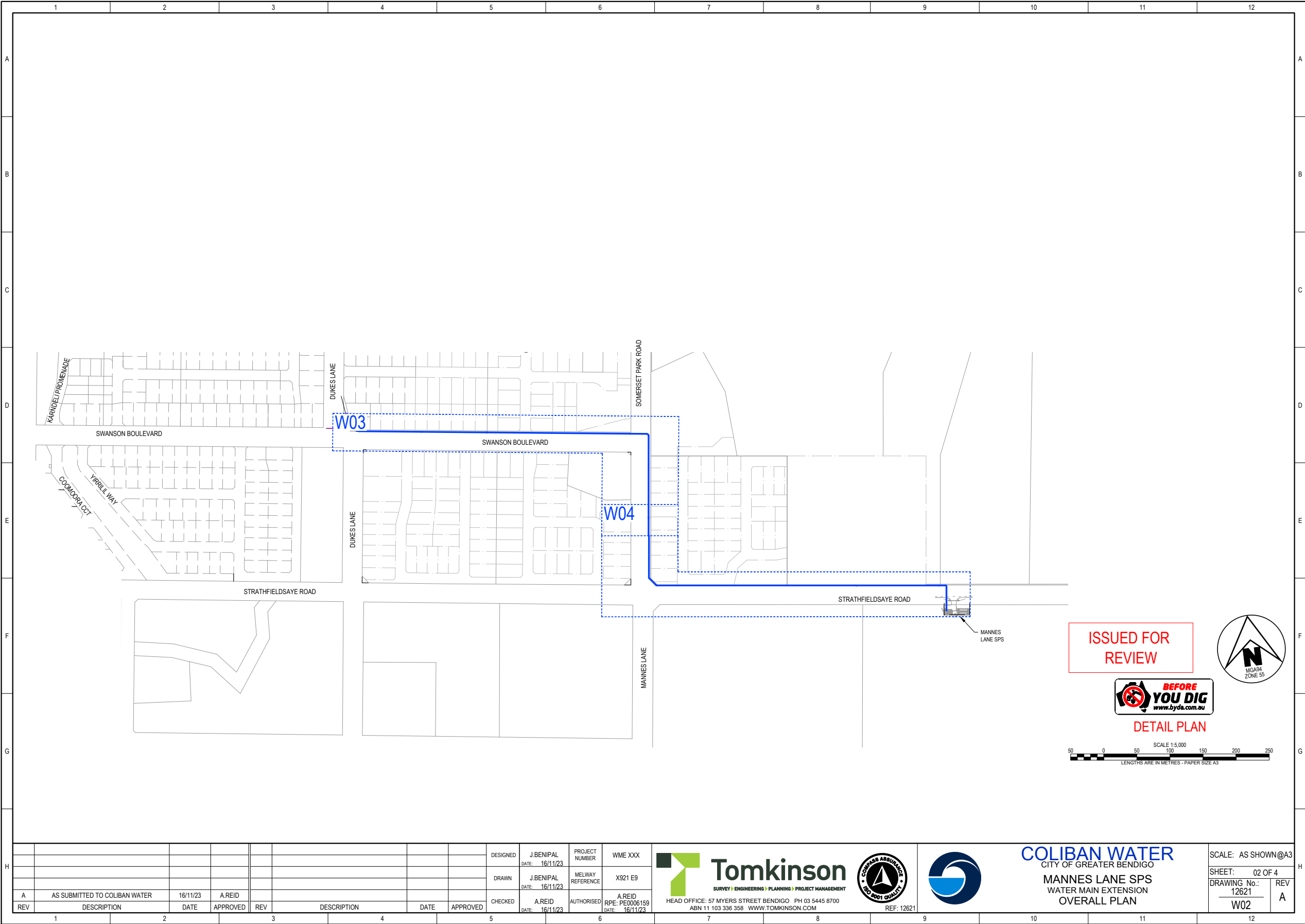




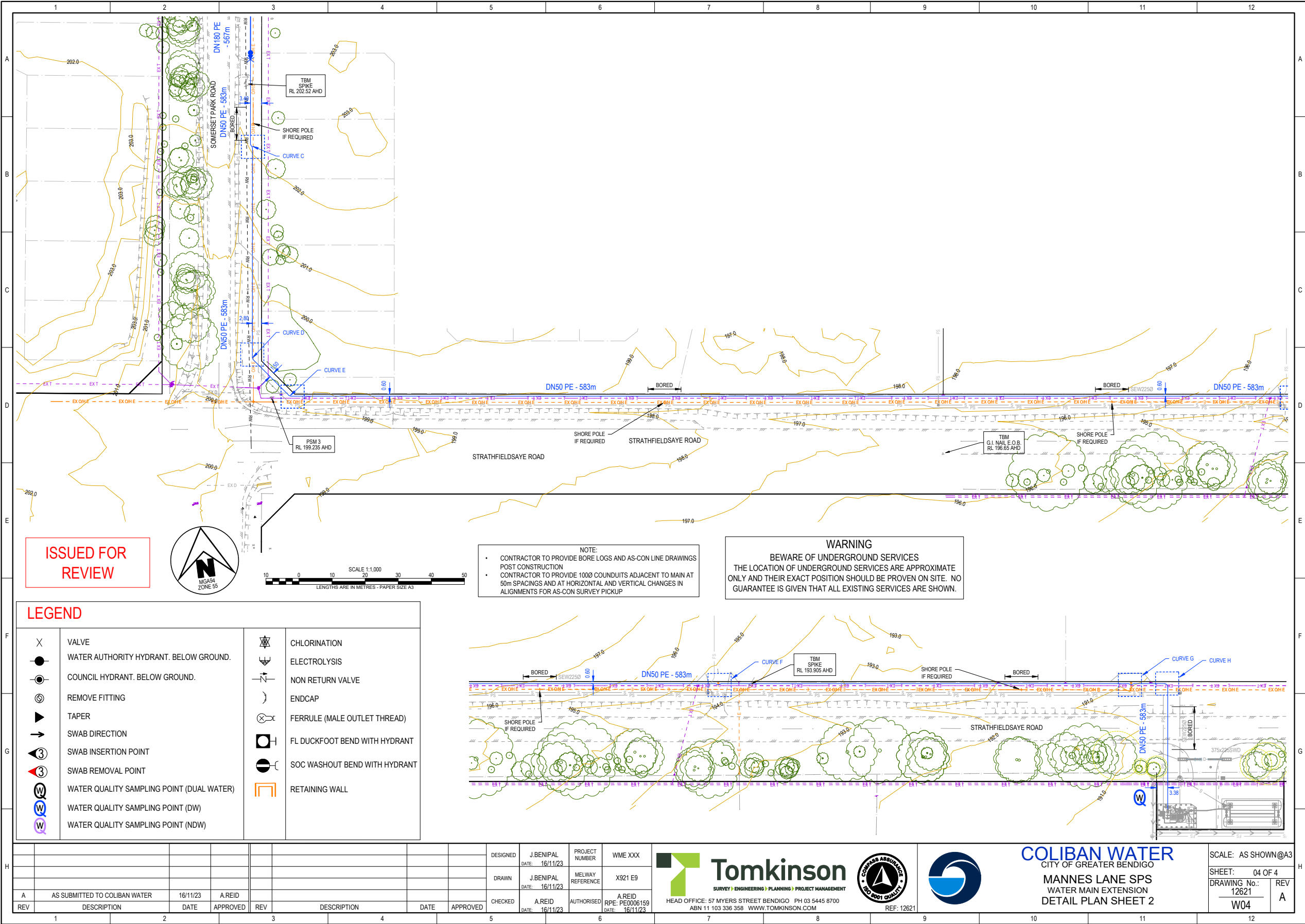





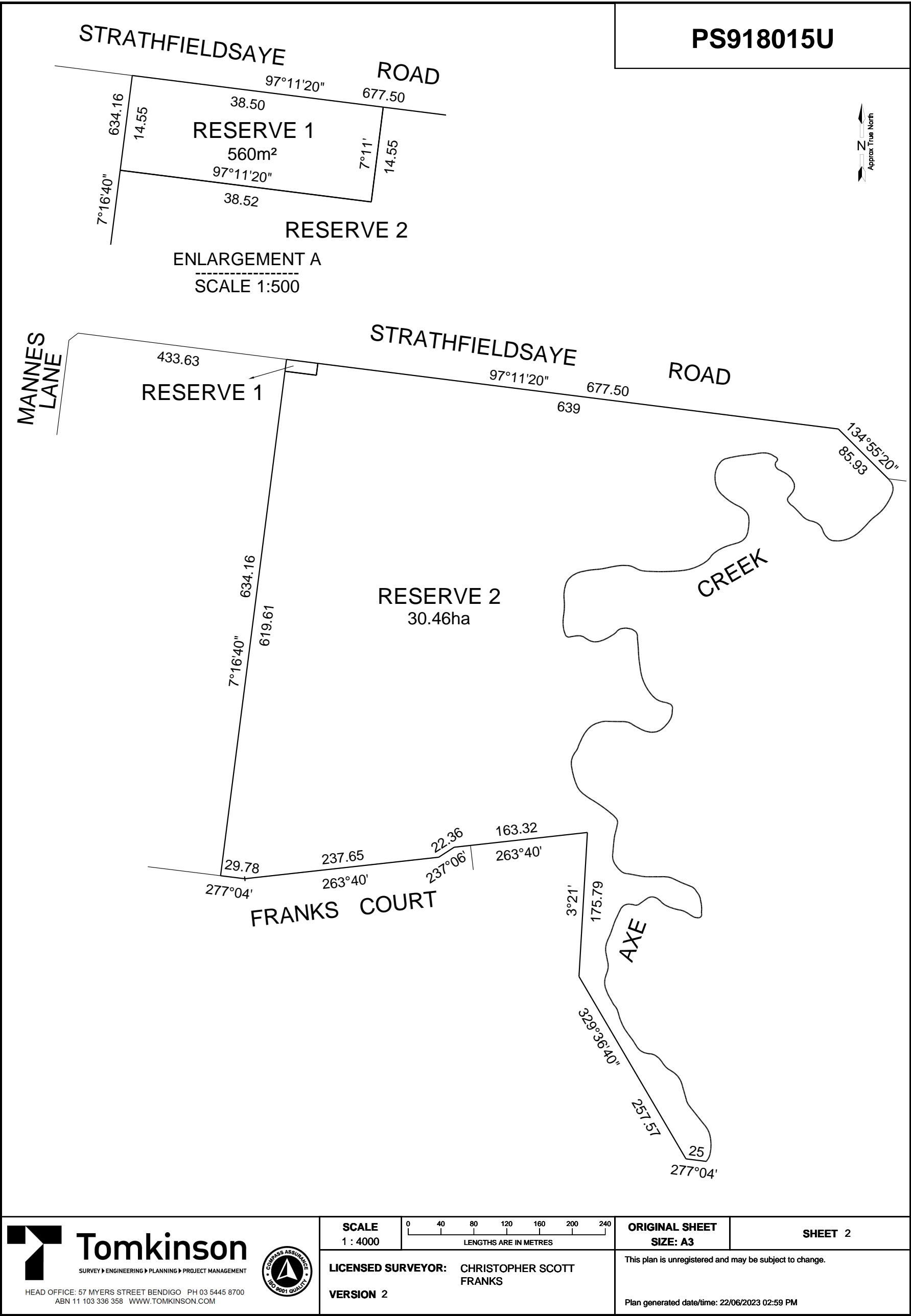




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PLOT DATE: 16/11/2023 FILE: C:\12\DATA\TOMKINSON\2023\11\2621 - STRATHFIELDSAYE SPS - MANNES LANE SPS - STRATHFIELDSAYE HOLDINGS - 1989\ENG\00\CAD\CURRENT\12621\01\WAT PLANS REV A.DWG



PLAN UNDER SECTION 24A OF THE SUBDIVISION ACT 1988 PLAN OF SUBDIVISION		EDITION 1	PS918015U	
LOCATION OF LAND PARISH: STRATHFIELDSAYE CROWN DESCRIPTION: CA. 1, 2 (PT) & 3 (PT), CROWN SECTION 10 TITLE REFERENCES: VOL. 11096 FOL. 417 LAST PLAN REFERENCE: RESERVE 3 ON PS540789 POSTAL ADDRESS: STRATHFIELDSAYE ROAD (at time of subdivision) STRATHFIELDSAYE 3551 VIC		COUNCIL NAME: CITY OF GREATER BENDIGO COUNCIL		
VESTING OF ROADS AND/OR RESERVES				
IDENTIFIER	COUNCIL/BODY/PERSON			
RESERVE 1	COLIBAN REGION WATER AUTHORITY			
RESERVE 2	CITY OF GREATER BENDIGO			
NOTATIONS				
DEPTH LIMITATION: Does Not Apply				
<p>This is an ePlan</p> <p>PURPOSE OF PLAN: To remove the reserve status of Reserve 3 on PS540789M and to create Reserve 1 for the use of Coliban Region Water Corporation and Reserve 2 for the use of City of Greater Bendigo Council</p> <p>SURVEY: This plan is based on survey.</p> <p>GENERAL PLAN NOTATIONS: Only Reserve 1 and the connection to Mannes Lane is based on survey</p>				
EASEMENT INFORMATION				
LEGEND: A-Appurtenant Easement E-Encumbering Easement				
IDENTIFIER	PURPOSE	WIDTH (m)	ORIGIN	LAND BENEFITED/IN FAVOUR OF
 SURVEY ► ENGINEERING ► PLANNING ► PROJECT MANAGEMENT HEAD OFFICE: 57 MYERS STREET BENDIGO PH 03 5445 8700 ABN 11 103 336 358 WWW.TOMKINSON.COM		SURVEYORS FILE REF: 12621 LICENSED SURVEYOR: CHRISTOPHER SCOTT FRANKS VERSION 2		ORIGINAL SHEET SIZE: A3 SHEET 1 OF 2 This plan is unregistered and may be subject to change. Plan generated date/time: 22/06/2023 02:59 PM



17. STRONG, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

17.1. Development Contributions Policy and Governance Framework

Author:	Rob Anderson, Coordinator Development Contributions and Infrastructure Planning
Responsible Director:	Rachel Lee, Director Strategy and Growth

Purpose

To consider and endorse a new Council policy and governance framework for the implementation and management of development contributions schemes across the City of Greater Bendigo, subject to community consultation.

Recommended Motion

That Council:

1. Endorse the draft Development Contributions Policy and Development Contributions Governance Framework for the purposes of community consultation;
2. Support the commencement of community consultation on the Development Contributions Policy and Development Contributions Governance Framework; and
3. Note that the Development Contributions Policy and Development Contributions Governance Framework will be presented back to Council for adoption following community consultation.

Executive Summary

- The City of Greater Bendigo is a recognised regional growth municipality and as part of the City's long-term growth there is a need for a transparent and consistent approach to infrastructure planning and funding for new development.
- A development contributions scheme is a tool used by local government to collect funds for the delivery of future infrastructure that services new development.
- City officers have been assessing how best to guide the selection, implementation and management of development contributions schemes for new development.
- A Development Contributions Policy (the Policy) and a Development Contributions Governance Framework (the Governance Framework) have been prepared to support City staff and the development industry, and to facilitate sustainable urban growth.

- The new Policy and Governance Framework has been prepared based on government and industry best practice, engagement with other growth councils and targeted consultation with the local development industry.

Background

Development contributions are a tool utilised by local government and other infrastructure authorities to ensure the delivery of essential shared infrastructure that is required to service new urban development or areas of significant change.

Development contributions play an important role to ensure this infrastructure burden doesn't fall on existing residents and business, but instead is funded by the beneficiaries of new development and the source of new service demand.

Development contributions do not fund all required infrastructure and services that are generated from new development but fund the 'essential' shared infrastructure required to support the new development. Major infrastructure and facilities that service much larger catchments are either funded directly by local and State governments or the Commonwealth Government, or in some cases development contributions can 'contribute' a portion of the overall costs where there is a strong relationship (nexus) between the infrastructure and the new development.

The different development contributions schemes are shown in Figure 1 below, together with a table showing how they respectively relate to legislation.

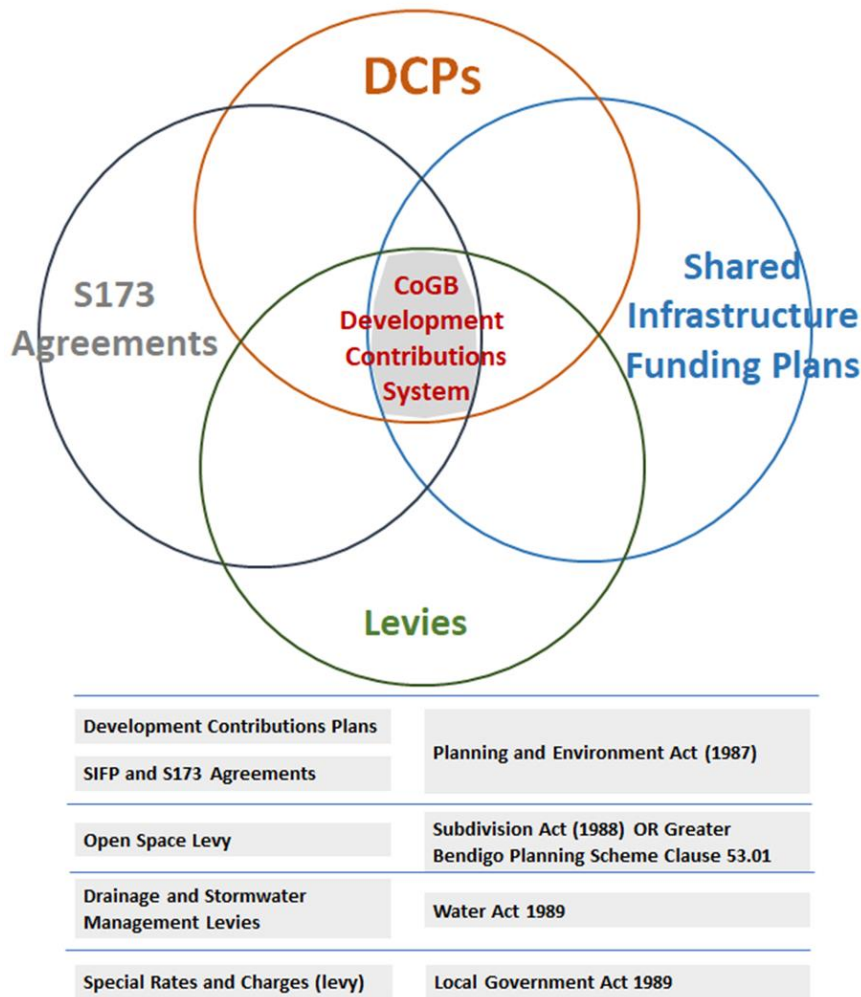


Figure 1 – Development Contributions Schemes

The development contributions schemes available to local government include:

- Development Contributions Plans (DCPs);
- Shared Infrastructure Funding Plans (SIFP) and legal agreements (e.g.: Section 173 Agreement as allowed under the Planning and Environment Act 1987);
- Public Open Space Levies;
- Drainage / Stormwater Management Schemes / Levies; and
- Special Rates and Charges.

To effectively manage these various development contribution schemes and ensure their appropriate use and management, there is a need for policy direction and guidance across internal departments and the development industry. This will ensure the use of fit-for-purpose development contribution scheme and more effective decision making.

Report

In 2023, the City commenced the development of a Development Contributions Framework that aimed to effectively guide the preparation and implementation of various development contributions schemes across the municipality.

The outcome of the process was a framework that:

- Defines the Policy Principles and Objectives that govern the City's development contributions schemes;
- Defines the City's opportunities for funding shared essential infrastructure as part of new development and change areas;
- Ensures the City's development contributions schemes are fit-for-purpose;
- Outlines the structure for decision making relating to new development contributions schemes; and
- Provides clarity on the roles and stakeholders involved in development contributions schemes.

A diagram summarising the Development Contributions Framework is shown in Figure 2 below.

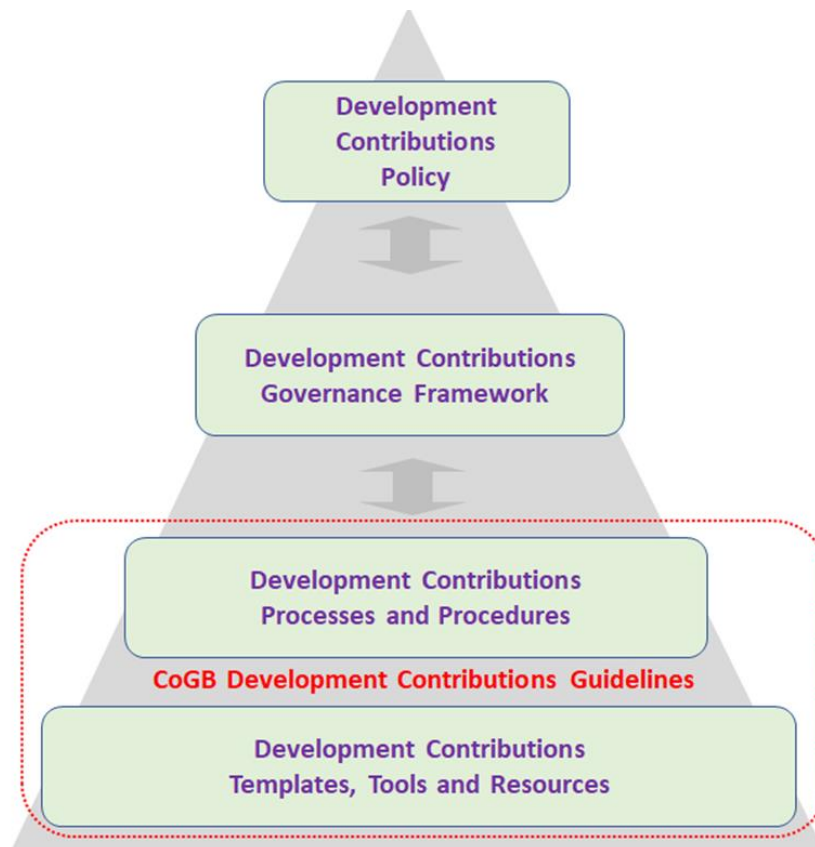


Figure 2 - Development Contributions Framework

The adopted Policy Principles that will underpin the City's development contributions schemes and ensure their fairness, ease of implementation, and ultimately their success, are detailed below in Table 1. These policy principles have been a

foundation of the development contributions system for over 30 years and ensure a balanced approach is taken on the collection of development contributions, the livability of the new communities and the financial viability of new development.

Table 1 – City of Greater Bendigo Development Contributions Policy Principles

Principles	Description
NEED	Clearly established need for the infrastructure.
NEXUS	Clear nexus between the infrastructure and the land it services.
EQUITY	Fair and equitable distribution of funding obligations.
TRANSPARENCY	Justification for the infrastructure and the selected scheme.
ACCOUNTABILITY	Ensure obligation are monitored and achieved by all parties.

The Development Contributions Framework also adopts four Policy Objectives relating to the City's role as a regional growth council and how best to implement development contributions within our regional development environment. These objectives can be seen below in Table 2.

Table 2 – City of Greater Bendigo Development Contributions Policy Objectives

Objectives	Description
EQUITABLE COST RECOVERY	Maximising the recovery of infrastructure costs that have a clear nexus with new development (be it through direct works or through development contribution schemes).
MAXIMISE LIVABILITY OF NEW DEVELOPMENT	Maximising the livability of the City's new development areas and change areas through the timely provision of essential infrastructure.
MINIMISE FINANCIAL RISK	Minimising the financial risk to the Council, its rate payers and development landowners.
DEVELOPMENT FACILITATION	Implementing development contributions schemes that focus on development facilitation and being fit for purpose.

The foundation of the proposed Development Contributions Governance Framework includes seven key stages that are critical to the success of a fit-for-purpose and best

practice development contributions scheme. These stages are reflected as a common thread across the City's full development contributions framework, including various guidelines, internal procedures and templates.

These seven (7) stages are:

1. **Selecting** a development contribution scheme;
2. **Preparing** a development contribution scheme;
3. **Implementing** a development contribution scheme;
4. **Managing** a development contribution scheme;
5. **Project Delivery**;
6. **Reporting and Forecasting**; and
7. **Governance, Reviewing and Audits**.

The development of the Policy and Governance Framework has been guided by the *Regional Development Contributions Plan Toolkit – Development Contributions Manual (2020)* that provides guidance to regional councils on the implementation of consistent and practical development contribution schemes for new development areas (predominately focus on DCPs, SIFPs and Section 173 agreements). The Toolkit was a collaboration project between 16 regional councils and the Victorian Planning Authority.

The Policy also complements the *Public Open Space Contributions Policy (2024)* that guides the collection and expenditure of open space contributions collected under the Subdivision Act 1988 and the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme (Clause 53.01).

Options Considered

The options that were considered as part of the City's total development contributions framework included:

1. A standalone Policy,
2. A Development Contributions Manual;
3. A governance package that included a new policy and companion governance framework.

Option 1 was not supported due to a concern that too much detail would be required in the policy to appropriately inform practitioners and staff, which is not the role of a Policy.

Option 2 was not supported due to the existing Regional Council DCP Toolkit that provides much of the detail contained with a manual. A council policy is also a recommendation of the toolkit that has been supported by regional councils and is already in place for many metropolitan councils.

Option 3 was seen as the most appropriate solution, as it provides a clear overarching policy to guide decision making, while a supporting governance framework can assist practitioners and staff with the selection and development of new development contributions schemes, relevant for the Greater Bendigo municipality.

Communications/Engagement

The Development Contributions Policy and Governance Framework have gone through an extensive engagement and development process to ensure it appropriately captures the needs of the City and industry.

The consultation and engagement process has included:

- Regular engagement with the City's Development Contributions Steering Committee;
- Internal engagement with key departments involved in various stages of the development contributions system;
- Engagement with other councils to share development contributions learnings and understand issues and/ or emerging trends that may need to be considered as part of the City's Development Contributions Framework;
- Targeted consultation with key local developers and development consultants during December 2023 / January 2024; and
- Presentation to the Bendigo chapter of the Urban Development Institution of Australia (UDIA) (note: the City is expecting a formal submission from the UDIA, however, verbal feedback to date has been in support of the Policy and Governance Framework).

To further support the development of the Policy, an Equity Impact Assessment (EIA) was undertaken to test any blind spots or inadvertent impacts the policy may have on members of the community.

Financial Sustainability

The aim of the new Development Contributions Policy and its companion Governance Framework, is to facilitate sustainable urban development across the municipality while also ensuring new development does not place unreasonable financial burden on the Greater Bendigo community.

As part of the Development Contributions Framework, two Policy Objectives specifically cover the issue of responsible financial management and equity, these being:

- Maximising the recovery of infrastructure costs that have a clear nexus with new development (be it through direct works or through development contribution schemes); and
- Minimising the financial risk to the Council, its rate payers and development landowners.

Risk Assessment

City officers regularly conduct risk assessments and audits on the City's development contribution system, including an external audit conducted in 2022.

These assessments reinforced the need for a clear framework that guides development contributions decision making, supported by various internal processes and procedures to maximise consistency, efficiency and knowledge management.

The key development contributions risks for the Council include:

- Under collection of justifiable development contributions;
- Increased delivery costs for development contributions projects;
- The use of the wrong development contributions scheme that may result in an unnecessary administration burden; and
- Poor integration between strategic land use planning and infrastructure planning.

These general risk areas are captured within the City's corporate risk register and monitored regularly. These risks are also addressed within the development contributions framework.

Policy Context

Primary Council Plan Reference

City of Greater Bendigo Council Plan *Mir wimbul* 2021-2025

Outcome 1 - Lead and govern for all

Outcome 2 - Healthy, liveable spaces and places

Secondary Council Plan Reference(s)

Goal 1 - Accountable, financially responsible, equitable, transparent decision making

Goal 7 - Sustainable population growth is planned for

Other Reference(s)

Public Open Space Contributions Policy (2024)

Conflict of Interest

No officer involved in the preparation or approval of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Attachments

1. Draft Development Contributions Policy FINAL [**17.1.1** - 6 pages]
2. Draft Development Contributions Governance Framework FINAL [**17.1.2** - 32 pages]



DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS POLICY

Approval Level:	Council
Policy Type:	Council
Approval Date:	tbc
Review cycle:	Every four years
Review Date:	tbc
Responsible Officer:	Coordinator Strategic Infrastructure Planning
Owner:	Strategic Planning
Responsible Director:	Strategy and Growth
Relevant Legislation/Authority:	Planning and Environment Act 1987, Local Government Act 1989, Local Government Act 2020, Water Act 1989, Subdivision Act 1988 ,Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme
DOCSETID:	tbc

1. PURPOSE

The Development Contributions Policy (the Policy) details the various development contribution schemes available to Council and the decision-making principles that guide the funding of major shared infrastructure projects required to service new urban development.

The Policy aims to guide the development of fit for purpose development contribution schemes that effectively manage the infrastructure needs of new and growing communities while minimising the financial risks to Council and the broader community.

The Policy is supported by the City of Greater Bendigo - Development Contributions Governance Framework (2024), that expands on the content of the Policy to provide further guidance.

2. BACKGROUND

Development Contributions are a tool utilised by Local Government and other infrastructure authorities to ensure the delivery of shared essential infrastructure for new urban development or areas of significant change.

Development contributions require landowners / developers to pay a portion of the cost of shared essential infrastructure that's required to service their land. These apportioned costs ensures a user pays approach and reflects the uplift in land value that results from the infrastructure's delivery.



Within regional Victoria, development contributions are primarily used for the management of new 'greenfield' urban growth areas that require the construction of significant infrastructure to transition these areas from farming land to new housing or industrial estates. However, development contributions schemes can also be used within inner urban change areas or smaller developments to address their impact on the broader suburb or community.

The development contributions schemes generally available to Local Government include:

- Development Contributions Plans (DCPs)
- Shared Infrastructure Funding Plans (SIFP)
- Public Open Space Levies
- Drainage / Stormwater Management Schemes
- Special Rates and Charges

The Policy is supported by the *Regional DCP Toolkit – Development Contributions Information Manual (2020)* which expands on the principles of this Policy and provides guidance to regional Councils' on the implementation of development contribution schemes. The Toolkit was a collaboration project between 16 regional Councils and the Victorian Planning Authority.

The Policy also complements the City of Greater Bendigo *Public Open Space Contributions Policy (2020)* that guides the collection and expenditure of open space contributions collected under the Subdivision Act 1988 and the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme (Clause 53.01).

3. SCOPE

The policy applies to:

- All shared essential infrastructure required to service the City's new development areas and change areas,
- Development contributions schemes that fall under:
 - Planning and Environment Act 1987 (section 3B)
 - Local Government Act 1989 (section 163)
 - Subdivision Act 1988 (section 18)
 - Water Act 1989 (section 215)
 - Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme (clause 53.01)

The Policy does not cover:

- The delivery of shared essential infrastructure required under a planning permit and usually servicing a single property or development. This could include footpaths, local streets, kerb and channel, small local parks, and local drainage infrastructure, potable water, reticulated sewerage, electricity and telecommunications.
- Major State or Commonwealth infrastructure that's funded and / or delivered to support the growth of the municipality.



4. DEFINITIONS

In this policy:

Development Contributions Plan (DCP) means a DCP incorporated in the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme via the Development Contributions Plan Overlay and governed by [Part 3B of the Planning and Environment Act 1987](#). A DCP includes a series of projects, estimate costs and apportionment to new development (usually via a \$/ha levy).

Development Contributions Scheme means the general term given to a development contribution process used to recover the cost of essential shared infrastructure from new development and change areas. It may take the form of those examples listed under section 2 of this Policy, or used in combination.

Development Contributions Governance Framework means a City of Greater Bendigo guidance document detailing the key decision-making principles for development contributions schemes within the municipality and the governance framework that supports them.

Drainage / Stormwater Management Schemes mean a development contribution scheme setup for the sole purpose of delivering shared stormwater and / or drainage infrastructure, that may include the management of flooding, water quality or both, and is levied under [Section 215 of the Water Act 1989](#).

Section 173 Agreement (S173) means a voluntary agreement under [Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987](#) that's agreed between a landowner and the Council, and details various legal obligations for each party. It can be used as a development contributions scheme on its own and obligate the delivering of essential infrastructure and / or the payment of funds to Council, or be a facilitation tool to implement individual projects within a large development contributions scheme such as a DCP. The S173 Agreement is registered on the landowners title to ensure obligations are protected long term.

Shared Infrastructure Funding Plans (SIFP) means an infrastructure plan that details the essential shared infrastructure required to service a new development area and sets out the obligations of landowners within the areas relating to works and / or payment of funds to Council. The SIFP is usually implemented via a voluntary agreements with Council under [Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987](#).

Public Open Space (POS) Levies means a levy applied to an area of the municipality that places an obligation on new development to pay a fixed percentage of the lands value to Council for open space purposes. The levy can be collected via [Part 3, Section 18 of the Subdivision Act 1988](#) or via [Clause 53.01 of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme](#). The levy can also be collected via a DCP and would be based on the site-specific land valuations of public open space land projects.

POS levies are guided by Council's [Public Open Space Contributions Policy](#).

Regional DCP Toolkit – Development Contributions Information Manual (2020) means the [Development Contributions Information Manual](#) commissioned by 16 regional growth Council's to assist with the development of a consistent and practical development contributions schemes within the State growing regional municipalities (predominately focus on DCPs and SIFPs).

Shared Essential Infrastructure means an infrastructure project of a moderate to large scale (be it costs, size or complexity) that services an area beyond that of an individual landowner, or benefits a large area of a suburb or precinct. Projects may include, but aren't limited to,



roads and intersection upgrades, sports reserves and parks, shared paths and trails, community centres and drainage infrastructure. All projects may also include land.

Special Rates and Charges means a formal Council scheme approved under [Section 163 of the Local Government Act 1989](#) for the funding of local or precinct based works that have a 'special benefit' to landowners and as such would require a contribution to these works; be it full or in part. A schemes usually relates to projects such as footpaths, kerb and channel and local drainage works.

Works in Kind (WIK) means the provision works that are nominated within an approved development contribution scheme, whereby the value of these works are offset against any landowner development contributions liability owed to Council. These projects can also include the provision of land.

Works in Kind (WIK) Agreement means an agreement implemented under Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and places an obligation on the landowner to deliver a project(s) included within an approved DCP or SIFP.

5. PRINCIPLES

The Policy principles that underpin the City's development contributions schemes and ensures their fairness, ease of implementation, and ultimately their success, include:

- **Need**
Clearly established need for the infrastructure.
- **Nexus**
Clear nexus between the infrastructure and the land it services.
- **Equity**
Fair and equitable distribution of funding obligations.
- **Transparency**
Justification for the infrastructure and the selected scheme.
- **Accountability**
Ensure obligation are monitored and achieved by all parties.

The above principles have been a foundation of the development contributions system for over 30 years and ensure a balanced approach is taken on the collection of development contribution and how this effects the liveability of the new communities and the financial viability of new development.

6. POLICY

In determining a Development Contributions Scheme, it is policy to:

Four (4) Policy Objectives:

- **Maximise equitable cost recovery**
The recovery of infrastructure costs that have a clear nexus with new development (be it through direct works or through development contribution schemes) is to be maximised.
- **Maximise the liveability of new development**
The liveability of the City's new development areas and change areas is to be maximised through the timely provision of essential infrastructure.
- **Minimise financial risk to Council**
The financial risk to the Council, its rate payers and development landowners, is to be minimised.
- **Facilitate development**



Development contributions schemes that focus on development facilitation and being fit for purpose are to be implemented.

To support the Policy, the *CoGB Development Contributions Governance Framework*, and its seven key stages, should be used to guide the development of fit-for-purpose and best practice Development Contributions Schemes.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary coordination role of the City's development contributions schemes is the responsibility of the Strategic Planning unit. To support the management of the various development contributions schemes the below governance groups will guide decision making and risk management.

- Development Contributions Steering Committee
- Development Contributions Working Group
- Public Space Committee
- CoGB Audit and Risk Committee

For more detail on the roles of each department please refer to the *CoGB Development Contributions Governance Framework (2024)*.

All selected development contributions schemes will be presented to Council for ultimate adoption.

It is recommended that all development contributions schemes complete an Equity Impact Assessment (EIA) as part of the development and consultation process.

8. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Readers are encouraged to access relevant documents and/or resources which are available as per the below.

These include:

- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Local Government Act 1989
- Subdivision Act 1988
- Water Act 1989
- Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme
- Victoria Government Development Contributions Plan (DCP) Guidelines (2007)
- Victoria Government Infrastructure Contributions Plan (ICP) Guidelines (2018)
- CoGB Public Open Space Contributions Policy
- CoGB Procurement Policy
- Regional DCP Toolkit – Development Contributions Information Manual (2020)
- CoGB Development Contributions Governance Framework (2024).
- CoGB Financial Plan
- CoGB Asset Plan
- CoGB Financial Reserves Management Policy

Further information or advice on this policy should be directed to the Strategic Planning unit.

9. HUMAN RIGHTS COMPATIBILITY



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

10. ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this, such a change may be made administratively. Examples include a change to the name of a City unit, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government department, and a minor update to legislation which does not have a material impact. However, any change or update which materially alters this document must be made through consultation with the staff Consultative Committee and with the approval of EMT or where required, resolution of Council.

11. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Date Approved	Responsible Officer	Unit	Change Type	Version	Next Review Date
<i>tbc</i>	<i>RA</i>	<i>Strategic Planning</i>	<i>New Policy</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>tbc</i>



DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK



Version: 1.0

Approval Date: tbc
Approved by: tbc
Review Date: tbc
Responsible Officer: Director Strategy and Growth
Authorising Officer: Chief Executive Officer

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2 ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

The City of Greater Bendigo is on Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Country. We acknowledge and extend our appreciation to the Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Peoples, the Traditional Owners of the land. We pay our respects to leaders and Elders past, present and future for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and the hopes of all Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Peoples. We express our gratitude in the sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual, and cultural costs of that sharing, and our hope that we may walk forward together in harmony and in the spirit of healing.

DRAFT

3 ABBREVIATIONS, DEFINITION AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

Abbreviations

City of Greater Bendigo	(CoGB)
Community Infrastructure Levy	(CIL)
Development Infrastructure Levy	(DIL)
Development Contributions Plan	(DCP)
Net Developable Area	(NDA)
Public Open Space	(POS)
Section 173 Agreement	(S173)
Public Open Space	(POS)
Shared Infrastructure Funding Plans	(SIFP)
Special Rates and Charges	(SRC)
Works in Kind	(WIK)

Definitions

Collecting agency means the agency to whom community and development infrastructure levies are payable under a Development Contributions Plan (DCP)).

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) means a levy payable for new development which is used to fund general community infrastructure under an approved DCP. The rate is set per dwelling and paid as part of the building permit process. The Maximum CIL is set by the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and indexed each year by the Planning Minister.

Development Agency means the agency specified in a development contributions plan (DCP) as being responsible for the provision of works, services or facilities for which a community infrastructure levy or development infrastructure levy or part of a levy is payable.

Development Contributions Plan (DCP) means a DCP incorporated in the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme via the Development Contributions Plan Overlay and governed by [Part 3B of the Planning and Environment Act 1987](#). A DCP included a series of projects, estimate costs and apportionment to new development (usually via a \$/ha levy).

Development Contributions Scheme means the general term given to a development contribution scheme used to recover the cost of essential shared infrastructure from new development and change areas. It may take the form of those examples listed under section 2 of this Policy, or used in combination.

Development Contributions Governance Framework means a Council document detailing the key decision-making principle for developments construction schemes within the City of Greater Bendigo and the governance framework that supports them.

Development Infrastructure levy (DIL) means a levy payable for new development which is used to fund development infrastructure (such as the construction of roads, traffic intersections and drainage works) identified in DCPs.

Drainage / Stormwater Management Schemes mean a development contribution scheme setup for the sole purpose of delivering shared stormwater and / or drainage infrastructure, that may include the management of flooding, water quality or both, and is levied under [Section 215 of the Water Act 1989](#).

Net Developable Area (NDA) means the net area of land available for development, excluding items such as connector roads, current or proposed public land, encumbered land due to flooding, vegetation or cultural heritage. The NDA is the area of land the development contributions would be calculated or charged during development.

Section 173 Agreement (S173) means a voluntary agreement under [Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987](#) that's entered into between a landowner and the Council, and details various legal obligations of each party. It can be used as a development contributions scheme on its own and obligate the delivering of essential infrastructure and / or payment of funds to Council, or be a facilitation tool to implement large development contributions scheme such as DCPs. The S173 Agreement is registered on the title to the land to ensure obligations are protected.

Shared Essential Infrastructure means an infrastructure project of a moderate to large scale (be it costs, size or complexity) that services an area beyond that of an individual landowner, or benefits a large area of a suburb or precinct. Projects may include, but aren't limited to, roads and intersection upgrades, sports reserves and parks, shared paths and trails, community centres and drainage infrastructure. All projects may also include land.

Shared Infrastructure Funding Plans (SIFP) means an infrastructure plan that details the essential infrastructure required to service a new development area and sets out the obligations of landowners within the areas relating to works and / or payment of funds to Council. The SIFP is usually implemented via a voluntary agreements with Council under [Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987](#).

Public Open Space (POS) Levies means a levy applied to an area of the municipality that places an obligation on new development to pay a fixed percentage of the lands value to Council for open space purposes. The levy can be collected via [Part3, Section 18 of the Subdivision Act 1988](#) and / or via [Clause 53.01 of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme](#). The levy can also be collected via a DCP and would be based on the site specific land valuations of public open space land projects.

POS levies are guided by the Council's [Public Open Space Contributions Policy](#).

Regional DCP Toolkit – Development Contributions Manual (2020) means the [Development Contributions Manual](#) commissioned by 16 regional growth Council's to assist with the development of a consistent and practical development contributions schemes within the State growing regional municipalities (predominately focus on DCPs and SIFPs).

Shared Infrastructure means an infrastructure project of a moderate to large scale (be it costs, size or complexity) that services an area beyond that of an individual landowner, or benefit a large area of a suburb or precinct. Project may include, but aren't limited to, roads and intersection upgrades, sports reserves and parks, community centres and drainage basins.

Special Rates and Charges (SRC) means a formal Council scheme approved under [Section 163 of the Local Government Act 1989](#) for the funding of local or precinct based works that have a 'special benefit' to landowners and as such would be required them to contribute; whether in full or in part to the scheme. The scheme usually relates to projects such as footpaths, kerb and channel and drainage work.

Works in Kind (WIK) means the provision of goods, services and / or works that are nominated within a approved development contribution scheme, whereby the value of these works are offset against any landowner development contributions liability owed by the landowner. These projects can also include the provision of land.

Works in Kind (WIK) Agreement means a WIK agreement implemented under Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and placing an obligation on a landowner to deliver project(s) included within an approved Development Contributions Plan.

Related Documents

- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Local Government Act 1989 and 2020
- Subdivision Act 1988
- Water Act 1989
- Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme
- Victoria Government Development Contributions Plan Guidelines (2007)
- Victoria Government Infrastructure Contributions Plan Guidelines (2018)
- CoGB Public Open Space Contributions Policy (2020)
- CoGB Procurement Policy
- CoGB Development Contributions Policy (2024)
- Regional DCP Toolkit - Development Contributions Information Manual (2020)
- CoGB Financial Plan
- CoGB Asset Plan
- CoGB Financial Reserves Management Policy

4 INTRODUCTION

4.1 BACKGROUND

Greater Bendigo is located on the lands of the Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung peoples who are the traditional owners of the land and who lived in the municipality for tens of thousands of years before European colonisation and the discovery of gold by European settlers in 1851.

Greater Bendigo is a creative and culturally diverse regional centre offering a broad range of economic opportunities, services and facilities which cater for a large regional catchment. The municipality is centrally located in the heart of Victoria, at the intersection of major highways, less than 150 kilometres to Melbourne. The municipality covers over 3,000 square kilometres and contains not only a vibrant urban area but many unique small towns such as Heathcote, Elmore, Goornong, Raywood, and Axedale, as well as a variety of agriculture activities such as livestock and cropping.

The population of Greater Bendigo has been steadily growing over the last decade, reaching over 121,000 in 2021. With a strong economy and the lifestyle opportunities on offer this growth is expected to continue. Inward migration of new residents, increasing life expectancy among existing residents, and local births will all contribute to more than 85,000 new residents calling Greater Bendigo home by 2056.

<p>121,221 people (2021 Census)</p> <p>54,342 dwellings (2021 Census)</p> <p>Estimated additional population 2056 (growth at 1.5%): 85,000</p> <p>Estimated additional dwellings 2056 (growth at 1.5%): 37,000</p>
--

In basic terms, if all these 37,000 dwellings were provided in greenfield growth areas it would equate to approximately \$400M – \$650M in new shared infrastructure projects based on general housing yield and average development contributions per hectare. However, the aim of sound strategic town planning, and supported by the CoGB's draft Managed Growth Strategy, is to maximise the development of land within infill areas, or close to the City, that already have access to infrastructure and services and only require minor augmentation to accommodate new growth.

4.2 DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS

As the City grows, as does the need for new infrastructure that must keep pace with the needs of new and growing communities. Development Contributions play an important role to ensure this infrastructure burden doesn't fall on existing residents and business, but instead is funded by the beneficiaries of new development and the origins of new service demand.

Development Contributions are a tool utilised by Local Government and other infrastructure authorities to ensure the delivery of essential shared infrastructure required to service new urban development or areas of significant change.

Development contributions require landowners / developers to pay a portion of the cost of major shared infrastructure that's required to service their land. These apportioned costs ensure a user pays approach and reflect the benefit and / or uplift in land value that results from the infrastructure delivery.

Development contributions do not fund all required infrastructure and services that are generated from new development and changes areas, but fund the 'essential' shared infrastructure required support the development. Major infrastructure and facilities that service much larger catchments are either funded directly by Local, State and Commonwealth Governments, or in some cases development contributions can 'contribute' a portion of the overall costs where there is a confirmed nexus between the infrastructure and the new development.

Within regional Victoria, development contributions are primarily used for the management of new 'greenfield' growth areas that require the construction of significant infrastructure projects to transition these areas from farmland to new housing or industrial estates. However, various development contribution schemes are used within inner City change areas or smaller development to reflect their impact on the broader suburb and community.

The development contributions schemes generally available to Local Government include:

- Development Contributions Plans (DCPs)
- Shared Infrastructure Funding Plans (SIFP)
- Public Open Space Levies
- Drainage / Stormwater Management Schemes
- Special Rates and Charges

The Policy has been guided by the Regional Development Contributions Plan Toolkit – Development Contributions Manual (2020) that expands on the principles within the Development Contributions Policy and provide guidance to regional Councils on the implementation of consistent and practical development contribution schemes for new development areas. The Toolkit was a collaboration project between 16 regional Councils and the Victorian Planning Authority.

The Policy also builds upon the recently adopted Public Open Space Contributions Policy (2020) that guides the collection and expenditure of open space contributions collected under the Subdivision Act 1988 and the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme (Clause 53.01).

Figure 1 - The basic structure of a development contributions scheme

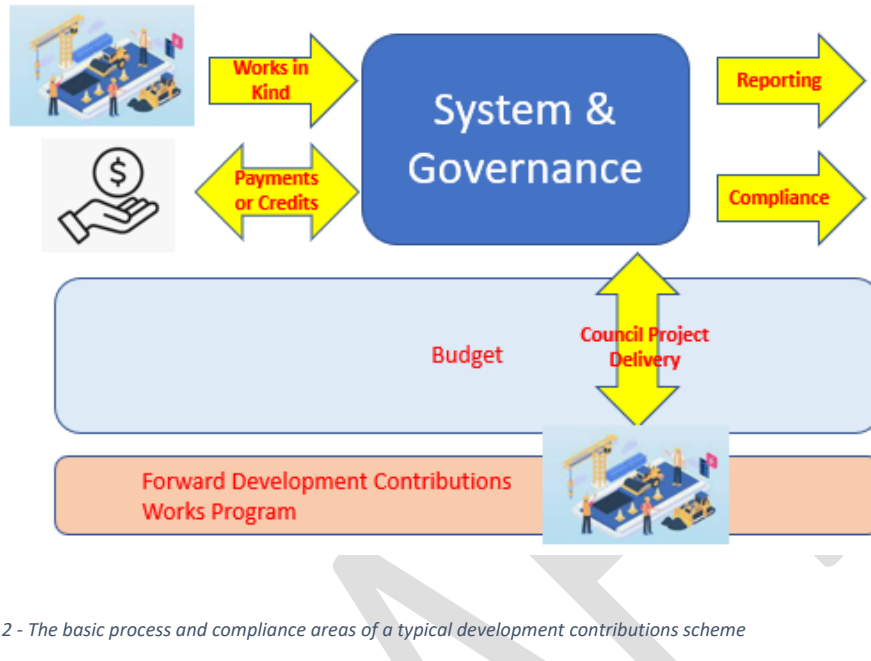
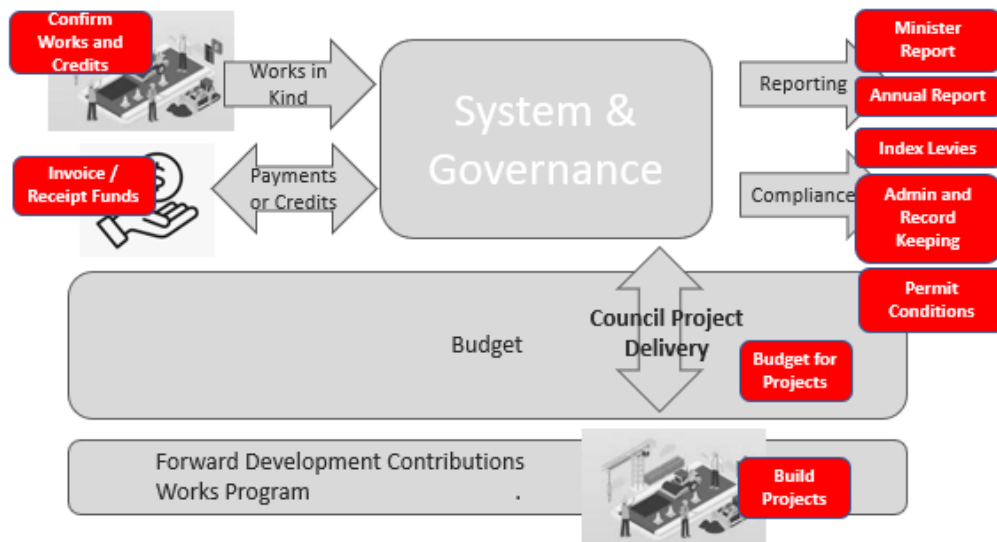


Figure 2 - The basic process and compliance areas of a typical development contributions scheme



4.3 COGB DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS PLANS

Currently the City of Greater Bendigo (CoGB) has two approved DCPs incorporated in the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme. These being:

- Huntly Growth Area DCP (2020)
- Marong Business Park DCP (2017)

The current value of these approved DCPs relating to funded projects is approximately \$68M (2023 dollars), with approximately 88% of these costs being recovered through development contributions.

At this point in time, only the Huntly Growth Area DCP is active, with approximately 40% of the growth areas already developed.

4.4 SECTION 173 AGREEMENTS AND SIFP

Section 173 agreements and Shared Infrastructure Funding Plans (SIFP) are voluntary based agreements that capture the infrastructure requirements for moderate to large scale development and ensure these obligations are locked in for the life of the development.

CoGB currently has approximately six of these agreements in place (as of October 2023) that deliver some form of development contribution and / or works.

4.5 PUBLIC OPEN SPACE LEVIES

The City of Greater Bendigo has various open space schemes across the municipality, with the most common forms of levies being:

- Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme via clause 53.01 – *Space Public Open Space Contribution and Subdivision*.
- Subdivision Act 1988
- S173 Agreements and / or Shared Infrastructure Funding Plans.
- Development Contributions Plans (DCPs)

4.6 REGIONAL COUNCILS' DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS PLAN (DCP) TOOLKIT (2020)

The *Regional DCP Toolkit – Development Contributions Information Manual (2020)* was a joint initiative between 16 regional Councils' and the Victorian Planning Authority.

The purpose of the project was to assist regional Councils with the development of consistent and practical development contributions schemes, and enable the easier take up of development contribution schemes.

The [DCP Toolkit](#) addresses matters such as:

- How to prepare, manage and review a development contributions scheme (focus being DCPS, SIFP and S173 Agreements).
- Education and upskilling of regional planners.
- Internal governance frameworks, policies, procedures as well as defined roles and responsibilities.
- Risk assessments of existing DCPs.
- Innovation in how to manage financials and reporting requirements.

Beyond the DCP Toolkit, the project also produced the below supporting documents.

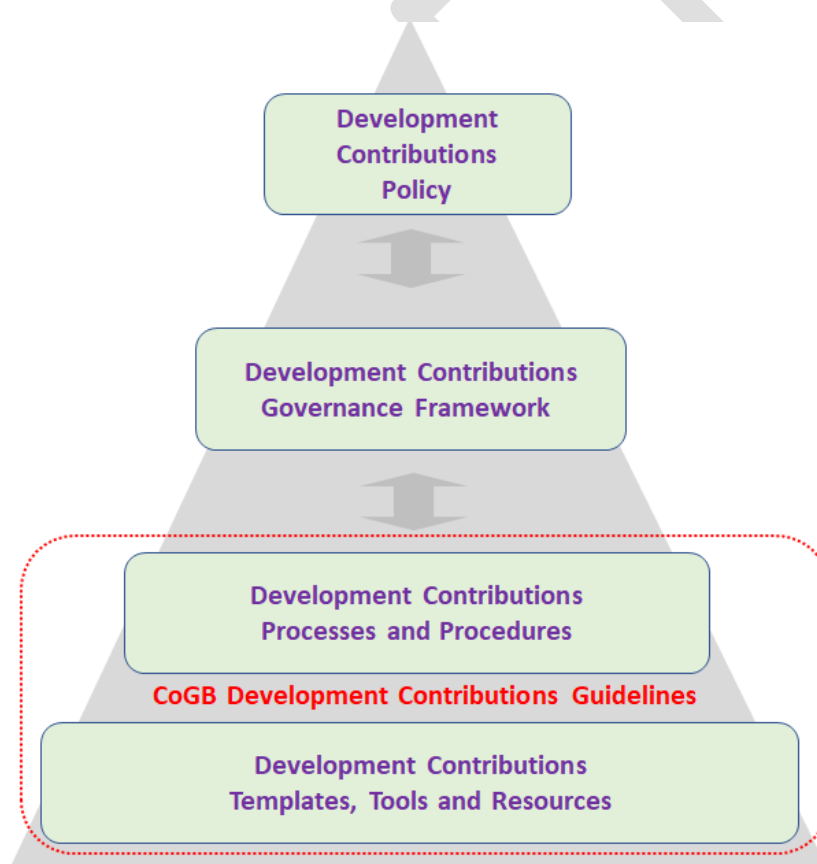
- Regional DCP Toolkit – Development Contributions Policies & Procedures – July 2020
- Regional DCP Toolkit – Development Contributions Fact Sheet – July 2020
- Regional DCP Toolkit – Excel Templates – July 2020

5 PURPOSE OF GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

The purpose of this Governance Framework is to:

- Clearly define the Policy Principles and Objectives that govern City's development contributions schemes,
- Clearly define the City's opportunities for funding shared essential infrastructure as part of new development and change areas,
- Ensure the City adopted development contributions schemes are fit for purpose,
- Outline the structure for decision making relating to new development contributions schemes, and
- Provide clarity on the roles and stakeholders involved in development contributions schemes.

Figure 3 - CoGB Development Contributions Framework



The adopted policy principles that will underpin the City's development contributions schemes and ensures their fairness, ease of implementation, and ultimately their success, are detailed below in Table 1. These policy principles have been a foundation of the development contributions system for over 30 years and ensure a balanced approach is taken on the collection of development contributions and how this effects the liveability of the new communities and the financial viability of new development.

Table 1 - Development Contributions Policy Principles

Principles	Description
NEED	Clearly established need for the infrastructure.
NEXUS	Clear nexus between the infrastructure and the land it services.
EQUITY	Fair and equitable distribution of funding obligations.
TRANSPERANCY	Justification for the infrastructure and the selected scheme.
ACCOUNTABILITY	Ensure obligation are monitored and achieved by all parties.

The development contributions framework also adopts four Policy Objectives relating to the CoGB's role as significant regional growth Council and how best to implementation development contributions within our regional development environment. These policy objectives can be seen below in Table 2.

Table 2 - Development Contributions Policy Objectives

Objectives	Description
EQUITABLE COST RECOVERY	Maximising the recovery of infrastructure costs that have a clear nexus with new development (be it through direct works or through development contribution schemes).
MAXIMISE LIVEABILITY OF NEW DEVELOPMENT	Maxmising the liveability of the City's new development areas and change areas through the timely provision of essential infrastructure.
MINIMISE FINANCIAL RISK	Minimising the financial risk to the Council, its rate payers and development landowners.
DEVELOPMENT FACILITATION	Implementing development contributions schemes that focus on development facilitation and being fit for purpose.

6 LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT

6.1 LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY SUMMARY

The primary legislative environment for development contributions schemes are anchored off the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme and the various pieces of legislation that inform specific planning and infrastructure outcomes. This is an important context, as the trigger for infrastructure and / or development contributions occurs through the development process, and more specially the planning permit process (eg: subdivision of land or development).

Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme

The *Victorian Planning Provisions* regulate many forms of development contributions. Clause 19.03 – *Development Infrastructure* of the *Planning Policy Framework* confirms the role of development contributions (including DCPs) for planned infrastructure.

The Development Contributions Plan Overlay (DCPO) referred to in clause 45.06 is the primary mechanism for implementing DCPs which are incorporated into local planning schemes.

Clause 53.01 – *Public Open Space Contribution and Subdivision* is the primary mechanism for implementing public open space via the nomination of specific percentages of open space contributions.

Planning and Environment Act 1987

The Planning and Environment Act 1987, along with its amending legislation, provides the legislative framework for the preparation and administration of DCPs, sets up the machinery for 'accountability' in the administration of DCPs, sets out the requirements for the contents of a DCP, and imposes financial responsibilities on councils relating to development contributions.

The Act also provides opportunities for Council's and landowners to negotiate voluntary agreements under Section 173 to lock in the infrastructure requirements and development contributions schemes. The benefit of S173 agreements is that they are registered on the title of the land and ensure these obligations are implemented, even if ownerships of the land changes.

S173 Agreements are also used for DCPs relating to formalising agreements for works in kind and using these works to offset their development contributions liability for the development.

Local Government Act 1989

The Local Government Act 1989, and its amendments in 2020, provides opportunities for development contributions, as well as obligations on Councils relating to the management of development contributions.

Section 163 of the Act (1989), allows councils to implement Special Rates and Charges Schemes that can be used for small to moderate development conditions scheme, usually within existing suburbs and for infrastructure gaps in footpaths, kerb and channel and drainage.

The Local Government Act 2020 places obligation on Councils relating to financial management and procurement that have overlaps with the development contributions system. This includes Audit and Risk Committee (Part 2, Division 8), Financial Management (Part 4, Division 4) and Procurement Part 5, Division 2).

Framework Note:**The City's role as Planning Authority**

The City of Greater Bendigo is the planning authority with responsibility for carrying out planning functions primarily under the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme and Planning and Environment Act.

The roles of the Planning Authority include:

- Assessment of development proposals to ensure they are consistent with the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme;
- Issuing planning permits, including conditions relating to infrastructure provision.
- Imposing and enforcing planning permit conditions (including those levying developer contributions).
- Prepare and adopted planning scheme amendments, including rezonings and changes to planning controls that would allow / facilitate development.

The City's role as Responsible Authority

The City of Greater Bendigo is the authority responsible for various assets and services under the Local Government Act, Water Act, Planning and Environment Act and the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme. These Responsibility Authority roles include:

- Road Authority
 - Guidance, approval and management of local government transport assets.
- Drainage Authority
 - Guidance, approval and management of local government drainage assets.
- Municipal Authority
 - The development and adoption of various strategies, plans and policies that serve the interests of the community and their infrastructure needs.
- Collecting Agency and Development Agency
 - Collection and use of DCP funds under an approved DCP.

Subdivision Act 1988

The Subdivision Act 1988 guides the subdivision of land within Victoria and also includes a default open space contribution of 5% (maximum) that Councils' can use as a safety net for open space contributions, usually in lieu of a formal public open space policy or changes to Clause 53.01 of the planning scheme.

The levy can be collected via Part 3, Section 18 of the Subdivision Act 1988 and / or via Clause 53.01 of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme. The levy can also be collected via a DCP and would be based on the site specific land valuations of public open space land projects.

Water Act 1989

The Water Act 1989 is the primary legislation for the management, use and discharge of water within the state of Victoria. It also provides guidance of the management of adverse impacts resulting from water running off new development and the need for effective flood mitigation and water quality management. To support this role, Section 215 of the Act allows water authorities (eg: regional Councils' manage drainage infrastructure) for the creation of 'water management schemes' (as known as Drainage or Stormwater Management Schemes).

These schemes are setup for the sole purpose of delivering shared stormwater and / or drainage infrastructure, and focus on the collection of funds to delivery flooding mitigation infrastructure, major drainage pipes, water quality infrastructure, or all three.

DCP and ICP Guidelines

To support the formal DCP system, the Victorian Government has prepared two guideline documents that inform the general preparation and management of DCPs and Infrastructure Contributions Plans (ICP). ICPs are currently only applicable within metropolitan Melbourne and do not apply to regional Victoria.

These guidelines are:

- Victoria Government Development Contributions Plan (DCP) Guidelines (2007)
- Victoria Government Infrastructure Contributions Plan (ICP) Guidelines (2018).

Although the ICP Guidelines are not formally applicable to regional Victoria and DCP area, they do provide guidance on the evolution of development contributions and areas such as benchmark infrastructure designs and costings.

7 VICTORIAN AUDITOR GENERAL'S OFFICE REPORTS

The Victorian Government, via the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO), has conducted several audits of the Victorian Development Contributions system, with three notable reports focusing solely on the development contributions system being completed in 2009, 2015 and 2020.

Appendix 7 provides a summary of all findings / recommendations from these three reports.

A general summary of the themes coming out of the three VAGO reports are listed below and reflect themes within the control of Local Government.

1. Improved governance and decision making associated with the development, management and reporting of development contributions.
2. Improved documentation of consistent process and procedures.
3. Improved cashflow assessment and forecasting of development contributions income, expenditure and works triggers.
4. Ensure development contributions funds are being spent for the purposes of their collection.
5. Lack of transparency, reporting and monitoring of informal and voluntary infrastructure agreements, such as S173 Agreements.
6. Improved risk management for all development contributions.
7. Improvement the framework, guidance and material available to Local Government relating to development contribution (via both Department of Transport and Planning and the Victorian Planning Authority).
8. Seek ways to reduce the time, cost and admin burden of development contributions.

In relating to point 7 above, 16 Councils' and the VPA have jointly funded and develop a DCP Toolkit – *Development Contributions Information Manual* to assist improve the knowledge and tools available to regional Councils.

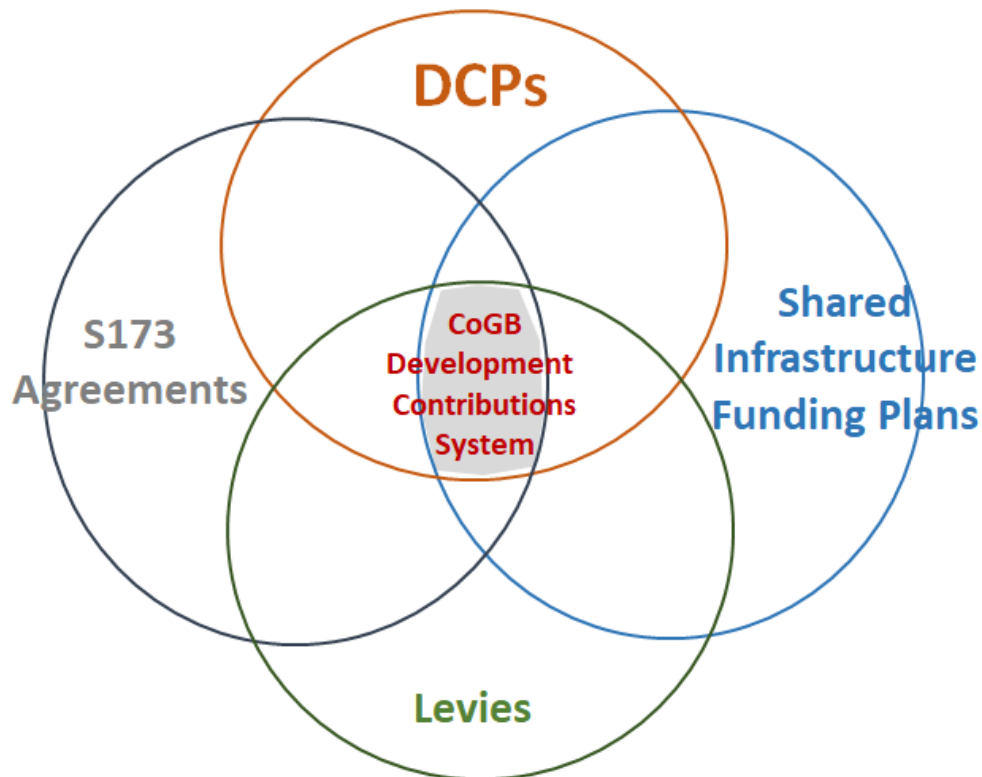
In relation to point 8 above, various Councils, including COGB, will continue to explore development contributions systems outside of a full DCP to will enable a more streamlined and fit for purpose development contributions scheme for small or medium size development. The CoGB has also made recent improvements to the Public Open Space development contributions system to improve transparency and ease of implementation for open space percentages across the municipality.

The remaining themes have been considered as part of the CoGB's new Development Contributions Policy, Governance Framework and internal guidelines.

8 DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS SCHEMES

This section covers the six (6) main development contributions scheme utilised by Local Government.

Figure 4 - Development Contributions Schemes



Development Contributions Plans	Planning and Environment Act (1987)
SIFP and S173 Agreements	
Open Space Levy	Subdivision Act (1988) OR Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme Clause 53.01
Drainage and Stormwater Management Levies	Water Act 1989
Special Rates and Charges (levy)	Local Government Act 1989

8.1 DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS PLANS (DCP)

A DCP is a mechanism used to levy new development for contributions to planned infrastructure needed by a future community as allowed for under the Planning and Environment Act.

A DCP sets out the justification for infrastructure and the calculations of cost and apportionment, allows the City to collect Development Contributions and specifies the infrastructure that is to be provided.

Approved DCPs are included in the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme as Incorporated documents in the schedule to Clause 72.04 and are implemented by applying a Development Contributions Plan Overlay and associated schedule to affected land.

The Planning and Environment Act identifies two types of infrastructure which can be levied and collected through a DCP: development and community infrastructure, the levies for which are referred to as the Development Infrastructure Levy (DIL) and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

The Development Contribution Levy (DIL) is generally paid when land is subdivided. If a development is proposed without the subdivision of land, the payment is triggered prior to the issue of a building permit. The DIL collected from developers forms the majority of funding for projects within a DCP.

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is paid by homeowners prior to the issuing of a building permit for the construction of a dwelling. Despite this, wherever possible, the City encourages developers to pay the CIL in advance on behalf of future landowners.

DCP Development Agency

Section 46H of the *Planning and Environment Act* defines a “development agency” as:

....a person specified in a development contributions plan as a person responsible for the provision of works, services or facilities or for the plan preparation costs for which a community infrastructure levy or development infrastructure levy or part of a levy is payable under this Part;

As a Development Agency, the Council must comply with the responsibilities of development agencies outlined under the *Planning and Environment Act*, including the delivery of all projects provided for in DCPs. It is responsible to provide all works and/or services nominated in the DCP, unless delegated to a landowner / developers as part of an approved works in kind agreement.

DCP Collecting Agency

Section 46H of the *Planning and Environment Act* defines a “collecting agency” as:

....a person specified in a development contributions plan as a person to whom a community infrastructure levy or development infrastructure levy is payable under this Part;

Councils are subject to legislative regulation and monitoring of development contribution levies in their roles as a Collecting Agency through the *Local Government Act*.

Section 136 of the *Local Government Act* outlines councils’ obligations to prudentially manage financial risk, which includes the management of each DCP.

Under Section 46Q of the *Planning and Environment Act* a Council must keep proper accounts of any amount of levy paid to it as a collecting agency or a development agency.

The Council’s role as a Collecting Agency also allows it to negotiate WIK and LIK in lieu of cash payments for development contributions.

Contributions collected under a DCP must be accounted for and ultimately spent only on the infrastructure items specified in the DCP. Transparent and clear internal procedures are necessary to appropriately manage DCPs.

8.2 SHARED INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING PLANS (SIFP)

A Shared Infrastructure Funding Plans (SIFP) is a simplified DCP that avoids the need for the complexity and cost of a planning scheme amendment process (required for a DCP), while still achieving the same outcomes.

A SIFP details the essential shared infrastructure required to service a new development area and sets out the obligations on landowners relating to works and / or payment of funds to Council. The SIFP is usually implemented via a S173 agreement and is registered on the title of all landowners within the development area.

A SIFP is best suited to areas that have low number of landowners (allows easier negotiation), a small to medium number of projects, and low project complexity.

Unlike a DCP, a SIFP is not governed by the requirements of Part 3B of the Planning and Environment Act relating to DCP preparation, management and reporting, however The City will usually manage these SIFP in a very similar manner.

8.3 VOLUNTARY AGREEMENTS – CONTRIBUTIONS VIA SECTION 173 AGREEMENTS

There is an opportunity within the planning system for landowners, the council and other parties to freely negotiate agreements for the provision of infrastructure, at the time a development proposal is considered.

An agreement can be used to place an obligation on the parties to:

- provide infrastructure, and/or
- pay for infrastructure.

Entering into an agreement for development contributions requires all parties to voluntarily agree to commit to their obligations, as set out in the agreement. Therefore, the establishment of a voluntary agreement cannot be a requirement of a planning scheme amendment or planning permit.

Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 provides a mechanism for formalising a voluntary agreement between the responsible authority, a landowner, and other parties.

A voluntary agreement in relation to infrastructure provision can be initiated when:

- the CoGB considers a planning scheme amendment request, and
- the CoGB considers a planning permit application.

A voluntary agreement can provide for:

- the costs and standard of infrastructure provision
- the timing of the provision of infrastructure

- the parties' obligation to provide the infrastructure
- timing of payments towards infrastructure
- the refund of cash contributions if infrastructure is not provided
- the upfront provision of infrastructure by one landowner and the reimbursement of the cost by other landowners as they develop, or
- works-in-kind in lieu of a cash contribution.

8.4 PUBLIC OPEN SPACE LEVIES

Unlike other forms of development contributions, Public Open Space contributions can be collected via various development contributions schemes.

A public open space levy places an obligation on new development to pay a fixed percentage of the land's value to Council for open space purposes, or when agreed the provision of land as an offset (in part of in full). The levy can be collected via Section 18 of the Subdivision Act 1988 and / or via Clause 53.01 of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme. The levy can also be collected via a DCP and would be based on the site specific land valuations of public open space land projects.

In the City of Greater Bendigo, the most common forms of Public Open Space contributions are:

- Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme via clause 53.01 – *Space Public Open Space Contribution and Subdivision*, where:
 - Residential subdivision within locality Bendigo contributes 2%, and
 - All other residential subdivisions contribution 5%
- Subdivision Act 1988
 - Historically used as the default contribution for open space (5% Public Open Space safety net), but has since been superseded by recent updates to the Clause 53.01.
- S173 Agreements and / or Shared Infrastructure Funding Plans.
- Development Contributions Plans (DCPs)

The percentage of Public Open Space contributions are guided by the Council's Public Open Space Contributions Policy.

In relation to works, the delivery of public open space and recreation projects are guided by the Council's Public Spaces Plan (2019)

8.5 DRAINAGE / STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SCHEMES

Drainage / Stormwater Management Schemes are development contribution schemes setup for the sole purpose of delivering shared stormwater and / or drainage infrastructure, that may include the management of flooding, water quality or both, and is levied under Section 215 of the Water Act 1989.

Under the Act they're referenced as Water Management Scheme, or more commonly by Melbourne Water as Development Service Schemes (DSS); noting Melbourne Water is the largest user of these schemes across metropolitan Melbourne.

A Scheme comprises a drainage strategy for an area together with a pricing arrangement that allows a Water Authority to require developers to contribute to the cost of the construction of works in connection with a development. Planning permit referrals received from councils under the Subdivision and Planning and Environment Acts are one trigger for this process.

For further details on drainage / stormwater management schemes refer to the Melbourne Water guide; [Principles for Provision of Waterway and Drainage Services for Urban Growth](#).

8.6 SPECIAL RATES AND CHARGES SCHEMES

Although not as common as other development contributions schemes, special rates and charges are a formal Council scheme approved under [Section 163 of the Local Government Act 2020](#) for the funding of local or precinct based works that have a 'special benefit' to landowners and as such would be required them to contribute.

The scheme usually relates to projects such as footpaths, kerb and channel and drainage work.

A SRC scheme requires a detailed evidence-based process relating to the justification for the project(s), the estimated cost (including costs per landowner) and a clear community consultation process. If approved, the landowners are charged the actual costs of the works once they're completed.

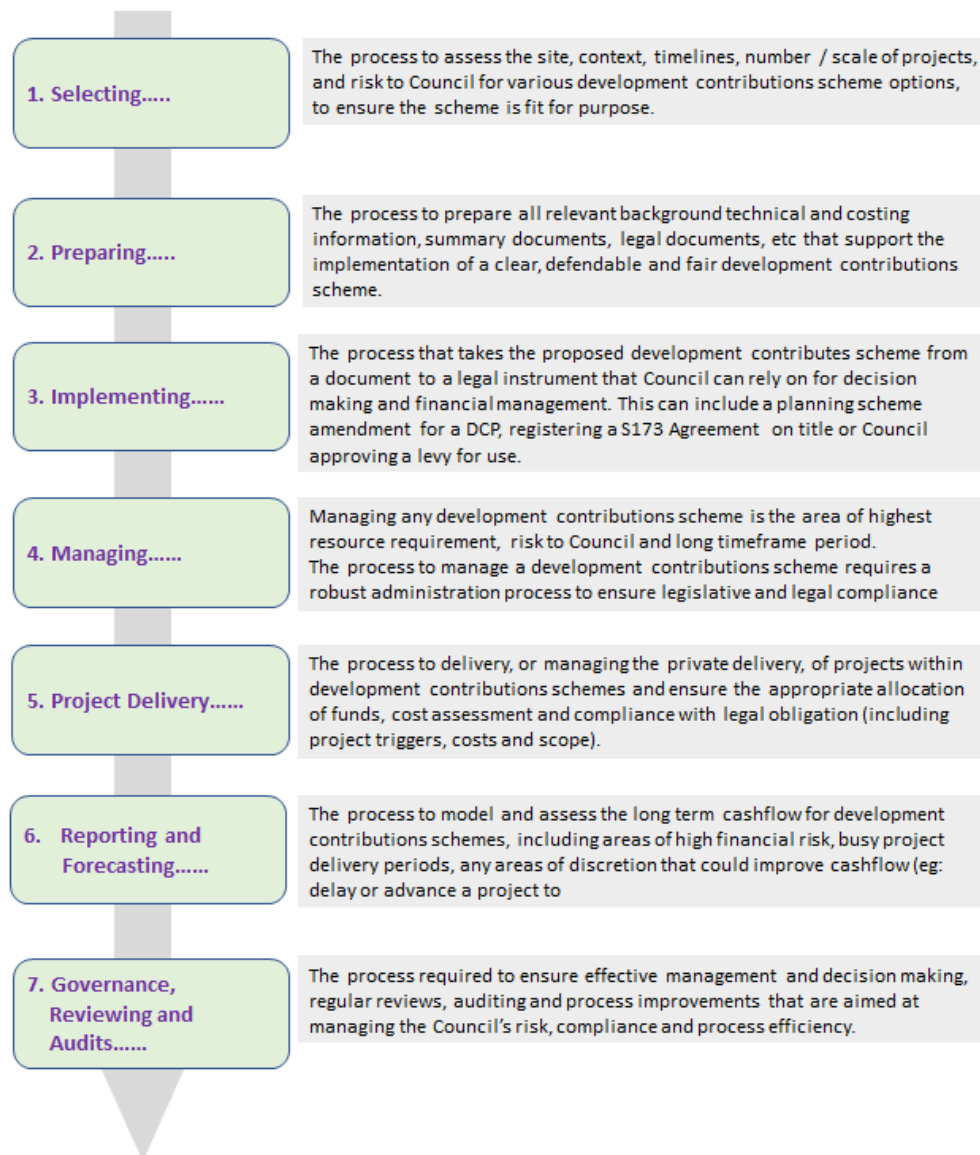
Community consultation will usually involve the agreement of a set percentage of impacted landowners, with most Councils establishing agreements rates of 80 – 100% acceptance. In some cases, the Council can mandate a SRC scheme if there is an urgent need or unique circumstances (eg: public safety).

9 THE SEVEN (7) STAGES OF A DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS SCHEME

The foundation of the Development Contributions Governance Framework covers seven key stages that are critical to the success of a fit for purpose and best practice Development Contributions Scheme.

These stages are reflected as a common thread across the CoGB's full development contributions framework, including various guidelines, internal procedures and templates.

Figure 5 - The Seven (7) Stages of the Development Contributions Framework



9.1 STAGE 1: SELECTING A DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTION SCHEME

The selection of an appropriate development contribution scheme must consider:

- The scale of the development / change area,
- The amount and certainty of change proposed by the new development or change area,
- The number of landowners involved,
- The number, cost and complexity of the shared infrastructure projects, and
- Maximising the recovery of shared essential infrastructure cost that have a clear nexus with the development areas and types (eg: residential, industrial, etc).

The above attributes are critical to selecting the right scheme for the right area, and must balance the risks to Council and stakeholders, the total life of the scheme (often 5 – 20 years), and the ease of implementation and management.

Figure 6- The General Spectrum of Development Contributions Schemes

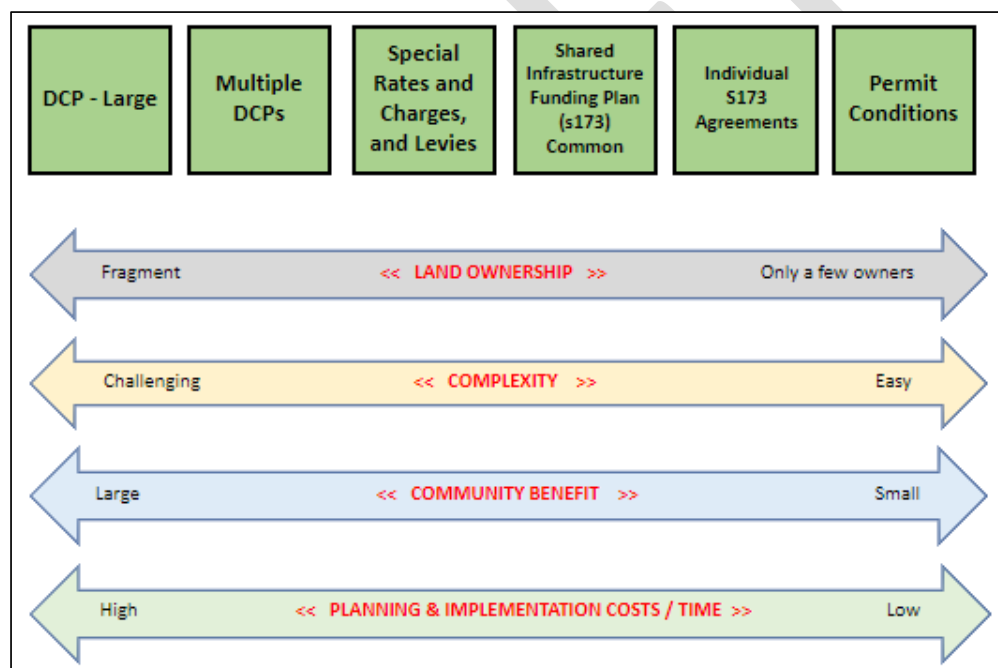


Table 3 - Development Contributions Scheme Suitability Matrix

Scheme	Size of Development Area	Land Ownership	Project No., Cost & Complexity	Community Benefit	Prep. Costs / Time
DCP	Medium to Large	>10 land owners	H	H	H
SIFP	Medium to Large	< 10 land owners	M	M	M
S173	Small to Medium	1 – 5	L	L - M	L
Open Space	Small to Large	Various	L	M	L – M
Special Rates and Charges (SRC)	Small	~ 20 – 50	H	L	M
Drainage / Stormwater	Generally for parcels >0.4ha	>10 land owners	M	L - M	H

H = High, M = Medium / Moderate, L = Low

The above suitable matrix is a guide only but provide general guidance on the suitability of various development contributions scheme relevant to different development settings and context.

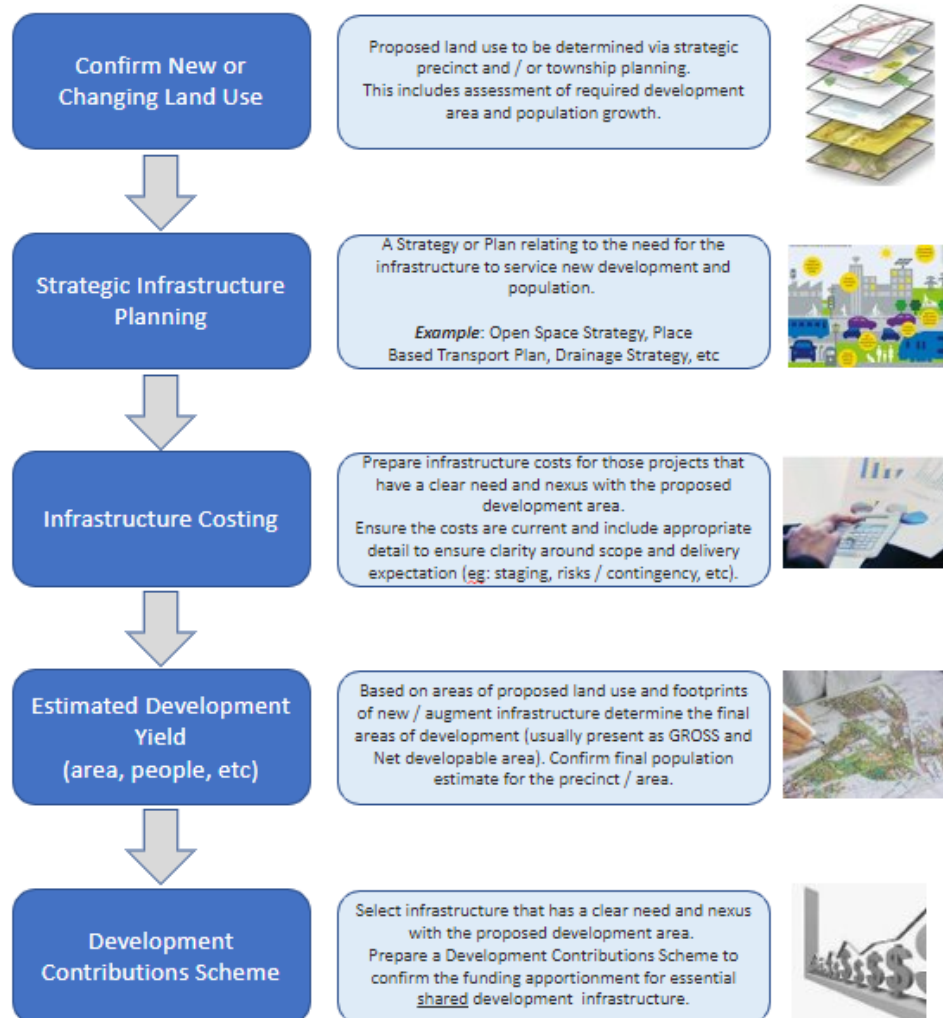
9.2 STAGE 2: PREPARING A DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS SCHEMES

The preparation of a development contributions scheme must ensure:

- The Policy Principles of Need, Nexus, Equity, Transparency and Accountability are achieved,
- The Policy Objectives, listed below, are achieved:
 - Maximise Cost Recovery
 - Maximise Liveability of New Development
 - Minimise Financial Risk
 - Development Facilitation
- High quality background technical assessment has been undertaken to justify the need, scope and timing of essential shared infrastructure projects,
- If required, project costing should be prepared and be evidence based,
- All documentation should be consistent of the CoGB's adopted structure, language and standards used within previous development contributions schemes or latest best practice,
- Development contributions are predictable and consistent across the municipality,
- Wherever possible, the scheme be developed in collaboration with the area's landowners and / or future developers, and maximise opportunities for consultation and input.

- As required, the documentation should be reviewed by Council's legal representatives to ensure legislative compliance and appropriate management of Council risk.
- The scheme does not inadvertently overlap with other development contribution schemes and create a real or implied case of 'double dipping',
- The scheme does not reflect a scale of infrastructure and / or funding contributions that would clearly impact the viability of the new development area.
- Projects that have very high external apportionment of costs (ie: low nexus with the development / change area) be discouraged, or alternative funding models considered.

Figure 7- The Basic Steps for Preparing Development Contributions Schemes



In relation to DCPs, SIFP and S173 agreements refer to the Regional DCP Toolkit – Development Contributions Information Manual (2020) for more detailed guidance.

Framework Note:

The default indexation methodology for Council's development contributions schemes are listed below:

Construction Projects	-	ABS Producer Price Index (PPI) – Roads and Bridges, Victoria
Building Projects	-	ABS Producer Price Index (PPI) – Non-Residential Buildings, Victoria
Land	-	<i>DCPs and SIFPs</i>
		Site Specific Land Valuation (before and after impact model for DCPs and SIFPs), OR
		ABS Consumer Price Index (CPI) for Melbourne, Victoria, OR
	-	<i>Open Space Levy</i>
		Site specific property valuation (for Open Space levy)

As part of the preparation of a Development Contributions Scheme an Equity Impact Assessment (EIA) should be undertaken by the CoGB to ensure the draft scheme meets the needs of the whole community and / or does not adversely impact part of the community.

9.3 STAGE 3: IMPLEMENTATION A DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS SCHEMES

The implementation of development contributions schemes must ensure:

- Effective management of legal, financial, reputational, and precedent risks to Council,
- Compliance with legislative procedures and processes (especially in relation to planning scheme amendments and special rates and charge schemes),
- The approved documentation is easy to read, is practical to implement and reflects the likely duration of the scheme (noting a DCP can take 20+ years to complete),
- The scheme is implemented in advance of any development and / or any projects being delivered.

The implementation of a development contributions schemes can be a resource-intensive and time-consuming part of the process. This stage of the process may require several rounds of documentation review by stakeholder legal representatives, refinement of project design, scope and / or costings, formal or informal community / stakeholder consultation, a planning scheme amendment process for DCPs or SIFP (where the SIFP accompanies a rezoning amendment) and the formal approval process through Council or even the Minister for Planning in the case of DCPs and changes to Public Open Spaces obligations under Clause 53.01 of the planning scheme.

Ultimately all development contributions schemes will require the formal adoption by Council. Depending on the scheme used, there maybe cases where approval occurs under Council delegation.

9.4 STAGE 4: MANAGING A DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS SCHEMES

The management of a development contributions scheme must ensure:

- Easy access to information for both external shareholders and internal departments,
- Clear process steps and, wherever practical, integration with existing Council processes and systems,
- Easy administration over the total life of the scheme,
- The use of robust governance systems to oversee management of Development Contributions Schemes. These are reflected in more detailed within the attached Development Contributions Governance Framework (2024).
- The use of up-to-date data and information to monitor the success of the Scheme, and inform high quality decision making.

General Administration

Process, procedures and templates to assist with the consistent, transparent and seamless delivery of administration services that deal with the day to day management of Development Contribution Schemes, especially those relating to DCP management.

Major areas covered by these procedures include:

- Assessment of developer liability and works in kind credits
- Practical completion certificates for completed works
- Works in Kind agreements

Procurement of DCP Projects

The Council can delegate the delivery of DCP projects via a works in kind process. These are formalised under S173 Agreement and approved by Council (or under delegation).

In these situations, the landowner / developer agrees to construct a project(s), and as such accepts the risks associated with its delivery, in exchange for a financial credit against their DCP liability.

All development contribution scheme projects delivered by the CoGB will align with the obligation set-out under the Council's Procurement Policy.

Works in Kind and Land in Kind

DCPs require payment of development contributions in cash, however, section 46P of the Planning and Environment Act provides the option for developers to deliver infrastructure works or provide land, a credit is then applied against the DIL liability for the developer.

These types of contributions are referred to as 'Works in Kind' (WIK) or 'Land in Kind' (LIK).

The decision lies with the CoGB to accept or decline WIK or LIK in lieu of cash contributions. Careful management of this process can provide benefits for the DCP and also the CoGB, in particular reducing some of the construction risk and financial risk associated projects delivery.

Contributions provided as WIK or LIK are secured via the registration of an agreement under section 173 of the *Planning and Environment Act* on the title of the subject land. Section 173 Agreements are binding on any future landowners. A condition is required to be included on the relevant planning permit requiring the preparation of the agreement.

Section 173 Agreements require careful management to ensure that contributions are either paid, delivered as works, or transferred as land in a manner that is compliant with the agreement requirements, including, but not limited to quality and timing.

9.5 STAGE 5: PROJECT DELIVERY

The delivery of projects included within a development contributions scheme must ensure:

- Projects are delivery in a timely manner based on the primary needs of the new / growing community, not the individual needs of landowners.
- Where practical (both physically and financially), development contributions projects are delivered early in the life of the development,
- Where practical, encourages the use of works in kind to deliver development contributions scheme projects (noting the significant benefit of delivering projects as an integrated part of the development),
- Works in Kind Agreements are approval by Council prior to the commencement of works,
- Projects are part of a long-term delivery pipeline to accommodate planning, design and delivery prior to agreed triggers or need.
- Projects are reflected in Council's long term financial plan to ensure a strategic approach to project delivery, income forecasting and deliver efficiency with other non-development construction capital works.
- Projects completed to the standards and specifications detailed in the Development Contribution Scheme or as agreed.

Framework Note:

Works in kind is a tool utilised by Councils' to facilitate the efficient delivery of projects included or nominated under a development contributions scheme.

These works in kind can include the construction of works such as roads, drainage and parks, or the provision of land for projects or open space.

The works in kind process allows the works to be delivered seamlessly as part of the development and avoids rework and conflicts due to Council works occurring within a private development setting.

9.6 STAGE 6: REPORTING AND FORECASTING

The reporting and forecasting of development contributions scheme must include:

- Regular reporting on performance and progress,
- A modelling or forecasting tool that ensure the long-term risk of the scheme(s) are proactively managed,
- Tracking of development contributions revenue and works in kind (including the use of a development contribution financial reserve(s)),
- Compliance with legislative reporting requirements,

Table 4 provides an overview of internal and external reporting to be undertaken on development contributions.

Table 4 - Reporting Program for CoGB Development Contributions

Reporting Commitments	Report	Frequency	Recipient	Responsible Officer
Monthly project updates and cost variations	INTERNAL non statutory	Monthly	Executive Management Team (EMT)	Coordinator Strategic Infrastructure Planning, and Manager Active and Healthy Communities, and Project Delivery Managers
Development Contribution Schemes progress and status	INTERNAL non statutory	Quarterly	Development Contributions Steering Committee Public Space Committee	Coordinator Strategic Infrastructure Planning, and Manager Active and Healthy Communities.
Development Contribution Schemes progress and financial status	INTERNAL statutory	Annual	Audit and Risk Committee	Coordinator Strategic Infrastructure Planning, and Manager Active and Healthy Communities.
Development Contribution Schemes progress and status	EXTERNAL statutory	Annual	Council	Coordinator Strategic Infrastructure Planning, and Manager Active and Healthy Communities.
For DCPs in accordance with Planning & Environment Act , Section 46QD and the Ministers Direction for DCPs.	EXTERNAL statutory	Annually, by 30 September	Minister for Planning and for inclusion in Council Annual Report	Coordinator Strategic Infrastructure Planning

9.7 STAGE 7: GOVERNANCE, REVIEW AND AUDITING

A Governance, Review and Auditing stage of the development contributions scheme must ensure:

- The implementation of formal governance and decision-making arrangements to oversee the seven stages of the development contributions process,
- The scheme is regularly reviewed, at frequencies reflective of its scale and complexity,
- Reviews are built into the obligations of the scheme to ensure is currency,
- The findings and actions from any review should, wherever possible, be implemented as soon as practical to minimise long term risk.
- Internal and external audits of the scheme should be encouraged and utilised as continuous improvement opportunities.

9.7.1 Committees and Working Groups

The following internal committees provide oversight and play a decision-making role in the management of development contributions.

9.7.1.1 Development Contributions Steering Committee

The Development Contributions Steering Committee will support the City's development contributions program to ensure Council meets its legislative requirements, demonstrates sound financial management and facilitates the timely delivery of infrastructure.

9.7.1.2 Development Contributions Working Group

The Development Contributions Working Group will support the Development Contributions Steering Committee in preparation and implementation of the City's development contributions program. The working group will coordinate the day to day management of the various development contributions schemes.

9.7.1.3 Public Space Committee

The Public Space Committee supports the preparation and implementation of the City's public open space development contribution schemes to ensure the City meets its legislative requirements, demonstrates sound financial management and facilitates the timely acquisition and / or delivery of open space infrastructure projects.

9.7.1.4 Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee is an advisory committee formally appointed by Council and is responsible to the Council. It plays an important role in providing oversight of the CoGB's financial and performance reporting, risk management, compliance with legislation and internal and external audit functions.

9.7.2 Delegations

Council has put in place a delegation structure that ensures the effective and efficient management of development contributions schemes to allow processing, management and project assessment.

Delegations will be regularly reviewed to ensure they maintain a fit for purpose approvals processes, including appropriate risk management and compliance with legislative and policy obligations.

Refer the City of Greater Bendigo [Delegation and Authorisation Policy \(19 Jul 2021\)](#) and [Instruments of Delegation](#).

18. ABORIGINAL RECONCILIATION

Nil

19. A CLIMATE-RESILIENT BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

19.1. Annual Environment Report 2022/23

Author:	Michelle Wyatt, Manager Climate Change and Environment
Responsible Director:	Stacy Williams, Director Healthy Communities and Environments

Purpose

To provide Council with an overview of the Annual Environment Report 2022/23.

Recommended Motion

That Council receive the Annual Environment Report 2022/23.

Executive Summary

Each year officers aim to prepare an Annual Environment Report (the Report) which provides a status update on progress towards achieving the organisation's environmental goals and objectives. The Report also provides a snapshot of how the organisation is progressing with implementing relevant environmental strategies and plans.

The Report uses the *Climate Change and Environment Strategy 2021-2026* themes, goals and indicators as the framework for reporting. For 2022/23 these indicators were reviewed and updated to ensure they are measurable and help build a picture of Council's progress towards achieving its environmental goals.

Key achievements, areas for improvement and a summary of current priorities is outlined in this report and in the Annual Environment Report itself.

Overall Council is progressing well with reducing organisational emissions, reducing waste collected per capita including waste sent to landfill, increasing sustainable land management practices, increasing recreational cycling and establishing a strategic direction for biodiversity conservation. Areas for improvement include facilitating a mode shift from car use to walking, cycling and public transport for travel such as commuting, accelerating council and the community's decarbonisation and improving water quality and flood mitigation outcomes through strategic stormwater management.

A number of indicators were not able to be reported on for 2022/23 due to the lack of monitoring or data collection. This will be improved in 2023/24 as Council starts

implementing its biodiversity monitoring program and establishes more consistent data collection processes.

The Annual Environment Report 2022/23 as well as a Summary Document are attached.

Background

This Annual Environment Report provides an overview of Council's environmental performance against:

1. *Greater Bendigo Climate Change and Environment Strategy 2021-26*
2. *Greater Bendigo Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2023-33*
3. *Greater Bendigo Zero Emissions Roadmap*
4. *Zero Carbon: Net Zero Emissions Plan for City Operations 2023-2030*
5. *Be the Change Action Plan*
6. *Greater Bendigo Walking and Cycling Strategy* (outcomes only)
7. *Greening Greater Bendigo* (outcomes only)

Implementation of other relevant documents such as the Greater Bendigo Food Systems Strategy will be assessed separately.

The report provides an assessment of Council's environmental performance against the indicators, goals and targets contained in these documents. All indicators have been mapped to the *Climate Change and Environment Strategy 2021-26* themes.

The body of the report includes a summary of achievements, areas for improvement and current priorities for each theme. The full table of goals and indicators is provided at Appendix 1 of the Report. A snapshot of progress with implementation of the abovementioned strategies is provided at Appendix 2 of the Report.

Report

The Annual Environment Report highlights the following achievements, areas of improvement and current priorities:

Achievements

- Reduction in landfill emissions by 11,500 tCO₂e due to the reduction in general waste received at Eaglehawk Landfill, including a reduction in commercial and industrial waste.
- Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 430 tCO₂e due to the progressive electrification of buildings and fleet.

- Removal of gas from 6 Council facilities to make them all electric.
- Increase in Council's electric passenger fleet from 6 to 10 vehicles.
- Delivery of a Climate Summit through the Greater Bendigo Climate Collaboration which was attended by approximately 680 community members.
- Development of the draft *Greater Bendigo Zero Emissions Roadmap* which was since adopted in September 2023.
- Development of the draft *Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan* which was since adopted in September 2023.
- Planting of 3,376 urban trees.
- Reduction in removal of native vegetation from Council operations.
- Adoption of the *Zero Carbon – Net Zero Emissions Plan for Council Operations 2023- 2030*.
- Installation of 18.5km of footpaths.
- Participation of approximately 168 landholders in the Healthy Landscapes: Practical Regenerative Agricultural Communities Program.
- Establishment of soft plastics recycling drop off points.
- Introduction of a 24-hour cat containment requirement.

Areas for Improvement

- Data collection processes and practices.
- The speed of electrification of Council facilities.
- Facilitating a mode shift from car use to walking, cycling and public transport use through investment in strategic infrastructure, programs and advocacy.
- Developing a strategic approach to managing stormwater to achieve water quality and flood mitigation outcomes.
- Developing a strategic approach to management of Council's natural reserves.
- Reducing waste from Council facilities and increasing use of reused and recycled content, products and materials in Council operations.
- Supporting the community to adapt to climate change.

Current priorities

Zero carbon

- Delivery of a program of electrification works for Council facilities.
- Development of feasibility studies and detailed design for electrification of Council's larger facilities such as the Bendigo Library and Council's aquatic centres.
- Development of a fleet transition strategy as a part of the Fleet Asset Management Plan.

- Participation in the North Central CMA's Community Carbon local carbon offsets program.
- Development of a Public Electric Vehicle Charging Framework and Implementation Plan in collaboration with other councils in the Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA).

Active and Public Transport

- Development of a Zero Emissions Transport Framework and Implementation Plan that identifies the most cost efficient interventions that will achieve the highest mode shift to walking, cycling and public transport use.
- Progression of the "Low Line" shared trail along Bendigo Creek.

Biodiversity and regeneration

- Delivery of a biodiversity engagement program.
- Delivery of the Rural Regeneration Grants program.
- Delivery of a Sustainable Land Management Program comprising workshops and individual on-farm advice as well as the Healthy Landscapes regenerative agriculture program.

Water

- Development of a Stormwater Management Strategy.
- Development of an implementation plan for Reimagining Bendigo Creek in collaboration with Djandak.

Circular economy

- Continued establishment of Circular Economy Hubs.
- Installation of glass drop off points across the municipality.
- Continued waste education across industry and the community.
- Changes to kerbside collection schedules to facilitate the continued reduction in waste to landfill – i.e. collection of recycling weekly and general waste fortnightly.

Other

- Exploration of opportunities to represent Council's environmental data on an interactive online porthole.
- Working with the community to build their resilience to the changing climate, including across the areas of heat waves, natural disasters, extreme weather events and drought.

Future priorities

- Continuing Council's **sustainable land management** and **biodiversity engagement** programs.

- Establishing a formal **environmental planning** function to ensure appropriate assessment of native vegetation removal from new development.
- Continuing to support emissions reductions across the community, including through the **Greater Bendigo Climate Collaboration**.
- Establishing an **integrated transport planning** function within Council to facilitate delivery of new low cost infrastructure solutions and advocacy that support a mode shift to walking, cycling and public transport use.

Status of actions

A review of actions across Council's key strategic environmental plans and strategies indicates that most actions are still "in progress" given that these strategies and plans were only adopted between 2021 and 2023.

Priority/Importance

High – reporting on Council's environmental progress is important to ensure the organisation is meeting its goals and delivering on its adopted strategies and plans.

Options Considered

Not applicable

Communications/Engagement

The Annual Environment Report 2022/23 was produced in collaboration with staff from across the organisation.

Financial Sustainability

Not Applicable

Risk Assessment

Not Applicable

Policy Context

Primary Council Plan Reference

City of Greater Bendigo Council Plan *Mir wimbul* 2021-2025
Outcome 5 - A climate resilient and healthy landscape

Secondary Council Plan Reference(s)

Goal 1 - Zero carbon

Goal 2 - Circular economy

Goal 3 - Thriving landscapes and ecosystems

Goal 4 - Water Sensitive Bendigo

Other Reference(s)

Not Applicable

Conflict of Interest

No officer involved in the preparation or approval of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Attachments

1. Annual Environment Report 2022 - 2023 [**19.1.1** - 50 pages]
2. Annual Environment Report 2022-2023 - Summary Document [**19.1.2** - 4 pages]



Annual Environment Report 2022-23

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Acknowledgement of Country

Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Greater Bendigo is on Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Country. We acknowledge and extend our appreciation to the Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung People, the Traditional Owners of the land.

We pay our respects to leaders and Elders past, present and future for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and the hopes of all Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Peoples.

We express our gratitude in the sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual and cultural costs of that sharing and our hope that we may walk forward together in harmony and in the spirit of healing.

Acknowledgement of First Nations People

The City recognises that there are people from many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities living in Greater Bendigo.

We acknowledge and extend our appreciation to all First Nations Peoples who live and reside in Greater Bendigo on Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Country, and we thank them for their contribution to our community.

Executive Summary

This Annual Environment Report provides the opportunity for Council to report on progress with implementing the organisation's key environment strategies and plans including the *Climate Change and Environment Strategy 2021-2026*.

The report provides an overview of key achievements, areas for improvements as well as progress towards achieving Council's environment objectives which are measured using a set of indicators. These indicators and the associated targets were reviewed for the 2022/23 Annual Report to ensure they are relevant and measurable.

Achievements 2022/23

The highlights for the 2022/23 financial year include:

Zero Carbon

- Reduction in landfill emissions by 11,500 tCO₂e due to the reduction in general waste received at Eaglehawk Landfill, including a reduction in commercial and industrial waste.
- Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 430 tCO₂e due to the progressive electrification of buildings and fleet.
- Removal of gas from 6 Council facilities to make them all electric.
- Increase in Council's electric passenger fleet from 6 to 10 vehicles.
- Delivery of a Climate Summit through the Greater Bendigo Climate Collaboration which was attended by approximately 680 community members.
- Development of the draft Greater Bendigo Zero Emissions Roadmap which was since adopted in September 2023.
- Adoption of the Zero Carbon – Net Zero Emissions Plan for Council Operations 2023- 2030.

Biodiversity and regeneration

- Development of the draft Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan which was since adopted in September 2023.
- Planting of 3,376 urban trees.
- Reduction in removal of native vegetation from Council operations.
- Introduction of a 24-hour cat containment requirement.

Active and sustainable transport

- Installation of 18.5km of footpaths.

Sustainable food systems

- Participation of approximately 168 landholders in the Healthy Landscapes: Practical Regenerative Agricultural Communities Program.

Circular economy

- The reduction of waste collected per capita across all waste streams and the increase in diversion of organic waste from landfill.
- Establishment of soft plastics recycling drop off points.

Areas for Improvement

Key areas for improvement include:

- Data collection processes and practices.
- The speed of electrification of Council facilities.
- Facilitating a mode shift from car use to walking, cycling and public transport use through investment in strategic infrastructure, programs and advocacy.
- Developing a strategic approach to managing stormwater to achieve water quality and flood mitigation outcomes.
- Developing a strategic approach to management of Council's natural reserves.
- Assessment of generated waste at Council owned facilities with a dedicated strategy to reduce waste where possible and increasing use of reused and recycled content, products and materials in Council operations.
- Supporting the community to adapt to climate change.

Current priorities

Current work underway to improve performance includes:

Zero carbon

- Delivery of a program of electrification works for Council facilities.
- Development of feasibility studies and detailed design for electrification of Council's larger facilities such as the Bendigo Library and Council's aquatic centres.
- Development of a fleet transition strategy as a part of the Fleet Asset Management Plan.
- Participation in the North Central CMA's Community Carbon local carbon offsets program.
- Development of a Public Electric Vehicle Charging Framework and Implementation Plan in collaboration with the Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA).

Active and public transport

- Development of a Zero Emissions Transport Framework and Implementation Plan that identifies the most cost efficient interventions that will achieve the highest mode shift to walking, cycling and public transport use.
- Progression of the "Low Line" shared trail along Bendigo Creek.

Biodiversity and regeneration

- Delivery of a biodiversity engagement program.
- Delivery of the Rural Regeneration Grants program.
- Delivery of a Sustainable Land Management Program comprising workshops and individual on-farm advice as well as the Healthy Landscapes regenerative agriculture program.

Water

- Development of a Stormwater Management Strategy.
- Development of an implementation plan for Reimagining Bendigo Creek in collaboration with Djandak.

Circular economy

- Continued review of long-term resource recovery planning such as Circular Economy Hubs.
- Continued waste education across industry and the community.
- Changes to kerbside collection schedules to facilitate the continued reduction in waste to landfill – i.e. collection of organics weekly and general waste fortnightly.

Other

- Exploration of opportunities to represent Council's environmental data on an interactive online porthole.
- Working with the community to build their resilience to the changing climate, including across the areas of heat waves, natural disasters, extreme weather events and drought.

Introduction

This Annual Environment Report provides an overview of Council's environmental performance against:

1. *Greater Bendigo Climate Change and Environment Strategy 2021-26*
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Implementation of other relevant documents such as the Greater Bendigo Food Systems Strategy will be assessed separately.

The report provides an assessment of Council's environmental performance against the indicators, goals and targets contained in these documents. All indicators have been mapped to the *Climate Change and Environment Strategy 2021-26* themes.

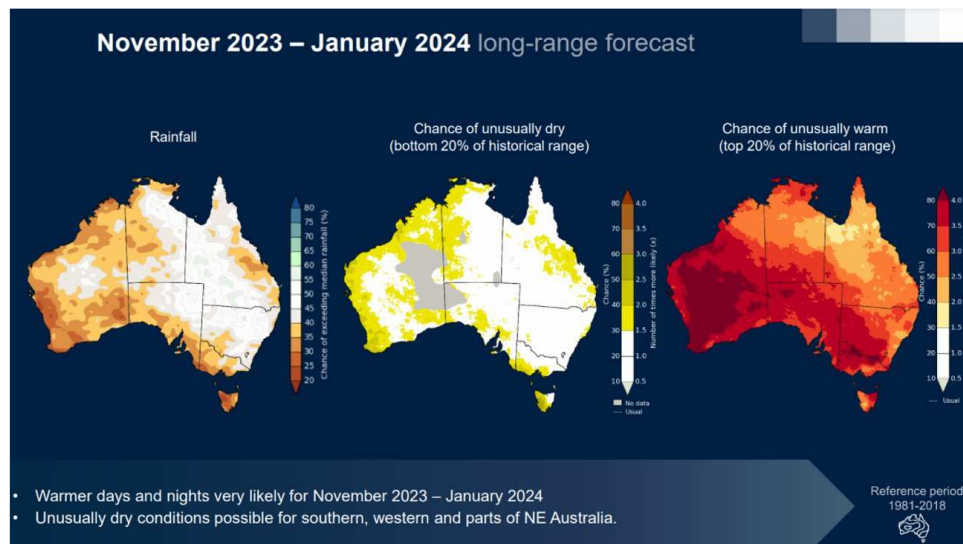
The body of the report includes a summary of achievements, areas for improvement and future work for each theme. The full table of goals and indicators is provided at **Appendix 1**. A snapshot of progress with implementation of the abovementioned strategies is provided at **Appendix 2**.

Context

Climate and biodiversity crisis

During 2022/23 the City of Greater Bendigo experienced the impacts of climate change. The flood event of October 2022 directly impacted parts of the municipality, and our neighbouring council experienced devastating impacts across the region.

In contrast Bendigo is staring at a long hot summer with El Nino being declared by the Bureau of Metrology. We also know that the climate is getting hotter and drier Australia's temperature has warmed by 1.48° since 1910 and ten of the hottest years on record have taken place between 2013 and 2020.



Source: BOM Long-range forecast for rainfall, usually dry and usually water conditions.

The hot and dry weather coupled with the higher fuel load from consecutive La Nina events points to an increased risk of bushfires for the latter half of 2023/24.

Biodiversity in Victoria continues to decline. Greater Bendigo is currently home to 92 threatened plants and 67 threatened animal species. Redressing biodiversity loss is a long term program for the City and the Strategy is a big step in the City's leadership and commitment towards a renewed natural environment.

Changing policy context.

Since the last Annual Environment Report the following changes have occurred at the State and Federal level:

Australian policy context

- Release of the [National Electric Vehicle Strategy](#).
- Release of the [Threatened Species Action Plan 2022-2032](#).

Victorian policy context

- Brought forward the state's net zero target from 2050 to 2045.
- Recycling Victoria commenced operations on 1 July 2022 with mandated policy [Building Victoria's Circular Economy](#)
- [Victoria's Gas Substitution Roadmap Update](#) was released and legislation was introduced requiring new subdivisions to be all electric from 1 January 2024.

Local policy context

- In December 2022 DJAARA and the City signed a unique agreement called "Yilingga Marna" (which in the Dja Dja Wurrung language means "shake hands"). The agreement streamlines procedures for the delivery of outcomes and benefit to community, while also building on the Dja Dja Wurrung Recognition and Settlement Agreement.

General

Achievements 2022/23

- Transition of the Sustainability and Environment Advisory Committee to the Greater Bendigo Environment Partnership.
- Delivery of an environment volunteers “thank you” breakfast during National Volunteer Week.
- Completion of the *Be the Change Action Plan* which sets out priority actions for internal initiatives that reduce the organisation’s environmental footprint.

Theme 1: Biodiversity and regeneration

Achievements 2022/23

- The draft *Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan* was released for public consultation which has since been adopted. Through the development of the Strategy over 500 residents were engaged.
- Reduction in native vegetation removed as a result of Council operations by 3.7 hectares to 1.6 hectares.
- Checking over 600 nestboxes across eight reserves with local groups to monitor mammal populations. Successful breeding of Powerful Owl in one nestbox.
- Planting 3,376 urban trees as a part of Greening Greater Bendigo.
- Delivery of a successful National Tree Day planting event with Friends of Ironbark Gully, where over 100 community members planted native seedlings.
- 24-hour cat containment introduced across the municipality.
- Monitoring creeks around fish reintroduction creeks and basins, where we have recorded Southern pygmy perch and Southern purple-spotted gudgeon.
- Flowering of *Banksia marginata* in the 1ha Council seed production area (330 trees from twelve provenances).
- Trialling native grass nature strips at multiple sites, including at the front of the City's nursery, which are proving resilient and productive.



Senior Biodiversity Officer Mark Hall Mark showing Healthy Landscapes participants how traps can be used to identify the types of pollinators that are present in the landscape and how to use nets to capture insects.

Areas for improvement

- Collection of data on the outputs and outcomes, including for community engagement and on-ground conservation works in Council managed natural reserves.
- Community education about Council's cat curfew and the importance of containing domestic cats (cats surrendered to BARC increased from 1,544 to 1,676 over 2022/23).
- Establishing ongoing resources for biodiversity engagement and support for community groups.
- Establishing a strategic approach to planning and management of conservation reserves.
- Ensuring planning permit applications for native vegetation removal implement the three step approach (avoid, minimise, offset) and collection of data on native vegetation removal from development for future reporting.
- Ensuring resourcing matches demand for conservation reserve management as Council's portfolio of reserves grows and as community expectations increase.

Current priorities

The current priority involves implementation of Council's *Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2023-33* including:

- Development of a biodiversity monitoring program.
- Development of management plans for Council's conservation reserves starting with Riley Street, Kennington Reservoir and the Crosby and Huntly Plantations.
- Implementation of a biodiversity engagement program in collaboration with other government organisations and community groups aimed at increasing the community's connection with nature.

Theme 2: Zero Carbon

Achievements 2022/23

Engagement and advocacy

- Delivery of community forums and engagement on renewable energy, sustainable transport and sustainable agriculture as well as a climate summit attended by over 670 people.
- Co-delivery of a Regional Zero Emissions Forum in collaboration with the Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance
- Submission of feedback to the *Australian Carbon Credit Units Review* and the Australian Government's *National Electric Vehicle Strategy*.

Strategies and plans

- Release of the *Greater Bendigo Zero Emissions Roadmap* for public consultation which has since been adopted.

Operational emissions

- Reduction in landfill emissions at Eaglehawk by 11,500 tCO₂e due to improved waste management and less waste sent to landfill (see **Figures 1, 2 and 3** below).
- Reduction in Council's corporate emissions by 430 tCO₂e due to reductions in gas and fuel use.
- The removal of gas appliances from 6 Council facilities to make them all electric.
- Installation of 8kW of solar at the former Heathcote Town Hall, 70kW at the Bendigo Library and programming of a 250kW rooftop solar system on Gurri Wanyarra which will be installed in early 2024.
- Increase to Council's solar generation across all Council buildings to a total of 680kW, generating annually an average of 1.142 megawatts of electricity, with an annual reduction in power costs of approximately \$146,000 for Council.
- Purchase of 4 additional electric vehicles to increase Council's electric passenger fleet to 10.
- Leasing an all-electric street sweeper.
- Commencement of the Community Carbon Pilot Program which is trialling local revegetation-based carbon offsetting.
- Installation of rooftop solar panels, batteries and a back-up generator at the Heathcote RSL to increase renewable energy use at the site and provide electricity in the event of power disruptions during an emergency.

Community emissions

- Reduction in community emissions by approximately 132,000 tCO₂e (between 2020/21 and 21/22) mainly due to the growth of renewable electricity in the grid
- Commencement of the Sustainable Subdivision Advisor role within Council works across 7 local governments to progress development of the sustainable subdivisions assessment framework and to build capacity of council staff and developers.

Areas for improvement

- Data collection and consistency across different data sources. Community data on emissions is harder to obtain and not aligned to Council's current reporting timelines.
- Acceleration of the energy transition across households and businesses.

- Confirming the pipeline of electrification works for Council facilities.

Current priorities

Current and future work is focused on implementation of Council's *Zero Carbon: Net Zero Emissions Plan for Council Operations 2023-2030* and the *Greater Bendigo Zero Emissions Roadmap* including:

- Delivery of a program of electrification works at Council facilities.
- Development of feasibility studies and detailed design for electrification of Council's larger facilities such as the Bendigo Library and Council's aquatic centres.
- Development of a fleet transition strategy as a part of the Fleet Asset Management Plan.
- Participation in the North Central CMA's Community Carbon local carbon offsets program.
- Development of a *Public Electric Vehicle Charging Framework and Implementation Plan* in collaboration with the Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA).
- Development of a solar farm feasibility study.
- Facilitation of discussions about a program to support low-income homes with energy efficiency works.
- Finalisation of the Loddon Mallee Zero Emissions Roadmap in collaboration with the Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance.

Council's corporate emissions

Figure 1 – Council's corporate emissions **including** landfill.

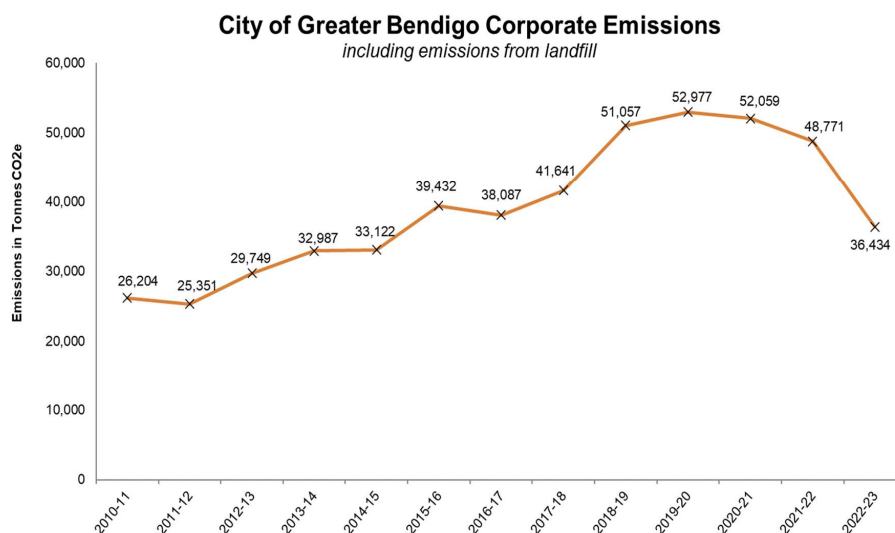
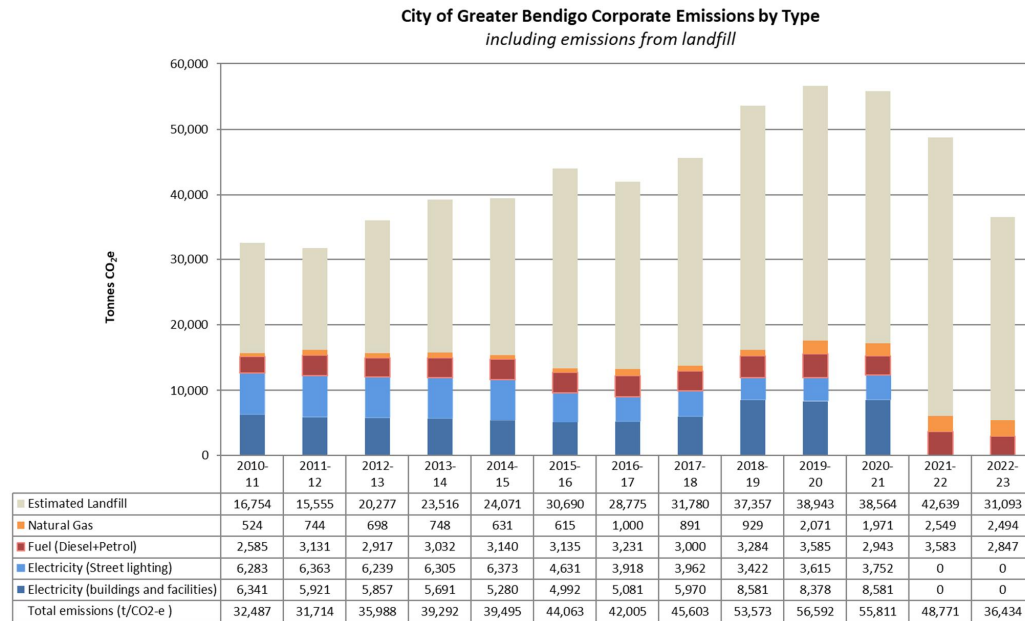
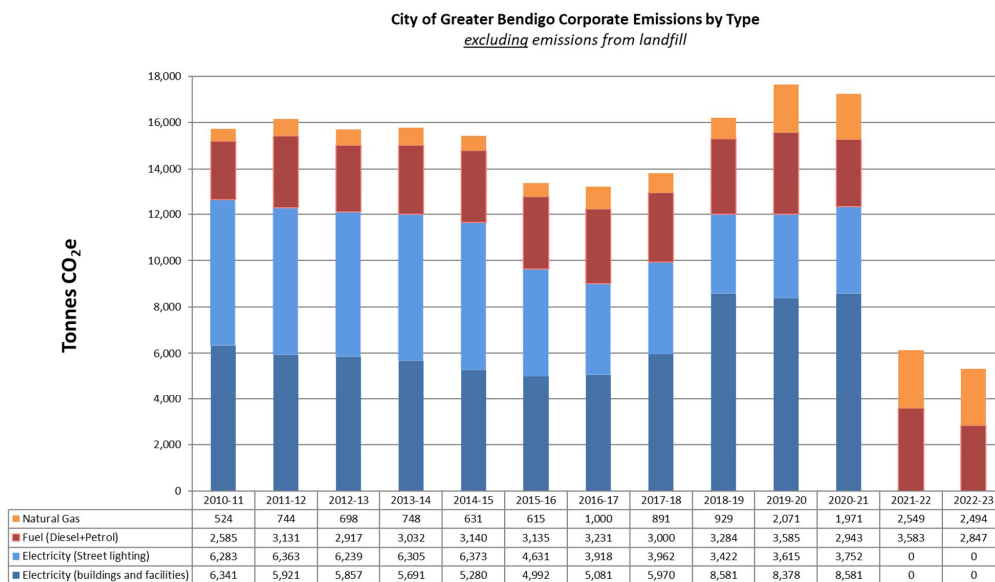
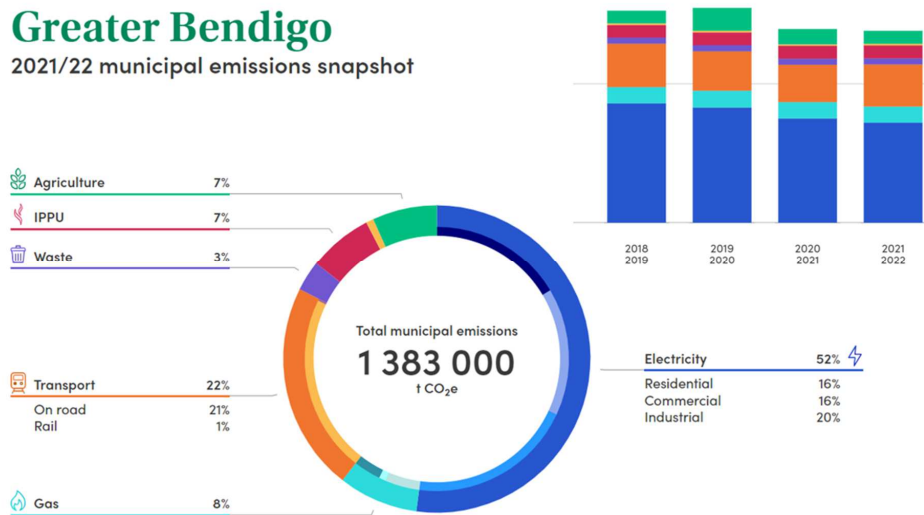


Figure 2 – Council's corporate emissions *including* landfill.**Figure 3 – Council's corporate emissions *excluding* landfill.**

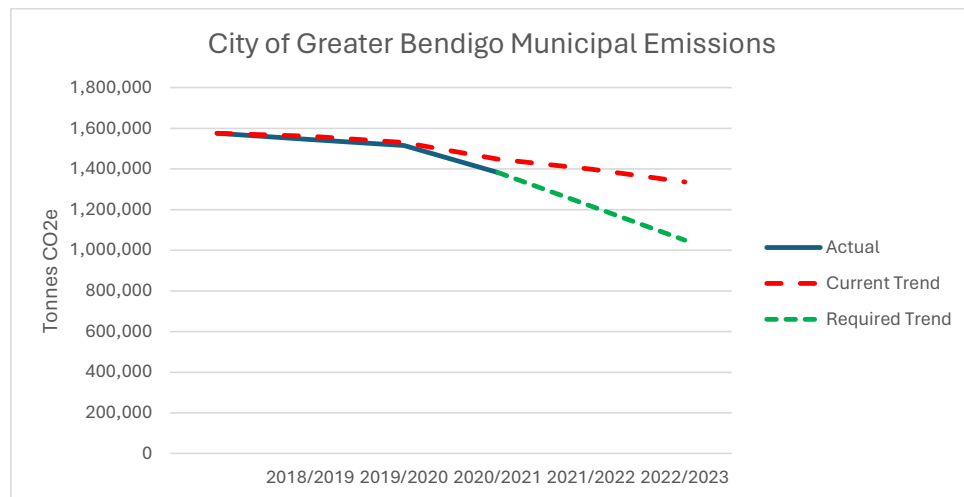
Community emissions

Figure 4 – City of Greater Bendigo municipal emissions by source

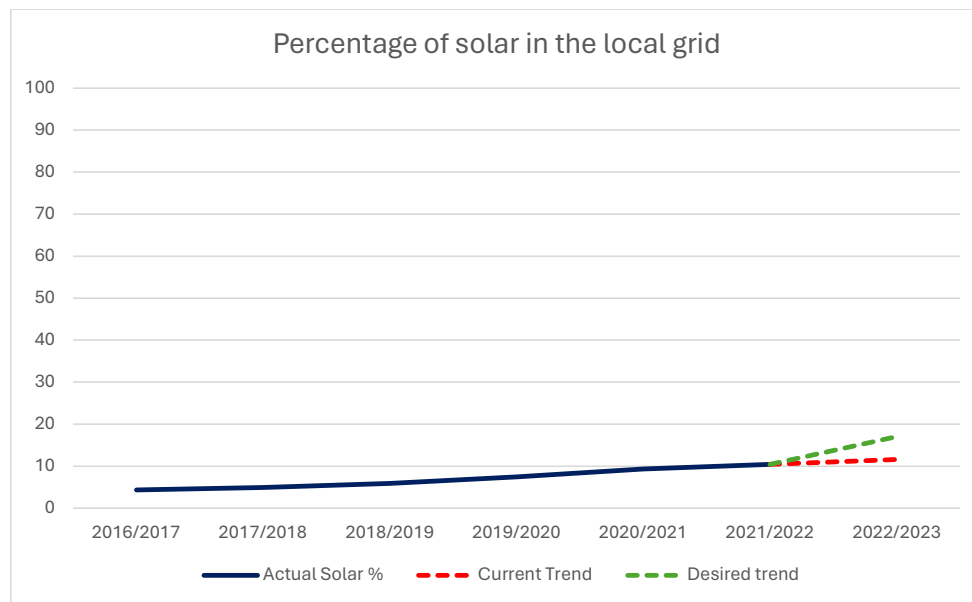


Source: Snapshot tool

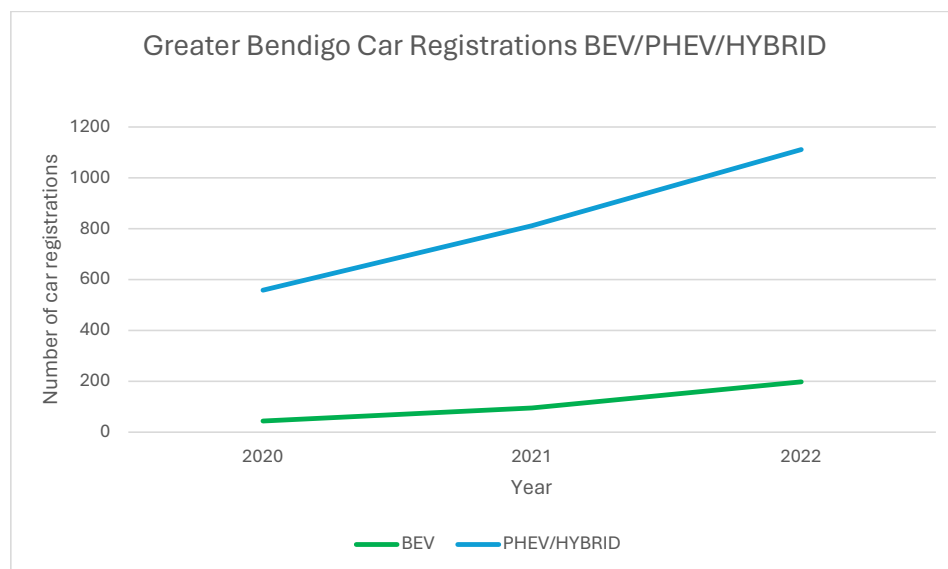
Figure 5 – City of Greater Bendigo municipal emissions forecasts



Source: Snapshot tool

Figure 6 – City of Greater Bendigo percentage of solar in the grid

Source: Powercor

Figure 7: City of Greater Bendigo car EV, PHEV and Hybrid registrations

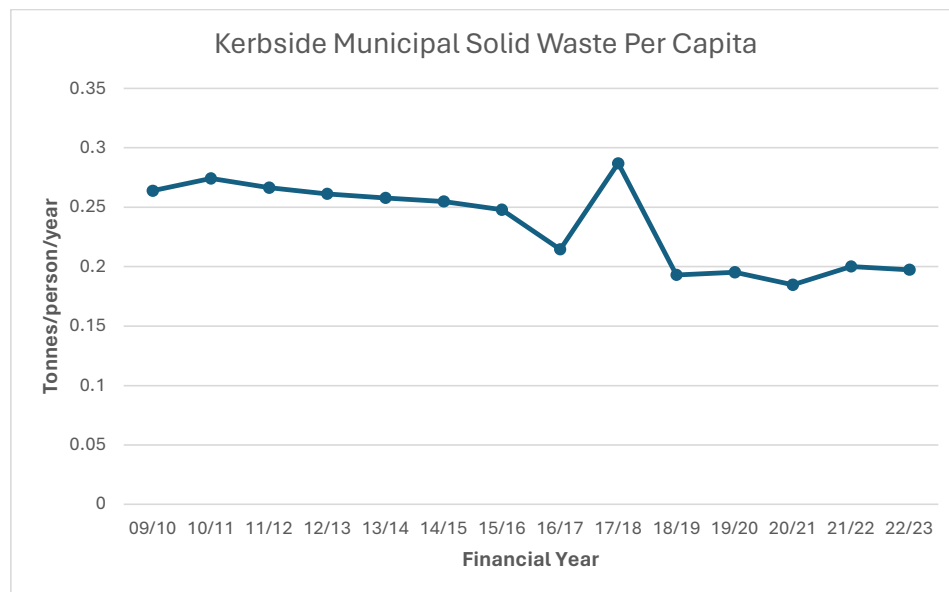
Source: Australian Automobile Association

Theme 3: Circular Economy

Achievements 2022/23

- From the 21/22 reporting year the City has seen a reduction in 22/23 of 12,652 of material received at the Eaglehawk Landfill. This includes all waste from residential and commercial drop off at the site, kerbside collection (not including recycling), and general waste collected from the City's three operated transfer stations.
- Reduction in the kerbside municipal solid waste per capita from 0.2 tonnes per person to 0.19 tonnes per person
- Establishment of free soft plastic drop off points at Strathfieldsaye, Goornong and Heathcote transfer stations, and the Eaglehawk Recycle Shop.
- As of May 2023, Greater Bendigo residents can recycle their unwanted textiles for free at new drop off points located at the Strathfieldsaye, Heathcote and Goornong Transfer Stations. Textiles accepted include clean clothing such as pants, skirts, jackets etc and linen items such as sheets, pillow-cases blankets, towels, cushions and pillows, doonas, pairs of shoes and material and yarn off-cuts.

Figure 8: Kerbside collection of waste sent to landfill per capita.



Source: EPA reporting data



Circular Economy Coordinator Scott Bryant and Transfer Station Manager Mick Aylett with the soft plastics recycling station established by the City of Greater Bendigo

Areas for improvement

- Data collection for different material and product use from Council owned operations.
- Use of reused and recycled content, products and materials in City operations and projects.
- Continued work in increasing diversion of organic waste from landfill from food generating commercial facilities.

Current and future work

- Continued review of long-term resource recovery planning such as Circular Economy Hubs.
- Continued engagement with the community and commercial industry about waste minimisation.
- Expansion of the organic collection to 5,500 rural households in November 2023
- Changing the collection frequency of household red general waste bins and green organics bins. General waste collections will move from weekly to fortnightly and organics bin collections will move from fortnightly to weekly in early 2024. The change is to increase the amount of organic food and other matter being diverted from landfill.

Theme 4: Active and Sustainable Transport

Achievements 2022/23

- Total of 18.5 km length of new footpaths constructed.
- Council funded a separate shared path of 1.6km length at Sheepwash Creek.
- Internal engagement to increase staff utilising active travel especially with the move to Galkangu and new facilities.
- Delivery of a Ride to Work Day event attended by 60 staff.

Council staff travel

In late September 2023 the City conducted a travel survey to assess how staff travel to work, and to understand the barriers to sustainable travel. The survey recorded 199 responses from City of Greater Bendigo staff. The key findings from the survey were:

- 17.5% of trips were via active transport and 4% via public transport.
- 76 staff travel 0 - 5 km to get to work, which is 38% of all trips. 36% of these trips were via active travel, biking or cycling and 56% of these trips are by car (this analysis did not include working from home days).
- 509 staff or 25% of trips were counted as a non-working day or working from home, saving on emissions from travel.



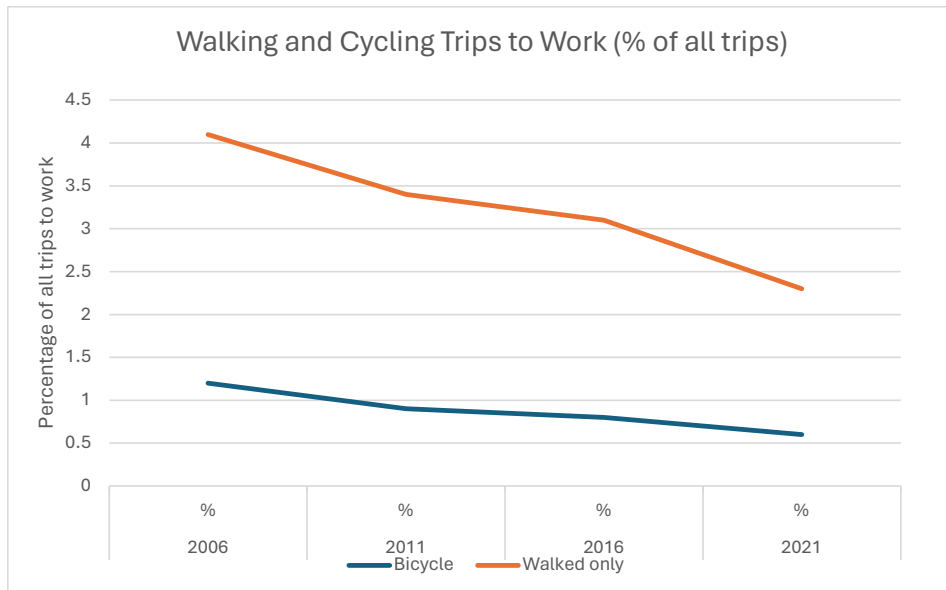
City of Greater Bendigo participating in national Ride and Walk to Work day in 2022.

Community travel

- Emissions from transport are the second highest source of emissions for the greater Bendigo community at 303,000 tCO₂e.
- The graphs below show an increase in the use of protected cycle paths across the municipality. Even so, at the same time there has been a decrease in active travel

commuting suggesting that the increase in use of shared trails has been primarily for recreation.

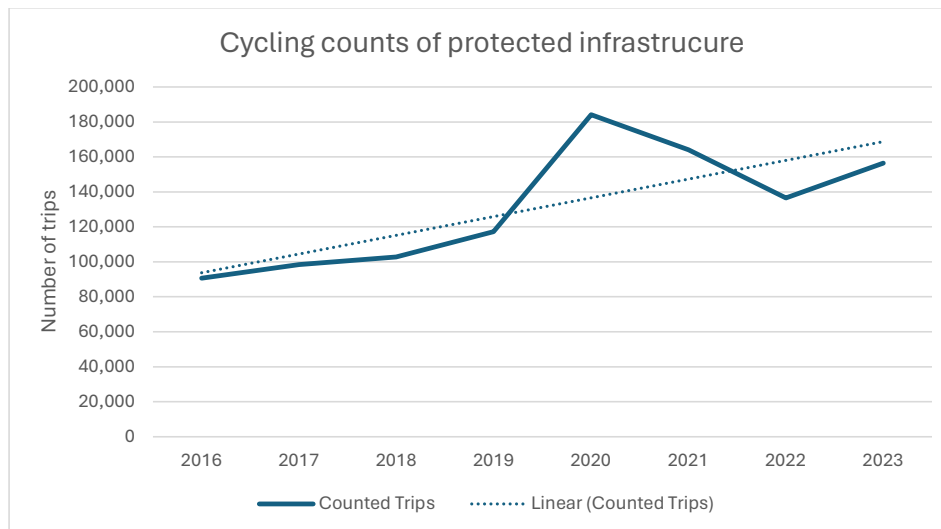
Figure 9: Journey to work by walking and cycling.



Source: ABS Census

Note: The decline in walking and cycling trips to work for 2021 aligns with the COVID pandemic when most people were working from home.

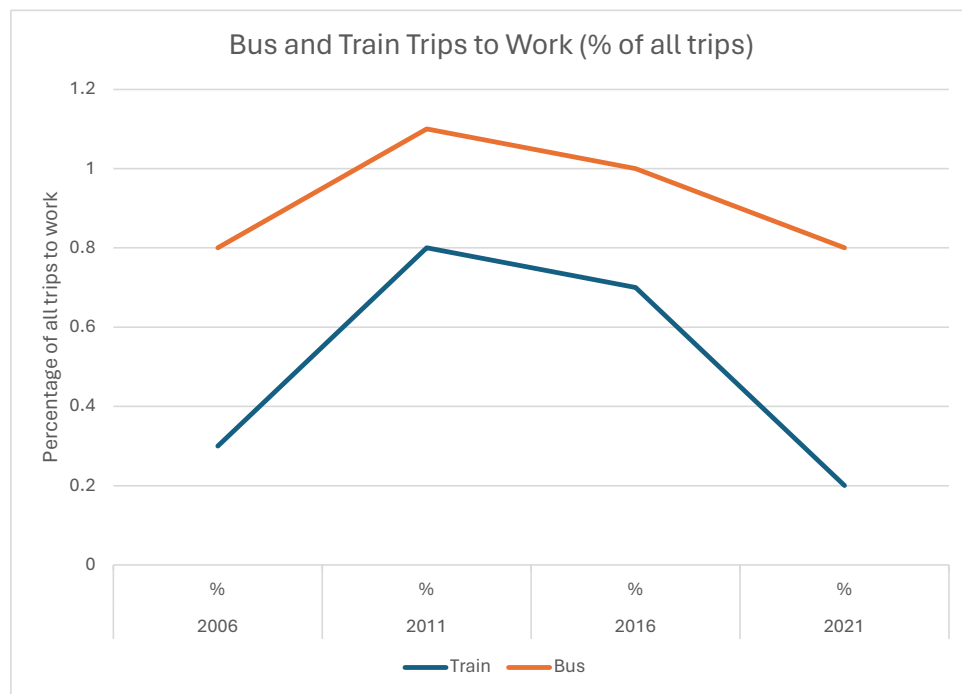
Figure 10: Use of off road shared rails by cyclists



Note 1: The data represents the number of trips counted by 4 embedded counters on Cashens Rd Okeefe Rail Trail, Hargreaves St Bendigo Creek Trail, Havlin St Back Creek Trail, Knight S Bendigo Creek Trail

Note 2: The increase in cycling counts in 2020 aligns with the COVID pandemic.

Figure 11: Journey to work by public transport



Source: ABS Census.

Note: The decline in bus and train trips aligns with the COVID 19 pandemic.

Areas for improvement

- Acceleration of delivery of walking and cycling infrastructure, particularly infrastructure that supports active travel commuting.
- Data collection related to staff and community modes of travel.

Current and future work

- Progressing development of a shared path along Bendigo Creek, often referred to as the “Low Line”. This shared path will create a cycling “highway” through the City, significantly increasing the safety, accessibility, and connectivity of Bendigo’s cycling network.
- Delivery of additional programs and events for staff in Galkangu (Bendigo GovHub) to support a mode shift to walking, cycling and public transport use.
- Development of a *Zero Emissions Transport Framework and Implementation Plan* co-funded by the Victorian Government.

Theme 5: Sustainable Food Systems

Achievements 2022/23

- Approximately 168 Greater Bendigo landholders participated in the Healthy Landscapes: Practical Regenerative Agricultural Communities Program which included 13 property visits, 2 discussion groups and 3 field days.
- 3 schools participated in a kitchen garden program.
- 70 household or community gardens were registered in the City with Grow it Local.

Areas for improvement

- Identifying and progressing projects that support broad food system changes in terms of local food production and reduced emissions from agriculture and food manufacturing.
- Increasing support for sustainable land management outcomes across the City's rural land.

Current and future work

- Implementation of a sustainable land management program to complement the existing Healthy Landscapes program, including the Rural Regeneration Grants.
- Continued implementation of Council's *Food Systems Strategy*.
- Establishing the Healthy Kids Advisor initiative to offer sponsored membership options for schools to join the kitchen garden program across the municipality.



Participants attending the field day, looking at preparation for a multi species cover crop. The presenter mentioned the paddock was browned out to break the life cycle of red legged earth mite before the plants commence growing.

Theme 6: Water Sensitive Bendigo

Achievements 2022/23

- Continued administration of the Water Sensitive Bendigo Partnership
- Progression of the Bendigo Creek Instream Works project.

Areas for improvement

- The strategic collection of water quality data.
- Establishing a Water Monitoring Program in collaboration with other agencies that enables the strategic and consistent collection of water quality data across the municipality's catchments.
- Reducing potable water use from Council operations.

Current and future work

- Review of the Water Sensitive Bendigo Partnership priorities and implementation plan.
- Development of a Stormwater Management Strategy that sets out priority interventions that will improve water quality and asset management.
- Continued implementation of the Reimagining Bendigo Creek Plan in collaboration with key stakeholders, including Djandak.
- Finalisation of the Stormwater Developer Contributions Offsets Policy.
- Development of a Water Quality Monitoring Plan in collaboration with NCCMA.

Flagship Projects

Be the Change

The purpose of the Be the Change flagship project is to reduce the environmental footprint of the organisation through changes to staff behaviour and work practices. The Climate Change and Environment Unit recently prepared the 'Be the Change Action Plan' which sets out a prioritised program of actions to achieve this goal.

An Action Plan was finalised in late 2022 to guide and identify actions staff wanted to see across the City. **27 workshops** were held with departments across Council at **11 different sites**. Each team's achievements and ideas were collected and synthesised and prioritised through a staff survey.

A series of 'lunch and learns' commenced in March 2023 to update the organisation on the Action Plan and will focus on the action areas outlined above. The initial lunch and learns reached around 60 staff on the following topics:

- What goes in, what bin?
- How to keep warm in winter
- Learn more about walking or riding to work.

Greater Bendigo Climate Collaboration

The Greater Bendigo Climate Collaboration has hit the ground running this year, including developing the *Greater Bendigo Zero Emission Roadmap* and hosting a Climate Summit in May.

The *Greater Bendigo Zero Emissions Roadmap* brought together stakeholders from across the City to identify project and advocacy initiatives to achieve zero emissions by 2030. The development of the Roadmap including input from over 1,500 people.

The Climate Summit at Ulumbarra Theatre was attended by approximately 670 people. Highlights included:

- Natasha Mitchell from ABC Radio National's Big Ideas hosting a debate about how regional cities can revolutionise transport systems for zero emissions and make them more liveable, healthy and effective.
- An insightful panel discussion about climate justice that covered gender, health, energy poverty and place-based change.
- Performances and presentations by young people from across Bendigo.
- Bendigo's religious and interfaith leaders signed a statement in support of the Greater Bendigo Zero Emissions Roadmap.
- A special screening of Damon Gameau's Regenerating Australia movie.
- Electrify Everything guru Saul Griffith stole the show encouraging people to act now and to advocate for greater investment at all levels of government to electrify everything.
- 27 stallholders, ranging from energy-efficient building designers to home energy assessors, an e-bike retailer, mending circle, solar system installers and others offered climate-friendly products and services.

Reimagining Bendigo Creek

Over 2022/23 and until the time of reporting Council has progressed the Bendigo Instream Works waterway restoration project which will rehabilitate the section of Bendigo Creek between Weeroona Avenue and the train line. Development of a Reimagining Bendigo Creek Implementation Plan is also underway in collaboration with Djandak.

Showcase Sustainable Developments

The City is encouraging its residents to implement sustainable design through the Elevating ESD planning Scheme Amendment and Sustainable Subdivision Framework.

Building a Circular Greater Bendigo

A number of steps have been taken to progress towards a Circular Greater Bendigo. These were recognised by the 2022 Premier's Sustainability Awards. The City was one of 12 award winners taking out the Industry Leader Award for circular economy innovation.

Healing Country Together

Council is working with DJAARA and Djandak on development of a coordinated program of waterway restoration works focusing on Bendigo Creek with the intent to support Djandak to progressively take the lead with delivery according to their resources and capacity. Discussions are also continuing about joint management opportunities at other sites with natural and cultural values.

Appendix 1: Table of goals and indicators 2022/2023

CC&E Strategy Goal	Indicator	2026 Target or trend	2021/22 Figure	2022/23 Figure	Status (on track, not on track)
1. Biodiversity					
Goal A. Council projects regenerate landscapes and ecosystems Goal B. Native habitat and areas of important biodiversity are protected for future generations	General Habitat Units of native vegetation removed as a result of Council operations*.	150% net increase in biodiversity value based on the General Habitat Score of the offset compared to the vegetation removed.	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported in future years.
	Total General Habitat Score of native vegetation offsets secured on Council managed land to compensate for removals*	Matches losses	2.02	.50	On track
	Ha of native vegetation removed from Council operations*	Declining	5.337 hectares	1.648 hectares	On track
	# medium and large trees removed from Council operations*	Declining	74	26	On track
	*Includes permitted and exempted removal under the planning scheme				
	Ha weed control on Council managed land.	N/A	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported in future years.
	% of Council managed Natural Reserves subject to weed control	Declining	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported in future years.
	Ha revegetation on Council managed land.	N/A	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported in future years.

CC&E Strategy Goal	Indicator	2026 Target or trend	2021/22 Figure	2022/23 Figure	Status (on track, not on track)
	Ha of enhancement plantings on Council managed land.	N/A	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported in future years
	Habitat quality / condition scores for selected Council managed natural reserves	Baseline assessments complete	NA	NA	To be reported on from 23/24
	Application of environmental overlays where needed	Completion of the review of environmental planning overlays	Review process commenced.	Review process commenced.	On track
	# cats brought in to BARC	Declining	1,544	1,676	Not on track
	# cats and foxes sighted in Council reserves.	Declining	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported on from 23/24
	# properties accessing the rate reduction for Trust for Nature covenants.	Increasing	52	54	On Track
	Number and status of endangered species in the City listed under the FFG or EPBC Acts	No increase in number or status of listed species	Data not collected for 22/23	Data not collected for 22/23	To be reported on from 23/24
Goal C. Connected and flourishing urban and rural landscapes and ecosystems	Presence and abundance of indicator species, including fish	Increase from baseline condition assessment at each Council managed natural reserve	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported on from 23/24
Goal E. Respectful and effective partnerships with Traditional Owners to regenerate ecosystems	Number of "significant roadsides"	Increase from last survey in 2009	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported on from 24/25
	# reserves managed by Traditional Owners	Two additional reserves (from 2021 baseline)	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported on from 23/24
	Number of disconnected patches of native vegetation over 20ha in area.	Declining	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported on from 23/24

CC&E Strategy Goal	Indicator	2026 Target or trend	2021/22 Figure	2022/23 Figure	Status (on track, not on track)
Goal C. Connected and flourishing urban and rural landscapes and ecosystems	% tree cover in urban areas	23% increase from 2019 baseline	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported on from 23/24
	% tree cover across Greater Bendigo	Increasing	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported on from 23/24
Goal D. Strong community connection to, awareness of and care of our ecosystems and biodiversity	# attendees at environment events (Council run events only until additional data is available)	Increasing	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported on from 23/24
	# new participants at environment events	Increasing	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported on from 23/24
	# collaborative projects underway.	N/A - Relevant collaborations underway	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported on from 23/24
	# people who are members of Landcare or Friends groups	Increasing	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported on from 23/24
	# Number of school programs/events on biodiversity	Increasing	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported on from 23/24
	# advocacy submissions, letters and other initiatives		Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported on from 23/24
2. Zero Carbon					
Goal F: Net zero carbon from Council operations by 2030	CO2e emissions from Council operations, broken up by scope and source	Declining	48,771	36,434	On track
	% of Council facilities which are all electric	60%	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported on from 23/24
	% of Council energy use from renewable energy, gas and LPG.	Declining	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported on from 23/24

CC&E Strategy Goal	Indicator	2026 Target or trend	2021/22 Figure	2022/23 Figure	Status (on track, not on track)
	Litres diesel and petrol use from Council fleet and plant	Declining	3,585	2,847	On track
	# and % of passenger electric vehicles in Council's fleet	35%	25 19.70%	32 25.02%	On track
	# and % of heavy vehicles and plant which are zero emissions	5	3 1.24%	6 2.49%	On track
	% of Council funds invested in financial institutions that do not lend to fossil fuel industries, as of June each year	60%	TBA	45.67%	On track
	% of the City's 2030 residual carbon emissions that will be offset by biodiverse revegetation projects established through the NCCMA's Community Carbon	5%	Project not commenced	Project not commenced	To be reported on from 24/25
#Goal G: Zero carbon across Greater Bendigo community by 2030	tCO2e emissions for the City	Declining	138,400	Not yet available	On track
	% of households with rooftop solar	40%	27%	1,358 units were installed	On track
	% of commercial buildings with rooftop solar	Increasing	Data not yet available	Data not yet available	N/A
	% of local solar energy in the local distribution network in CoGB	Increasing	10.4%	Not yet available	On Track
	# business who participate in Council's business emissions reduction program	Increasing	Project not commenced	Project not commenced	To be reported on from 23/24
	# of electric hot water units installed to replace gas since 1 Jan 2018	Increasing	N/A	1,410	On track
	# of energy efficient split systems installed since 1 Jan 2018	Increasing	Data not yet available	Data not yet available	To be reported on from 23/24
	# of Victorian energy certificates created from appliance upgrades.	Increasing	Data not yet available	Data not yet available	To be reported on from 23/24
	# attendees at climate change related workshops, webinars and events	Increasing	Data not collected	~ 900	On track

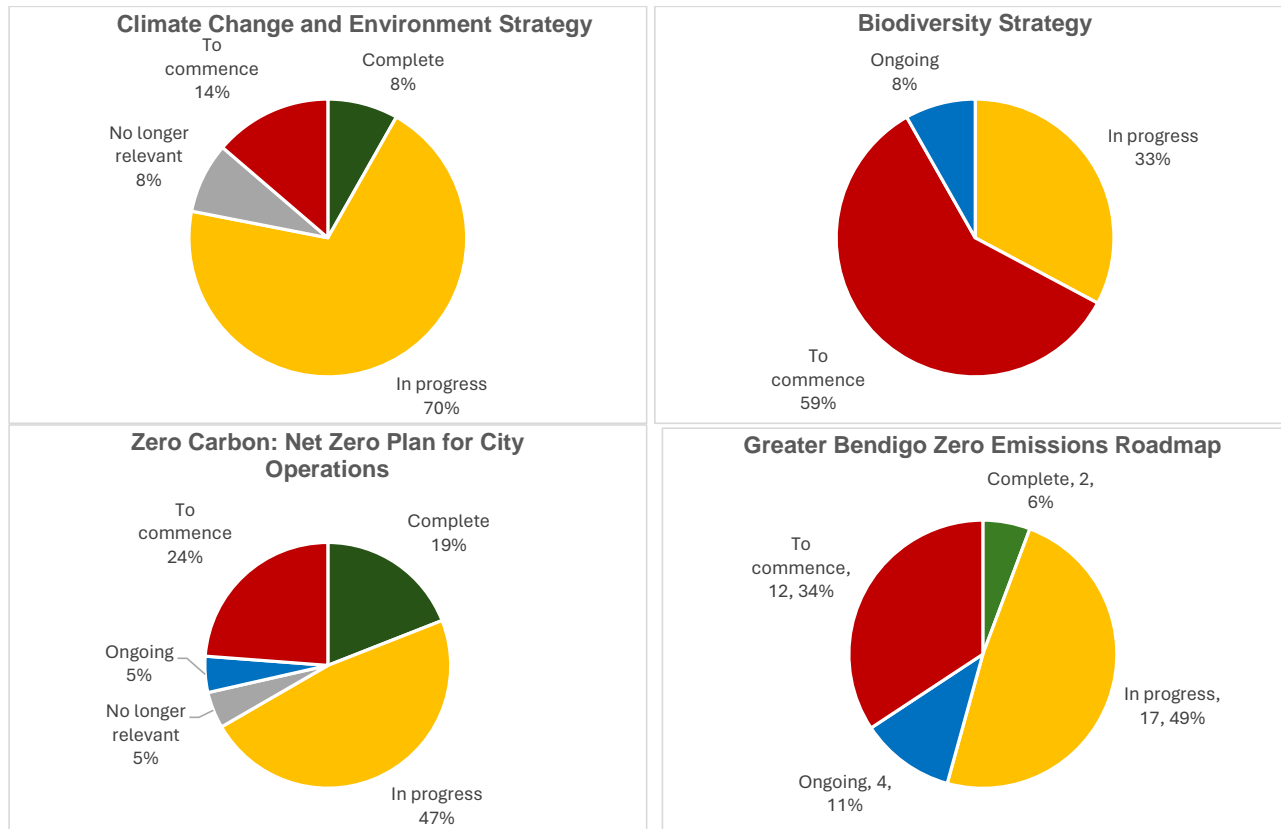
CC&E Strategy Goal	Indicator	2026 Target or trend	2021/22 Figure	2022/23 Figure	Status (on track, not on track)
3. Circular Economy					
Goal H: Zero recoverable waste from Council operations	Tonnes of waste collected across all waste streams from Council facilities	35% reduction from 2020 baseline year	1,689 tonnes	1,787 tonnes	Not on track
	% of recoverable waste from Council facilities diverted from landfill (or contamination rate)	Increasing	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported on from 23/24
Goal I: A well-established circular economy with zero recoverable waste to landfill	Tonnes of waste collected across all waste streams from the community per capita.	Decreasing	0.6806	0.57	On Track
	% of recoverable waste diverted from landfill (or contamination rate)	72%	50.5%	52%	On Track
4. Transport					
Goal J: Council staff use active, public and low carbon transport	% of staff trips to work by walking, cycling, carpooling or public transport	20%	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported on from 23/24
Goal K: Greater Bendigo has a safe and well connected active transport network	Km of new footpaths constructed (developer and Council funded)	Increasing	13km	18.5km	On Track
	# footpath projects completed.	5 per year = 15 between 1 July 2023 and 30 June 2026	6	4	Not on track
	Km of new separated / protected cycling lanes constructed	Increasing	NA	1.6km	On Track
	Km of new on-road cycling lanes installed	Increasing	Data not collected	Data not collected	To be reported on from 23/24
	% of houses within 500m of separated / protected cycling network	Increasing	NA	65%	On Track
Goal L: Greater Bendigo community uses active, public and low carbon transport network	Overall Transport Emissions	Decreasing	303, 000	Not yet available	To be reported on from 23/24
	% of community who walk or cycle to work	Increasing	2.9%	Not yet available	Not on Track
	% of community who use public transport to get to work	Increasing	1%	Not yet available	Not on Track

CC&E Strategy Goal	Indicator	2026 Target or trend	2021/22 Figure	2022/23 Figure	Status (on track, not on track)
Goal M: Greater Bendigo has a safe and well connected active transport network	# cycling trips on separated / protected trails with counters	Increasing	136,439	156,336	On Track
	# cycling trips on on-road cycling lanes (commuter)	Increasing	NA	NA	To be reported from 23/24
	# pedestrian trips on shared trails	Increasing	50,041	Complete data not available	To be reported in future years
	# and % of vehicles registered in the City which are battery electric	Increasing	45 .05%	95 .11%	On track
	Car ownership data based on registrations	Decreasing	83684	86098	Not on Track
	Public transport use	Increasing	.2%	Data not yet available	To be reported in future years
5. Sustainable Food Systems					
Goal N: Council is a leader in sustainable food procurement, practices and policy	No data available.	NA	NA	NA	NA
Goal O: Sustainable food production systems are viable, resource efficient and regenerate natural ecosystems	% of Sustainable Land Management Grant funds which are allocated	100%	Project not commenced	Project not commenced	To be reported from 23/24
	Number of grant recipients who implement additional sustainable land management changes on their properties	50%	Project not commenced	Project not commenced	To be reported from 23/24
	# of farm rated properties that have participated in the Healthy Landscapes or a similar extension program	50	~90	~168	On Track
Goal P: Communities are aware of the resources required to produce food and know how they can influence the food system	# schools delivering a kitchen garden program (e.g. Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program)	Increasing	Data not collected	3	On Track
	# patches registered in the City with Grow it Local	Increasing	Data not collected	70 registered patches	On Track

CC&E Strategy Goal	Indicator	2026 Target or trend	2021/22 Figure	2022/23 Figure	Status (on track, not on track)
Goal O: Enable Traditional Owners to grow and harvest indigenous food and fibre plants	No data available.	NA	NA	NA	NA
6. Water					
Goal R: Council operations are water efficient and utilise diverse water supplies	ML of potable, recycled and rural water used in Council facilities	3% reduction in potable water use from 2016 baseline (307ML)	297 ML potable water used	299 ML	Not on Track
Goal S: Flood risk in Greater Bendigo is reduced through flood mitigation infrastructure and planning	Implementation of the following flood mitigation projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Racecourse Creek Levy Bendigo Creek Levy (Howard St to Leans Rd) Total Flood Warning System Crusoe Reservoir Flood Mitigation Project 	<p>Racecourse Creek Levy and Bendigo Creek Levy (Howard St to Leans Rd): Detailed design complete.</p> <p>Total Flood Warning System: Implemented</p> <p>Crusoe Reservoir: Feasibility Study complete</p>	Data not available	<p>Racecourse Creek Levy – Detailed design complete. Advocacy to VLine required for works on railway. Subject to future construction funding bid external funding.</p> <p>Bendigo Creek Levy (Howard St to Leans Rd) – Detailed design, survey and project planning ongoing as a \$720,000 project. Anticipated to be completed in the next 12 months (design project)</p> <p>Total Flood Warning System – Not an active project, no funding</p>	On Track

CC&E Strategy Goal	Indicator	2026 Target or trend	2021/22 Figure	2022/23 Figure	Status (on track, not on track)
				Crusoe Reservoir Flood Mitigation Project – Not an active project, no funding	
Goal T: Investment in water projects is secured through collaborative partnerships	\$ leveraged for water initiatives through the Water Sensitive Bendigo partnership	\$0.5M	\$583,000 for Bendigo Creek	0	On track
Goal U: Waterways in Bendigo are healthy, connected and nurturing places	Mg/L Reactive Phosphorous measured at key sites	Declining	Data not collected	Data not collected	NA
Goal V: Waterways in Greater Bendigo are collectively managed by Traditional Owners, agencies and community	# waterway reserves co-managed by DJAARA or Taungurung	2	0	0	Not on track

Appendix 2: Status of Actions



Climate Change and Environment Strategy 2021-2026		
Biodiversity and Regeneration		
#	Actions	Status 2022/23
1.1	Develop an ecological baseline and mapping to determine the extent and condition of existing biodiversity and remnant vegetation in Greater Bendigo	To commence
1.2	Investigate and progress potential nature corridors between remnant vegetation, and commence developing partnerships and implementation arrangements to facilitate corridors	In progress
1.3	Investigate and develop stronger planning controls to protect native vegetation under the Planning Scheme	In progress
1.4	Implement the Sustainability and Environment recommendations of the 2019 Planning Scheme Review	In progress
1.5	Review and update the Rural Roadside Management Plan 2005	To commence
1.6	Implement a program to monitor and maintain Council's 300 environmentally sensitive water sensitive urban design assets	To commence
1.7	Employ an Environmental Education and Community Liaison Officer	Complete
1.8	Establish a Gardens for Wildlife program to support and empower the community to actively store biodiversity	To commence
1.9.1	Develop a local planning policy to increase tree canopy and vegetation cover in subdivision design	To commence
1.9.2	Develop a biodiversity management policy and investment plan	Complete
1.10	Implement the City's Invasive Plants and Animals Policy and Procedures	Complete
1.11	Establish a rare and threatened species collection and research program at the Bendigo Botanic Gardens	To commence
1.12	Join ICLEI's Cities with Nature program	No longer relevant
Zero carbon		
2.1	Purchase all electricity used by Council owned and operated facilities from 100% renewable energy via VECO (2022).	Complete
2.2	Support community groups operating from Council owned facilities to access 100% renewable energy via VECO.	In progress
2.3	Facilitate and plan for the transition to locally generated renewable energy power supply.	In progress
2.4	Install solar panels on Council owned buildings via Power it from the Rooftop program.	In progress
2.5	Progressively remove existing gas appliances from Council owned buildings and replace them with electric alternatives.	In progress
2.6	Develop a policy mandating no new gas connections installed in Council owned and operated buildings.	In progress
2.7	Progressively replace Council's lightweight vehicle fleet to be electric vehicles.	In progress
2.8	Investigate options and costs to transition Heavy Fleet away from fossil fuels	In progress
2.9	Install Electric Vehicle charging stations at selected Council sites powered by renewable energy.	In progress
2.10	Purchase offsets for other emissions to reach 2026 Target, including offsetting emissions from fleet, landfill and gas.	No longer relevant
2.11	Develop a shadow carbon price to better account carbon emissions in Council's investment decisions	No longer relevant
2.12	Raise awareness and support community groups to prepare for climate change and create zero carbon homes and lifestyles	In progress
2.13	Audit and retrofit Council owned buildings to maximise energy efficiency.	To commence

Climate Change and Environment Strategy 2021-2026		
2.14	Develop a baseline of energy intensity across all Council's assets and operations	No longer relevant
2.15	Partner with North Central Catchment Management Authority and other stakeholders to explore and develop local carbon offset schemes	In progress
2.16	Advocate in partnership with CVGA for upgrading inefficient street lights on major roads (cost shared lights)	In progress
Circular economy		
3.1	Evaluate options and implement solutions to address the closure of Eaglehawk Landfill	In progress
3.2	Revise design and procurement approaches for new and existing projects that require the use of reused and recycled products and ensure product recyclability at end of life.	In progress
3.3	Provide all Council facilities with access to organic recycling options	In progress
3.4	Implement the single use plastics policy	In progress
3.5	Reduce general waste to landfill by implementing the Circular Economy and Zero Waste Policy	In progress
3.6	Quantify the City's embodied carbon emissions (e.g. scope 3 emissions)	In progress
3.7	Engage with businesses and residents to support the adoption of reused and recycled materials	In progress
3.8	Establish 'Circular Economy Hubs' that act as physical material hubs for the drop-off and recirculation of materials and products from and for both commercial and residential activities	In progress
3.9	Support the establishment of Tool Libraries, Repair Cafes, Library of things to facilitate the repair and sharing of products and goods rather than the need to buy new	In progress
Sustainable and active transport		
4.1.1	Develop a 10 year walking and cycling infrastructure prioritisation plan	Complete
4.1.2	Develop an activation plan to increase community capacity to use active transport	In progress
4.1.3	Develop a budget bid to increase the funding for new footpaths	In progress
4.2	Design and construct the Mundy Street and Hargreaves Street separated cycleway infrastructure to enable better connections to the City Centre	In progress
4.3	Deliver priority works to reduce gaps and barriers within the walking and cycling network (including building underpasses and road crossings)	In progress
4.4	Deliver sustainable transport education program promoting low carbon modes of transport	To commence
4.5	Update the Environmentally Sustainable Design policy and deliver increased bicycle parking and change room facilities for new developments	In progress
4.6	Advocate for additional and more frequent public transport options that meet growing community needs	In progress
4.7	Advocate for bike sharing and car sharing programs	In progress
4.8	Advocate for the Greater Bendigo commuter rail service	In progress
4.9	Advocate for Public Transport to be powered by renewable or sustainable fuel sources	In progress
Sustainable food systems		
5.1	Implement Greater Bendigo's Food System Strategy	In progress

Climate Change and Environment Strategy 2021-2026		
5.2	Progress the City of Gastronomy, including promoting and supporting sustainable food production	In progress
5.3	Provide financial incentives for producers to transition to sustainable agricultural practices including applying for the sustainable agriculture rate	In progress
5.4	Improve the City's procurement practices by preferencing caterers who source locally produced food	In progress
5.5	Support schools and early education centres to incorporate sustainable food education into the curriculum, including kitchen garden programs	In progress
5.6	Enable Traditional Owners to grow and harvest traditional food and fibre plants	To commence
5.7	Support local businesses and the community to avoid food and packaging waste	To commence
5.8	Partner with North Central Catchment Management Authority and Landcare groups to promote and deliver sustainable agricultural practices	In progress
5.9	Advocate for greater incentives for primary producers to transition to regenerative / agro-ecological practices, including carbon sequestration	In progress
5.10	Advocate to State and Federal government to create more sustainable food systems	In progress
Water Sensitive Bendigo		
6.1	Develop a policy for the water quality reserve that advances Water Sensitive Urban Design outcomes for new developments and stormwater offsets	In progress
6.2	Develop the Central Bendigo and Heathcote flood mitigation studies	In progress
6.3	Evaluate and secure funding for highest priority flood mitigation options for Greater Bendigo	In progress
6.4	Partner with Coliban Water to install digital meters on Council's water connections and implement water efficiency measures	In progress
6.5	Investigate and evaluate alternative water supply infrastructure for Council's assets	In progress
6.6	Develop a policy to promote alternative water supply options (includes stormwater harvesting) for new sporting fields and recreational reserves	No longer relevant
6.7	Implement Council's Domestic Wastewater Management Strategy	In progress
6.8	Facilitate the Water Sensitive Bendigo Partnership including shared decision making for integrated water management outcomes.	In progress
6.9	Support and facilitate relevant agencies to undertake water security planning including investigating alternative supply options	In progress
6.10	Advocate for and enable Traditional Owners to heal Country and actively manage waterways	In progress
6.11	Partner with North Central Catchment Management Authority to implement the Waterwatch program including citizen science program for Bendigo Creek	In progress
6.12	Partner with DELWP to identify a long-term solution for the Bendigo Groundwater project	Complete
6.13	Partner with Coliban Water to improve household and business water use efficiency	No longer relevant
6.14	Advocate for investment for priority water initiatives via the Water Sensitive Bendigo Partnership & Reimagining Bendigo Creek Prospectus	In progress
Reimagining Bendigo Creek		

Climate Change and Environment Strategy 2021-2026		
7.1	Finalise and implement the integrated water quality monitoring plan for Bendigo Creek	No longer relevant
7.2	Commence creating chain of ponds on Bendigo Creek	In progress
7.2.1	Obtain approvals and funding for instream works downstream of Kings Bridge	In progress
7.2.2	Construct instream works downstream of Kings Bridge	In progress
7.2.3	Establish and maintain instream works downstream of Kings Bridge	In progress
7.3	Establish priority constructed wetlands	To commence
7.3.1	Obtain & funding approvals for Long Gully constructed wetlands (stage 1)	To commence
7.3.2	Construct Long Gully constructed wetlands (stage 1)	To commence
7.3.3	Establish and maintain Long Gully constructed wetlands (stage 1)	To commence
7.3.4	Design and seek approvals for later stages of the Long Gully constructed wetlands	To commence
7.4	Investigate and prioritise channelised sections of the urban creeks to renaturalise	To commence
7.4.1	Design and seek approvals for priority renaturalisation sections	To commence
7.5	Assess the catchment and identify potential interventions to reduce sediment and retain water in the landscape	To commence
7.6	Co-develop a video with Dja Dja Wurrung to celebrate the creek's heritage and future aspirations	To commence
7.7	Plan cycling and walking infrastructure along the creek lines including low line.	In progress
7.7.1	Obtain funding to undertake design and approvals for the Low Line trail	In progress
7.7.2	Plan and detailed design of the low line trail from Golden Square to Lake Weeroona	In progress
7.7.3	Obtain approvals and funding for the low line trail from Golden Square to Lake Weeroona	In progress
7.7.4	Construct the low line trail from Golden Square to Lake Weeroona	To commence
Healing Country Together		
8.1	Facilitate a co-design process with Taungurung and Djaara, Council and relevant agencies to identify public land of interest, management aspirations, opportunities to foster community stewardship	To commence
8.2	Partner with communities, Traditional Owners, Parks Victoria, DELWP and NCCMA to identify opportunities to better connect people with natural places through regeneration	To commence
8.3	Support community groups, agencies, Taungurung and Dja Dja Wurrung to connect with nature and do healing works on Country	In progress
8.4	Restore and nurture Country by planting native species, including bush tucker and medicine plant species	In progress
8.5	Monitor the current condition of waterways, landscapes, flora and fauna using both Western Science and Traditional Ecological Knowledge	To commence
Be the Change		
9.1	Develop a project plan including communications and engagement approach to implement 'Be the Change'	Complete
9.1.1	Develop and deliver an internal training program to raise awareness and drive behaviour change to deliver goals of Climate Change and Environment Strategy	In progress

Climate Change and Environment Strategy 2021-2026		
9.1.2	Collaborate with 'Change Champs' to deliver drive behaviour change activities to deliver goals of Climate Change and Environment Strategy	In progress
9.2	Develop a capability framework for climate change and environmental responsibilities	No longer relevant
9.2.1	Develop climate change and environment related Key Performance Indicators for relevant Directors and Managers	No longer relevant
9.2.2	Develop standard Key Performance Indicators that progress climate change and environment actions to be included in all performance development plans	No longer relevant
9.3	Review budget decision making principles and assessment metrics to increase climate change considerations in investment decisions	In progress
9.4	Review procurement assessment metrics to increase climate change considerations in purchasing decisions	In progress
9.5	Audit and assess Council's buildings and infrastructure from climate resilience, climate adaptation and sustainability perspectives	To commence
9.6	Undertake a climate risk and vulnerability assessment for all Council buildings and infrastructure and identify necessary adaptation actions.	To commence
9.7	Plan, design and implement buildings and infrastructure retrofits	To commence
9.8	Assess Council's systems and policies to identify improvements and efficiencies in line with the goals of this strategy	Complete
The Greater Bendigo Climate Collaboration		
10.1	Secure financial partners to support the Greater Bendigo Climate collaboration	Complete
10.2	Develop project approach including education program, monitoring and evaluation and project governance	Complete
10.3	Facilitate 1000 households & 100 businesses to develop zero carbon plans	No longer relevant
10.4	Facilitate Greater Bendigo's sectors of the economy to co-design and deliver city-scale projects that will achieve zero carbon economy	In progress
10.5	Host a Greater Bendigo Climate Summit	Complete
10.6	Partner with Loddon Campaspe regional councils to collectively design and advocate for the top ten regional projects to support zero carbon	In progress
Showcase Sustainable Developments		
11.1	Advocate for the Big Housing Build partners, affordable housing providers, developers and government agencies to deliver environmentally sustainable housing projects	In progress
11.2	Investigate and progress partnership opportunities for the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct to create a framework for an environmentally sustainable industrial estate	In progress
11.3	Facilitate a co-design approach to the planning and design of the identified projects	In progress
11.4	Develop a manual to guide the design and construction of Environmental Sustainable Developments	To commence
Foundational actions		

<i>Climate Change and Environment Strategy 2021-2026</i>		
12.1	Establish monitoring arrangements so each indicator is embedded within corporate monitoring systems	In progress
12.2	Establish the working group to implement the Strategy	No longer relevant
12.3	Complete OPEX bid to secure adequate resources for the Strategy's implementation	In progress
12.4	Complete annual report	Complete
12.5	Undertake mid-term evaluation of strategy implementation in 2023	In progress
12.6	Develop a communications and engagement plan to implement the strategy	No longer relevant

Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan		
#	Actions	Status 2022/23
BDS 1.1	Review the planning scheme provisions relating to biodiversity in the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme (GBPS). This should include a review of the effectiveness of current planning policies and overlays and implementation of necessary changes, considering (amongst other things): • Potential policy gaps • Protecting urban vegetation • The preliminary 'Potential Biolink Areas' mapping (Fig. 17) and proposed habitat connectivity plan Action 3.1) • The degree to which the Urban Forest Interface Policy achieves its goals.	In progress
BDS 1.2	Investigate all available options for establishing an Environmental Planner position responsible for providing internal and external education, advice and assessments of planning applications and projects which have environmental impacts, including compliance for native vegetation removal.	In progress
BDS 1.3	Ensure land management plans are submitted with planning permit applications in the farming zone (FZ) and rural conservation zone (RCZ) that propose effective actions that support biodiversity values and limit impacts to them.	To commence
BDS 1.4	In City's Managed Growth Strategy, direct new development toward areas that avoid unacceptable biodiversity outcomes.	In progress
BDS 1.5	Explore development of Biodiversity Sensitive Urban Design (BSUD) principles for Greater Bendigo.	To commence
BDS 1.6	Review the City's implementation of planning provisions related to native vegetation removal, including compliance processes and the City's in-house native vegetation offsets program.	In progress
BDS 1.7	Continue to provide input into Environmental Effects Statements as appropriate to minimise and manage biodiversity impacts from mining and other activities.	Ongoing
BDS 1.8	Ensure large native trees are properly protected through the GBPS or local laws, potentially through the implementation and promotion of a Significant Tree Register. Investigate integration of data collected in the Large Old Tree Project across Greater Bendigo.	To commence
BDS 1.9	Conduct regular condition / health assessments of native vegetation in City managed land and along waterways, potentially incorporating citizen scientists, and report the outcomes in City's Annual Environment Report.	To commence
BDS 1.10	Support the establishment of a threatened plant collection at Bendigo Botanic Gardens.	To commence
BDS 1.11	Increase awareness of the City's domestic cat policy (i.e., 24 hr curfew) and ensure adequate enforcement to protect native wildlife.	In progress
BDS 1.12	Develop an agreed service level for water levels in City managed waterbodies (e.g., Crusoe Reservoir) to best protect native species and processes while balancing the community's desire for passive recreation.	To commence
BDS 1.13	When developing Environment Management Plans for City managed reserves, work with Traditional Owners, agencies, and the community to support and strengthen strategic and coordinated pest plant and animal control programs across land tenures in the vicinity.	Ongoing
BDS 1.14	Review approval processes for biodiversity enhancement projects that trigger permit applications under the GBPS and explore opportunities to streamline and simplify it.	To commence
BDS 1.15	Ensure precinct planning undertaken as part of Greening Greater Bendigo adequately promotes the retention and connection of native vegetation to support urban biodiversity.	Ongoing
BDS 1.16	Continue to collaborate with other local government areas including the Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE) to incorporate native vegetation and biodiversity outcomes into new developments and subdivisions	In progress

Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan		
	via planning scheme mechanisms including: • Elevating Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) targets Planning Scheme Amendment and • Advancing the Sustainable Subdivisions Framework documentation for Planning Scheme Amendment consideration	
BDS 1.17	Collaborate with groups and agencies to determine the completeness and adequacy of existing biodiversity data, extend existing programs across Greater Bendigo (e.g., nestboxes, bird surveys, waterbugs, large 'hero' trees project), and identify additional monitoring and evaluation needs.	To commence
BDS 1.18	Establish a monitoring program that is representative, robust, and strategic in the species and communities it monitors closely to measure against actions taken to protect and enhance biodiversity and biocultural values.	To commence
BDS 1.19	Review current enforcement procedures for infringements related to biodiversity and identify potential pathways to increase compliance (e.g., vegetation removal, firewood collection, rubbish dumping and pollution).	To commence
BDS 1.20	Reduce the number of displaced, injured and killed wildlife through human activities (e.g., vehicle strikes) through: • Partnering with Wildlife Victoria, wildlife rescue and care agencies, other councils and transport authorities on education and mitigation programs • Assisting in reviewing the Greater Bendigo Road Safety Action Plan (as necessary) to incorporate wildlife strikes.	In progress
BDS 2.1	Conduct a service review of the City's natural reserve management functions taking into account implementation of this strategy and future environmental management plans.	To commence
BDS 2.2	Work with Traditional Owners, agencies, groups and the community to develop and implement Environmental Management Plans / Action Plans for City managed nature reserves, including an assessment of conservation values and threats and a set of actions to enhance their natural, recreation and cultural values, including water quality and flood and erosion control. Align these with Traditional Owner rights, obligations, and priorities. Prioritise plans for: • Kennington Reservoir • Crusoe Reservoir • Crosbie Regenerative Forest • Huntly Regenerative Forest • Victoria Hill	In progress
BDS 2.3	Work with Traditional Owners, agencies, groups (particularly Landcare) and the community to develop and implement waterway restoration plans that promote biodiversity and cultural values and supports the rights and obligations of first nations peoples (e.g., restoring chain-of-ponds). Prioritise a review the Implementation Plan for Reimagining Bendigo Creek to help inform the sequencing and scheduling of conservation works.	In progress
BDS 2.4	Continue to conduct strategic pest plant and animal management works within City managed reserves in accordance with the requirements of the CALP Act, the City's Invasive Plants and Animals Policy and Procedure and any site-specific management plans.	Ongoing
BDS 2.5	Complete an audit of all City owned and managed nature reserves, ensuring each has been adequately classified according to their primary purpose.	To commence
BDS 2.6	Maximise opportunities to restore diverse groundcover and shrub vegetation on council owned and managed land and waterways and through council programs (e.g., Greening Greater Bendigo), including increasing populations of threatened plant species or communities and Traditional Owner priority species.	To commence
BDS 2.7	Support Djaara and Taungurung to increase connection to country and cultural practices (e.g., food and fibre plants, cultural burns), working towards sole management of public land where appropriate and partnering in stewardship across multiple land tenures where biodiversity values can also be enhanced through joint action.	Ongoing

Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan		
BDS 2.8	Increase populations of all species, with particular attention on threatened species and communities, on City managed land, through targeted habitat restoration, enhancement and monitoring of populations, in line with Traditional Owner, federal, state, and regional priorities.	In progress
BDS 2.9	Work with other local government areas, agencies, Traditional Owner Groups and commercial native nurseries to prepare a feasibility study for establishment of an additional native nursery and indigenous seed collection and propagation program, targeting locally rare species to increase genetic diversity, bolster resistance and resilience to climate change and meet growing demand for indigenous plants.	To commence
BDS 2.10	Increase and improve significant roadside vegetation across Greater Bendigo through strategic management. Review: • Strategic Directions Urban Roadside Vegetation Management 2011-2015 • Strategic Directions Rural Roadside Conservation 2011-2015 • Roadside Weed and Pest Animal Plan	To commence
BDS 2.11	Create a series of "Tiny Forests" on City managed land at key locations in urban areas and townships across Greater Bendigo that align with Djaara's Forest Gardening priorities to restore important native and cultural habitat and engage the community in their conservation value.	To commence
BDS 2.12	Support habitat restoration on private land by: • Promoting local carbon offset projects, including the program being developed by the North Central CMA • Connecting landholders with funding streams such as the Victorian Government's Bushbank Program and others as appropriate • Connecting landholders with Landcare and other groups • The City's Sustainable Land Management Grants program* • Applying for funding to implement the Habitat Connectivity Plan (Action 3.1). • Collaborating with Djaara to integrate actions from Galk-galk Dheekunya Forest Gardening Strategy 2022 -2034 *included in the 2023/24 Council budget	In progress
BDS 2.13	Increase participation of Bendigo landholders in the Healthy Landscapes project and seek to extend the program to the cropping and horticulture industries. Aim to include Djaara as a partner and to expand the program to other local government areas.	In progress
BDS 2.14	Increase the number of properties with conservation covenants, particularly in potential biolink areas, by actively promoting the City's applicable Bushcare Incentive rate rebate.	To commence
BDS 2.15	Explore options to support the current community run Common Myna control program.	To commence
BDS 2.16	Track the effectiveness of programs such as the Spring Plains Watershed Repair project and, if highly effective, support similar programs to restore ecological function at appropriate strategic sites.	To commence
BDS 2.17	Review the management plans for Crosbie and Huntly Regenerative Forestry programs with the aim of maximising biodiversity outcomes while achieving financial cobenefits from forestry products. Investigate opportunities to collaborate with Djaara to integrate Forest Gardening principles into the management of these sites.	In progress
BDS 2.18	Develop a planned burn policy with Traditional Owner Groups to enhance the natural and cultural values of City managed nature reserves and roadsides where appropriate and investigate the need for additional resources to deliver an ecological and cultural burn program.	To commence
BDS 2.19	Finalise preparation of a Storm Water Management Strategy that, amongst other things, aims to enhance the quality of water entering Greater Bendigo's creeks and rivers through sediment and pollution control.	In progress
BDS 3.1	Develop and implement a detailed 'Habitat Connectivity Plan' based on the Potential Biolink Areas Plan (Fig. 17) included in this strategy. The plan will be developed in partnership with Traditional Owners and land management agencies and	To commence

Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan		
	incorporate current conservation efforts, interrogate modelled biodiversity and cultural values (Fig. 16), build adaptive capacity to climate change, and engage local landholders to help create a series of biolinks to aid species diversity and movement on land and in waterways across Greater Bendigo.	
BDS 3.2	Develop a program that supports renaturalisation of nature strips, particularly in urban areas and townships, to increase mostly ground cover and shrubby native plant species diversity, improve habitat for wildlife and neighborhood character (e.g., pollinator corridors project). Encourage the community to apply for a community grant or partner with a corporate sponsor that would support its implementation.	To commence
BDS 3.3	Work with North Central Catchment Management Authority and other stakeholders on a local carbon offset program, ensuring offset sites align with priority areas for habitat enhancement and connectivity.	In progress
BDS 3.4	Explore opportunities to utilise regenerative forestry on council managed land to improve habitat and cultural connectivity across the landscape and provide opportunities for more sustainable firewood practices – i.e., in addition to Crosby and Huntly Regenerative Forestry programs. Integrate Djaara's Forest Gardening principles where possible and appropriate.	To commence
BDS 4.1	Advocate for 1) the return of land to Djaara and Taungurung for sole management; and 2) for the extension of protected land, through the state purchase and registration of significant bushland areas not currently protected (e.g., application for National Park classification for the Wellsford Forest).	To commence
BDS 4.2	Advocate for stronger biodiversity controls in state and federal legislation as appropriate.	To commence
BDS 4.3	Advocate for Victorian and Australian listing of threatened species, pest plants and animals and threatening processes as needed. Support delisting of species that have recovered and are no longer threatened as appropriate.	To commence
BDS 4.4	Advocate for a review of funding to catchment management authorities (CMAs) to allow them to actively protect and restore riparian habitats.	To commence
BDS 4.5	Advocate for Victorian and Australian government funding programs that are long term, support scaling of existing successful program and approaches and, where possible, are aligned to state, regional and local priorities and, therefore, are non-competitive.	To commence
BDS 5.1	Establish a permanent Biodiversity Engagement Officer position to meet growing community needs for support, citizen science activities and education (e.g., assistance to community environment groups and supporting the establishment of new groups and programs).	In progress
BDS 5.2	Work collaboratively with Djaara and Taungurung, environmental groups and agencies, businesses, farmers, and individuals to increase and share environmental storytelling and bring Traditional Owner voices back to the landscape (e.g., historical accounts, on-country yarns, art installations, greater media coverage of environmental stewardship).	To commence
BDS 5.3	Establish a program to increase community access to nature and to raise awareness about Greater Bendigo's natural values and how to protect and enhance them (e.g., school program, nature activities, planting, cleanup days, dead tree detectives, weed busters, storm water education).	In progress
BDS 5.4	Continue to develop guides on the natural values of Greater Bendigo and how best to support them on private land (e.g., weeds guide, species guides).	To commence
BDS 5.5	Consider establishing community environment programs that fall under the "Gardens for Wildlife" banner (e.g., pollinator plantings on nature strips and in schools, tiny forests, backyard biodiversity, wilderhoods).	To commence

Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan		
BDS 5.6	Assist in the development, promotion and distribution of a bushwalking guide to Bendigo (tracks and trails) with other groups and agencies (e.g., CVACF, Spring Plains Steering Committee), including the Bendigo Bushland Trail, outlined for reinstatement in the Greater Bendigo Public Space Plan.	In progress
BDS 5.7	Increase environmental awareness of City staff, including training on significant natural values of Greater Bendigo. Provide specific training for on-ground staff on natural values protection when conducting work.	To commence
BDS 5.8	Investigate implementing the Nature Stewards program run by the Victorian National Parks Association to help build capacity amongst interested individuals and environmental groups across Greater Bendigo.	In progress
BDS 5.9	Celebrate and recognise the contribution community groups make to the environment and biodiversity conservation.	In progress
BDS 5.10	Utilise citizen science programs to train the community to help deliver the Biodiversity Monitoring Program included in this Strategy.	To commence
BDS 5.11	Provide education and support to the community for online data recording and management tools (e.g., Fulcrum, iNaturalist, Victorian Biodiversity Atlas).	To commence
BDS 5.12	Increase inter-agency and community group data sharing across Greater Bendigo (e.g., use of shared platforms such as iNaturalist and the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas) and ensure data is effectively managed to allow for appropriate analysis of trends.	To commence
BDS 5.13	Establish an annual BioBlitz across Greater Bendigo, engaging relevant land management agencies, groups, Landcare, and the public.	To commence

Zero Carbon: Net Zero Plan for Council Operations		
#	Actions	Status 2022/23
ZEP 1	The City will implement an emission tracking program, using the Trellis web-based emission tracking software to collect, interpret and act on data within its emission boundary.	Complete
ZEP 2	The City will develop a multi-year capital program for both energy efficiency works and for sustainable technologies such as solar PV and batteries, including for community managed facilities	In progress
ZEP 3	The City will finalise the 2023 update of the Sustainable Buildings Policy and promote it across the organisation.	Complete
ZEP 4	The City will finalise strategic planning for City and community facilities and will develop a related (draft) ten-year capital program	In progress
ZEP 5	The City will complete a review of the condition of our plant and equipment at key sites to inform project prioritisation and future budget requests and allocations.	In progress
ZEP 6	The City will develop a capital program budget for the electrification upgrade of large gas consuming sites, that includes upgrades to electrical capacity where needed and will ensure that opportunities to package projects (i.e., codeliver multiple upgrades concurrently) are realised to achieve cost efficiencies.	In progress
ZEP 7	The City will develop a capital program budget, for the electrification of small and medium gas consuming sites	In progress
ZEP 8	The City will review its Fleet Policy and other relevant documents to enable the transition to electric vehicles.	To commence
ZEP 9	The City will develop business cases for electric vehicle charging infrastructure at relevant Council facilities, prioritising Galkangu (in consultation with the Victorian Government) and the depot. This includes working with Powercor to determine the current electricity supply, spare capacity, constraints, and opportunities.	To commence
ZEP 10	The City will seek to optimise its fleet and plant and commence transitioning where suitable electric or zero emissions options are available, This includes seeking quotes for electric or zero emissions options as a part of future procurement processes	In progress
ZEP 11	The City will engage industry experts to help plan and implement the transition to zero emission vehicles to help reduce the risks and optimise the financial outcomes.	In progress
ZEP 12	The City will work with expert consultants to better understand its current emissions liability from the Eaglehawk landfill, and to forecast this liability into the future taking account of planned operational changes including the closure and capping.	Complete
ZEP 13	The City will quantify its annual material consumption and scope 3 emissions and identify and implement priority actions to reduce these emissions to net zero.	To commence
ZEP 14	The City will promote its vision of 'electrifying everything' to become an all-electric, zero carbon, healthy workplace that is leading by example to achieve net zero e.g., in prospectus documents and public communications.	Ongoing
ZEP 15	The City will identify expenditures as they relate to the environment. This 'green tagging' will become part of the annual budget process and will be reported in budget documents and in the Annual Environment Report.	To commence
ZEP 16	The City will develop governance arrangements, composed of new and existing small working groups, to coordinate the transformation to net zero emissions.	No longer relevant
ZEP 17	The City will utilise its internal change management expertise to assist with the transformation, and to relate the transformation to the City's staff values and behaviours i.e., through the Be the Change flagship project.	In progress

Zero Carbon: Net Zero Plan for Council Operations		
ZEP 18	The City will participate in a pilot project in collaboration with the North Central Catchment Management Authority and other councils to test the feasibility of a local carbon offset program that achieves biodiversity co-benefits.	In progress
ZEP 19	The City will develop an offset policy to guide decisions about purchasing offsets.	To commence
ZEP 20	The City will purchase carbon offsets as required, from FY2029/30 to achieve its net zero goal and will provide the necessary evidence that these offsets have been retired to achieve Climate Active carbon neutral certification.	In progress
ZEP 21	The City will review and update the monitoring, reporting, and learning framework for its Zero Carbon journey as part of a larger review of the monitoring, reporting, and learning framework for the Climate Change and Environment Strategy.	Complete

Greater Bendigo Zero Emissions Roadmap		
#	Actions	Status 2022/23
1	Continue the Climate Collaboration - Continue the Collaboration and seek collective funding for projects as needed	Ongoing
2	Partnerships - Continue to actively seek out opportunities to collaborate with other agencies and organisations and to collectively resource organisations such as the Bendigo Sustainability Group, Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance, Bike Bendigo and DJAARA to deliver programs that progress shared priorities.	Ongoing
3	Local community leadership and action - Support local initiatives that build community based climate leadership and action. This may include education, schools, engagement or art programs that target different demographics and / or neighbourhood and township scale climate action planning	In progress
4	Regional Zero Emissions Roadmap - Continue to work with the Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance and other stakeholders to finalise and implement the Regional Zero Emissions Roadmap currently in development.	In progress
5	Dja Dja Wurrung self determination - Support and help resource DJAARA to deliver their Climate Change Strategy and Renewable Energy Strategy and to participate fully in climate action on Djandak, including in participating in the actions in this Roadmap.	Ongoing
6	Community engagement - Deliver an engagement program in collaboration with the Bendigo Sustainability Group that builds awareness of how to electrify homes and access renewable energy.	In progress
7	Sustainable Design Advisory Service - Refocus existing Council resources on providing sustainable design advice to residents planning on building or renovating outside of the planning permit application process.	In progress
8	Funding mechanisms - Work with lenders to develop and promote low and no interest loans, mortgage-based products and other financial mechanisms to help fund retrofitting initiatives.	To commence
9	Low-income homes electrification and retrofitting - Codesign and deliver a financially sustainable, ongoing program with welfare agencies to finance, support, electrify and retrofit low-income homes	In progress
10	Energy Efficiency and Resilience Service - Investigate implementation of a pilot project working with the CVGA, Bendigo Sustainability Group, neighbourhood houses, CVGT Employment, Bendigo TAFE, DJAARA and Mens Sheds to retrofit homes for energy efficiency and climate resilience while building skills in energy assessments and trades.	In progress
11	Bulk buy programs - Work with the CVGA and / or the Bendigo Sustainability Group to implement a bulk buy program for renewable energy and / or electric appliances prioritising programs that deliver savings to residents.	To commence
12	Business support program - Support businesses to create and implement their own zero emissions roadmaps to install solar, electrify and become energy efficient.	In progress
13	Big business collaboration - Bring together Bendigo's big businesses to collaborate on large scale solar and power purchase agreements.	In progress
14	Community Wealth Fund - Investigate establishing an independently managed fund to receive and democratically allocate funds from partners, donors and local renewable energy projects	To commence
15	Community Benefit Sharing Policy - Establish a policy that sets out Council and the community's expectations for benefit sharing outcomes from renewable energy developments	To commence
16	Collaboration with Powercor - Continue to develop a collaborative relationship with Powercor to enable Council and the community to create a 100% renewable energy grid.	To commence

Greater Bendigo Zero Emissions Roadmap		
17	Cycling revolution - Accelerate implementation of the City's separated cycling network and develop an approach to filling in the network with a suite of temporary and permanent on road paths, "greenways" and end of trip and parking facilities.	To commence
18	Walking revolution - Accelerate the City's program of walking infrastructure, including footpaths, crossings and traffic calming interventions, that transform car dominated roads into pedestrian prioritised and friendly streets. Special focus on pedestrian priority around every school, park and shopping centre.	To commence
19	Bus revolution - Advocate for an overhaul of the City's bus services with the aim of delivering a rapid transit system that is direct, frequent, safe, electric, replaces thousands of car trips daily and integrated with walking and cycling.	In progress
20	Metro rail commute - Advocate for a frequent Bendigo metro rail commuter service an hour each side and inside Greater Bendigo.	In progress
21	Electric vehicle charging - Develop a policy that establishes Council's approach to supporting installation of charging infrastructure in strategic locations. Consider installing Council owned charging infrastructure if and when the business case is favourable.	In progress
22	Electric vehicle bulk buy - Investigate delivery of a bulk buy program for the community in collaboration with the CVGA, the Bendigo Sustainability Group and other stakeholders.	To commence
23	Fleet and logistics collaboration - Bring organisations in the city together to investigate opportunities for collaboration relating to the purchase and sharing of fleet, e-bikes, plant, freight and commercial electric vehicles.	To commence
24	Integrated Sustainable Transport Planner and Programs Officer - Establish a role in Council to lead strategic action, integrated transport planning, advocacy and behaviour change programs with schools and workplaces.	To commence
25	Sustainable Farming Systems - Build on the successes of the Healthy Landscapes program and similar regenerative agriculture initiatives in the region and work with key partners to expand programs to other council areas and sectors, including exploring a partnership with DJAARA and employing additional extension officers	In progress
26	Sustainable Land Management Grants - Provide small grants to farmers to implement regenerative, sustainable farming techniques.	In progress
27	Zero carbon farms program - Work with Agriculture Victoria, NCCMA and other relevant stakeholders to expand their Community of Practise and deliver an advisory service that coordinates with other local and regional programs to support farmers account for and reduce their emissions	Complete
28	Agribusiness Officer - Maintain Council's Agribusiness Officer role to run capacity building programs support young farmers to enter the industry and provide the conduit for information to farmers and the community.	In progress
29	Food waste business programs - Deliver a food waste reduction program targeting businesses including farms, retail and hospitality.	To commence
30	Urban food production - Support and promote existing programs that increase local food growing and food literacy, such as community gardens, food redistribution programs, backyard and communal growing and school engagement. Investigate establishing an "edible streets" pilot program that involves supporting a street or neighbourhood to install edible gardens and swap produce.	Ongoing
31	Local carbon offsets program - Work with the NCCMA and other partners such as DJAARA, to establish a local carbon offsetting program that achieves local biodiversity, cultural and economic outcomes.	In progress

Greater Bendigo Zero Emissions Roadmap		
32	Greater Bendigo Biodiversity Strategy - Finalise and implement the Greater Bendigo Biodiversity Strategy that seeks to protect and enhance native vegetation across the City.	Complete
33	Support community enterprises - Support local community circular economy enterprises with small grants and in-kind support to help them scale their impact.	In progress
34	Greater Bendigo Circular Economy Hub - Finalise design and secure funding to develop a regional Circular Economy Hub to collect, sort and reprocess commercial and industrial resources, and enable local reprocessing enterprises to form.	In progress
35	Waste Education Action Plan - Develop and implement a Resource Recovery Action Plan that continues to support the community, businesses and schools to reduce waste and consumption.	To commence



ANNUAL ENVIRONMENT REPORT

SUMMARY DOCUMENT

The Annual Environment Report highlights the City's progress with implementing the *Climate Change and Environment Strategy 2021-2026* and other key environment strategies. A summary of key achievements for each action area of the Strategy is outlined here. The full report can be accessed on the [City's website](#).

ACTION AREAS

The *Climate Change and Environment Strategy 2021-2026* has six action areas, which collectively contribute to all seven outcomes in the Council Plan.

This Summary Document summarises the Strategy's 2036 goals for each action area and lists the highlights and key achievements for 2022/2023.



SUSTAINABLE AND ACTIVE TRANSPORT

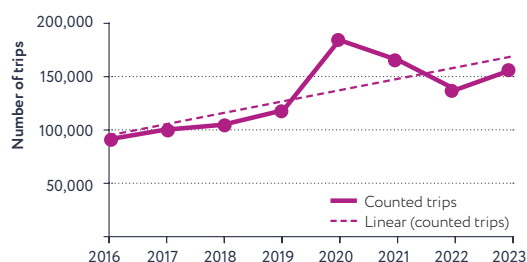
Goal: Greater Bendigo City staff and community walk, cycle and use public transport and electric vehicles instead of cars with internal combustion engines. In 2022/2023 we:

Installed 18.5km of footpaths.

Conducted a baseline travel survey to assess how staff from numerous organisations across Greater Bendigo travel to work, and to understand the barriers to sustainable travel.

Hosted a debate at the Climate Summit by Natasha Mitchell from ABC Radio National's Big Ideas about how regional cities can achieve a zero emissions transport system. Listen [here](#).

Cycling counts of protected infrastructure



BIODIVERSITY AND REGENERATION

Goal: Native habitat and areas of important biodiversity are protected and enhanced for future generations. In 2022/2023 we:

Developed the draft Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan which was adopted in September 2023.

Planted 3,376 urban trees.

Reduced native vegetation removed from City operations by 3.7 hectares to 1.6 hectares.

Checked over 600 nestboxes across eight reserves with local groups to monitor mammal populations. Successful breeding of Powerful Owl in one nestbox.

Introduced a 24-hour cat containment requirement.



Pictured: Senior Biodiversity Officer Mark Hall showing Healthy Landscapes participants how traps can be used to identify the types of pollinators that are present in the landscape and how to use nets to capture insects.



ZERO CARBON

Goal: Net zero carbon from City operations and across the Greater Bendigo community by 2030. In 2022/2023 we:

Reduced the City's greenhouse gas emissions by 430 tCO₂e (excluding emissions from landfill).

Reduced emissions from landfill by 11,500 tCO₂e due to less waste entering Eaglehawk Landfill.

Removed gas from six City facilities to make them all electric.

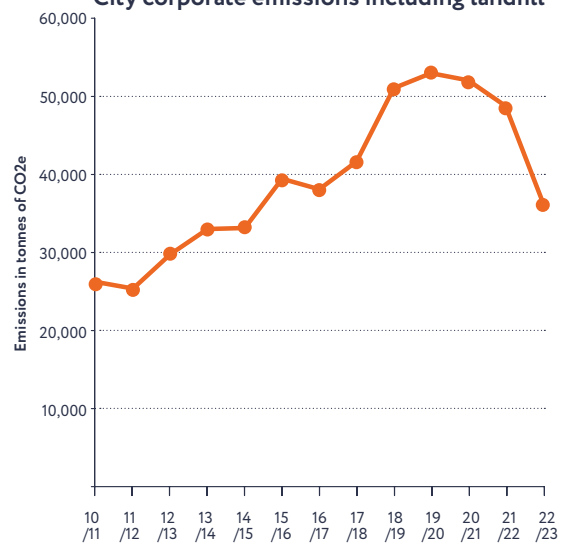
Increased the City's electric passenger fleet from six to ten vehicles.

Delivered a Climate Summit through the Greater Bendigo Climate Collaboration which was attended by approximately 680 community members.

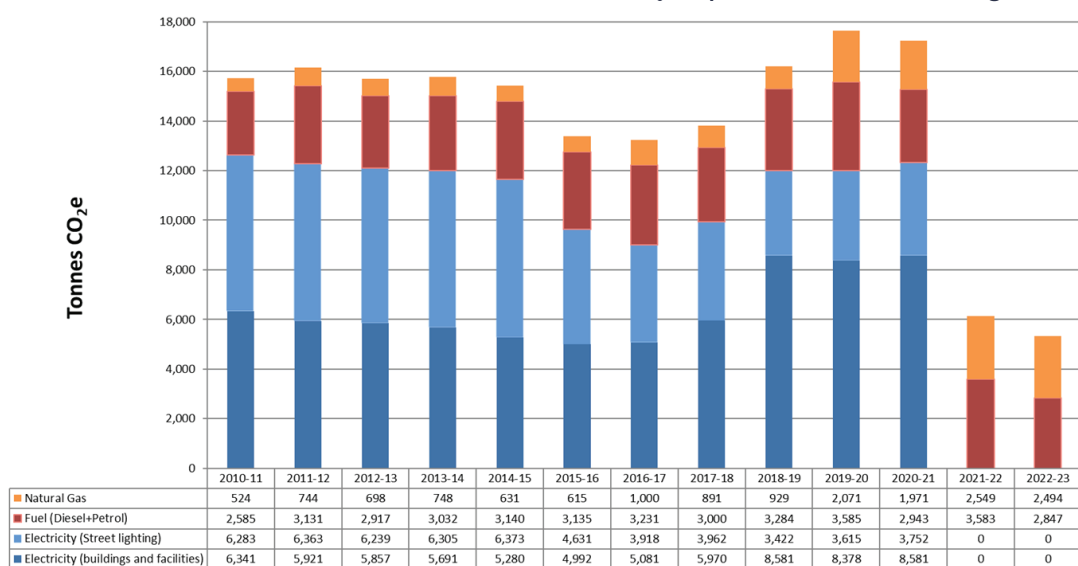
Developed the draft Greater Bendigo 2030 Zero Emissions Roadmap which was since adopted in September 2023.

Adopted the Zero Carbon Net Zero Emissions Plan for City Operations 2023- 2030.

City corporate emissions including landfill



City corporate emissions excluding landfill





SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

Goal: Sustainable food production systems are viable, resource efficient and regenerate natural ecosystems. In 2022/2023 we:

Enabled participation of approximately 168 landholders in the Healthy Landscapes: Practical Regenerative Agricultural Communities Program.

Achieved registration of 70 household or community gardens in the City with Grow it Local.



Pictured: Participants attending the field day, looking at preparation for a multi species cover crop. The presenter mentioned the paddock was browned out to break the life cycle of red legged earth mite before the plants commence growing.



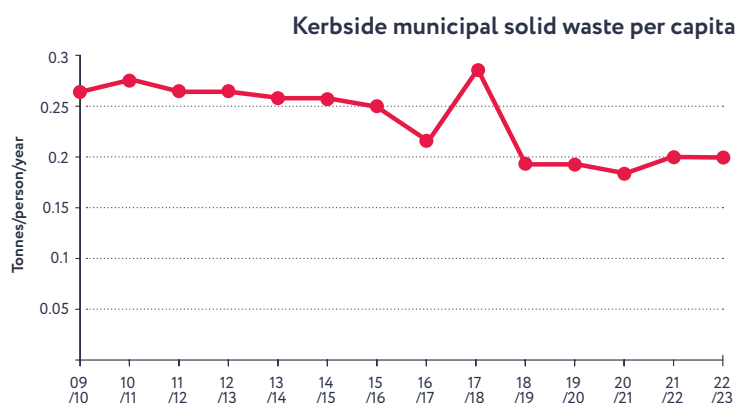
CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Goal: A well-established circular economy with zero recoverable waste to landfill. In 2022/2023 we:

Achieved a reduction in waste collected per capita across all waste streams and an increase in diversion of organic waste from landfill.

Achieved a reduction in the kerbside municipal solid waste per capita from 0.2 tonnes per person to 0.19 tonnes per person

Established soft plastics recycling drop off points.



WATER SENSITIVE BENDIGO

Goal: City operations are water efficient and utilise diverse water supplies. In 2022/2023 we:

Progressed the Bendigo Creek Instream Works project.

Continued administration of the Water Sensitive Bendigo Partnership.

20. A VIBRANT, CREATIVE COMMUNITY

Nil

21. A SAFE, WELCOMING AND FAIR COMMUNITY

Nil

22. URGENT BUSINESS

Nil

23. NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil

24. MAYOR'S REPORT

25. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT