MINUTES
Council Meeting

Monday September 20, 2021 commencing at 6:00 PM

Livestreaming at www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/councilmeeting
*** Broadcast live on Phoenix FM 106.7 ***

VENUE:
www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/councilmeeting

NEXT MEETING:
Monday October 18, 2021
Livestream

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This Council Meeting is conducted in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020 as amended by the COVID19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) Act 2020, Governance Rules 2020 and Local Law Process of Municipal Government 2020

Council Vision

Greater Bendigo - creating the world's most liveable community.

Council Values

Six values inform everything we as Council do in working together to be the best we can for all of our community.

Seeking to achieve the best value for our use of the community's public funds and resources, by:

- We Lead;
- We Learn;
- We Contribute;
- We Care;
- We Respond;
- We Respect.

Goals

- Presentation and Managing Growth
- Wellbeing and Fairness
- Strengthening the Economy
- Environmental Sustainability
- Embracing our Culture and Heritage
- Lead and Govern for All

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1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

2. TRADITIONAL LANGUAGE STATEMENT

3. OPENING STATEMENT

4. MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

5. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

Cr Dr Jennifer Alden
Cr Matthew Evans
Cr David Fagg
Cr Andrea Metcalf
Cr Margaret O'Rourke
Cr Greg Penna
Cr Julie Sloan
Cr Vaughan Williams
Mr Craig Niemann, Chief Executive Officer
Mr Andrew Cooney, Director Corporate Performance
Mr Ian McLauchlan, Acting Director Presentation and Assets
Mr Steve Hamilton, Director Strategy and Growth
Mr Peter O'Brien, Acting Manager Planning
Mr Geoff Fallon, Coordinator Governance

APOLOGY:

Cr Rod Fyffe OAM

MOTION

Moved: Cr David Fagg
Seconded: Cr Vaughan Williams

That the apology of Cr Rod Fyffe be received and Leave of Absence be granted from this meeting.

CARRIED

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6. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Margaret O'Rourke
Seconded: Cr Greg Penna

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

CARRIED

7. COMMUNITY RECOGNITION

8. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

9. RESUMPTION OF STANDING ORDERS

That Standing Orders be resumed.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Julie Sloan
Seconded: Cr Andrea Metcalf

That Standing Orders be resumed.

CARRIED

10. COUNCILLOR EVANS' REPORT

“Thank you, Mayor Alden.

INTRODUCTION

Spring is a special time of the year.

You can smell the change in the air. You can feel the weather warming up. You can hear our natural environment chirping along, and you can see the bright colours of Tulips, Wattles, and the sunshine. Except for today of course.

Our engagements in the community have been reduced and restricted over the past month, forcing us to pivot and adapt accordingly. We do miss seeing everyone in the community, whether that’s at listening posts, organised events, or simply walking past in the street or at the supermarket.

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"COMMITTEE MEETINGS

However, there is still always work to be done. The City's various committees have continued their work, holding their regular committee meetings online.

Since our last meeting, I have attended meetings for The Public Space Advisory Committee, the first meeting of the new Disability & Inclusion Reference Committee, the Bendigo Easter Fair Reference Committee, and the Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan Steering Committee.

Committees provide important oversight on the development and implementation of the City's key plans and strategies. Our committees focus on many components of our community. I am thankful for the enthusiasm from all members and their contributions and ideas.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who are apart of all committees. To the City staff who coordinate, to the key stakeholders who provide valuable input through experience, to community members who are passionate about the topic.

These contributions all add up to help us achieve our community vision, which is that "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."

For anyone interested, keep an eye out for the opportunities to be a part of these committees. I highly recommend it.

COVID TIMES

I am aware of the range of feelings and emotions across our community and abroad at the moment.

The events over the past 24 to 48 hours have been of particular concern. Several exposure sites have been listed in Greater Bendigo, cases listed in neighbouring municipalities, and seven-day lockdowns in place for Greater Geelong, the Surf Coast Shire, the City of Ballarat, and the Mitchell Shire.

I note the way in which our community has responded. Today, we have seen massive ques at our testing sites. We are all appreciative of the work of the Bendigo Health teams who have been under the pump. I am equally thankful to members of our community who have come forward to get tested.

There remains a sense of uncertainty, frustration, and hopelessness. Over the past month in particular, we have seen the cancellation of community winter sports seasons, and large and small events. Shows and art exhibitions remain on hold or cancelled and many of our experiences are not able to be offered.

Despite some slight easing of restrictions, many businesses and organisations have not been able to open up or proceed with their activities because it simple is not viable. One café owner told me about how tough it has been to tell their workers that they could not be guaranteed any shifts.

As someone who works at a school, I know how tough it has been for students, staff, and families. 27 of 50 learning days in Term 3 have been remote learning.

And of course, simple as not being able to see our fathers on Father's Day, and to catch up with mates, friends, and family to enjoy important milestones in our lives.

Yep, we are over it.

MOVING FORWARD

Although the times have been tough, I am confident that our community is doing what is needed to secure our recovery. Our community has been proactive and practical in its approach to combating COVID-19 and keeping as open as possible.

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“Whether it’s checking in to venues, getting tested if we are unwell or showing symptoms, or getting vaccinated, our community’s response has been strong, and in many ways, leads the way across Australia.

The community will have noted the campaign launched by the City to support our community to go for it. If you are yet to be vaccinated, I encourage you to book an appointment and get the jab.

We all want to break free of the rolling lockdowns and burdensome restrictions and live our lives. With the National Plan and the Roadmap announced yesterday, there needs to be a strong commitment from governments to the roadmaps out of this pandemic.

We must move towards securing our recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and build towards a brighter and happier future.

CONCLUSION

I am hopeful to see everyone in the community in the near future.

In the meantime, Stay classy Greater Bendigo! Oh, and Go Dees!

EVENTS & ENGAGEMENTS

- Observed the Information & Ideas on Flooding (online community discussion).
- Public Space Advisory Committee Meeting (online).
- Attended the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission information session (online).
- The first meeting of the new Disability Inclusion Reference Committee (online).
- Bendigo Easter Festival Reference Group meeting (online).
- CEO Annual Performance Review 2020/2021 (online).
- Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan meeting (online).
- Discussion on footpaths and bus shelters across Greater Bendigo.
- Workshop on Transport Priorities for Greater Bendigo.
- Attended several meetings, briefings, and sessions”.

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11. 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.

Cr Andrea Metcalf declared a conflict of interest (general conflict of interest) in the Lead and Govern For All Report No. 19.5 (Bendigo Stadium Limited Financial Update) as she is Council's representative on the Board of the Stadium.

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12. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

12.1. Confirmation of Minutes of August 16, 2021

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Monday August 16, 2021, as circulated, be taken as read and confirmed.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Vaughan Williams
Seconded: Cr Matthew Evans

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

Report

Report No.	Item	Recommendation
13.1	Confirmation of Previous Minutes	That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Monday 19 July 2021, as circulated, be taken as read and confirmed.
14.1	Draft Council Plan 2021- 2025 For Exhibition	That the Greater Bendigo City Council consider the draft Council Plan 2021- 2025 and resolve to advertise it for formal exhibition and submissions from 17 August until 6 September 2021.
14.2	City of Greater Bendigo 10 Year Financial Plan	That the Greater Bendigo City Council consider the draft 10 year Financial Plan and resolve to advertise it for formal exhibition and submissions from 17 August until 6 September 2021.
14.3	Draft Greater Bendigo Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021 - 2025	That the Greater Bendigo City Council consider the draft Greater Bendigo Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021- 2025 and resolve to advertise it for formal exhibition and submissions from 17 August until 6 September 2021.
14.4	Draft Climate Change and Environment Strategy - Release for Community Consultation	That the Greater Bendigo City Council consider the draft Climate Change and Environment Strategy (2021-26) and resolve to advertise it for formal exhibition and submissions from 17 August until 6 September 2021.
15.1	Response to Petition for Sealing of Mannes Lane, Axe Creek	That Council: 1. Receive and note the officer's comments regarding the current priority of the sealing of Mannes Lane in the context of the rolling program,

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		the suitability of current maintenance and inspection regimes and the outcome of the Road Safety Audit and pavement condition assessment. 2. Deliver the nine (9) actions identified from the Road Safety Audit over the next three months. 3. Respond to the lead petitioner, Michael Batrouney and signatory of the supporting letter, Sasha Peppinck, advising of the outcomes of the Road Safety Audit, pending delivery of safety improvement works and that the sealing of Mannes Lane is not currently a priority, however will continue to be considered during the development of future Capital Works Programs as part of the annual budget process.
15.2	Response to Petition: Maternal and Child Health Services for Marong and Surrounds	That Council: 1. Reinstate weekly centre-based MCH consultations on a (6) six month trial basis in Marong at the kindergarten. The option for clients to attend other centres or access in home outreach services where preferable will continue to be offered. 2. Review delivery of the service in consultation with the community and ward councillors within six months of the recommencement of the Marong MCH Service 3. Commence planning for the Marong Community Facilities Project – a community hub integrating kindergarten, maternal and child health and general community spaces in the town centre as identified in the Marong Township Structure Plan September 2020. 4. Advise the lead petitioner of the outcome of this report.
16.1	Planning Scheme Amendment C247gben – Planning Scheme Review Part 2 – Zone and Overlay Updates and Corrections – Further Inclusions to Amendment	That Council: 1. Endorse the addition of extra zone and overlay changes as outlined in this report, to be included as part of Amendment C247gben. 2. Request the Minister for Planning to authorise Council to prepare Amendment C247gben to the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme. 3. If authorised by the Minister, exhibit Amendment C247gben to the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme giving notification as required for the minimum statutory exhibition period of one month.

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		4. Authorise the Director Strategy and Growth to make minor changes to Amendment C247gben where the changes do not affect the purpose or intent of the Amendment.
16.2	Planning Scheme Amendment C254gben Authorisation Request – Forest Estate – 244 Edwards Road, Maiden Gully	That Council: 1. Request the Minister for Planning to authorise Council to prepare Amendment C254gben to the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme. 2. If authorised by the Minister, exhibit Amendment C254gben to the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme giving notification as required for the minimum statutory exhibition period of one month.
16.3	76 Thomas Lane, Mia Mia 3444 - Use and Development of the Land for a Dwelling and Outbuildings	Pursuant to section 61 of the Planning and Environment Act (1987), Council issue a Notice of Decision to Refuse to Grant a Permit for use and development of the land for a dwelling and outbuildings at 76 Thomas Lane, MIA MIA 3444 subject to the following grounds: 1. The proposal is inconsistent with local planning policy (Clause 22.02) and the purpose and decision guidelines of the Farming Zone as: a. The dwelling does not support or enhance agriculture; and b. The dwelling would cause the fragmentation of agricultural land.
16.4	Lot 1 Station Road, Bagshot 3551 - Use and Development of a Dwelling and Outbuilding	Pursuant to Section 61 of the Planning and Environment Act (1987), Council issues a Permit for the Use and Development of the Land for a Dwelling and Outbuilding Lot 1 Station Road BAGSHOT 3551 subject to the following conditions: 1. FARM MANAGEMENT PLAN REQUIRED Before a building permit is issued or any works commence, a Farm Management Plan must be submitted to, and endorsed by the Responsible Authority. The plan must be generally in accordance with the Farm Management Plan (FMP/2101022) and Environmental Management Plan (EMP/2101022) submitted with the application and must include: • A clear plan of the whole site, drawn to scale with dimensions, indicating all proposed infrastructure, including:

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		○ All internal and boundary fencing; ○ All proposed works; ○ The location and capacity of water sources; ○ All areas of revegetation, including shelter belts/windbreaks; and ○ All non-productive areas (access ways, storage areas, house yard etc). • A schedule clearly outlining the proposed activities to be undertaken and timeframes for these to occur, including but not limited to: ○ Site specific pest plant and animal management; ○ Revegetation of sensitive area, such as areas of friable soils and gullies; ○ Infrastructure to be constructed to support the agricultural activity (pumps, troughs, yarding etc); and ○ Soil improvement works. When approved, the plan will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. The Plan must not be altered without written consent of the Responsible Authority and must be implemented to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. 2. NO LAYOUT ALTERATION The use and/or development permitted by this permit as shown on the endorsed plan*(s)* and/or described in the endorsed documents must not be altered or modified (for any reason) except with the prior written consent of the Responsible Authority. 3. IMPLEMENTATION OF FARM MANAGEMENT PLAN The actions out in the Farm Management Plan must be implemented within the specified timeframes to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority, unless with the prior written consent of the Responsible Authority. 4 GENERAL DRAINAGE – BUILDINGS & HOUSES

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		The proposed building(s) and works must be drained to the satisfaction of the City of Greater Bendigo as the responsible drainage authority. 5. CONSTRUCTION OF DRIVEWAY Prior to the commencement of works for the house, the owner must construct an all-weather driveway connecting the dwelling to Station Road. 6. ELECTRICITY SUPPLY The dwelling must be connected to a reticulated electricity supply or have an alternative energy source to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. 7. WATER TANK Water tanks shall be provided adjacent to the house in an appropriate location to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority for domestic supply. 8. NO HABITATION The outbuilding hereby permitted is at no time to be used for the purpose of human habitation. 9. EXPIRY OF PERMIT This permit will expire if the wither of the following circumstances occur: • The development hereby permitted is not commenced within 2 years from the date hereof. • The development hereby permitted is not completed and the use commenced within 4 years of the date hereof. The time within which the development must be completed may be extended, on written request to the Responsible Authority, before or within 6 months after the expiry of this permit where the development has not yet started or 12 months where the development has commenced.
16.5	Lot 2 Drummonds Lane, Derrinal 3523 - Use and	Pursuant to section 61 of the Planning and Environment Act (1987), Council issue a Notice of Decision to Refuse to Grant a Permit for the use and

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	Development of Land for a Dwelling in Association with Horse Husbandry and Dog Breeding	development of land for a dwelling in association with horse husbandry and dog breeding at Lot 2 Drummonds Lane DERRINAL 3523 on the following grounds 1. The proposal is inconsistent with state and local planning policy, as well as the objectives and decision guidelines of the Rural Conservation Zone and Environmental Significance Overlay, and has the potential to result in adverse environmental impacts affecting the water supply catchment. 2. The scale of the proposed use and development is inconsistent with the objectives and decision guidelines of the Rural Conservation Zone and will result in adverse amenity impacts to surrounding landowners and occupiers by way of noise generation and increased traffic to the site. 3. The proposed development does not constitute an orderly planning outcome for the area pursuant to Clause 65 of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme.
16.6	149 Williamson Street, Bendigo 3550 - Subdivide Land into 4 lots and Development of 4 Dwellings	Pursuant to section 61 of the Planning and Environment Act (1987), Council issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit to subdivide land into 4 lots and construct 4 dwellings at 149 Williamson Street, BENDIGO 3550 subject to the following conditions: 1. Modified Plan Required Before the development starts, amended 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 will then form part of the permit. The plans must be drawn to scale with dimensions. The plans must be generally in accordance with the plans submitted with the application but modified to show: • Site area correctly shown • Deletion of the masonry front fences which are parallel to the road within the front setbacks of Dwellings 1 and 2

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		• Sill heights for highlight windows for habitable rooms to be a minimum of 1.7m above floor level • Screening where shown on the north west and south east elevations is to be no more than 25 percent transparent. • The grade of the driveway to be 1:20 for the first 6 metres inside the property line as per AS/NZ 2890.1:2004 Cl.33 • Garage doors widened to 6 metres to comply with AS/NZ 2890.1:204 Fig. 5.4 for a B85 vehicle 2. No Layout Alteration The use and development permitted by this permit as shown on the endorsed plans and/or described in the endorsed documents must not be altered or modified (for any reason) except with the prior written consent of the responsible authority. 3. ISSUE of Title Prior to the commencement of the subdivision and development permitted by this permit, a Statement of Compliance must be issued for Planning Permit AM/722/2019/B and a separate title issued for Lot 5 (the subject site). 4. STREET TREES • No street trees are permitted to be removed unless prior written consent has been obtained from the City of Greater Bendigo's Arborist. • In the event that approval is granted to remove street trees, the amenity value of any tree(s) will be determined by the City of Greater Bendigo's Arborist in accordance with the City's Urban Tree Management Policy and applied to these City assets. All costs must be paid to the City before the commencement of any street tree removal. • No works are permitted inside the Tree Protection Zones of trees for retention without the prior written approval of the City of Greater Bendigo's Arborist.

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		• Where street trees are to be retained and are located within the vicinity of the development works, Tree Protection Zones must be established in accordance with AS4970 – 'Protection of trees on development sites' for the duration of any works to the satisfaction of the responsible authority and tree protection requirements must be met as outlined within the City's Tree Protection Fact Sheet to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. 5. Landscape Plan Required Before the development starts, 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 survey (*including botanical names*) of all existing vegetation to be retained and/or removed • Details of surface finishes of pathways and driveways • 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 6. Completion of Landscaping Before the occupation of the development starts 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. 7. 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. 8. SUSTAINABLE DESIGN ASSESSMENT

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		• Prior to the endorsement of plans, the Built Environment Sustainable Scorecard (BESS), project number C4880FCB dated 19/4/2021 submitted for assessment must be amended to the satisfaction of the responsible authority to include the following: • An overall score of 50% or higher and have 'pass' rates of 50% for the Energy, Water and IEQ categories and 100% for the Stormwater category. • Justification for the points claimed in management and innovation sections. (Providing internal courtyards, achieving 10 minute neighbourhood requirements and creating clear frontages etc are not considered innovative) • All commitments proposed within the BESS and STORM reports are to be notated on plan including: o The WELS ratings of fittings, fixtures connections o The size and location of any proposed rain water tanks, roof areas to be connected to tanks and toilets and court yards gardens to be connected to the tanks to achieve STORM requirements on site o The star rating and location of electric how water units, reverse cycle air conditioning systems o Double glazing to all habitable room windows o Location of clothes lines, food production areas. When submitted and approved to the satisfaction of the responsible authority, the amended BESS and submitted STORM report along with associated notated plans will be endorsed to form part of this permit. • Prior to the commencement of occupation, a Building Users Guide must to prepared to the satisfaction of and submitted to the responsible authority for approval.

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		• Prior to the commencement of occupation or issue of Statement of Compliance, whichever comes first, of any dwelling approved under this permit, a report from the author of the BESS report approved pursuant to this permit, or suitably qualified person or company, must be submitted to the responsible authority. The report must be to the satisfaction of the responsible authority and must have photographic evidence to confirm that all measures specified in the BESS and STORM reports have been implemented in accordance with the approved plan. The report must include the final NatHERS certificates (or alternative NCC compliance methodology documentation) for the dwellings in the development for review by the responsible authority. 9. General Exterior Treatment The exterior treatment of the buildings permitted by this permit including all exterior decoration, materials, finishes and colours must be to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. The exterior treatment of the building*(s)* must be maintained to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. 10. Refrigeration & Air-conditioning Equipment Any equipment required for refrigeration, air-conditioning, heating and the like must be suitably insulated for the purpose of reducing noise emissions and must be located so as to not be highly visible from the street to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. 11. Construction Phase All activities associated with the construction of the development permitted by this permit must be carried out to the satisfaction of the responsible authority and all care must be taken to minimise the effect of such activities on the amenity of the locality. 12. No Mud on Roads In the event of mud, crushed rock or other debris being carried onto public roads or footpaths from the subject land, appropriate

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		measures must be implemented to minimise the problem to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. 13. CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT PLAN Prior to the commencement of development, a Construction Management Plan (CMP) must be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the responsible authority. The CMP must include, but not be limited to: • Dust management including techniques to prevent mud and dirt being transported from the site to adjacent streets • Any impacts upon adjacent roads and pedestrian walkways and providing for adequate movement and circulation of vehicles and pedestrians adjacent to the land during the construction phase; • Proposed parking and standing locations for construction vehicles and construction workers vehicles; • Temporary fencing works; • A communication strategy for advising the responsible authority and residents of key stages/events (including their timing and duration) in the construction program of the development; • A liaison officer for contact by residents and the responsible authority in the event of relevant queries or problems experienced. The development must be undertaken in accordance with the approved CMP to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. 14. Detailed Drainage Plans 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:

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		• Underground drainage • Direction of stormwater run off • A point of discharge • Water quality • Stormwater detention 15. CONSTRUCTION OF WORKS Prior to the Roadworks, drainage and other civil works must be constructed in accordance with the City of Greater Bendigo Infrastructure Design Manual and plans and specifications approved by the Responsible Authority and must include: (a)Underground drainage 16. Section 173 Agreement – ON SITE DETENTION SYSTEM Prior to the issue of a Statement of Compliance, the applicant/owner must enter into an agreement under section 173 of the Planning & Environment Act 1987. Such agreement must covenant that: • The owner will maintain each on-site treatment system and/or detention system and not modify without prior written approval from the responsible authority. • The owner shall allow duly authorised officers of the responsible authority to inspect the systems at mutually agreed times. • The Owner will pay for all costs associated with the construction and maintenance of each on-site detention system and/or treatment system. 17. City of Greater Bendigo 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 & channel, footpath, seal, street lights, signs and other public infrastructure fronting the property and abutting at least two properties either side

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		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. 18. Vehicle Crossings Vehicular access to the subject land from any roadway or service lane (and vice versa) must be by way of a vehicle crossing constructed at right angles to the road, to suit the proposed driveway and vehicles that will use the crossing. The driveway between the property boundary and the kerb must be constructed in accordance with the Infrastructure Design Manual. Any existing kerb layback not used must be removed and the kerb reinstated. Any existing driveway not used must be removed and the nature strip reinstated. A Works within Road Reserves permit must be obtained from the City of Greater Bendigo Engineering Department prior to any work commencing in the road reserve. 19. Sealed Car Park Areas set aside for the parking of vehicles together with the aisles and drives must be properly formed to such levels that they can be utilised in accordance with the endorsed plan and must be drained and provided with an impervious all weather seal coat. The areas must be constructed, drained and maintained in a continuously useable condition to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. 20. Use of Car Parking Areas Areas set aside for the parking and movement of vehicles as shown on the endorsed plan must be made available for such use and must not be used for any other purpose. 21. PEDESTRIAN SIGHTLINES The subdivision/development must ensure sight lines at the driveway exit comply with Clause 52.06-9 of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme.

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		22. Fencing of Site The fence(s) as shown on the endorsed plans*(s)* must be erected and maintained to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. 23. TELECOMMUNICATIONS • 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. • 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.

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		24. 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. 25. Powercor • This letter shall be supplied to the applicant in its entirety. • 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. • 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. • Any buildings/structures must comply with the clearances required by the Electricity Safety (Installations) Regulations. • Any construction work must comply with Energy Safe Victoria's "No Go Zone" rules. • The applicant shall establish easements on the subdivision, for all existing Distributor electric lines where easements have not been otherwise provided on the land and for any new powerlines to service the lots or adjust the positioning existing easements. Notes:

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<table>
<tr><th>Report No.</th><th>Item</th><th>Recommendation</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>· Existing easements may need to be amended to meet the Distributor’s requirements Easements required by the Distributor shall be specified on the subdivision and show the Purpose, Origin and the In Favour of party as follows:

<table>
<tr><th>Easement reference</th><th>Purpose</th><th>Width (metres)</th><th>Origin</th><th>Land Benefited/In favour of</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Power Line</td><td></td><td>Section 88 – Electricity Industry Act 2000</td><td>Powercor Australia Ltd.</td></tr>
</table>
26. Coliban Water
• The owner is required to provide reticulated water and sewerage services to each of the lots 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 may be required to the existing water supply service pipes and the property service drains in accordance with our specifications.
• A Coliban Water sewer main currently traverses Lots 3 & 4. The owner is required to reach agreement with Coliban Water for any proposed structure over or adjacent to the existing sewer main which traverses Lots 3 & 4 and comply with the requirements of a Buildover agreement for the proposed works. Agreement may be reached with Coliban Water for this section of sewer main to be renewed or diverted clear of a building envelope/footprint.
• Prior to Coliban Water issuing a Certificate of Compliance for the subdivision, metered</td></tr>
</table>

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		water supply services are required to be constructed into Lots 1-4 of this subdivision for the provision of water supply. • Applications through Coliban Water's Consent to Connect Process are required prior to any property drain being amended and/or connected to Coliban Water sewer assets and the water service and meter assemblies required to be located in the common area according to Coliban Water conditions. • 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 2020 and any specific conditions of Coliban Water. • All Coliban Water assets within the development site, are required to be protected by registered easements created in favour of Coliban Region Water Corporation 27. COMPLETION OF DEVELOPMENT Before a statement of compliance is issued for the subdivision: • The dwelling(s) approved under this permit must be constructed to a state of practical completion to the satisfaction of the responsible authority; or • The owner must enter into an agreement under section 173 of the Planning & Environment Act 1987 that covenants that the lots created by the subdivision will only be developed in accordance with the plans endorsed under this permit. The agreement will end upon completion of the development shown on the endorsed plans. 28. EXPIRY OF THE PERMIT - SUBDIVISION AND DWELLINGS This permit will expire if:

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		• The plan of subdivision is not certified within two years from the date of this permit; or • The subdivision is not completed within five years from the date of certification of the plan of subdivision; or • Construction of the approved dwellings is not completed within 7 years from the date of this permit. The responsible authority may extend the time for certification of the plan, or for the completion of the dwellings, if a request is made in writing before the permit expires or thereafter, within the period allowed by section 69 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. **City of Greater Bendigo Engineering Note** A Works within Road Reserves permit must be obtained from the City of Greater Bendigo Engineering Department prior to any work commencing in the road reserve. CONSENT FOR WORK ON ROAD RESERVES The applicant must comply with: • The Road Management Act 2004, • Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2005, and • 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 note 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.
17.1	Greater Bendigo Disability Inclusion Reference Committee Member Appointments 2021	That Council resolve to: 1. Appoint the following applicants to the Disability Inclusion Reference Committee for a two-year term: • Bernadette Wright – returning member and current Chairperson.

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		• Sara McQueenie – returning member. • Justin Marshall– returning member • John Cooper– returning member • Liz Wright - new • Elise Stewart - new • Kyle Walsh - new • Liz March - new • Adam English - new • Chris Bolton - new • Shona Brown - new • Stephanie Sayer - new • Jessica Symes – new 2. Formally thank retiring members: • Vinnie Mammoliti • Madelyn Blackwood • Scott Mclarty • Colleen Travers • Daniel Reid • Jan Pagliaro • Michael Leechman • Jarrod Stephens 3. Write to all applicants to thank them for their interest in joining the Disability Inclusion Reference Committee.
18.1	Bendigo Airport Lease of Lot HX12, N4 and N5	That Council, having complied with sections 190 and 223 of the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act) by having given public notice in the Bendigo Advertiser on May 29, 2021 and that no submissions were received: 1. Grant a lease to John Moore and Addinsall Nominees Pty Ltd for 658 square metres of land, being part of the land in certificate of Title Part Lot 3 PS 422204F, Volume 10557, Folio 954, known as Lot HX12 at the Bendigo Airport situated on 35 Victa Road, East Bendigo, (Land) for the purposes of an airport hangar, a space to operate a recreational aviation school, and storage of related

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		equipment and consumables (Lease Proposal), for a term of seven (7) years (with two (2) x seven (7) year options), with a commencing rent of $3,000 per annum plus GST. 2. Grant a lease to PeterJohn Pty Ltd for 440 square metres of land, being part of the land in certificate of Title Part Lot 3 PS 422204F, Volume 10557, Folio 954, known as Lot N4 and N5 at the Bendigo Airport situated on 35 Victa Road, East Bendigo, (Land) for the purposes of an airport hangar, a space to operate a recreational aviation school, and storage of related equipment and consumables (Lease Proposal), for a term of five (5) years (with four (4) x five (5) year options), with a commencing rent of $3,300 per annum plus GST.
20.1	Greater Bendigo Heritage Advisory Committee Terms of Reference and Appointment of a New Committee	That Council: 1. Adopt the revised Heritage Advisory Committee Terms of Reference August 2021. 2. Endorse making all positions on the Heritage Advisory Committee vacant and commencing an Expressions of Interest process to call for new members. 3. Thank the outgoing and departed Committee members for their contribution over their term.

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13. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

Nil

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14. PRESENTATION AND MANAGING GROWTH

14.1. Discontinuance of Alexandra St Eaglehawk

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

Purpose

To advise Council of the outcome of the public notice regarding proposed discontinuance of Alexandra Street and part of Turner Street, Eaglehawk.

Summary

As part of current discussions with All Stone Quarries (ASQ), the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (the Department) requested that Council consider proposed discontinuance of Alexandra Street Eaglehawk, described as CA224D Section M at Eaglehawk Parish of Sandhurst and described in Crown Folio Volume 11769 Folio 929 together with approximately 300m2 of Turner Street Eaglehawk adjoining aforesaid CA224D, described and shown hatched within Attachment 1 (the Subject Road).

The Subject Road predominately services the ASQ site and it is considered that ongoing Council management of this road offers limited to no broader public benefit.

At its Ordinary Meeting on 19 July 2021 Council resolved to issue public notice and opportunity to receive and consider public submissions prior to making its decision whether to proceed with the proposed discontinuance.

Following expiry of the mandatory 28-day notice period, one submission has been received. This submission is in support of the proposed discontinuance. Officers have provided a subsequent report on the outcome of the public notice period and associated recommendation to proceed with the proposed discontinuance of the Subject Road.

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RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Pursuant to Sch. 10 Clause 3 of the Local Government Act 1989, discontinue Alexandra Street described as CA224D Section M at Eaglehawk Parish of Sandhurst and described in Crown Folio Volume 11769 Folio 929, together with approximately 300m2 of Turner Street, Eaglehawk adjoining aforesaid CA224D, described and shown hatched within Attachment 1.
2. Publish required notice of the discontinuance of Alexandra Street and Part Turner Street, Eaglehawk in the Government Gazette and provide written notice to the Department Environment, Land, Water and Planning of the land being transferred to the Crown.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Julie Sloan
Seconded: Cr David Fagg

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

Policy Context

Community Plan Reference:

City of Greater Bendigo Community Plan 2017-2021:

Goal 3	**Strengthening the economy**
Objective 3.1	Support our local businesses and industry to be strong, vibrant and to grow and develop.
Goal 4	**Presentation and managing growth**
Objective 4.5	Provide and maintain urban and rural infrastructure to support the liveability of our community

Council Policy Reference : Asset Management Policy
https://www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/About/Document-Library/asset-management-policy

Background Information

Previous Council Decision(s) Date(s):

The Departments request seeking consideration of proposed discontinuance of the Subject Road was initially introduced for Council discussion at a briefing held on 7 June 2021.

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At its Ordinary meeting on 19 July 2021 a detailed report regarding the proposed discontinuance of the Subject Road was provided, with Council subsequently resolving to give public notice and opportunity to receive and considerer submissions pursuant to Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act).

Background information

In accordance with the Act, public notice of the proposed discontinuance was placed in the Bendigo Advertiser on 24th July 2021. A 28-day period for receipt of public submissions was provided.

The Subject Road as identified within Attachment 1, predominately services the ASQ site. No other properties abut the Subject road and it is considered that ongoing Council management of this road offers limited to no broader public benefit. This is in recognition that unlicensed Crown land and freehold properties located to the east of the ASQ site, may still be accessed via the remaining component of Turners Road, which connects to Upper California Gully Road.

Report

Opportunity for lodging submissions in response to Councils notice of the proposed discontinuance closed on 23 August 2021. In response to the public notice, one submission was received from Mr Don Bartlett, Projects Manager for ASQ.

The submission received identified that ASQ have been working with the City of Greater Bendigo Engineering Unit and the Department for some years to identify options to improve safety and traffic flow for all vehicles and pedestrians entering or leaving the ASQ and Resource Recovery Precinct at Eaglehawk.

The submission also identified that the proposed discontinuance will potentially enable creation of a common point of entry for ASQ traffic to/from Upper California Gully Rd, located as far away from Victoria Street as is feasible and that the timely “closure” of Alexandra St as proposed in the Council Resolution will facilitate those improvements.

Priority/Importance:

Discontinuance of the Subject road is considered to be medium priority. The proposed discontinuance is coupled to current discussions occurring between ASQ and the Department regarding future use and reconfiguration of ASQ’s Eaglehawk site as well as long term arrangements for associated licenced crown land parcels.

Options/Alternatives:

Council may choose not to support the Departments request to pursue the proposed discontinuance of the Subject road, either in its entirety or current form. In this instance COGB will remain the co-ordinating road authority and be required to continue its inspection and maintenance activities.

The decision not to support the proposed discontinuance may impact upon the scope and/or viability of ASQ’s proposed site redevelopment, limiting the opportunity to explore potential road infrastructure improvements at intersection and access points from the ASQ site to Upper California Gully Road.

Timelines:

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Pursuant to section 223 of the Act, Council have provided the mandatory 28 days from the date of publication of the notice for submissions to be received. Subject to Council approval, implementation of the proposed discontinuance is expected to be completed within six weeks.

Risk Analysis:

No risks have been identified with respect to the proposed discontinuance.

If the Subject road is not discontinued, this may represent a potential risk to the ASQ redevelopment as well as opportunities to achieve local traffic safety improvements.

Consultation/Communication

Internal Consultation:

Internal assessment by the Engineering, Strategic Planning and Property Service units has informed the recommendation to proceed with discontinuance of the Subject Road.

External Consultation:

Public notice of the proposed discontinuance has been provided including opportunity to make submissions prior to Council making its decision whether to proceed.

Resource Implications

Discontinuance will extinguish the City's responsibilities for inspection and maintenance of the Subject Road. It is estimated that discontinuance of the Subject road could save Council between $2,000 to $5,000 per annum. The cost of administering discontinuance of the Subject road is considered negligible and will be delivered using existing resources.

Attachments

1. City of Greater Bendigo - Public Notice with Plan - Alexandra Street and Turner Street, Eaglehawk

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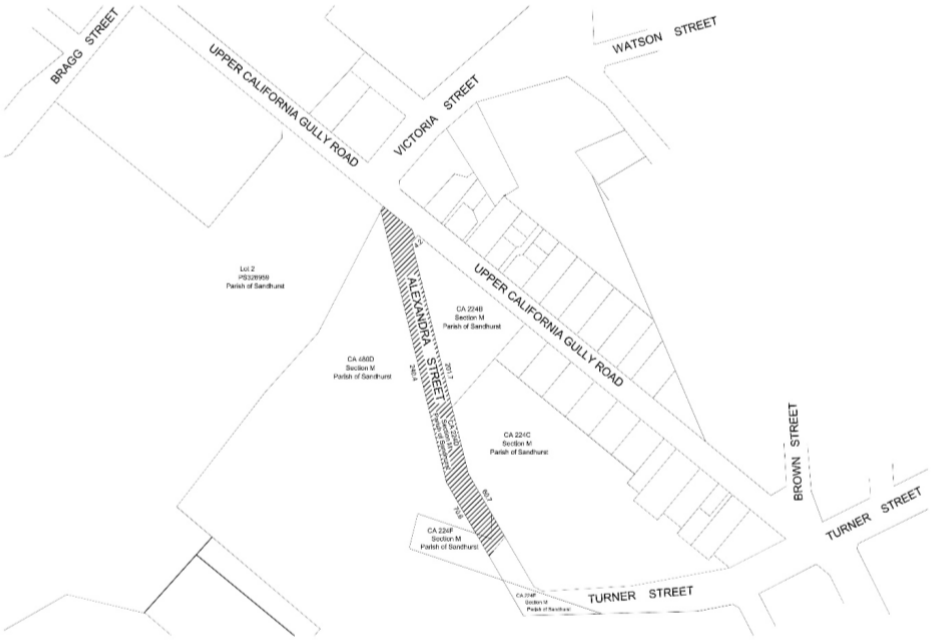
Attachment 1 - City of Greater Bendigo - Public Notice with Plan - Alexandra Street and Turner Street, Eaglehawk

City of Greater Bendigo
Road Discontinuation
Part of Alexandra Street Eaglehawk

Pursuant to Section 206 and Schedule 10, Clause 3 of the Local Government Act 1989, Greater Bendigo City Council, at its ordinary meeting held on day of 2021 resolved to discontinue Alexandra Street Eaglehawk described as CA224D Section M at Eaglehawk Parish of Sandhurst and approximately 300m2 of Turner Street Eaglehawk adjoining CA224D being Government Road shown hatched on the plan below as not reasonably required as a road for public use. The land is to be transferred to the Department of Environment, Land Water and Planning to become unreserved Crown Land.



DATED 2021

CRAIG WILLIAM NIEMANN
Chief Executive Officer

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Version: 1, Version Date: 30/08/2021

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14.2. Affordable Housing Action Plan

Author	Stacey Poulter, Strategic Planner
Responsible Director	Steve Hamilton, Director Strategy and Growth

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek adoption of the Affordable Housing Action Plan and noting of the Affordable Housing Community Engagement Summary Report.

Summary

Housing is a human right and considered as essential infrastructure in any community. Being able to access affordable and appropriate housing helps people secure and maintain a job, keep families safe, raise happy and healthy children, enjoy a better standard of living and contribute to their community. If we want to create a sustainable and prosperous community in Greater Bendigo this must be for all our residents, and this includes everyone having access to affordable housing.

Affordable housing is housing (including social housing) that is appropriate for the needs of very low income households, low income households and moderate income households.

Like many places in Australia, there is a growing affordable housing problem in Greater Bendigo. Our community is facing increasing levels of homelessness and demand for social housing, pressure in the private rental market, costs of housing and housing stress, and housing supply mismatch. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have placed even further pressure on affordable housing as well as the broader housing market. In particular, the community and local organisations reported a worsening of people struggling to pay for basic living expenses (such as food, heating, rent or mortgage payments) and secure rental housing, or delays with new housing.

In 2017 Council identified the need to prepare a strategic response to this growing issue. An Affordable Housing Action Plan (Action Plan) has now been developed to support an increase in the supply and provision of affordable housing to meet the community's needs. While this includes mechanisms to increase the supply of well-designed and efficient affordable housing, the Council as a provider or supplier of housing is out of scope for this project. The City already influences affordable housing in many different ways, however the Action Plan aims to bring this work together in a more coordinated way and focus those efforts to collectively achieve better outcomes for our community.

An extensive community engagement program has been undertaken to develop the Action Plan. The engagement approach directly involved the community to ensure concerns and aspirations were consistently understood and considered. Community engagement was undertaken during project milestones in stage one (project scope), stage two (background paper) and stage three (draft action plan). A wide range of individuals, groups and organisations participated, however most feedback was from industry stakeholders (those delivering and supporting affordable housing), community members and tenants. Overall there is significant community support for the Action Plan and a shared concern for this growing issue in our municipality.

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RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Adopts the Affordable Housing Action Plan.
2. Notes the Affordable Housing Community Engagement Summary Report.
3. Acknowledge and thank the stakeholders who contributed to the development of the Affordable Housing Action Plan.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr David Fagg
Seconded: Cr Margaret O'Rourke

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

Policy Context

Community Plan Reference:

City of Greater Bendigo Community Plan 2017-2021

As part of the 2017-2018 actions set out in the Community Plan, the following objective and action are intended to achieve Goal 4 Presentation and managing growth:

- Objective 4.2 Plan to meet future housing needs
    - Action 4.2.3 Develop a Social and Affordable Housing and Living Strategy and commence implementation

Strategy Reference (include weblink as applicable):

Greater Bendigo Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021

Goal 2 Safe and secure: The Greater Bendigo community lives free from violence and abuse, is protected from environmental risks and is supported to live affordably.

- Objective: Reduce socio-economic disadvantage by increasing access to and affordability of;
    - Nutritious food
    - Diverse housing
    - Energy.

Goal 5 Liveable: The Greater Bendigo community is adaptable and resilient and has access to sustainable natural, built, social and economic environments that support and enhance health and wellbeing.

- Objective: Improve accessibility;
    - Health and community services
    - Transport

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    - Technology and information
- Objective: Facilitate supportive built and natural environments.

Residential Development Strategy

- Objective: To provide and support affordable housing opportunities
- Objective: To provide for a range of housing types and densities that responds to the changing needs of the community

Housing Strategy

The Housing Strategy adopted by Council in 2016 (amended in 2018) identified strong community support for Council to play a role in ensuring our municipality advocates for the provision of affordable housing. The Housing Strategy set out a number of issues and opportunities that have helped to inform the development of an Affordable Housing Action Plan.

In particular, the Housing Strategy recommended that the *"development of an affordable housing policy will commence in 2017/18 and will involve engaging with a range of stakeholders and government agencies"*.

Background Information

Victorian Local Councils have an important role in ensuring there is adequate supply of housing to meet community needs. However, there is no set policy or role for the provision of affordable housing, and it is therefore the responsibility of each individual Council to determine what their policy or role will be. It is clear there is an appetite in the community for the Greater Bendigo Council to continue to increase its support and advocacy for additional affordable housing.

Previous Council Decision(s) Date(s):

- 17 June 2019 – Councillor briefing to provide a project update and gain feedback prior to the preparation of an Affordable Housing Background Paper.
- 18 November 2019 – Councillor briefing for feedback on the Affordable Housing Background Paper and project Community Engagement Plan prior to consultation with the community.
- 19 August 2020 – Council endorsed the Draft Affordable Housing Action Plan for consultation with key stakeholders and the community.
- 21 December 2020 – Councillor briefing to provide a project update and an overview of the State Government's recently announced Big Housing Build program.

Report

The City has developed an Affordable Housing Action Plan which is to be considered by Council for adoption (see Attachment 1).

The Action Plan sets out the City's role and actions it will implement to support an increase in the supply and provision of affordable housing to meet the community's needs. The City already influences affordable housing in many different ways, however the Action Plan aims to bring this work together in a more coordinated way and focus those efforts to collectively achieve better outcomes for our community.

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Housing is a human right and considered as essential infrastructure in any community. Being able to access affordable and appropriate housing helps people secure and maintain a job, keep families safe, raise happy and healthy children, enjoy a better standard of living and contribute to their community. If we want to create a sustainable and prosperous community in Greater Bendigo this must be for all our residents, and this includes everyone having access to affordable housing.

The Planning and Environment Act 1987 defines affordable housing is housing (including social housing) that is appropriate for the needs of very low income households, low income households and moderate income households.

Across Australia and in Greater Bendigo there is a growing affordable housing problem. Greater Bendigo already has a high number of households within the very low income range (42 %), low income range (25 %), and moderate income range (20 %), however there are also high levels of housing stress. In 2016, almost 26 percent of all households were vulnerable to a housing crisis or eviction due to rental or mortgage stress. There are even higher proportions in the very low income households (71 % in rental stress) and low income households (72 % in mortgage stress). When people experience housing stress, basic needs such as food, water consumption, heating and cooling are often sacrificed in order to keep living in their home. Housing stress and financial hardship can increase the risk of people and families needing social housing or becoming homeless.

There are now more than 60,000 people across Victoria waiting for social housing, of which 2,632 are in Greater Bendigo. Currently social housing supply in Bendigo (2,404 occupied homes) cannot meet this need. The Action Plan proposes a number of strategies to increase social housing supply from current levels of 4.6 per cent, to meet demand of 10 per cent by 2036.

The key issues relating to affordable housing in Greater Bendigo have been identified through research and an extensive community engagement program, and include increasing homelessness and demand for social housing, increasing pressure in the private rental market, rising cost of housing and housing stress, and housing supply mismatch. The key indicators for these issues in Greater Bendigo are summarised as follows:

- Increasing homelessness and demand for social housing
    - 327 people estimated to be experiencing homelessness in 2020, yet at the same time 2,599 people accessed specialist homelessness services.
    - Social housing wait list has doubled over four years, from 1,315 in 2016 to 2,632 in 2020.
- Increasing pressure in the private rental market
    - Rental vacancy rate dropped from 2.5 per cent in 2016, to 0.7 per cent in 2020.
    - Rise of short-stay accommodation (e.g. Airbnb and Stayz).
    - Recent changes to legislation (Residential Tenancies Act and Regulations).
    - Poor quality housing – the majority of rental properties were built prior to the current building regulations (commenced 1993), now require upgrading and are running below current energy efficiency standards.

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- Rising cost of housing and housing stress
    - In 2006 the median house price was five times the annual median household income and by 2016 this had risen to 5.24, representing an increase in house prices from $217,000 to $322,500 over 10 years.
    - The median purchase price of land increased from $85,000 in 2006 to $150,000 in 2016.
    - In 2016 over 11,000 (almost 26%) households in very low, low and moderate income ranges experiencing rental and mortgage stress.
    - During the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns in 2020, more than 80 per cent of survey respondents, including local community and organisations, reported a worsening of issues relating to affordable housing, in particular the ability to pay for basic living expenses (such as food, heating, rent or mortgage payments) and being able to secure rental housing or delays with new housing.
- Housing supply mismatch
    - The average floor area of homes increased by 40% over 10 years, from 228m² in 2010 to 313m² in 2020.
    - The proportion of 'empty nesters' increased by 20.6 per cent from 2006 to 2016 (indicator of an ageing population who will likely need to downsize to smaller homes).
    - In 2016 there were 11,569 single/lone person households however there were only 7,741 one or two bedroom dwellings.

Key components of the Action Plan set out Council's response to these issues, including the objectives, social housing target and Council roles.

Three objectives have been developed in partnership with the community to identify where we want to be:

1. Better understand affordable housing issues
2. Increase supply and improve quality of affordable housing
3. Improve Council processes and timeframes that affect affordable housing

These objectives are supported by 26 actions (set out in the implementation plan) that have been developed and tested with key internal and external stakeholders. Each action responds to barriers and opportunities in processes, policies and funding programs identified by the community, industry stakeholders and City staff.

Consideration is also given to the City's response to the State Government's recently announced Big Housing Build program. This $5.3 billion program represents a significant shift in affordable and social housing policy, aiming to increase supply from 3 per cent to the national average of 4.2 per cent (around 60,000 additional dwellings). Importantly, Greater Bendigo has been allocated a minimum investment of $85 million in affordable housing, and there is a further $485 million unallocated funding across the state. The Action Plan includes strategies to ensure that Greater Bendigo is well positioned to respond to opportunities arising from this program now and into the future.

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In developing the Action Plan, the community told us that it was important for Council to clearly identify a position and define the role that Council will play in the affordable housing sector. Greater Bendigo already has an extensive network of organisations providing support and delivering affordable housing to those in need. However, there is a clear desire from industry stakeholders for Council to better support this existing network of organisations through the following roles:

- Leader – Establishing a clear position on affordable housing and building an increased understanding of the issues
- Advocate – Advocating across community, industry and all levels of Government to improve outcomes in all areas relating to affordable housing
- Facilitator – Bringing together key stakeholders and reducing barriers to facilitate an increase in the supply of affordable housing
- Partner – Partnering with key stakeholders to leverage assets and resources to increase the supply of affordable housing

Outcomes from consultation on the Draft Action Plan show strong community support for the key components of the Action Plan:

- 76% felt the 'Objectives' responded appropriately to the key issues.
- 81% agreed that the roles for Council to address affordable housing are appropriate.
- 88% agreed with the social housing target of 9.5% by 2036 or felt this should be a higher proportion or delivered quicker.

Priority/Importance:

High – the development of the Action Plan is a commitment of the Community Plan 2017-2021.

Options/Alternatives:

Council has the option of endorsing the Affordable Housing Action Plan, endorsing the Affordable Housing Action Plan with changes, or not endorsing the document.

Timelines:

This project commenced in August 2018, however experienced delays during the COVID-19 pandemic, as a result the final Action Plan will be considered by Council for adoption in August 2021. The major milestones for this project are as follows:

- Stage 1: August 2018 – Project scope
- Stage 2: February 2019 – Background Paper
- Stage 3: August 2020 – Draft Action Plan
- Stage 4: August 2021 – Final Action Plan

Progress:

The project is currently in stage 4, where a final Affordable Housing Action Plan has been prepared and will be considered by Council for adoption.

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Risk Analysis:

The City has committed to developing an Affordable Housing Action Plan through the Community Plan 2017-2021. Based on this direction, the City has engaged extensively with the community, local Community Housing Providers, organisations and individuals, as well as peak bodies and government. By not adopting the strategy Council will not deliver on its undertaking and commitment to community and stakeholders. Without looking at addressing the provision and quality of affordable housing it is likely to be a growing problem in Greater Bendigo with associated social, economic and environmental implications.

Consultation/Communication

An extensive community engagement program has been undertaken for this project, with an approach to directly involve the community to ensure concerns and aspirations were consistently understood and considered. Community engagement was undertaken during project milestones in stage one (project scope), stage two (background paper) and stage three (draft action plan). The findings from each round of community engagement informed develop of key documents, such as the Background Paper, Draft Affordable Housing Action Plan, and the final Affordable Housing Action Plan.

Over the course of the project, community engagement was open for almost 12 weeks. Engagement activities were promoted across all media platforms, including media releases, radio interviews, newspaper adverts, Facebook posts from the City's Facebook page, and emails to the project mailing list. The project reached more than 16,000 people and directly engaged 239 individuals, groups and organisations in its development.

A wide range of individuals, groups and organisations participated, however most feedback was received from industry stakeholders (those delivering and supporting affordable housing), community members and tenants. Engagement activities focused on opportunities to discuss issues in detail and work through solutions. As a result, 136 people were involved in workshops, forums and one on one meetings, providing key insights to local issues and contributing to practical actions to address these. Further feedback was also provided through online surveys (90 respondents) and written submissions (13).

At times where COVID-19 restrictions were in place, engagement activities were limited to online surveys, written submissions and virtual meetings. Outcomes of the feedback collected during each engagement period helped to inform and refine documents in each project stage.

For further information please see Attachment 2.

Project Governance

A Project Steering Committee and Project Working Group were established at the beginning this project to assist with development of the Affordable Housing Action Plan. Both the Committee and Group have representatives from across the organisation who contributed to the project direction and document content during each stage of the project.

Resource Implications

Development of the Action Plan has been delivered within the Strategic Planning Unit operational budget.

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Projected costs for future financial years:

There are actions proposed in the implementation plan that have budget implications, which will need to go through the normal budget cycle and be determined by Council.

Attachments

1. Affordable Housing Action Plan.
2. Affordable Housing Community Engagement Summary Report.

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Attachment 1 - Affordable Housing Action Plan

Affordable Housing Action Plan

City of Greater Bendigo

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Executive Summary

Housing is a human right and considered as essential infrastructure in any community. Being able to access affordable and appropriate housing helps people secure and maintain a job, keep families safe, raise happy and healthy children, enjoy a better standard of living and contribute to their community. If we want to create a sustainable and prosperous community in Greater Bendigo this must be for all our residents, and this includes everyone having access to affordable housing.

Affordable housing is housing (including social housing) that is appropriate for the needs of very low income households, low income households and moderate income households.

In Greater Bendigo there is a growing affordable housing problem. The lack of a housing supply pipeline can have an impact on community members being priced out of the housing market. This results in individuals and families living in housing that they cannot afford, or waiting and hoping to secure social housing, or becoming homeless.

This Action Plan sets out the City's role and actions it will implement to support an increase in the supply and provision of affordable housing to meet the community's needs. The City already influences affordable housing in many different ways, however this Action Plan aims to bring this work together in a more coordinated way and focus those efforts to collectively achieve better outcomes for our community.

Community vision		
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.		
Affordable Housing Action Plan purpose		
Set out the City's role and actions it will implement to support an increase in the supply and provision of affordable housing to meet the community's needs		
Definitions		
Affordable housing	Housing (including social housing) that is appropriate for the needs of very low income households, low income households and moderate income households	
Social housing	Umbrella term that includes public housing (delivered by State Government) and community housing (delivered by Registered Housing Agencies)	
Objectives		
Better understand affordable housing issues	Increase supply and improve the quality of affordable housing	Improve Council processes and timeframes that affect affordable housing
Social housing target		
Increase existing supply of social housing from 4.6 per cent to meet demand of 10 per cent by 2036		
Roles for Council		
Leader	Establishing a clear position on affordable housing and building an increased understanding of the issues	
Advocate	Advocating across community, industry and all levels of Government to improve outcomes in all areas relating to affordable housing	
Facilitator	Bringing together key stakeholders and reducing barriers to facilitate an increase in the supply of affordable housing	
Partner	Partnering with key stakeholders to leverage assets and resources to increase the supply of affordable housing	

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Purpose

Governments at all levels have a clear obligation to ensure that individuals and households have access to adequate, appropriate and affordable housing, as a cornerstone of a strong and fair society. Housing as a human right is recognised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention of the Rights of Child and by the Australian Human Rights Commission. Without a right to housing, many other basic human rights are compromised.[1] This includes the right to family life and privacy, the right to freedom of movement, the right to assembly and association, the right to health and the right to development.[2] These matters are protected and promoted under the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities which councils are required to uphold.

The purpose of this Action Plan is to set out the role and actions the City will implement to support an increase in the supply and provision of affordable housing to meet the community's needs. This Action Plan will bring together the work the City already undertakes as part of its regulatory requirements to work in a more coordinated way and focus those efforts to collectively achieve better outcomes for our community.

Why affordable housing matters

Being able to access affordable and appropriate housing helps people secure and maintain a job, keep families safe, raise happy and healthy children, enjoy a better standard of living and contribute to their community. There is a clear relationship between housing and wellbeing, and access to adequate housing has a multitude of broader benefits, from better health outcomes to improved learning outcomes for children in school.[3] When people do not have access to affordable housing then other basic needs, such as food and clothing, can be compromised. In Greater Bendigo, suburbs with higher proportions of households reporting that they ran out of food in the last 12 months are generally more likely to be within the low income ranges and experiencing housing stress.[4]

Housing looks different for individuals, couples and families. As people move through life stages their needs change – health, relationships and employment can influence the type of housing they need, their living arrangements and what they can afford.

Affordable housing is vital for the health, wellbeing and prosperity of our residents. If we want to create a sustainable and prosperous community in Greater Bendigo this must be for all our residents, and affordable housing must be considered essential infrastructure.

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[1] Sidoti, C, 'Housing as a Human Right', Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, (1996) <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/rights-and-freedoms/projects/housing-homelessness-and-human-rights>, accessed 17 Sep. 2019.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Beer et al., 'Housing Policy, Housing Assistance and the Wellbeing Dividend: Developing an Evidence Base for Post-GFC Economies', Housing Studies, vol. 26 (2011), 1171-1192.
[4] City of Greater Bendigo, 'Preliminary findings - Active Living Census 2019', 2019.

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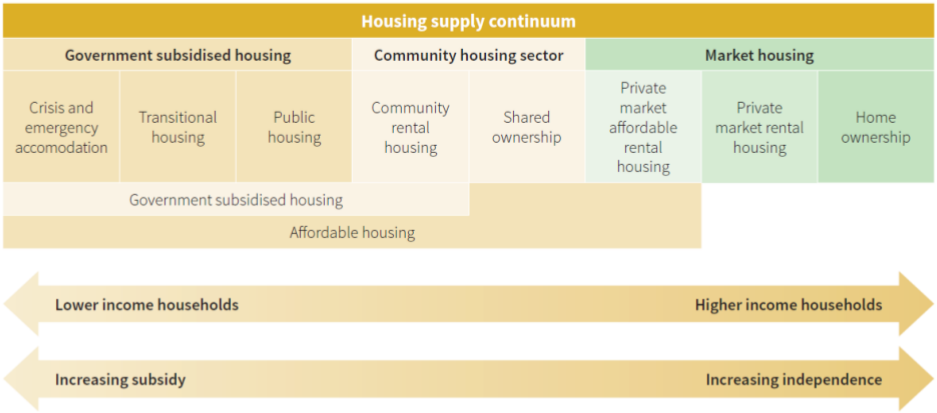
Defining affordable housing

In Victoria the Planning and Environment Act 1987 defines affordable housing as **housing (including social housing) that is appropriate for the needs of very low income households, low income households and moderate income households**.

Household income ranges are set by the Minister for Planning and released annually. The Minister also determines **what is appropriate for the needs of very low, low and moderate income households** (see Appendix A). This includes matters relating to allocating dwellings to eligible households, ownership and management of dwellings, design and energy efficiency of dwellings, location of housing in proximity to shops, services, employment and transport, integration for community cohesion.

Households in the very low to moderate income ranges are often struggling to, or are unable to, participate in the private market and are largely dependent on intervention to secure appropriate housing by government or Registered Housing Agencies (RHAs). The different **types of affordable housing** are included in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1. Housing supply continuum



See Glossary for housing definitions.

How is affordable housing different to social housing?

Social housing is an umbrella term that includes both public housing (government housing) and community housing (provided by Registered Housing Agencies). Social housing is short and long-term rental housing designed for people on low incomes particularly those who have recently experienced homelessness, family violence or have other special needs. Rents are capped to ensure affordability for tenants.

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Affordable housing in Greater Bendigo

The total number and proportion of households in the affordable housing income ranges for Greater Bendigo are listed in Table 1 below. While the very low and moderate income ranges have remained relatively unchanged since 2011, those in the low income range have increased substantially (see Appendix A for definitions and income ranges).

Table 1. Greater Bendigo total households in the very low, low and moderate income ranges

	Very low income range		Low income range		Moderate income range	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
2011	15,654	45 %	6,098	18 %	7,771	23 %
2016	15,687	42 %	9,275	25 %	7,361	20 %

The number and proportions of household types within the affordable housing income ranges for Greater Bendigo are set out in Table 2 below. Single adult households within the very low income range account for the highest number and proportion across all household types and income ranges.

Table 2. Very low, low and moderate income ranges by household type in Greater Bendigo

	Very low income range		Low income range		Moderate income range	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Single adult	5,971	55 %	2,193	20 %	1,567	14 %
Couple, no dependant	3,652	36 %	2,353	23 %	2,048	20 %
Family (with one or two parents) and dependent children	5,263	37 %	4,128	29 %	3,280	23 %

Income by household range is only measurable through data collected every five years as part of the ABS Census. It is acknowledged that this data is now five years old, however data will continue to be updated and monitored over time.

What is the scale of the problem?

Despite increasing awareness of the importance of housing, both among the community and across all levels of government, the evidence indicates that there is a growing housing affordability problem in many parts of Australia including Greater Bendigo. The lack of a housing supply pipeline can have an impact on community members being priced out of the housing market. This results in individuals and families living in housing that they cannot afford, or waiting and hoping to secure social housing, or becoming homeless, and often sacrificing food or heating and cooling.

During the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns in 2020, more than 80 per cent of survey respondents, including local community and organisations, reported a worsening of issues relating to affordable housing, in particular the ability to pay for basic living expenses (such as food, heating, rent or mortgage payments) and being able to secure rental housing or delays with new housing.

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Housing stress

The widely accepted definition for housing stress is measured by the 30/40 rule where the cost of housing is 'no more than 30 per cent of income for those households in the bottom 40 per cent of adjusted income distribution'. [5] It applies to those who are renting and those who have a mortgage.

In 2016 there were an estimated 11,397 households in very low, low and moderate income ranges experiencing rental and mortgage stress. This means that 25.9% of all households in Greater Bendigo were vulnerable to a housing crisis or eviction due to rental or mortgage stress (see Table 3 below). Households experiencing the highest proportions include 71 per cent of very low income ranges in rental stress, and 72 per cent of low income ranges in mortgage stress.

Table 3. Total households in very low, low and moderate income ranges experiencing housing stress

Total very low, low and moderate income households and experiencing housing stress (spending >30% on housing) in Greater Bendigo 2016												
	Very low income households				Low income households				Moderate income households			
	Total households		In housing stress		Total households		In housing stress		Total households		In housing stress	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Renting	5,809	37.0	4,126	71.0	2,507	27.0	1,067	43.0	1,554	21.0	80	5.0
Mortgage	2,793	18.0	1,739	62.0	3,735	40.0	2,684	72.0	3,950	54.0	1,701	43.0

When households within the very low, low and moderate income ranges experience housing stress, basic needs such as food, water consumption, heating and cooling are often sacrificed in order to keep living in their home. Housing stress and financial hardship can increase the risk of people and families becoming homeless. In Australia one in seven people have no savings, which means they are one bill away from not being able to pay their debts.[6]

Increasing demand for social housing

Social housing plays an important role in supporting some of the most vulnerable people in our community. This includes people on low incomes, particularly those who have recently experienced homelessness, family violence or have other special needs. Despite its importance, the supply of social housing has decreased over time. Capital investment by Government has decreased from building an annual average of 8,000 to 14,000 dwellings to now just 3,000.[7] Since the 1990s Government has focussed more on individual subsidies such as first home owner grants and rent assistance.

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[5] Judith Yates and Michelle Gabriel, 'Housing affordability in Australia', *Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI)*, (2006) <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/nrv-research-papers/nrv3-3>, accessed 13 Aug. 2019.
[6] Evgenia Bourova, Ian Ramsay and Paul Ali, 'What 1,100 Australians told us about the experience of living with debt they can't repay', *The Conversation* [website], (2019) <http://theconversation.com/what-1-100-australians-told-us-about-the-experience-of-living-with-debt-they-cant-repay-105296>, accessed 4 Sep. 2019.
[7] Lawson et al.,'Social housing as infrastructure: rationale, prioritisation and investment pathway', *AHURI*, (2019) <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/306>, accessed 15 Aug. 2019.

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As the supply of social housing has decreased, demand has increased. This is reflected in the growing number of people experiencing homelessness and those waiting to be housed in social housing.

Homelessness refers to individuals being unable to find accommodation that is adequate, or only having access to accommodation with limited or no tenure and no access to space for social relations.* In Australia, women aged 55 years and older are the fastest growing cohort experiencing homelessness. The issue of homelessness is also compounded for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who must deal with social and historical complexities relating to the dispossession of land, political justice and struggle for self-determination.

In 2016 the ABS Census estimated 295 people were experiencing homelessness in Greater Bendigo.[8] However, due to the difficulty in counting homeless individuals as part of the Census, this is likely to be a significant undercount. Specialist homelessness services provided to people at risk of or experiencing homelessness increased by 32 per cent between 2015 and 2020, from 1,973 to 2,599.[9] In 2020 there was a decrease in demand for these support services, however this is likely a result of the government's temporary increased funding in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many people experiencing homelessness in the Bendigo region are living in crowded dwellings, in temporary accommodation for the homeless, or stay temporarily with other households. In the Bendigo CBD rough sleepers are more likely to be males aged over 50 years and presenting with mental health issues. Anecdotally, many report having an awareness of support services or are under supervision of case workers and on the wait list for social housing.

Recently there has been an increase in the number of social housing properties, from 1,713 in 2016 to 2,404 in 2020. Yet the number of people still waiting for social housing has doubled over the same period, from 1,315 to 2,632 (increasing further to 2,729 people in March 2021). The growing acute social housing need is represented in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Acute social housing need in Greater Bendigo

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Estimated people experiencing homelessness		295	303^	311^	319^	327^
Social housing waiting list	1,239	1,315	1,533	1,760	2,183	2,632
Unmet acute social housing need					*2,502*	*2,959*
Existing social housing dwellings					2,386	2,404
Total acute social housing need					**4,888**	**5,363**

* This includes individuals who are sleeping rough, couch surfing, sleeping in their cars, living in hostels and refuges and those living in a single room without a kitchen or bathroom.
[8] ABS, Census of Population and Housing: Estimating homelessness, 2016, cat. No. 2049.0, <https://www.abs.gov.au/Ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/2049.0Appendix12016?opendocument&tabname=Notes&prodno=2049.0&issue=2016&num=&view>, accessed 23 January 2019.
[9] Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), 'Specialist homelessness services annual report', (2019) <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-2017-18/contents/contents>, accessed 1 Oct. 2019.
^ Calculated based on the annual average increase between 2011 and 2016 ABS Census

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Illegal dwellings

Some individuals and families are unable to access the formal housing market and end up living in housing that does not meet the minimum standards for building requirements (referred to as illegal dwellings or unauthorised works). Because illegal dwellings are not constructed to a minimum standard they can often present a health and safety risk to the occupants. However, given long waiting lists for social housing, if councils commence proceedings to evict individuals and families, they will likely become homeless. Balancing Councils' obligation to uphold human rights and responsibilities, and ensuring a home is safe for the occupants is a difficult issue to resolve. This issue is complex and each Council across Victoria and Australia grapples with how to deal with it.

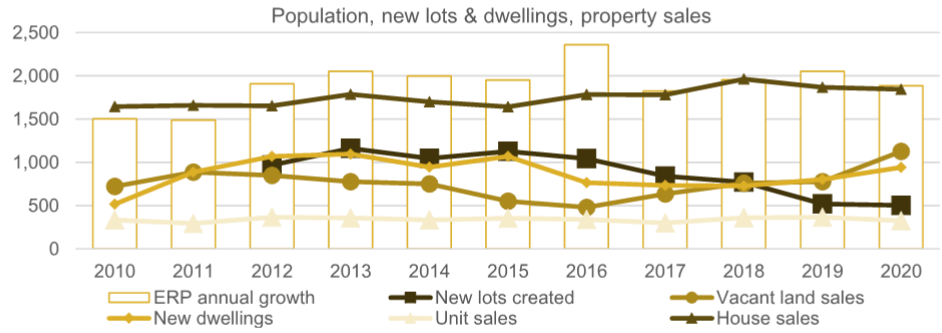
What is contributing to the problem?

Supply

Affordable housing is part of a much broader and complex housing system that is influenced by drivers such as population, employment, education, tourism and land supply. These factors all have an impact on the supply of housing and how it is delivered, including dwelling type, size, and energy efficiency. While the focus of this Action Plan is not to increase the general supply of housing, it is important to understand what is contributing the current issues with affordable housing.

Like many cities around Australia, Greater Bendigo is experiencing challenges between population growth and housing demand, increasing costs for subdivisions, building and buying houses, poor quality housing stock, changes in legislation and lending practices, delays during the subdivision process, and supply of materials for dwelling construction. The COVID-19 pandemic has placed even further pressure on these supply issues. Early population data indicates that many younger adults and families who would have otherwise moved to larger cities remained living in the regions.[10] While land sales and new dwellings being constructed in 2020 increased, unit and house sales slightly decreased.

Figure *2. Greater Bendigo population, new lots and dwellings, property sales (source: Appendix C)*



[10] Andrew Rossiter, 'What were the early impacts of COVID-19 on population growth in Regional Australia?', *.id* [website], (2021) <https://blog.id.com.au/2021/population-forecasting/what-were-the-early-impacts-covid-19-had-on-population-growth-in-regional-australia/>, accessed 16 Jun. 2021.

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Increasing property prices

Over time house sales and vacant land prices in Greater Bendigo have continued to increase. Between 2010 and 2020, the median house price in Greater Bendigo has increased from $262,000 to $404,164.[11] This represents an increase of 54 per cent, or $142,164. Similarly, over the same time period, the median purchase price of land in Greater Bendigo has also increased by almost 65 per cent (or $62,000), from $97,000 in 2010 to $160,000 in 2020.[12] In part land values can be attributed to the infrastructure costs associated with greenfield development, however these increasing prices mean that it is more difficult than ever for single households, retirees, those on lower incomes or first home buyers to purchase or build a house.

Larger homes and smaller households

With the rise in popularity of bigger homes, particularly in Australia, the size (floor area) of new homes in Greater Bendigo are increasing yet households are becoming smaller. In 2010 the average floor area of a home in Greater Bendigo was 228m² and by 2020 this increased to 313m². This represents an increase by almost 40 per cent over 10 years. While this increase is likely a result of the predominant household type being 'family households' (68%), the proportion of 'empty nesters' increased by 20.6 per cent from 2006 to 2016. This is an indicator of an ageing population who will likely need to downsize to smaller homes. However, despite our ageing population and growing need for smaller homes, there is a shortage of one or two bedroom housing Greater Bendigo. In 2016 there were 11,569 single/lone person households however there were only 7,741 one or two bedroom dwellings.[13] There is a similar mismatch of supply and demand in social housing stock. Although the number of bedrooms is not publicly available, it is understood that social housing stock in Greater Bendigo is mostly three or four bedroom housing, yet there is high demand for single/lone person households.

Rising costs to run our homes

Costs associated with running a home have also been increasing as a result of poor-quality housing stock and rising energy prices. As the price of gas and electricity increases these energy inefficient homes result in high gas and electricity bills for those living within them – contributing to housing stress. In the context of affordable housing, housing quality is how a house functions and performs for the benefit of those living within the house now and into the future. Housing quality has a direct impact on people's health and wellbeing, connection to community, and ability to reduce energy costs and negative impacts on the environment. Housing quality includes environmentally sustainable design and universal design principles.*

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[11] DELWP, 'A Guide to Property Values: Annual data and analysis from Valuer-General Victoria', *Houses by suburb*, (2019) <https://www.propertyandlandtitles.vic.gov.au/property-information/property-prices>, accessed 1 Oct. 2019.
[12] DELWP, 'A Guide to Property Values: Annual data and analysis from Valuer-General Victoria', *Property prices*, (2019) <https://www.propertyandlandtitles.vic.gov.au/property-information/property-prices>, accessed 21 Oct. 2019.
[13] Ibid.
* See Glossary for definition of Environmentally Sustainable Design and Universal Design

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Relatively inexpensive retail energy costs during the last decades of the 20th century masked the energy inefficiencies of the dwellings being constructed in Australia.[14] That has now translated into high operating costs for many of those households given the increase in energy costs. Between 2008 and 2018 the price of electricity increased by 76 per cent and 53 per cent for gas.[15] This acutely impacts the most vulnerable in our community, who are least able to afford it, simply as a result of turning on the heating or cooling just to stay comfortable in a poor-quality home.

Many of the homes we build today will still be in use in 50 or even 100 years' time. Therefore, the housing we create for the future will need to be flexible, adaptable and resilient, helping us to respond to both predicted and unexpected change.[16] The quality of housing still to be constructed needs to look beyond the here and now, learn from the mistakes of the past and consider the health and comfort of occupants well into the future.

Challenges in the private rental market

With limited investment by State and Federal Government in social housing over many years, vulnerable households are increasingly reliant on the private rental market. Most rental properties are now offered by individuals and family investors, the bulk of which are home owners. In 2020 there were a total of 10,621 properties being rented in the private market across Greater Bendigo – significantly more than the 2,404 social housing dwellings being rented. Government legislation and tax incentives impact the private rental market and can significantly influence supply and longevity of properties.

In Greater Bendigo, growth of new rental properties continued decreasing between 2015 and 2019 (with total rentals decreasing for the first time since 2005). However, during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 the number of new rental properties increased significantly (see Figure 3 below).[17] Yet while numbers are once again increasing, the vacancy rate of rental properties has dropped from 2.5 per cent in 2016, to 0.7 per cent in 2020.[18]

There have also been decreases in the number of rooming houses operating in Greater Bendigo. In 2016 there were 21 rooming houses registered with the City, however in 2020 this has decreased to 15 in total.[19]

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[14] Fitzgerald, Tess, 'Home energy affordability: Accommodating the case for energy efficiency', *Australian Energy Council* [website] (2017) <https://www.energycouncil.com.au/analysis/home-energy-affordability-accommodating-the-case-for-energy-efficiency/>, accessed 25 Jun. 2020.
[15] Phillips, Ben, 'Energy Stressed in Australia', *Brotherhood of St Lawrence*, (2018) <https://www.bsl.org.au/research/browse-publications/energy-stressed-in-australia/>, accessed 24 Jun. 2020.
[16] McGee, Caitlin, 'Housing', *Australian Government Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources* [website], (2013) <https://www.yourhome.gov.au/housing>, accessed 24 Jun. 2020.
[17] Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), 'Rental Report', (2019) <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/publications/rental-report>, accessed 1 Oct. 2019.
[18] Real Estate Institute of Victoria, 'Monthly Research Bulletin', (2016; 2020).
[19] Consumer Affairs Victoria, 'Rooming houses found for Greater Bendigo City', *Public register of rooming houses* [website], (2020) <https://registers.consumer.vic.gov.au/RhrSearch/SearchResult?SearchTermType=LocalCouncil&SearchTerm=Greater%20Bendigo%20City>, accessed 15 Jun. 2020.

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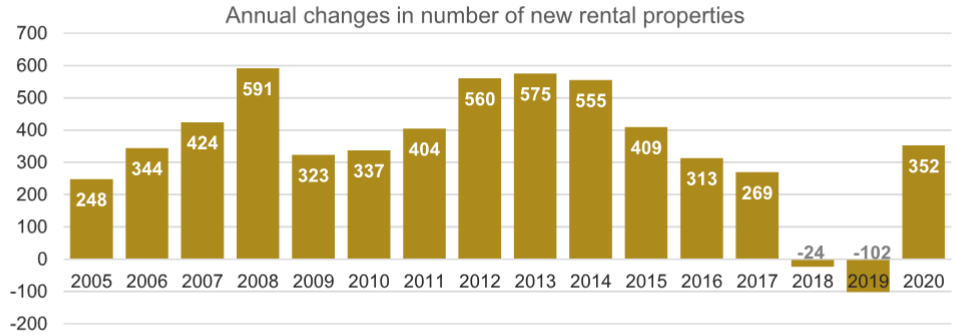
Figure 3. Annual rentals (active bonds)



The quality of rental housing impacts on running costs and quality of life for tenants, and the need for renewal may influence whether landlords retain their investment. Given the majority of rental properties were built prior to the current building regulations (commenced 1993), many now require upgrading and are running below current energy efficiency standards.[20] However, there are currently few incentives for property owners to update their ageing rental properties, and in a tight rental market lower income tenants have few choices than poor-quality ageing housing. This disproportionally impacts those with a disability and low income households, with individuals and families finding it difficult to secure housing appropriate to their needs and having limited funds to make improvements to poor-quality dwellings.

The supply of private long-term rental properties is also being challenged by the recent rise of short-stay accommodation. Over the past year the total number of short term rentals listed on both Airbnb and Stayz in Greater Bendigo remained relatively unchanged. In September 2019 there were approximately 481 rentals listed on Airbnb and Stayz, and in August 2020 this decreased to 461 rentals.[21] Short-stay accommodation properties operate outside the regulation that applies to rooming houses. As a result the City has limited understanding of previous housing tenure (rental or owner-occupied) or if and why accommodation is removed from the short-term rental market. This also means that the City is limited in what it can do to influence this sector of the housing market.

At this stage it is unclear how long-term private investment in the rental market will be impacted by the recent changes to Victorian legislation. In particular there have been substantial changes to the Residential Tenancies Act and Regulations, which are intended to provide more security for tenants while also protecting landlords' ability to manage their property, and improve the quality of rooming houses.

Given these recent policy changes and other challenges in the private rental market, it will be vital to monitor these aspects of the housing market over time.

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[20] Tenants Union of Victoria, 'Regulation of property conditions in the rental market', *Department of Justice and Community Safety*, (2016) <https://www.tuv.org.au/articles/files/submissions/160830-TUV-RTA-Property-Standards.pdf>, accessed 2 Oct. 2019.
[21] Airbnb, 'Places to stay in Bendigo', *Airbnb* [website], (2019) <https://www.airbnb.com.au/>, accessed 30 Sep. 2019 and 4 Aug. 2020; Stayz, 'Properties in Bendigo', *Stayz* [website], (2019) <https://www.stayz.com.au/>, accessed 30 Sep. 2019 and 4 Aug. 2020.

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Policy context

All levels of Government have a range of laws and policies that determine how taxation revenue is allocated. In 2018-19 the Commonwealth Government collected approximately 81 per cent of all taxes in Australia, followed by 15 per cent collected by Victorian Government and three per cent by Local Government.[22] Policies at all levels influence, among other things, the supply of housing (see Table 5 below).

Recently there has been a considerable shift in the State Government's housing policy, with a growing momentum and priority placed on how to increase affordable housing. The State Government's newly created Homes Victoria department, together with $5.3 billion Big Housing Build program, will provide a significant boost to Victoria's supply of affordable housing. The program aims to increase supply from 3 per cent to the national average of 4.2 per cent (around 60,000 additional dwellings). Greater Bendigo has been allocated a minimum of $85 million investment in affordable housing from this program.

Table 5. Government housing policy levers[23]

Commonwealth Government	Victorian Government	Local Government
Housing demand • Tax benefits (negative gearing and capital gains tax reductions) • First Home Loan Deposit Scheme • Migration policy (population increase)	Housing demand • Oversees land release • Re-zoning land (Planning Scheme Amendments) and legislating the Planning and Environment Act 1987 • Land use and development (Planning and Environment Act 1987) • Stamp duty and land tax • First Home Owner Grant • Shared equity initiative • Exemptions and concessions for pensioners and principle place of residence	Housing demand • Planning for population, land supply, and housing • Implementing Zones and Overlays in the Planning Scheme, including re-zoning land • Regulating rooming houses and buildings
Social housing investment • National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA) with States and Territories • Affordable Housing Bond Aggregator (AHBA) provides low cost loans to Registered Housing Agencies • Family home guarantee	Social housing investment • Funding and providing public housing to households on low incomes • Regulates RHA's and enables RHA's to manage some public housing (Housing Act 1983 and Residential Tenancies Act 1997) • Social Housing Growth Fund • Big Housing Build ($5.3B social housing investment) • Public Housing Renewal Program	Rates • Council property rates
Major infrastructure investment • City Deals • National Housing Infrastructure Facility (NHIF) provides finance	Major infrastructure investment • Public transport, hospitals, roads and schools	Minor infrastructure investment • Libraries, roads, drainage schemes and bridges, sports and recreation facilities

[22] ABS, Taxation Revenue, Australia, 2018-19, Catalogue number 5506.0, <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/5506.0#:~:text=Total%20taxation%20revenue%20collected%20in,increase%20in%20taxes%20on%20property.>, accessed 11 Jun. 2020.
[23] 'Understanding the housing policy levers of Commonwealth, state and territory, and local government', AHURI, (2018) <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/policy/ahuri-briefs/understanding-the-housing-policy-levers-of-commonwealth,-state-and-territory,-and-local-government>, accessed 11 Jun. 2020.

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for infrastructure projects that will deliver affordable housing		
Welfare support • Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) for renters in the private market	Policy • Homes for Victoria Strategy 2017 • 10 year Social and Affordable Housing Strategy • Local Government Affordable Housing Compact • Plan Melbourne 2017-2020 • Victorian Infrastructure Plan • Secondary Dwellings Pilot • Inclusionary Zoning Pilot • Ministerial Advisory Committee on Planning Mechanisms for Affordable Housing	Policy • Community/Council Plan • Health and Wellbeing Plan • Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme • Environment Strategy • Managed Growth Strategy • Housing Strategy (GBHS) • All Ages All Abilities Action Plan • City Centre Plan

What is Council already doing?

In the past the City of Greater Bendigo was a supplier of social housing, however with changes to legislation and funding over time this role has changed. Social housing previously owned by the City has been progressively transferred to the State Government or Registered Housing Agencies. This includes 17 social housing dwellings in Heathcote and 12 across Bendigo. The City currently does not own any social housing properties and is not a Registered Housing Agency.

In 2012 the City provided support to developers to secure funding from the Federal Government's Building Better Regional Cities Program which helped to deliver 100 affordable house and land packages to eligible households in Huntly.

The City assists not-for-profits and community organisations who provide support services to those experiencing homelessness. In-kind support is provided to local homelessness programs, such as Bendigo Winter Night Shelter, HeyVan Homelessness Assertive Outreach Response Program, and the response to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Recently the City has taken an inclusive growth approach to address disadvantage. This includes initiatives in strategies such as Greening Greater Bendigo, Economic Development Strategy, Public Space Plan, draft Environment Strategy, draft Council Plan, draft Health and Wellbeing Plan, and draft Social Justice Framework.

The City is also participating in the State Governments Secondary Dwellings Pilot Program, which introduces planning policy to make it easier for people to have a secondary dwelling. A secondary dwelling is a small dwelling – similar to a dependent persons unit, granny flat, or tiny home – on the same lot as an existing dwelling. Smaller housing provides options for an ageing population, multigenerational families, and low-income households.

Following the announcement of State Government's Big Housing Build program in 2020, the City has undertaken a significant amount of work in response to some of the program's initiatives and this is expected to continue until the program finishes in 2024.

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Council's position

Council is committed to achieving our Community Vision, *'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.'*. We will do this by delivering on the three **objectives** outlined in this Action Plan, which include:

1. Better understand affordable housing issues
2. Increase supply and improve quality of affordable housing
3. Improve Council processes and timeframes that affect affordable housing

Further strategies and actions implement these objectives by working to address the **key issues** relating to affordable housing identified in this Action Plan, which are summarised as:

- Increasing homelessness and demand for social housing
- Increasing pressure in the private rental market
- Rising cost of housing and housing stress
- Housing supply mismatch

There is a particularly high need for more one and two bedroom dwellings, given single adult households in the very low income range are the most disadvantaged cohort.

The overall aim of this Action Plan is to increase the supply of affordable housing, and there are several actions which will work towards this, however given the acute need for our most vulnerable community members, a **social housing target** has been developed to increase current supply of social housing from 4.9 per cent to meet demand of **10 per cent by 2036**.[24]

This target recognises that there will always be a need for social housing in our community, and as our population grows the number of social housing dwellings will increase proportionately. Having a target will assist in affordable housing negotiations with developers through the Planning Scheme as well as Homes Victoria for public housing. Delivering this level of social housing supply over 15 years is more realistic given the complex challenges this sector faces, including being able to secure funding, the smaller scale of developments in regional areas, and limitations of a voluntary contributions system.

The City will support an increase in the supply and provision of affordable housing to meet the community's needs through the following **roles**:

- Leader – Establishing a clear position on affordable housing and building an increased understanding of the issues
- Advocate – Advocating across community, industry and all levels of Government to improve outcomes in all areas relating to affordable housing
- Facilitator – Bringing together key stakeholders and reducing barriers to facilitate an increase in the supply of affordable housing
- Partner – Partnering with key stakeholders to leverage assets and resources to increase the supply of affordable housing

[24] See Appendix D for further information on how this target has been developed.

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Implementation Plan

The implementation plan details what City wants to achieve (objectives), how we will get it (strategies) and what we will do next (actions). This will be implemented over the next four years and measured by a monitoring and evaluation framework (see following section).

Objectives (what we want)	Strategies (how we will get it)		Actions (what we will do next)		Role	Responsibility	Timing
1 Better understand affordable housing issues							
	1.1	Create opportunities for information sharing and greater understanding across industry stakeholders	1.1.1	Expand the City's Developers Forum and host housing forums, bringing stakeholders together to understand needs and create opportunities for collaboration.	Leader and Facilitator	Statutory Planning Unit	Short term - 1 year
	1.2	Reduce stigma around affordable housing	1.2.1	Use community engagement opportunities for strategic planning projects to increase understanding of affordable housing.	Leader and Advocate	Strategic Planning Unit	Long term - 4 years
	1.3	Improve access to and understanding of rooming houses and their regulations	1.3.1	Advocate for improvements to rooming house regulations to benefit both operators and tenants.	Advocate	Safe & Healthy Environments Unit	Long term - 4 years
			1.3.2	Use Council website and business newsletters to assist rooming house operators to navigate regulations.	Leader	Safe & Healthy Environments Unit	Long term - 4 years
2 Increase supply and improve the quality of affordable housing							
	2.1	Increase the supply of social housing	2.1.1	Work in partnership with State Government on Big Housing Build initiatives, in particular developing a long term strategic partnership to increase social housing in Greater Bendigo, and achieve sustainable design and health and wellbeing outcomes.	Facilitate and Partner	Strategic Planning Unit	Long term - 4 years
			2.1.2	Investigate options around rating discounts for the provision of social and affordable housing.	Facilitate	Financial Strategy Unit	Long term - 4 years

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Objectives (what we want)	Strategies (how we will get it)	Actions (what we will do next)		Role	Responsibility	Timing
		2.1.3	Review planning permit application fees waiver policy to ensure proposals by Registered Housing Agencies can qualify for a waiver.	Facilitate	Statutory Planning Unit	Medium term - 2 years
		2.1.4	Identify well located surplus Government land in Greater Bendigo and work with Registered Housing Agencies, developers and Governments to deliver a mix of affordable housing on these sites.	Facilitate and Partner	Strategic Planning Unit	Long term - 4 years
		2.1.5	Advocate to State Government to mandate inclusionary zoning in the Planning Scheme, to ensure that a proportion of housing in a development is set aside for affordable housing.	Advocate	Statutory Planning Unit	Long term - 4 years
		2.1.6	Work with Registered Housing Agencies, developers and all levels of Government to reduce development costs and risks associated with infrastructure provision and contaminated land, through funding and grants.	Advocate and Facilitate	Strategic Planning Unit	Long term - 4 years
		2.1.7	Advocate for increased funding to local homelessness service providers, including for support services, emergency and crisis accommodation, and transitional housing.	Advocate	Community Partnerships	Long term - 4 years
		2.1.8	Investigate mechanisms to reduce the time taken to subdivide and to bring vacant residential land to market.	Advocate	Statutory Planning Unit	Medium term - 2 years
	2.2 Increase diversity of housing	2.2.1	Advocate for and implement changes to the Planning & Environment Act 1987 and Planning Scheme to allow and encourage small secondary/accessory dwellings.	Advocate	Statutory Planning Unit	Medium term - 2 years
		2.2.2	Develop a campaign to change community attitudes towards different types of housing.	Advocate	Strategic Planning Unit	Long term - 4 years
		2.2.3	Investigate advocacy for universal design requirements to be implemented through the Planning Scheme and/or National Construction Code.	Advocate	Strategic Planning Unit	Long term - 4 years

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Objectives (what we want)	Strategies (how we will get it)	Actions (what we will do next)	Role	Responsibility	Timing
	2.3 Improve the quality of new housing	2.3.1 Through the Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE), advocate to State Government to create mandatory ESD requirements and implement State-wide through the Particular Provisions in the Planning Scheme.	Advocate	Environment Unit	Long term - 4 years
	2.4 Improve the quality of existing public housing and housing in the private market	2.4.1 Advocate to State Government to continue improving the energy efficiency of public housing, such as expanding the EnergySmart Public Housing Project and implementing the DHHS Housing Design Guidelines.	Advocate	Environment Unit	Long term - 4 years
		2.4.2 Advocate to State and Federal Governments to continue assisting households to improve the energy efficiency of private housing, such as expanding the Energy Savvy Upgrades program.	Advocate and Facilitate	Environment Unit	Long term - 4 years
		2.4.3 Support the availability of secure and competitive loan terms for lower income households in Greater Bendigo to improve the energy efficiency of homes, such as the Environmental Upgrade Finance program and other green loan products.	Advocate and Facilitate	Environment Unit	Short term - 1 year
3 Improve Council processes and timeframes that affect affordable housing					
	3.1 Reduce planning application timeframes	3.1.1 Develop a new "Major Projects Planner" position for consideration by Council.	Facilitate	Statutory Planning Unit	Medium term - 2 years
		3.1.2 Advocate to State Government for exemption of notice and review requirements in the Planning Scheme for social housing developments.	Advocate	Statutory Planning Unit	Long term - 4 years
	3.2 Adopt a clear position on affordable housing	3.2.1 Implement affordable housing data and relevant objectives, strategies and actions in the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme.	Leader	Strategic Planning Unit	Long term - 4 years
		3.2.2 Establish a clear pathway for negotiating affordable housing agreements under the Planning & Environment Act 1987.	Advocate and Facilitate	Statutory Planning Unit	Short term - 1 year

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Objectives (what we want)	Strategies (how we will get it)	Actions (what we will do next)		Role	Responsibility	Timing
		3.2.3	Develop an unauthorised works protocol (illegal dwellings), to provide guidance for council staff when dealing with owners who struggle to get into the formal housing market.	Leader	Safe & Healthy Environments Unit	Long term - 4 years
		3.2.4	Advocate to State Government to create a Ministers Guideline for crisis accommodation (e.g. temporary homeless shelters) in non-residentially classified, public and private buildings.	Advocate	Safe & Healthy Environments Unit	Long term - 4 years
		3.2.5	Develop a homelessness protocol.	Leader	Community Partnerships Unit	Long term - 4 years

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Monitoring and Evaluation

The following monitoring and evaluation measurements will be used to determine whether the City is on track to achieving the Action Plan objectives and if actions need updating to respond to changes in Government policy and new issues or opportunities.

It is acknowledged that changes in the housing market and issues relating to affordable housing occur over a longer period of time. Although the impact of Action Plan will be measured regularly change is likely to be incremental in the short term, however when viewed over the long term it is expected to be substantial and lasting.

Affordable Housing Action Plan monitoring and evaluation				
Action Plan Objectives	Measurement	Source	Frequency	Responsible Unit
1. Better understand affordable housing issues	Annual summary report on housing • Update on implementation plan progress • Other initiatives	• CoGB database & below data sources • CoGB units responsible for implementation plan actions	• 12 months • 12 months	• Strategic Planning • Strategic Planning
2. Increase supply and improve the quality of affordable housing	• Number of new dwellings constructed • Number of social housing dwellings • Decrease in the unmet acute need for social housing • Proportion of households experiencing housing stress • NatHERS average energy rating for new dwellings • Increase of 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings constructed annually • Number of secondary dwelling approvals	• CoGB database: building permits • CoGB database • DHHS & ABS: Estimated homelessness • ABS: Census • NatHERS & CSIRO • CoGB database: building permits • CoGB database: planning permits	• 12 months • 12 months • 5 years • 12 months • 12 months • 12 months	• Strategic Planning • Strategic Planning • Strategic Planning • Strategic Planning • Strategic Planning • Strategic Planning • Statutory Planning
3. Improve Council processes and timeframes that affect affordable housing	• Outcomes of planning proposals that include social housing • Outcomes of implementing homelessness protocol • Outcomes of implementing unauthorised works protocol	• CoGB database • CoGB database • CoGB database	• 12 months • 12 months • 12 months	• Statutory Planning • Community Partnerships • Safe & Healthy Environments

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Glossary

Affordable Housing	Housing (including social housing) that is appropriate for the needs of very low income households, low income households and moderate income households. More generally, this can be considered housing which does not negatively impact on the ability of households to meet other basic living costs.
Community Housing	Housing for low to moderate income households or people with special needs and managed by Registered Housing Agencies.
Crisis and emergency housing	Short term housing for people escaping family violence and people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, including women's refuges, youth refuges and major crisis supported accommodation services (transitional housing, refuges, hotels, motels, caravan parks, or staying temporarily with friends). Crisis and emergency housing is managed by not-for-profit organisations who usually assist in finding long-term housing and provide other support.
Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD)	ESD aims to improve the health and comfort of buildings for occupants whilst reducing negative impacts on the environment. ESD assists with protecting our environment, secures today's living standards, helps future-proof communities against rising energy, water and waste disposal costs, and reduce the impact of climate change. ESD sets out a number of different standards for buildings to achieve, based on commercially proven techniques, and is appropriate to the scale of development and site specific opportunities and constraints.
Housing Act 1983	Legislates social housing in Victoria including development and funding of housing for low-income households regulate and monitor Registered Housing Agencies, promotion, education and encouragement of the sector.
Inclusionary zoning	Where a certain proportion of housing in a development is set aside for low to moderate income households. This may be tied into development or density bonuses.
Mortgage/Rental Stress	Households in the lowest 40 per cent of incomes who are paying more than 30 per cent of their usual gross weekly income on home loan repayments.
Planning and Environment Act 1987	Framework for planning the use, development and protection of land in Victoria. This Act also includes a definition of affordable housing, specifies income ranges for very low, low and moderate income households for affordable housing, and allows local government to negotiate section 173 agreements for voluntary affordable housing.
Public housing	Long-term discounted rental housing provided by the Victoria State Government Director of Housing (DoH), Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Homes Victoria.
Registered Housing Agency	A Registered Housing Agency (RHA) is a not-for-profit providing affordable rental housing for low income households. RHA's may own, manage and develop affordable housing as well as provide a range of housing support and assistance to clients.
Residential Tenancies Act 1997	Regulation and management of rented premises, rooming houses, and caravan parks, define the rights and duties of their landlords, owners, tenants and residents.
Rooming house	Housing with one or more room for rent by four or more people. Residents in rooming houses also generally share bathrooms, kitchens and other common areas.
Section 173 Agreement	Under Section 173 (s173) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 a land owner and Responsible Authority can enter into an agreement that sets out conditions or restrictions for the use and development of land. A s173 Agreement is a legal contract that is recorded on title of land. As part of the State Government housing reforms, this Act was amended to include s173 (1A) allowing a Responsible Authority to negotiate s173 agreements for voluntary affordable housing.
Social Housing	Short and long-term rental housing designed for people on low incomes particularly those who have recently experienced homelessness, family violence or have other special needs. Rents are capped at 25 per cent of total household income. Social housing can be; **public housing**, either government owned and managed or government owned and managed by a RHA; or **community housing** which is owned and managed by a RHA.
Universal Design	Based on principles to ensure buildings are designed to be equitable, flexible, intuitive, perceptible, tolerant for error, low physical effort, and appropriate size and space for approach. These principles underpin the Australian 'Livable Housing Design Guidelines', which recommends simple changes to building standards to make housing liveable for pregnant mums, young families with kids, people with sporting or traumatic injuries, seniors, and those with a disability and their families.[25]

[25] Livable Housing Australia, 'Livable Housing Design Guidelines', (2020) <http://www.livablehousingaustralia.org.au/library/SLLHA_GuidelinesJuly2017FINAL4.pdf>, accessed 24 Jun. 2020.

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Appendix A – Definitions and income ranges

Income ranges for very low, low and moderate for household are gazetted annually on the recommendation of the Minister for Planning and the current ranges are set out below in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Income ranges for regional Victoria (areas outside the Greater Capital City Statistical Area of Melbourne), June 2020 [26]

	Very low income range	Low income range	Moderate income range
Single adult	Up to $19,020	$19,021 to $30,430	$30,431 to $45,640
Couple, no dependant	Up to $28,520	$28,521 to $45,640	$45,641 to $68,460
Family (with one or two parents) and dependent children	Up to $39,930	$39,931 to $63,900	$63,901 to $95,840

The Minister for Planning also determines what should be considered when trying to understand the housing needs of very low, low and moderate income households. This is set out as Specified Matters under Section 3aa(2) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, and includes:

- Allocation
- Affordability (in terms of the capacity for very low income, low income and moderate income households that it is intended for)
- Longevity (in terms of the public benefit of the provision)
- Tenure
- Type of housing, in terms of form and quality
- Location, in terms of site location and proximity to amenities, employment and transport
- Integration, in terms of the physical build and local community
- The following official estimates of housing need:
    - Australian Bureau of Statistics Community Profiles
    - Census profiles for Victoria
    - Department of Health and Human Services Rental Report
    - Metropolitan regional housing plans to guide housing growth
    - Public housing waiting list (Victorian Housing Register list)
    - Victoria in Future data tables.

[26] Victoria Minister for Planning Hon. Richard Wynne MP, 'Governor in Council Order', DELWP, (2019) <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/policy-and-strategy/affordable-housing/resources>, accessed 8 Aug. 2019.

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Appendix B – What the community told us

Approach and process

Given the sensitivity of issues associated with affordable housing a range of engagement methods were used throughout the project. While this included broad and anonymous methods such as online surveys, there was an emphasis on targeted workshops and one on one meetings with key stakeholders to gain further insights. The project was promoted through the City's website, Facebook page, internally with staff, a project mailing list, newspaper adverts and radio interviews.

In stage one of the project a stakeholder and community forum was held in August 2018, as well as one on one meetings. Affordable housing issues identified included supply, quality, regulation, changing climate, and a lack of policy from Council. The opportunities raised covered market incentives, advocacy around regulation, energy efficiency, community education, alternative housing models, and potential roles for Council. These findings informed the Affordable Housing Background Paper.

Community engagement in stage two of the project was open from January until March 2020, and included an online survey, workshops, meetings, and written submissions. Feedback built on the comments collected in stage one and related to; challenges with funding and financing, sharing cross-sector knowledge, increasing housing supply and improving energy efficiency, delays with planning applications, no clear direction from Council, managing community perception, lack of housing diversity and poor-quality, support for Council roles, and suggested actions for Council to address these issues. These findings informed the Draft Affordable Housing Action Plan.

Stage three community engagement was undertaken in August and September 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic when restrictions were in place, as a result engagement was limited to an online survey, written submissions and virtual meetings. Despite these limitations there was meaningful engagement with community and key industry stakeholders, including virtual discussions with industry stakeholders such as Registered Housing Agencies, community support providers and a Peak Body for developers. This provided an opportunity to test the practicality of actions proposed and gain further clarity around the feedback. Findings have informed this final Affordable Housing Action Plan.

Outcomes

Through the abovementioned approach to community engagement the project reached more than 16,000 people and directly engaged 239 people and organisations in its development. Overall there is growing concern across our community for issues associated with affordable housing and strong support for developing a strategic response to this. Level of support for key components of the Action Plan:

- 76% felt the 'Objectives' responded appropriately to the key issues.
- 81% agreed that the roles for Council to address affordable housing are appropriate.
- 88% agreed with the social housing target of 9.5% by 2036 or felt this should be a higher proportion or delivered quicker

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Appendix C – Data tables for population, land and housing supply

Table 7. Population, supply and demand of land, dwellings, and acute social housing need

Year	Estimated Resident Population[27] #	ERP annual growth #	Annual growth rate %	Existing dwellings[28] #	New dwellings* #	New lots** #	Vacant land sales[29] #	Unit / Apartment sales[28] #	House sales[28] #	Rental properties[30] #	Social housing supply** #	Social housing waiting list[31] #	People accessing Specialist Homelessness Services[32] #	Estimated homelessness[33] #
2010	100,506	1,503	1.5		517	-	723	334	1,645	7,310	-	-	-	-
2011	101,995	1,489	1.5	43,538	889	-	888	295	1,660	7,714	-	-	-	257
2012	103,905	1,910	1.9	-	1,071	950	851	366	1,654	8,274	-	1,243	-	-
2013	105,957	2,052	2.0	-	1,097	1,145	779	358	1,787	8,849	-	1,234	-	-
2014	107,955	1,998	1.9	-	945	1,061	753	335	1,700	9,404	-	1,336	-	-
2015	109,908	1,953	1.8	-	1,069	1,107	552	354	1,643	9,813	-	1,239	1,973	-
2016	112,267	2,359	2.1	48,989	766	1,075	481	340	1,785	10,126	1,713	1,315	2,056	295
2017	114,091	1,824	1.6	-	734	914	637	301	1,782	10,395	-	1,533	2,266	303^^
2018	116,041	1,950	1.7	-	729	768	760	360	1,963	10,371	-	1,760	2,646	311^^
2019	118,093	2,052	1.8	51,515^	803	528	779	367	1,867	10,269	2,386	2,183	2,809	319^^
2020	119,980	1,887	1.6	52,459^	944	504	1,127	326	1,846	10,621	2,404	2,632	2,599	327^^
2021	*123,632*	-	-	*53,671*	-	-	-	-	-	10,657	-	2,729	-	-
2026	*134,466*	-	-	*58,559*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2031	*145,065*	-	-	*63,589*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2036	*155,596*	-	-	*68,736*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

[27] ABS, 'ERP by LGA (ASGS 2018), 2001 to 2020', (2020) <https://stat.data.abs.gov.au/>, accessed 18 Jun. 2021.
.idForecast, 'Population and household forecasts, 2016 to 2036', prepared by .id based on historic ABS Census and Estimated Resident Population data, (2017), <https://forecast.id.com.au/bendigo>, accessed 1 May 2021.
[28] ABS, 'Census 2011 and 2016 Greater Bendigo LGA', (2020) <https://www.abs.gov.au/census>, accessed 26 Jun. 2020.
* Building permit data is a self-reporting system that building surveyors submit to CoGB, quality of data is dependent on individual building surveyors.
[29] DELWP, 'A Guide to Property Values: Annual data and analysis from Valuer-General Victoria', (2020) <https://www.land.vic.gov.au/valuations/resources-and-reports/property-sales-statistics>, accessed 25 Jun. 2021.
[30] DHHS, 'Rental Report', (2020) <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/publications/rental-report>, accessed 17 Nov. 2020.
** Based on City of Greater Bendigo database.
[31] DHHS, 'Victorian Housing Register and Transfer List', (2021) <https://www.housing.vic.gov.au/victorian-housing-register>, accessed 4 May 2021.
[32] AIHW, 'Specialist homelessness services annual report', (2019) <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-2017-18/contents/contents>, accessed 17 Nov. 2020.
[33] ABS, Census of Population and Housing: Estimating homelessness, 2016, cat. No. 2049.0, <https://www.abs.gov.au/Ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/2049.0Appendix12016?opendocument&tabname=Notes&prodno=2049.0&issue=2016&num=&view>, accessed 23 January 2019.
^ Based on ABS Census 2016 dwellings and annual building permit data submitted to CoGB by building surveyors.
^^ Based on ABS Census estimates from 2011 and 2016.

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Table 8. Annual property sales statistics from Valuer-General Victoria[34]

City of Greater Bendigo Residential Price Statistics 1989 to 2019									
	Vacant land sales			Units/Apartments sales			House sales		
Year	No. of Sales	Median Price	Mean Price	No. of Sales	Median Price	Mean Price	No. of Sales	Median Price	Mean Price
1989	461	27,000	32,027	185	75,000	97,190	1,207	78,000	84,568
1990	413	27,500	32,300	227	80,000	85,578	1,133	80,000	88,541
1991	367	27,000	30,522	193	83,000	91,406	1,029	80,000	87,050
1992	485	28,000	32,241	195	79,500	81,444	1,268	82,900	89,851
1993	497	31,000	33,861	261	80,000	81,644	1,400	85,000	91,912
1994	467	32,500	37,146	204	81,500	89,154	1,295	86,000	94,314
1995	362	31,000	34,983	169	85,000	98,696	1,212	85,000	92,787
1996	323	31,000	35,787	172	80,000	85,294	1,224	85,000	91,482
1997	498	32,500	37,867	220	76,000	82,784	1,346	86,500	95,523
1998	443	32,000	35,060	238	82,500	89,114	1,302	88,000	97,349
1999	473	35,000	38,636	225	87,250	99,544	1,358	95,000	107,214
2000	397	36,000	39,120	285	94,000	107,221	1,613	100,000	110,598
2001	772	41,950	45,905	331	95,000	106,560	1,946	120,000	127,021
2002	783	50,000	52,789	317	127,500	131,785	1,932	145,000	158,363
2003	952	61,000	64,919	453	145,000	152,681	1,878	179,475	190,858
2004	610	74,950	79,354	264	165,000	171,597	1,775	195,000	207,797
2005	657	79,500	86,288	308	183,375	188,959	1,692	205,000	218,697
2006	592	85,000	96,620	299	180,000	187,515	1,649	217,000	229,628
2007	562	89,000	97,111	367	193,000	195,780	1,733	221,000	236,760
2008	423	85,000	91,838	260	187,750	197,656	1,549	222,000	237,073
2009	750	86,500	93,066	398	199,975	206,572	1,752	232,125	246,661
2010	723	97,000	106,729	334	216,250	225,540	1,645	262,000	280,788
2011	888	105,425	111,753	295	225,000	230,267	1,660	275,000	293,919
2012	851	112,000	118,827	366	228,300	223,120	1,654	295,000	312,724
2013	779	120,000	130,203	358	237,250	240,663	1,787	307,500	328,372
2014	753	120,000	132,463	335	235,000	253,431	1,700	320,000	341,437
2015	552	132,250	147,269	354	237,750	235,411	1,643	325,000	342,675
2016	481	150,000	154,528	340	240,000	252,906	1,785	322,500	353,611
2017	637	145,000	150,602	301	257,500	275,168	1,782	335,000	360,182
2018	760	145,750	154,240	360	263,000	272,507	1,963	346,800	378,824
2019	779	148,000	165,547	367	267,000	281,301	1,867	360,000	394,870
2020	1,127	160,000	171,725	326	305,000	324,729	1,846	404,164	432,756

[34] DELWP, 'A Guide to Property Values: Annual data and analysis from Valuer-General Victoria', (2019) <https://www.propertyandlandtitles.vic.gov.au/property-information/property-prices>, accessed 4 Aug. 2020.

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Appendix D – Determining acute need for social housing

The estimated acute need for social housing is based on the following approach:

- Estimated people experiencing homelessness in Greater Bendigo, based on ABS estimates (327)
- Those on the DHHS social housing waiting list in the North Division – Loddon, Bendigo (2,632)
- Existing social housing dwellings in Greater Bendigo, based on the City of Greater Bendigo database (2,404)

These indicators bring the total acute social housing need to 5,363 or 10 per cent of the total estimated dwellings in Greater Bendigo in 2020. It is acknowledged that this estimate is likely to be considered relatively conservative given the likely significant undercount of those experiencing homelessness.

The **unmet** acute need for social housing in Greater Bendigo in 2020 is estimated to be 2,959 and is based on the following approach:

- Estimated people experiencing homelessness in Greater Bendigo (327)
- Those on the social housing waiting list in the North Division – Loddon, Bendigo (2,632)

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Attachment 2 - Affordable Housing Community Engagement Summary Report

Affordable Housing Action Plan

Community Engagement Report

City of Greater Bendigo

2021

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Introduction

The City of Greater Bendigo has completed an extensive community engagement program to support development of the Affordable Housing Action Plan (Action Plan). The Action Plan aims to better understand affordable housing needs in Greater Bendigo, and establish a position for how the City proposes to address the growing issue of an affordable housing shortage now and into the future.

The engagement approach directly involved the community to ensure concerns and aspirations were consistently understood and considered. Community engagement was undertaken during project milestones in stage one (project scope), stage two (background paper) and stage three (draft action plan). A wide range of individuals, groups and organisations participated, however most feedback was from industry stakeholders (those delivering and supporting affordable housing), community members and tenants. At times where COVID-19 restrictions were in place, engagement activities were limited to online surveys, written submissions and virtual meetings. Outcomes of the feedback collected during each engagement period helped to inform and refine documents in each project stage.

Methodology

Aim and objectives

The aim of community engagement for this project was to ensure the final Action Plan responded appropriately to the affordable housing issue in Greater Bendigo and aligned with feedback collected from key stakeholders and community.

Objectives include:

- Understand affordable housing needs and how they have changed over time.
- Inform and engage both Council and the community on why the City needs to address the issue of housing affordability.
- Investigate the options available to local government to increase the provision of affordable housing.
- Engage with housing providers, developers, real estate agents, and others around affordable housing and what mechanisms are available to local government in this regard.
- Develop a clear policy for the City around affordable housing including mechanisms to increase affordable housing stock.
- Consider mechanisms to improve the energy and water efficiency of homes to both reduce housing costs and environmental impacts.

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Engagement approach

The approach to engagement for this project was to 'involve' all stakeholders, in accordance with the International Association for Public Participation Spectrum (IAP2). This included working directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspiration were consistently understood and considered.

While broad and anonymous engagement methods were employed to gather a range of views from across the community, given the sensitivity of issues associated with affordable housing there was also a focus on targeted workshops and one on one meetings to gain further insights. This involved leveraging existing and strengthening new relationships with key stakeholders working in the affordable housing space and City staff.

All engagement undertaken was consistent with the City's Community Engagement Policy, and any engagement activities held during the COVID-19 pandemic adhered to social distancing restrictions in place (e.g. no face to face engagement).

Engagement activities and participants

During stages one, two and three of the project community engagement was open for almost 12 weeks. Over this time, engagement activities were promoted across all media platforms, including media releases, radio interviews, newspaper adverts, Facebook posts from the City's Facebook page, and emails to the project mailing list. The project reached more than 16,000 people and directly engaged 239 individuals, groups and organisations in its development.

Engagement activities focused on opportunities to discuss issues in detail and work through solutions. As a result, 136 people were involved in workshops, forums and one on one meetings, providing key insights to local issues and contributing to practical actions to address these.

Further feedback was also provided through online surveys (90 respondents) and written submissions (13).

Table 1 below further details the engagement activities undertaken.

Table 1. Engagement activities and audience numbers

Engagement activity	Audience number
Written submissions	13
Survey responses	90
Workshop, forum, and meetings	136
Local newspaper adverts	4
Radio interviews	2
People reached on CoGB Facebook	15,012
CoGB Facebook clicks and reactions	821
Project mailing list email	160
Internal staff reached	700

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Summary of engagement findings

Overall there is growing concern across our community for issues associated with affordable housing and strong support for developing a strategic response to this.

Level of support for key components of the Action Plan:

- 76% felt the 'Objectives' responded appropriately to the key issues.
- 81% agreed that the roles for Council to address affordable housing are appropriate.
- 88% agreed with the social housing target of 9.5% by 2036 or felt this should be a higher proportion or delivered quicker

A wide range of individuals, groups and organisations participated in the community engagement process over the course of the project, however most feedback was from industry stakeholders (those delivering and supporting affordable housing), community members and tenants.

During the COVID-19 pandemic individuals and organisations reported a worsening of issues relating to affordable housing, in particular the ability to pay for basic living expenses (such as food, heating, rent or mortgage payments), being able to secure rental housing or delays with new housing.

Stage 1

Community engagement during stage one of the project (scope) provided a basis for further research and engagement throughout the project.

A stakeholder and community forum was held in August 2018,and attended by approximately 40 people, followed by one on one meetings. Local affordable housing issues, opportunities, and potential roles for Council were explored. Issues identified included supply, quality, regulation, changing climate, and a lack of policy from Council. The opportunities raised covered market incentives, advocacy around regulation, energy efficiency, community education, and alternative housing models. There was strong support for Council taking a lead role, bringing together stakeholders and the broader community, improving policies and processes, partnering on initiatives and being an advocate and facilitator.

These findings helped to inform the Affordable Housing Background Paper in stage two.

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Stage 2

Community engagement in stage two of the project was open from January until March 2020, and included an online survey, workshops, meetings, and written submissions. Feedback built on the comments collected in stage one and related to the current state of affordable housing, key challenges and key actions for the Draft Action Plan.

Overall there are a significant number of different types of organisations contributing to the support network of affordable housing in Greater Bendigo, particularly Community Housing Providers (Registered Housing Agencies) and volunteer organisations. As a result, there is a strong desire for the City to clearly define its role in affordable housing and play a more active role in supporting the community organisations and advocating on their behalf. There is also a growing community desire to see a holistic improvement in affordable housing, including affordable and sustainable living.

Several challenges for affordable housing were raised, including:

- Funding and financing.
- Legislative requirements and delays with these processes.
- Managing community perception.
- Lack of housing diversity and poor-quality supply (including ageing stock and sustainability).

Suggested actions related to the City's role as a leader, advocate, facilitator and partner. Overall, most feedback received related to the City's role as a 'Planner' and focused on building and planning regulation and the planning permit process. Suggested actions are broadly summarised as follows:

- Advocate to State Government for regulatory changes relating to inclusionary zoning, sustainable design, value capture, rooming houses, homeless shelters, and alternative housing.
- Market incentives and advocacy to State Government to increase social housing and support services.
- Improvements to Council processes for faster decision making in planning and building.
- Identify and facilitate affordable housing developments on surplus government land.
- Initiatives and funding to reduce development costs and risks associated with infrastructure provision and remediating contaminated land.

There was also feedback around clarifying definitions and ensuring terminology is consistent throughout the document.

Finally, concerns around the timeframe to implement the Action Plan were identified, and given the long-term nature of this issue it is important that implementation is extended.

These findings helped to inform the Draft Affordable Housing Action Plan in stage three of the project.

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Stage 3

Stage three community engagement was undertaken in August and September 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic when restrictions were in place, as a result engagement was limited to an online survey, written submissions and virtual meetings. Despite these limitations there was meaningful engagement with community and industry, including virtual discussions with key stakeholders such as Registered Housing Agencies, community support providers and a Peak Body for developers. This provided an opportunity to test the practicality of actions proposed and gain further clarity around the feedback.

Overall there was significant support for the proposed roles for Council and objectives to address affordable housing. Other suggested roles such as provider or supplier are outside the project scope.

Most agreed with the proposed social housing target of 9.5 percent by 2036, or believed the target should be higher, delivered sooner or include other cohorts. Other suggested improvements included explaining or justifying the target timeframe, comparing supply with the average supply for Victoria, or an alternative to a fixed target.

Around half the comments received supported the 28 actions and implementation timing proposed. There were a number of additional actions suggested, relating to:

- Facilitating an increase in housing diversity – including alternative development models
- Increasing funding and reducing development costs
- Building understanding and skills training in specific areas
- Improving housing quality
- Further sustainable living measures
- Increasing land supply
- Changes to planning policy
- Support and concerns around introducing and managing multiple contributions policies
- Collective regional approach

Feedback on the background information within the document included:

- Clearly define terminology and simplify the document
- Further demographic insights
- Introducing monitoring and evaluation measures
- Expanding on content in the ‘What is Council already doing’ section

These community engagement findings have helped to inform the final Affordable Housing Action Plan. The findings from stage 3 are detailed in the following Appendices.

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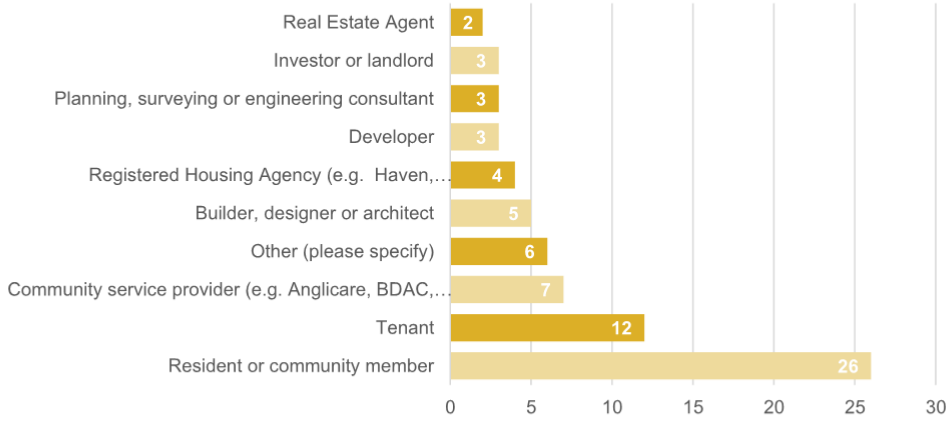
Appendix 1. Draft Affordable Housing Action Plan survey results

The community engagement period was open for four weeks, from 21 August until 21 September 2020. A total of 60 respondents participated in an online survey, the findings of which are outlined below.

Q1) What is your interest in affordable housing?

There was good representation from across industry and the community, with most being either involved in delivering affordable housing or providing support services (45%) or community members, residents and tenants (43.3%).

Respondents were able to nominate more than one interest.



Deidentified responses to 'Other' (please specify):

Retirement village General Manager
Student of financial counselling
Human rights perspective
Parent of adult with a disability
Would-be owner builder, part of The Affordable Housing Initiative Facebook group (376 members)
Tenancy officer

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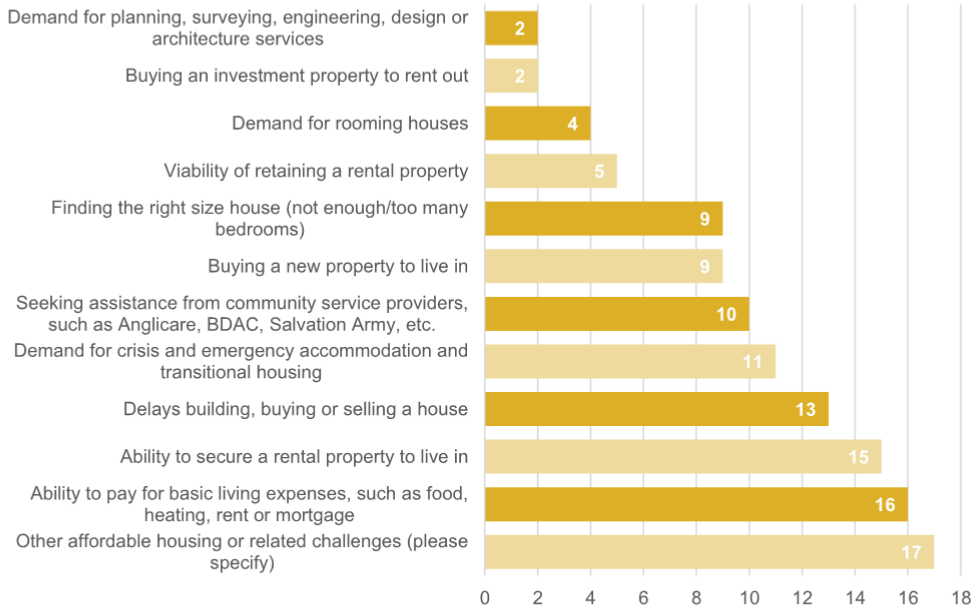
Q2) Has the COVID-19 pandemic worsened any of the following affordable housing issues for you or your organisation?

Respondents identified a broad range of affordable housing issues that have been further impacted by COVID-19, however the most significant impacts related to:

- Ability to pay for basic living expenses (such as food, heating, rent or mortgage payments)
- Securing housing

Respondents were able to select more than one option.



Deidentified responses to 'Other affordable housing or related challenges' (please specify):

Overcrowding for invisible communities particularly those on temporary visas
Affordable housing interest
NA. I am concerned for housing affordability for our community though.
Ticked this because no options were relevant to me. Reduced demand for Air BnB may be a postive outcome from COVID?
Nil, personal interest in affordable housing generally.
As part of an organisation that raises funds to support social housing, our task has been made more difficult by COVID19
Stability in housing. Efforts should target those who are on the precipice and vulnerable to homelessness, as to ensure that those in housing feel secure, and can live their lives without the threat of becoming homeless looming over them. I have witnessed a past neighbour who were given little notice to move and find another cheap housing option. It was very stressful time for her and her family. She had only just settled into her property.
Affordable land with open options for dwelling style
Disability access

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Suppressed business activity has set back the dream of home ownership and limited entrepreneurial activities
Council has not addressed submissions to the Marong Structure Plan, submissions were made 2years ago. I would be happy to add more affordable housing to my proposed development

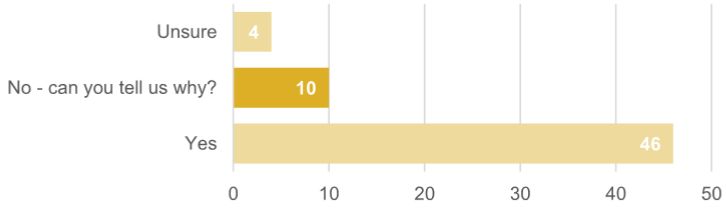
Q3) Do you own any short stay accommodation properties?

No respondents reported owning any short stay accommodation properties.

Q4) The Draft Action Plan proposes three objectives (below), do you think they respond appropriately to the key issues?

- *Better understand affordable housing issues*
- *Increase supply and improve quality of affordable housing*
- *Improve Council processes and timeframes that affect affordable housing*

Most respondents (76.6%) felt the 'Objectives' proposed in the Draft Action Plan responded appropriately to the key issues.



Deidentified responses to 'No – can you tell us why' (16.6%):

I can't see that the plan addresses the increase supply need - without actual cash investment to build more affordable housing there won't be an increase in supply
Agree with those three, but add to the list 'Advocacy to State and Federal governments for investments in social housing'.
Housing stability: Persons in housing need to feel secure and not second guess whether they will be moved on, removed. They need stability.
Council need to have a more open mind to housing and what people want as a dwelling, cheaper land development with less overlays.
The council have some responsibility to provide, build and maintain emergency, short term and single dwellings and not just leave everything to services and government
From reading the plan and responding to the survey there is limited considerations of the role community should play in housing, given the absence of housing is often linked to broader social issues
I believe all levels of government should do more. This action plan is a "we will look at" rather than a "we will do"
I also don't approve of my rates being used to even fund this proposal - this is not a local government issue!!!!
I think it's highly inappropriate that any potential development be it public housing or any housing not have the opportunity to be reviewed or objected to prior to a development being approved.
Need to consult with those who require emergency housing, damage to housing, violence, lack of funds

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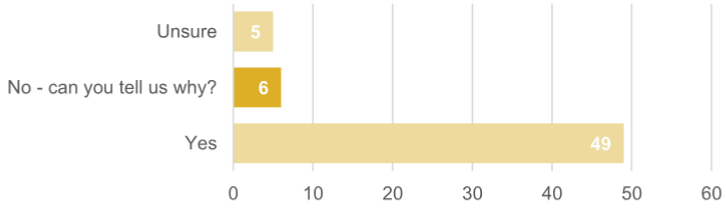
1 is a given, but 2 needs to be evidenced by 1
Well, it's not wrong, the first objective in a sense is to identify the 'key objectives' so that's fine. I like the second objective I think it sums up the overall desire (i.e. more and better) The last objective seems to be more of an action. Perhaps it could be 'Position Council as a facilitator of affordable housing for its citizens and an advocate for effective affordable housing provision in Victoria.'

Q5) The Draft Action Plan proposes four roles for Council to address affordable housing, including;

- *Leader – Establishing a clear position on affordable housing and building an increased understanding of the issues*
- *Advocate – Advocating across community, industry and all levels of Government to improve outcomes in all areas relating to affordable housing*
- *Facilitator – Bringing together key stakeholders and reducing barriers to facilitate an increase in the supply of affordable housing*
- *Partner – Partnering with key stakeholders to leverage assets and resources to increase the supply of affordable housing*

Given the regulatory and strategic tasks that Council is required to undertake, do you agree that the proposed roles for Council are appropriate?"

Most respondents (81.6%) agreed that the proposed roles for Council to address affordable housing are appropriate.



Deidentified responses to 'No – can you tell us why' (10%):

Should co-fund development
While the roles proposed are appropriate, many of these are already in place when considered against my role within affordable housing. The problem is that these roles lose focus by getting hamstrung or handballed to other areas.
Council need to look at what they can do, and not just focus on giving task to others
They don't go far enough.
There are a number of state funded organisations that already get funding for this issue!!
Customer

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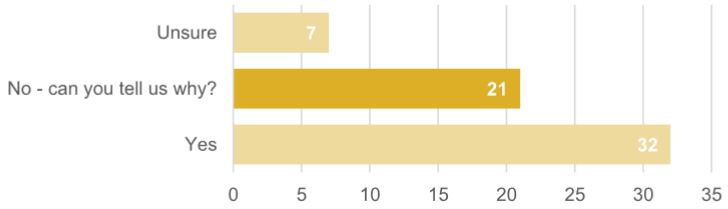
6) The following social housing target is proposed in the Draft Action Plan:

- *Increase current supply of social housing from 4.9 per cent to meet demand of 9.5 per cent by 2036.This target is based on the estimated number of people experiencing homelessness, those on the DHHS social housing waiting list, and the existing social housing supply, in Greater Bendigo.*
- *The purpose of this target to help increase the urgent need for more social housing. It will assist Council to negotiate the delivery of more social housing with developers (through the Planning Scheme) and State and Federal Governments.*
- *Do you agree with this social housing target of 9.5% by 2036?*

Approximately half (53.3%) of respondents agree with the proposed social housing target of 9.5 percent by 2036.



Deidentified responses to 'No – can you tell us why' (35%):

They should be building them now.
Something needs to be done much earlier than 2036
2036 is a long time to wait for the problem to be solved
I think we owe it to one another to do much better much sooner. If we want to live in healthy supportive communities, then we need to make this basic necessity a priority.
16 yrs??? Unacceptable people need housing now
I'd like some justification on the timeline - why so long? That is 16 years away.
Increase supply of housing sooner would be beneficial
I think we should increase this amount because the invisible communities I have mentioned above are not included in this data.
I would like to see it aim for above the projected demand.
The target only refers to housing need NOW. By 2036 the need will have increased. The target also fails to include the need for housing for at risk groups such as people with disabilities living with elderly parents who need housing and who will not get housing through the NDIS. Those people are not represented in the figures.
It probably needs to be a bigger percentage delivered sooner, given how many people are locked out of the housing market - 16 years will be too late for many families with children to establish themselves as home owners, and 16 years is a long time for people experiencing homelessness - especially as that figure looks set to increase.
I think it needs to be higher, given the population increase, increasing youth unemployment and mental health/substance dependence increasing in the area.
May not be sufficient in the medium term given the impact of COVID19
It's a start but not enough and the need is ever growing
The number should be greater
Too little too late.

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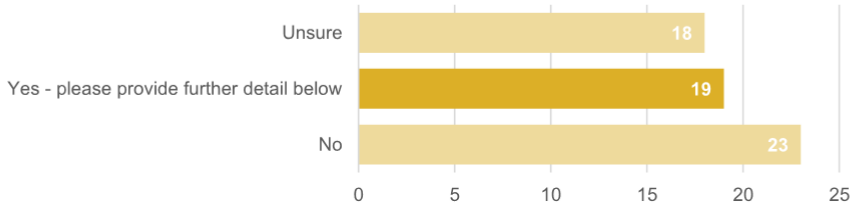
The fact that people are not on a list in many cases means that the suggested need is underestimated. Women particularly don't often think of them selves of homeless. I congratulate Council on the initiative, it needs to be about advocating for change not just an exercise in numbers.
Goal needs to be higher for transitional housing to stop people becoming homeless in the first place
This is not something I want funded for by the rates I pay!!
I agree, but does the target allow for people migrating in who require affordable housing?
Working towards a fixed figure is giving in to the idea that it cannot change. Council (and the entire community) should work towards lowering this figure.

7) The Draft Action Plan identifies 28 actions to be delivered over the next 4 years. Do you think there are any actions missing from this list or can you identify any issues with the proposed delivery timeframe?

Responses were fairly balanced across all three options, although there were slightly more people who agreed that there were no actions missing or issues with the proposed delivery timeframe (38.3%).



Deidentified responses to 'Yes – please provide further detail below' (31.6%):

Should be delivered sooner
I think items 2.1.7, 3.2.4 and 3.2.5 should actually be done in a short term not long term (>4yrs). The advocacy for funding for affordable housing and temporary housing-shelters should start now. What is going to happen to those in the waiting list? wait 4 more years? housing is not a 'good to have' it a 'must have'
A definite start and finish date
Too many of the strategies are to take under 4 years, rather than under 2 years, for instance
Funding
Needs more investment
Reduce development costs, ie 5% POS contributions, Coliban Water Contributions.
Providing the infrastructure that is needed when new housing projects are being built in the outer regions of Bendigo
Council also needs to identify short term 'emergency' actions they can take to address current supply problems - similar to their covid homelessness response
Promotion of adaptable and multi-generational housing
I also think the target above needs to factor in those marginalized by the increasing housing costs, who would otherwise be home owners if the cost was not prohibitive.
I think there needs to be more emphasis on using sustainable materials.
The planning controls and relevant policy should be reviewed and strengthened to increase the % of smaller dwellings and in particular smaller lot sizes which facilitate starter homes.
Has the Council explored mandating supply of low-cost housing for new housing developments?

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There is no mention of Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) many Young Bendigo citizen are living in Nursing Homes because there is not enough SDA properties.
There are many possible actions missing. One example is working towards social acceptance of smaller, cheaper housing (e.g single bathroom)
Ascertain and encourage people in housing need who are not on the housing wait list to be included and supported to apply for housing. eg people with disabilities.
How is diversity of housing monitored, addressed? More could be said of this is the information preceding the tables of actions.
What research is there of people who are on the social housing waiting list or considered to be homeless, coming from Melbourne to look for cheaper housing? Migration patterns across cities/towns would be useful.
What is the breakdown in those using social housing, are homeless or at risk of homelessness by age, gender?
There is no reference to monitoring and evaluation of the actions and their outcomes. What consultation will occur during the four year period to revisit and ensure the plan remains on track or is reviewed? Four years is a long time for not much to happen. Commitment to implementation and ongoing review needs to be demonstrated beyond the development of the plan.
It appears from this plan that not enough is being done to address the issue of 'Increasing homelessness and demand for social housing' as referred to on page 12. While this plan is about ways to provide cheaper housing, thereby addressing one of the determinants of homelessness, greater links to existing work being done on other determinants to homelessness and demand for social housing could be made in the 'What is council already doing' section.
The plan refers to the objective of 'Improve the quality of existing public housing and housing in the private market'. More could be done here. Most of the actions are focussed on new housing stock not existing. While energy efficiency is to be commended for existing housing stock, the DHHS Housing Design Guideline are only for new housing stock. Very little, otherwise, focuses on the amenity of existing 'current' housing stock.
Further clarity is required for some actions e.g. 3.2.5 Develop a homelessness protocol – what does this mean in the context of this larger strategy? What does Implement affordable housing data (3.2.1) mean?
If there is any mention of support for owner builders, I missed it. Council support for owner builders across Australia has evaporated in recent years. Supporting owner builder initiatives, or group owner build initiatives, should be a primary focus of council To neglect that is a grave and problematic omission.
The plan is very clear to read and the preceding information on the nature of the issue and the policy context is very useful.
It's not local governments responsibility
Temporary housing for damage to house
Solutions or at least part solutions can sit with community groups or interest groups - the reality is without Innovation, considered and well planned supports In place, building houses is only part of the solution
Change planning regulations to enable people to purchase land with shared agreements to developing multiple dwellings. Instead of relying on developers to do this.
Not sure if I agree with exempting affordable housing from public notification 3.1.3. Perhaps better off putting more wording within Clause 16.01-4S to balance out objectors raining concerns regarding the 'types' of people who might live in a proposed dwelling.

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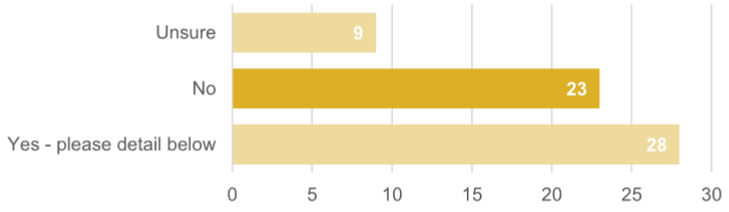
8) Do you have any other ideas around addressing affordable housing in Greater Bendigo that have not already been identified?



Deidentified responses to 'Yes – please detail below' (46.6%):

So much of the focus is on new land development, which misses two key opportunities/areas of concern: i) we should be increasing the density of our urban living, not contributing to suburban sprawl, ii) pushing suburban sprawl creates a host of affordability issues including oversized houses, dependence on private transportation, lack of services due to greenfield development etc. In short, I strongly suggest looking at redeveloping inner-urban/city areas for better and denser housing. This would help address affordable housing, and make Bendigo a nicer place to live, rather than risk continuing to just be a sprawl of poorly serviced suburbia.
I am also supportive of a minimum density requirement for development within close proximity to public transport and public open space
As above we need create the right conditions for diverse housing.
Affordable short-term accommodation for workers
COVID has taught up anything, it's that there needs to be considerable thinking about alternative models and responses, just more of the same is not sufficient.
Investigate some demonstration projects such as tiny houses on council land to provide housing for people on the wait list.
The Secondary dwelling changes should really help. We need more smaller dwellings, but we need these to be developed in a way that creates community, an affordable version of the Paddock or Nightingale.
Encourage co-housing communities where more households can be built on smaller amount of land by sharing land between tenants.
If council could allow tiny houses to be erected permanently on land then these could be rented out a low and affordable rate. If multiple tiny homes were allowed on one block then the investor would still get a fair return on investment while housing possibly more families than otherwise may have been the case with building townhouses. I believe tiny houses are an affordable option for investors and could provide a low rent opportunity for people at risk.
Secure funding to build and identify a large block of vacant land, build a series of small 'tiny' style houses on it with several large communal kitchen/bathroom/social areas. Allow people to live there rent free for 3 months then start paying rent up to 1 year - 18 months- this provides stability of having an address, shared facilities and community and supports people to move out of home/not be homeless/ save for rental/deposit - would act as gateway housing - would need management/security resources but could meet local need.
Shared housing between owners and tenants
Encourage developers to come up with ideas/schemes within their development to address affordable housing
Leave it to Ken Marchingo it's his responsibility not the councils
Improving energy efficiency should be extended to also include use of renewable energy, e.g. solar PV
Retrofitting existing Council buildings (with emphasis on sustainability and livability) would be good to consider?
High quality design is also important in terms of promoting the benefits.

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The financial stress is a shortcut to homelessness. We need to address the cause not the symptom. Provide financial support, focus on preventing poverty. Support those escaping from domestic violence. I know first hand that many women stays in violent relationships because they have nowhere to go and don't want to have their kids sleeping in the sidewalk
I think the document should also highlight any age and/or gender related issues to do with affordable housing - e.g. are single older women overrepresented in the statistics? What different housing models might these women be interested in?
Definitely need more affordable and long-term housing for aged pensioners. Too difficult for them to afford private rentals, too hard for them to move. They need suitable housing with minimal garden and sufficient amenities to maintain them in their declining years.
Have a central contact for tenants looking for housing and for housing information, some type of "hub". Better feedback for tenants when not accepted for a property ie. why, number of applicants. Some way of being able to prove your suitability as a tenant, especially when you are unable to provide references, currently Anglicare are unable to provide information to prospective landlords about how suitable a tenant would be ie. condition tenant keeps the house, stability of income etc.
Land areas closer to the city of Bendigo that could be used
Open more land. Caravan, cabin, tiny home style, land for long term camping, more housing land that the council develop to lower costs
Rewrite the draft plan in an accessible format. This plan is incredibly wordy, uses confusing data with little explanation, and devotes most attention to the problem rather than the solution.
Understanding the process for having a property registered as an SDA and making a more streamlined process.
Capacity building for the real estate industry so that they better support the needs of ethnic community members.
I had a project in mind to use the unused Eaglehawk Railway facility as both a place to teach people on low incomes how to build tiny houses, and also the old caravan park facilities on that site as a small community site for tiny homes. There are probably more unused spaces that would be suitable, but the trade/workshop facilities at the Eaglehawk site were particularly suitable for a project like this. I have qualified builders also interesting in participating.
Federal and State legislation to minimise individuals accumulating large portfolios of investment properties
An affordable housing quota exceeding a certain number of dwellings
Greater investment in crisis accommodation and support
I think that reduced rates are a great way for Council to support for registered housing agencies. I think this is more effective than funding or grants.
While this is not a local council issue, the government home builder boost has an approach that could be included within land lease communities. It is a lack of knowledge and understanding that restricts this inclusiveness for the retired sector.
Reduce the number of new buildings
Meeting basic housing needs achieves little if we simply have people in society ‘existing’ in empty lives.

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Appendix 2. Draft Affordable Housing Action Plan written submissions

Nine written submissions to the Draft Action Plan were received from a range of stakeholders, such as community members, community organisations, City staff, designers, developers, peak industry bodies, and Registered Housing Agencies (RHAs). All feedback has been summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Summary of written submissions to the Draft Affordable Housing Action Plan

Type of comments	Summary	Description	Submitter	Officer response
Document	Clear and consistent definitions and terminology	• Definitions and terminology for 'affordable' and 'social housing' need to be consistent with State Government definitions • Affordable housing should be owned and managed by Registered Housing Agencies	Submitters 6 and 9	Acknowledged. Document updated to clarify definitions and terminology.
Project implementation	Introduce measures to ensure implementation is successful over an expanded period of time	• Establish governance for implementation and a new role to coordinate • Introduce measures to monitor and evaluate the Action Plan • Increase implementation timeframe from four years	Submitters 3, 4 and 5	Acknowledged. It is estimated that implementation of most actions can be undertaken within existing staff resources. Responsibility for implementing actions has been further clarified and monitoring and evaluation measurements added. Extending implementation of Action Plan (further than 4 years) outside project scope.
Actions	Community perceptions	Establish and publicise a mechanism for linking low-income renters or advocates with the real estate sector to facilitate communication and eliminate biased discrimination	Submitter 4	Acknowledged. Work to reduce stigma around affordable housing will be undertaken as part of implementation action 1.2.1.
Council's position	Additional Council role as 'provider'	Council needs to be a provider (landlord)	Submitter 8	Council as a supplier/provider of housing is out of scope for this project.

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Council's position	Support for all Council roles proposed in the Draft Action Plan	• Councils role as 'leader' is pivotal in promoting and ensuring the policy environment is set to embed social and affordable housing across all tenure types • Supporting RHA's and industry partners to 'advocate' to State Government will attract further investment • Council can 'facilitate' and attract expertise, broaden the conversation and knowledge, so the whole industry across our environment will benefit, bringing best value to our city • Developing stronger 'partnerships' with RHA's will expand housing options and dispersed tenancies, and leverage relationships with Federal Government	Submitter 9	Support acknowledged.
Council's position	Additional Council role as 'supporter'	Financial support could be provided to RHA's to encourage further investment and growth of community housing in LGA	Submitter 9	While Council is not proposing to directly fund RHA's, many actions are aimed towards reducing the costs associated with developing community housing, such as; investigating rating discounts (action 2.1.2), application fee waivers (action 2.1.3), surplus government land opportunities (action 2.1.4), and infrastructure delivery and land remediation (action 2.1.6).
Council's position	Support for proposed social housing target	Strong support the ambitious target for increased social housing and advocacy actions that accompany this.	Submitter 5	Support acknowledged.
Council's position	9.5% target could include the private sector (not just social housing) to address disadvantage	Social or public housing is not necessarily the best household wealth creation outcome for those socially disadvantaged, and the gap remains in seeking to increase social belonging and freehold ownership. Is a 9.5% social housing target realistic or aspirational? Strategy could target the private sector for build to rent schemes as an alternative option.	Submitter 6	Acknowledged. Given the difficulties in obtaining data to measure the affordable housing need (ABS Census every 5 years), and considering the scale of the acute need for social housing in Greater Bendigo, developing a target for social housing was considered a higher priority that can be monitored more frequently. Council also has a greater ability to influence social housing in the short term than the private housing market. Despite there being no target for affordable housing it is the aim of this Action Plan to work towards this, with several actions around housing diversity, quality

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				(to reduce housing stress), and rooming houses. Although alternative housing options can assist with affordability, build to rent schemes are generally not considered to be an affordable option unless they are subsidised.
Council's position	Social housing target should be increased similar to European standards	Of the 20 LGA's nationally recognised to have the greatest need for social housing, Bendigo is 17th on the list. A vision for the future would be to emulate European targets of 15-25% of all housing stock. This requires a massive shift overtime for Council to take the lead in sponsoring the growth of Community Housing initiatives and undertaking a long-term infrastructure commitment, that will assist all of community and stakeholders to reach these targets.	Submitter 9	Acknowledged. The social housing target proposed is relatively conservative given the hidden need that is often unreported. However, this is a significant shift in Council policy and industry will need time to adjust and respond long term. Local social housing need will continue to be measured and reviewed following the expiry or renewal of this Action Plan.
Actions	Planning policy should facilitate release of land that is inclusive of social housing	Introduce value capture to increase supply of community housing by RHA's	Submitter 9 and 4	Acknowledged. Value capture experiences from other Victorian Councils indicate that this requires a substantial contribution for public benefit, as a result this is a high effort process for Council and has a low impact.
Actions	Negotiating affordable housing outcomes	Engage RHA's for advice and assistance when negotiating affordable housing outcomes with developers	Submitter 9	Acknowledged. This will be explored through implementation of action 3.2.2, to establish a clear pathway for negotiating affordable housing outcomes.
Actions	Establish an internal structure to manage funds collected through affordable housing negotiations and DCPs	Concern there is no management of revenue raising mechanisms that will ensure new infrastructure is delivered. There are ongoing and lengthy delays in Melbourne where such schemes apply.	Submitter 6	Acknowledged. This will be explored through implementation of action 3.2.2, to establish a clear pathway for negotiating affordable housing outcomes.
Actions	Ensure the Action Plan considers all potential responses to affordable housing – not just through the planning scheme	• Most LGAs have an aspirational affordable housing strategy • Strategy must be broad considering both supply and demand • Rigid delivery of affordable housing through the planning system is problematic	Submitter 6	Acknowledged. The Action Plan recognises that affordable housing is complex and there are many different aspects to consider. The implementation plan includes actions relevant to legislation that controls planning, building, social housing and the private rental market, as well as government funding schemes targeted towards sustainability, infrastructure delivery and social housing.

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Actions	Financial support to assist RHA's to increase housing supply	• Under the Local Government Act, Section 169, 1D, Councils may grant a rate rebate or concession in relation to any rateable charge to support the provision of affordable housing to a registered agency. Section 173 Agreements can ensure perpetuity and re-investment of savings. • Grants or rate relief to safeguard the financial viability of proposed or existing community housing (provided by RHA's) particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.	Submitter 9 and 5	Acknowledged. Grant rebates and securing land use in perpetuity will be investigated through the implementation of the Action Plan. While Council is not proposing to directly fund RHA's, many actions are aimed towards reducing the costs associated with developing community housing, such as; investigating rating discounts (action 2.1.2), application fee waivers (action 2.1.3), surplus government land opportunities (action 2.1.4), and infrastructure delivery and land remediation (action 2.1.6).
Actions	Planning policy impacting land and housing supply	• Council's compact city position is contributing to the undersupply of new land and housing • Infill development proposals need to be implemented consistently across all levels of Council. Objections and planning decisions often result in reduced lot yield.	Submitter 7	The City's compact city planning policy will be reviewed as part of the Managed Growth Strategy.
Actions	Maintaining affordability and lifestyle	• Need to maintain Bendigo's comparative regional housing prices • Bendigo is not a commuter city like Geelong or Ballarat so there is less demand for smaller lots	Submitter 6 and 7	Acknowledged. State and Local planning policy already encourages a diverse mix of housing, and given the evidence of a housing mismatch (bedroom vs households) in Greater Bendigo, particularly for vulnerable households, this is an issue that needs to be tackled.
Actions	Impact of multiple contributions policies on land prices	• Acceptance that DCPS's are becoming the norm in regional Victorian greenfield areas • Concern that some levies are too high, reducing affordability through the increasing land prices – delaying land release • Affordable housing contributions and DCPs will increase the sales price of land	Submitter 6 and 7	Acknowledged. Currently the City has one adopted residential DCP, and this is considered to be comparable to other regional DCP levies. This Action Plan is intended to signal industry Council's position to negotiate voluntary affordable housing contributions in the long term, allowing time for Council to develop this process and industry to adjust.
Actions	Introduce Government loans to eligible renters for home purchase	Equity program to assist long term renters with rental payment history to purchase homes	Submitter 1	State government already has a shared equity initiative in place to assist first home buyers to enter the property market.
Actions	Advocacy to all levels of Government to undertake remediation of surplus land that is	• Council to advocate to Federal and State Governments to allocate funding to remediate any contaminated land, that is surplus, to be suitable for residential purposes prior to sale of land.	Submitter 4	Acknowledged. Council will investigate remediation requirements under several pieces of legislation as part of implementing actions 2.1.4 and 2.1.8.

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	contaminated, prior to sale of land	• Council to ensure funding is allocated to the remediation of contaminated surplus land prior to selling land.		
Actions	Example of affordable housing infill development	Proposal is a medium density development for 15 residential apartments of different sizes (bedroom), aims to be compliant with Livable Housing Design Guidelines – Gold Level and 2020 Better Apartments guidelines.	Submitter 2	Noted.
Actions	Support for proposed and increased housing diversity actions	• Pleased to see a focus on improving the diversity of housing options for all life stages and addressing barriers to implementing universal design • Council should revise planning requirements to make possible (indeed, encourage) development of Tiny Houses and modular housing	Submitters 4 and 5	Support acknowledged. Modular or smaller homes meet the same definition as a dwelling under the Planning Scheme, therefore share the same rights and restrictions. The City is one of five Councils currently trialling a secondary dwellings provision in the Planning Scheme, which is designed to streamline the planning process under VicSmart. This process is intended to reduce red and assess applications in a 10 day time period (as opposed to 60 days). Tiny homes are typically transportable homes that can remain on private property for 21 days without a permit (under Local Laws), however are not permissible long term.
Actions	Advocate to State Government for existing and new public housing to include further affordable living infrastructure	Align advocacy actions with the City's One Planet Living Framework, Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021, and the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-23, such as: infrastructure for home food production and gardening (e.g. fitting rainwater tanks to properties, landscaping home and community gardens for fruit and vegetable growing)	Submitter 5	Acknowledged. Action 2.1.1 amended to include advocacy around health and wellbeing outcomes.
Actions	Regional collective and collaborative approach to affordable housing	Consider benefits of standard definitions, data sets and core performance indicators (supplemented by local information) to developing regional approaches to meeting housing need of low-income earners. There are ongoing benefits of data	Submitter 5	Acknowledged. Currently Councils have very limited access to data, however we will continue seeking to understand this issue through the implementation of actions 1.1.1 and 2.1.1.

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		sharing between local governments and relevant state agencies.		The City also regularly attends a Victorian inter-Council group focussed on a collaborative approach to affordable housing.
Actions	Undertake an audit of all Government surplus land and publish this list	CoGB should collect information about land within its boundaries potentially suitable for residential development, assemble this into a register, and make it publicly available.	Submitter 4	Acknowledged. Action 2.1.4 proposes to undertake this work.
Actions	Advocate for social housing to be well located	A related priority for advocacy around social housing (and affordable housing in general) is ensuring it is located with easy links to employment, schooling, shops, community facilities by walking and public transport.	Submitter 5	Acknowledged. This consideration, amongst others, is legislated by Specified Matters under Section 3aa(2) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.
Actions	Address delays with service authorities impacting land supply	• Experiencing lengthy delays with service authorities such as Powercor and with LUAAs • Previous delays with the Titles Office have been resolved	Submitter 6 and 7	Acknowledged. Action 2.1.8 modified to investigate mechanisms that may reduce the time taken to subdivide and to bring vacant residential land to market.
Actions	Reduce planning permit application timeframes	Cost and time to obtain planning permits impact on the price purchasers pay for land	Submitter 7	Acknowledged.
Actions	Need actions to address increasing residential land supply	• Increase land supply • Re-zone more well-located land for residential purposes	Submitter 7	Acknowledged. Action 2.1.4 aims to address land supply for social housing, however land supply and residential zoned land will be reviewed as part of the Managed Growth Strategy.

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Appendix 3. Draft Affordable Housing Action Plan industry stakeholder meetings

Three meetings were held with industry stakeholders, including local Registered Housing Agencies and peak bodies, to discuss the Draft Affordable Housing Action Plan. All feedback has been summarised in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Summary of meetings to discuss the Draft Affordable Housing Action Plan

Type of comments	Summary	Detail	Meeting	Officer response
Document	Clear and consistent definitions and terminology	Terminology needs to be clear, e.g. affordable social housing and affordable private housing, and identifying what those affordable products are	Meeting 1	Acknowledged. Document updated to clarify definitions and terminology.
Council's position	Having a target for social housing only is realistic given Council's ability to influence outcomes, and the target proportion is aspirational yet fair	• Aspirational particularly in comparison to the State Government's aim of increasing supply across the state to a 4.5% average • 9.5% is a fair proportion for social housing • Understand that it is an easier target to work towards, fewer variables • Private rentals are not the answer – people expect a return on investment so they cannot help disadvantaged people • Airbnb is important for tourism and income for residents (particularly retirees) • Opportunity to acknowledge despite the demand, the current supply is above Victorian average	Meeting 1 and 3	Acknowledged.
Council's position	Social housing target must be voluntary	Good to be aspirational, but cannot be mandatory	Meeting 2	Acknowledged.

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Council's position	Need to advocate for a state-wide approach to social housing supply	Need a consistent state-wide approach from State Government, including definition and inclusionary zoning	Meeting 2	Acknowledged.
Actions	Second objective is mostly tenant based	Actions within the second objective are mostly for tenant outcomes (e.g. action 2.4.1)	Meeting 3	Acknowledged.
Actions	Acknowledge that higher quality housing is a better outcome for tenants but can reduce housing yield	• Increasing design standards (universal design and ESD) can be difficult as it increases upfront costs for RHAs and could mean that fewer dwellings are delivered. Can see the benefit however to tenants and reducing ongoing living costs. • Action 2.3.2 – although increased design standards drive development costs up, can appreciate costs savings associated with avoiding RFIs and reducing application processing timeframes	Meeting 3	Acknowledged.
Actions	Support for proposed action to reduce stigma	Action 1.1.2 aims to reduce stigma around affordable housing through increasing community understanding	Meeting 1	Acknowledged.
Actions	Need to explore voluntary value capture on re-zonings	Voluntary value capture is under-expressed. Need to be signalling to developers what it is and how it will be applied. Problem arises when Councils try to apply this retrospectively, after the economic viability of the project has been undertaken.	Meeting 1	Acknowledged. Value capture experiences from other Victorian Councils indicate that this requires a substantial contribution for public benefit, as a result this is a high effort process for Council and has a low impact.
Actions	Lack of land supply and risk around unresolved DCPs	• First home builder grants available – but limited land available • Major greenfield opportunities have been explored • Still a lot of risk with development in M/Gully North West without DCPs resolved	Meeting 2	Acknowledged. Action 2.1.4 aims to address land supply for social housing, however land supply and residential zoned land will be reviewed as part of the Managed Growth Strategy.

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Actions	Need to address delays with service authorities	• Delays with Titles office are resolved • Locally there are significant delays with agencies – particularly around Land Use Activity Agreements and Powercor. • Suggest a system like POS contributions so people know what to expect • Need to bring together referral agencies at a high level to address significant delays and develop agreed timeframes	Meeting 2	Acknowledged. Action 2.1.8 modified to investigate mechanisms that may reduce the time taken to subdivide and to bring vacant residential land to market.
Actions	Need to maintain competitive regional pricing	• Greater Bendigo needs to maintain our regional advantage and competitive pricing – currently $30K less than Ballarat and we should aim to stay that way • Capturing uplift value of land at re-zoning stage only drives up land prices	Meeting 2	Acknowledged.

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Appendix 4. Summary of changes to the final Affordable Housing Action Plan

Overall the document has been simplified, by reducing the amount of text particularly in the section 'What is contributing to the problem?'.

Further clarification and consistency with definitions and terminology has been added, particularly with reference to affordable housing and social housing.

Explanation and justification for the social housing target proportion and timeframe has also been added to the 'Council's position' section.

Additional data and acknowledgement of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have been included throughout the document.

Further information and reference to the State Government's Big Housing Build program has been incorporated into the body of the document as well as the Implementation Plan.

Based on feedback collected on the Draft Action Plan, the section 'What is Council already doing?' has been expanded to more accurately reflect the breadth of work that the City undertakes in relation to affordable housing.

A new section 'Monitoring and Evaluation' has been added to measure whether the City is on track to achieving the Action Plan objectives and if actions need updating to respond to changes in Government policy and new issues or opportunities.

There have also been minor changes to the Implementation Plan to incorporate feedback on the Draft Action Plan, including the removal of two actions.

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14.3. 84 Rowan Street, BENDIGO 3550 - Two Lot Subdivision; Construction of a Second Dwelling on a Lot; Construction of a Vehicle Crossover and Demolition and Construction of a Fence

Author	Adele Hayes, Senior Statutory Planner
Responsible Director	Steve Hamilton, Director Strategy and Growth

Summary/Purpose

Application details:	Two lot subdivision; construction of a second dwelling on a lot; construction of a vehicle crossover; and demolition and construction of a fence
Application No:	DSD/864/2020
Application Documents	Documents
Applicant:	Aspect Planning Services
Land:	84 Rowan Street, BENDIGO 3550
Zoning:	General Residential Zone
Overlays:	Heritage Overlay 11 Parking Overlay 1
No. of objections:	11
Consultation meeting:	4 June 2021
Key considerations:	• Whether the proposal is consistent with Planning Scheme policy regarding housing, design and infill residential development; • Whether the proposal is consistent with the provisions of the General Residential Zone and the neighbourhood character policy; • Whether the proposal will adversely affect the heritage significance of the place or precinct; • Compliance with ResCode and whether the impacts on neighbours are acceptable; • Objector concerns; • Factors to consider in 'repeat' applications.
Conclusion:	The proposal, on balance, is an acceptable outcome with regards to the relevant Planning Scheme provisions and is recommended for approval.

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RECOMMENDATION

Pursuant to section 61 of the Planning and Environment Act (1987), Council issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit for a two lot subdivision; construction of a second dwelling on a lot; construction of a vehicle crossover; and demolition and construction of a fence at 84 Rowan Street, BENDIGO 3550 subject to the conditions at the end of this report.

ALTERNATE MOTION

Moved: Cr Andrea Metcalf
Seconded: Cr David Fagg

Pursuant to section 61 of the Planning and Environment Act (1987), Council issue a Notice of Decision to Refuse to Grant a Permit for a two lot subdivision; construction of a second dwelling on a lot; construction of a vehicle crossover; and demolition and construction of a fence at 84 Rowan Street, BENDIGO 3550 on the following grounds:

1. The proposal is not in keeping with the character of the area.
2. The proposal will adversely affect the heritage significance of the place and precinct.
3. The proposal represents an over development of the site.
4. The proposal does not adequately address the key planning issues raised in the course of the previous planning application on the land.

CARRIED

Policy Context

Community Plan Reference:

City of Greater Bendigo Community Plan 2017-2021:

- Goal 4 Presentation and managing growth
- Goal 6 Embracing our culture and heritage

Attachments

1. Planning Assessment Report

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Attachment 1 - Rowan Street Planning Assessment

PLANNING ASSESSMENT REPORT

Background Information

It is important to acknowledge the permit history of the site as a relevant consideration.

Planning permit DSD/612/2018 for a two lot subdivision, construction of a second dwelling on the lot, construction of a carport and vehicle crossover, and demolition and construction of a fence was recommended for conditional approval at the 23 August 2019 Council meeting. Council resolved to refuse to grant a permit on the following grounds:

1. The proposal is not in keeping with the character of the area.
2. The proposal will adversely affect the heritage significance of the place and precinct.
3. The proposal represents an over development of the site.

The refusal was appealed by the applicant at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, who affirmed Council's decision to not grant a permit on 7 April 2020. This is discussed in greater detail below.

Planning permit DR/354/2020 was approved on 2 July for the partial demolition and alterations to the existing dwelling, demolition and construction of a fence and construction of a pergola. The partial demolition and alterations to the existing dwelling have been undertaken.

The current planning permit application was lodged on 19 November 2020 following pre-application meeting advice from the City. This is essentially a repeat application, with the carport component having been removed and the following key changes having been made to the design:

- Variation of lot sizes;
- Front, rear and north-western side setbacks increased;
- New dwelling now proposed to be located on the shared lot boundary;
- Removal of the upper floor balcony;
- Reduction in size of the upper floor;
- Design detail in the façade (increased ground floor presence and roof pitch);
- Garage further setback;
- Private open space increased;
- Updated landscape plan.

Report

<u>Subject Site and Surrounds</u>

The site comprises 2 lots and is formally referred to as Lot 1 TP751405 and Crown Allotment 13A, Section 50B, Parish PP3473A and is otherwise known as 84 Rowan Street, Bendigo.

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The site is rectangular in shape with an overall area of 788.567 square metres. The site benefits from two street frontages, with a 20.83 metre frontage to Rowan Street and a 39.33 metre frontage to Vine Street. The site is relatively flat.

The site currently contains a single storey, three bedroom, Inter-war style dwelling (constructed approximately 1922) that is oriented towards Rowan Street, with a small garden shed located in the rear yard. The dwelling is setback 6.2 metres from Rowan Street, 5.275 metres from Vine Street and 15 metres from the rear property boundary. The dwelling is constructed of weatherboard with a cross-gabled roof and small verandah along the south-west elevation.

A 1.0 metre high iron fence runs along the Rowan Street frontage, with a 1.8m high iron fence running along the Vine Street frontage. A number of small to medium size shrubs and trees are located within the front and side setbacks, with a large tree located in the rear yard. Vehicle access to/from the site is via an existing single crossover onto Vine Street.

The site is located within an established residential area which predominantly comprises single storey, detached period dwellings, however some double storey development and infill residential development is found in the area. Many of the dwellings in the surrounding area have been altered, primarily in the form of rear extensions.

There is a consistency of front setbacks of dwellings along this portion of Vine Street. Side setbacks generally range from 1-2 metres, with structures such as garages/carports commonly constructed on or in proximity to side boundaries. Most properties have low front fences, however materials vary.

Adjoining the site to the north-east at 82 Rowan Street is a single storey dwelling (constructed approximately 1910) which features a large single storey extension to the rear. The dwelling is constructed of weatherboard with a corrugated iron cross-hipped roof. The dwelling is setback 8.2 metres from Rowan Street. Vehicle access is via a driveway located along the south-west boundary of the property which leads to an attached carport.

Adjoining the site to the north-west at 90 Vine Street is a single storey Victorian style dwelling (constructed approximately 1905) with a large outbuilding located to the rear. The dwelling is constructed of weatherboards with a corrugated iron hipped roof. The dwelling is setback 6 metres from Vine Street (not including verandah encroachment). Vehicle access is via a driveway located along the south-east boundary leading to an attached single carport.

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Figure 1: Location map showing subject site and surrounding area

Figure 2: Location map showing objectors properties marked with a star

Proposal

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The application proposes a two lot subdivision; construction of a second dwelling on a lot; construction of a vehicle crossover; and demolition and construction of a fence.

Lot 1 will have an area of 535.136 square metres and will contain the existing dwelling, which will be retained. It is proposed to construct a new 3 metre wide vehicle crossover from Rowan Street. The pergola approved as part of DR/354/2020 is proposed to be converted to a carport. An uncovered car space will be provided to the front of the carport.

Lot 2 will have an area of 255.677 square metres and will contain the proposed dwelling. The new dwelling will front Vine Street and will be of a double storey, contemporary design with a floor area of 183.24 square metres.

The dwelling will contain 3 bedrooms; 2 bathrooms; an open plan kitchen, living and dining area; rumpus room; and an attached single garage. An undercover alfresco area is proposed at ground level to the rear. An uncovered car space is located to the front of the garage.

The dwelling will be constructed of selected brickwork and render at ground floor, and horizontal weatherboard style cladding and render at first floor with a Colorbond roof.

It is proposed to utilise the existing single crossover and construct a 1.2 metre high rendered brick and steel rod fence along the front boundary of the property.

It is also proposed to construct a 1.8 metre high colorbond fence along the shared boundary of Lot 1 and Lot 2.

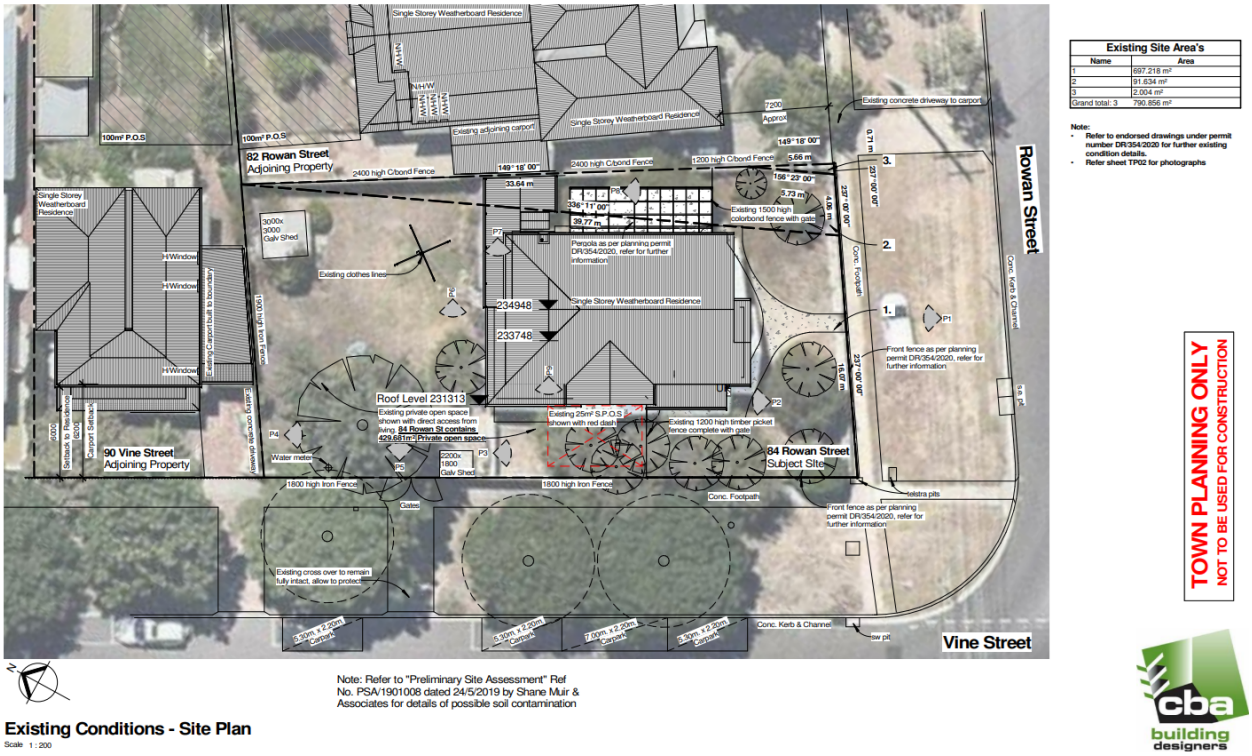

Figure 3: Existing Conditions

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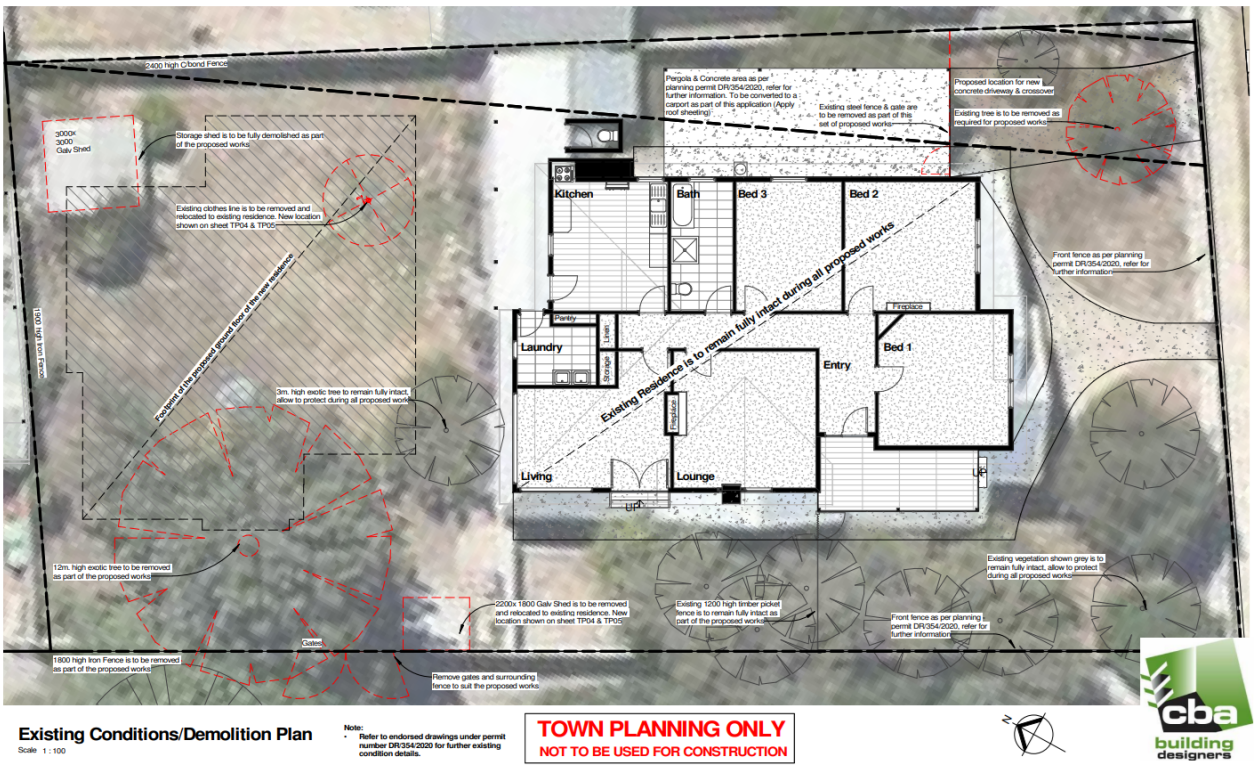

Figure 4: Demolition Plan

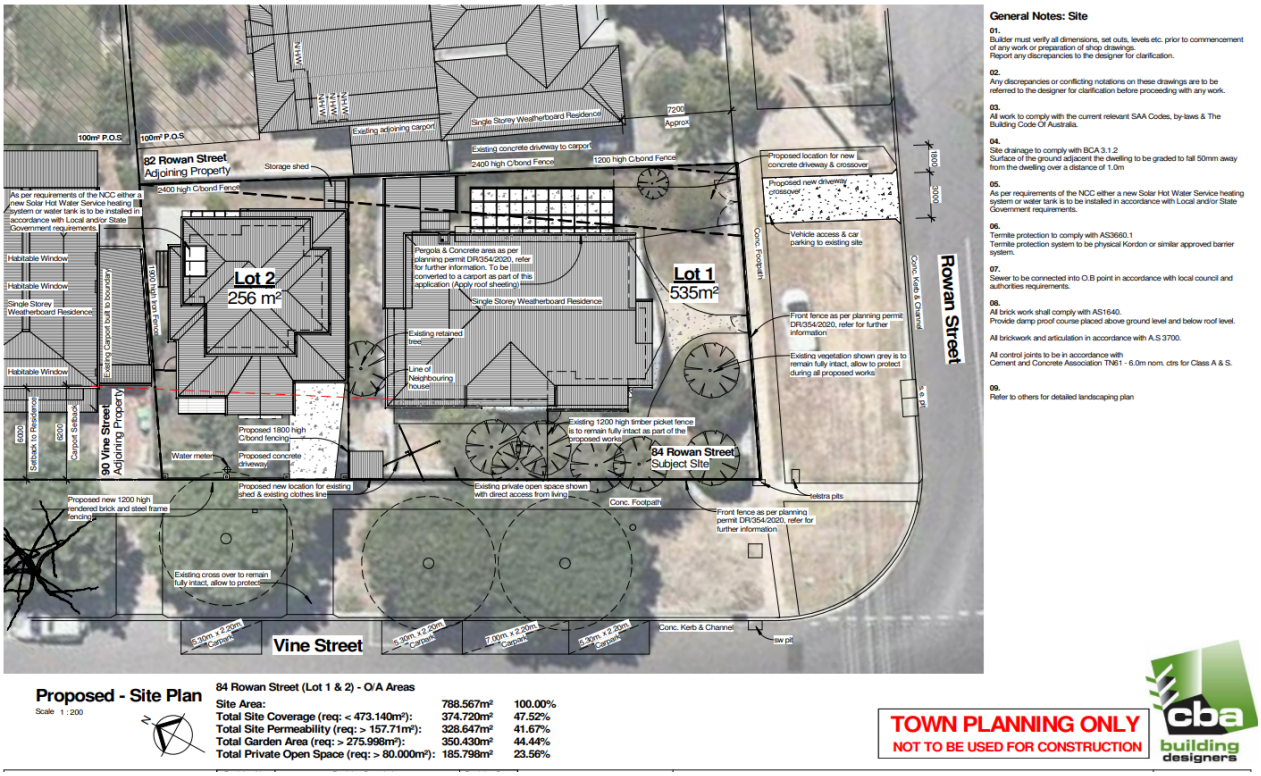

Figure 5: Proposed Site Plan

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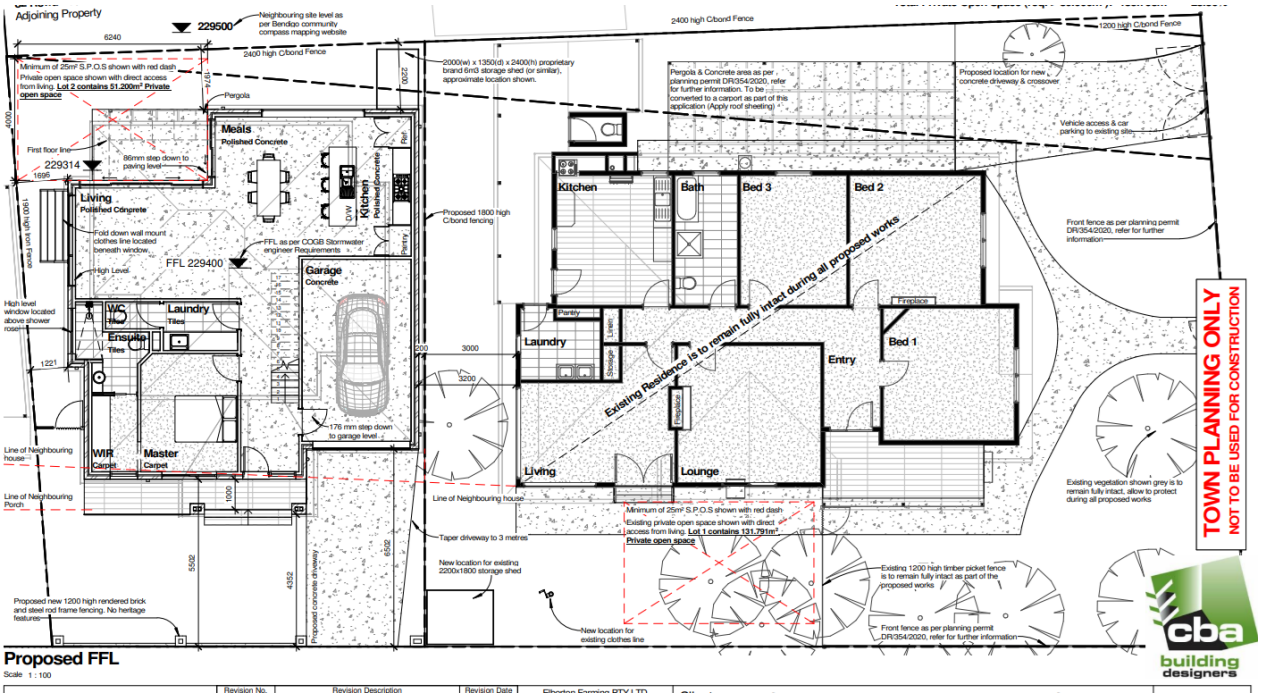

Figure 6: Proposed Ground Floor Plan

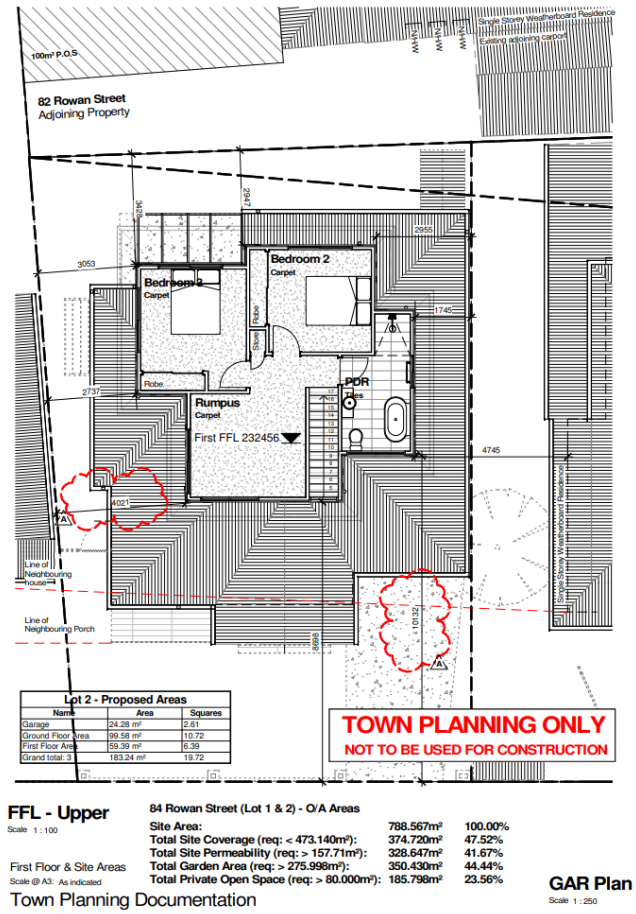

Figure 7: Proposed First Floor Plan

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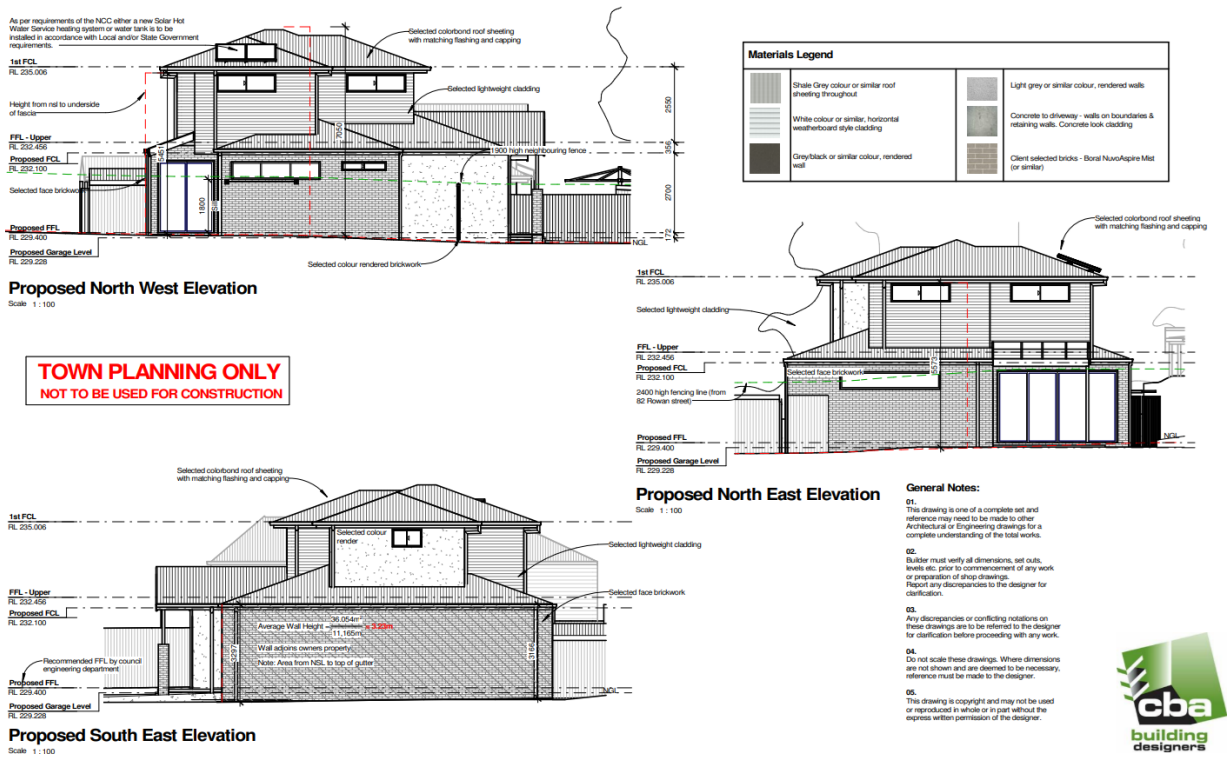

Figure 8: Proposed Elevations

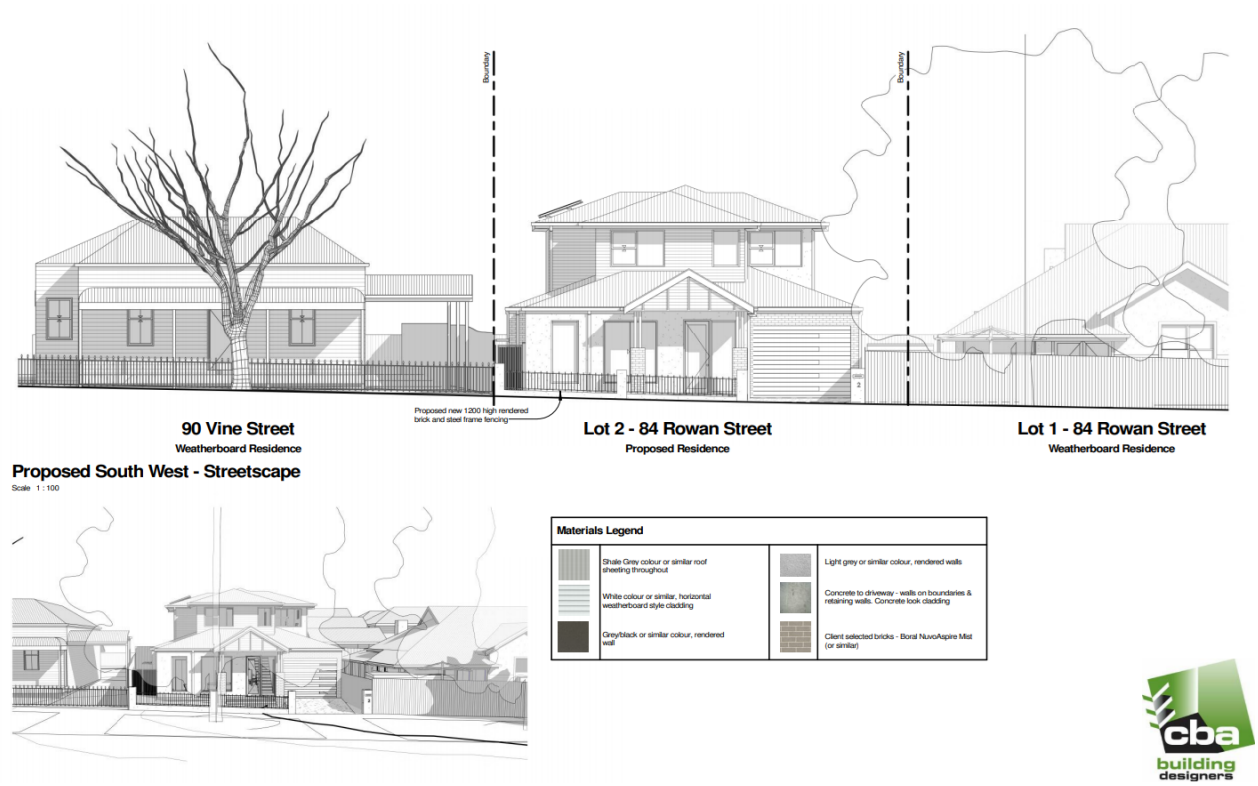

Figure 9: Proposed Streetscape Elevation

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Figure 10: 3D Perspective

Figure 11: Proposed Landscape Plan

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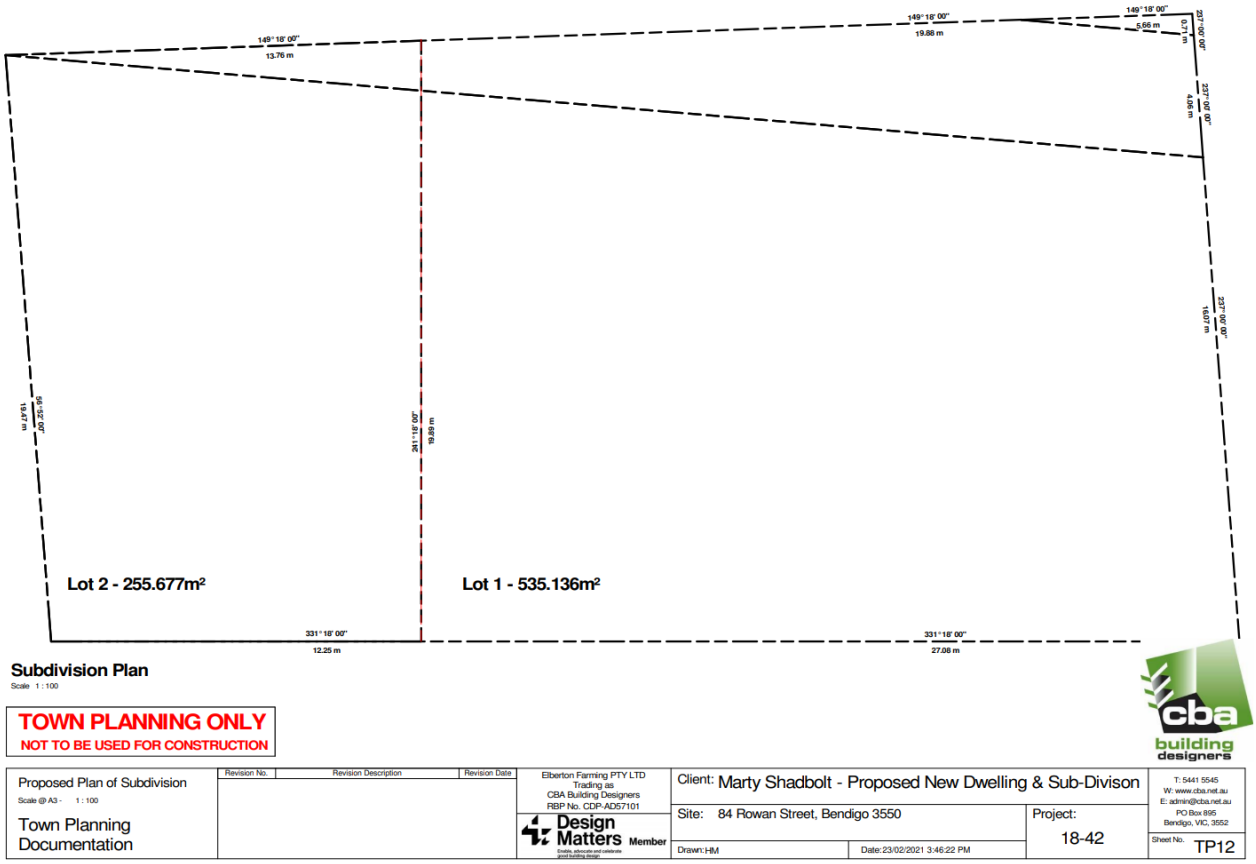

Figure 12: Proposed Subdivision Plan

Planning Controls - Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme

Planning Policy Framework

- Clause 11 Settlement
- Clause 11.01-1S Settlement
- Clause 11.01-1R Settlement – Loddon Mallee South
- Clause 11.02-1S Supply of urban land
- Clause 11.03-1S Activity centres
- Clause 13.02-1S Bushfire planning
- Clause 13.04-1S Contaminated and potentially contaminated land
- Clause 15.01-1S Urban design
- Clause 15.01-2S Building design
- Clause 15.01-3S Subdivision design
- Clause 15.01-5S Neighbourhood character
- Clause 15.03-1S Heritage conservation
- Clause 16.01-2S Location of residential development
- Clause 16.01-3S Housing diversity

Local Planning Policy Framework

- Clause 21.02 Key Issues and Influences
- Clause 21.05 Compact Greater Bendigo
- Clause 22.11 Central Bendigo Residential Character Policy

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- Clause 22.26 Heritage Policy

Other Provisions

- Clause 32.08 General Residential Zone
- Clause 43.01 Heritage Overlay
- Clause 52.06 Car parking
- Clause 55 Construction of two or more dwellings on a lot
- Clause 56 Residential subdivision
- Clause 65 Decision Guidelines

Permit Triggers

The need for a planning permit is triggered by:

- Clause 32.08-3 of the General Residential Zone, which states that a permit is required to subdivide land and that a subdivision must meet the requirements of Clause 55.
- Clause 32.08-6 of the General Residential Zone, which states that a permit is required to construct more than one dwelling on a lot and that a development must meet the requirements of Clause 55.
- Clause 43.01-1 of the Heritage Overlay which states a permit is required to subdivide land, construct a building/carry out works, construct a vehicle crossover, demolish and construct a fence.

Consultation/Communication

Referrals

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

Referral	Comment
Traffic & Design	No objection subject to standard conditions relating to sight distances, vehicle crossing construction requirements and the requirement to obtain a Works within Road Reserve permit.
Drainage	No objection subject to standard conditions relating to the requirement to provide detailed drainage plans, the construction of works and public assets.
Heritage	Initial concerns were raised with the following aspects of the proposal: • The proposed side setbacks are generally in keeping with the immediate streetscape at ground floor level; preference would be to avoid built form on either side boundary, the 1m setback to the garage slightly reduces the impact of this in the streetscape. • There are some reservations around the upper level setback from side boundaries. While increased from the minimal setbacks of the previous application, built form is still sited within 2m of the south east (side) boundary. This allows a

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Referral	Comment
	4.745m separation from the existing dwelling. This is considered just barely adequate; preference would be for an increase in this setback to reduce the visual bulk of the upper level. • The immediate streetscape is predominantly single storey forms, although there are some second storey additions set well back from the street frontages. The upper level here is setback, which is further improved by the projection of the porch, but there are still some concerns about the impact of the upper level on the streetscape. While it is setback, there is no dimension provided to allow an understanding of how far behind the primary frontage (i.e. front wall) of the lower level it is. Working across different plans, it appears to be just under 3.2m from the front wall. This is close to an acceptable level, but preference would be to see it set back slightly further to reduce the visible presence of the upper level in the streetscape. The following recommendations were put forward: • While the proposed new infill building is generally in keeping with the immediate context, there are concerns about the potential for the upper level to dominate the streetscape. To avoid this, setbacks should be increased and the visual bulk of the upper level reduced. The proposed subdivision is generally acceptable. Upon receipt of amended plans, the application was re-referred to the City's Heritage team who provided the following advice: • The increased upper level setbacks look like they are enough to reduce the visual bulk now. The proposal is acceptable.

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, 11 objections were received, with the grounds of objection being:

- Heritage;
- Neighbourhood character;
- Overdevelopment of the site (small lot sizes, lack of open space, setbacks, lack of landscaping);
- Unreasonable amenity impacts;
- Insufficient level of amenity for future occupiers;
- Visually dominant/visual impact/blocking views/height;

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- Design;
- Car parking and traffic impacts ;
- Property devaluation;
- Tree removal and reduction in green space;
- Non-compliance with ResCode;
- Overlooking;
- Overshadowing/loss of light;
- Impacts on easement of adjoining property;
- Application history (and VCAT findings);
- Inaccuracy of application plans and documentation;
- Property boundary measurements;
- Advertising process.

Whilst it is noted that some of the objectors raised concerns as to whether the advertising process had been undertaken in accordance with the legislative requirements (having been partially conducted over the Easter period), the applicant provided a signed statutory declaration which stated that the advertising had been carried out in accordance with the requirements. Whilst the City puts a hold on advertising over the Christmas / New Year period, this does not occur for other holidays throughout the year.

The objections are discussed below.

A consultation meeting was held on 4 June 2021 with the applicant, land owner, objectors and Ward Councillors.

Following the consultation meeting, the applicant provided additional information in response to some of the concerns raised, which was circulated to all parties. No objections were withdrawn as a result of this process.

Planning Assessment

Whether the proposal is consistent with Planning Scheme policy regarding housing, design and infill residential development

The site is located within a long established, inner suburb of Bendigo. It is approximately 1.0 kilometre north-west of the Bendigo City Centre and close to a range of facilities, services and transport options; being located within the Bendigo Activity Centre.

Planning policy through Clauses 11, 11.01-1S, 11.03-1S, 16.01-2S, 16.01-3S and 21.05 supports an intensification of development on sites that benefit from such locational attributes; seeks to create a compacted Bendigo urban area and create diversity in housing stock. A cornerstone of that approach, as outlined in Clauses 21.05-2 and 21.05-3, is the support of increased housing in locations within 10 minutes of a range of services and facilities.

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The proposal meets planning policy objectives in terms of being an appropriate location for housing and infill residential development and is located within a 10 minute neighbourhood. The proposal provides a new three bedroom dwelling that meets the City's policy direction of providing diverse housing choice and contributes towards the goal of creating a compact urban area.

Given the policy support from a strategic housing policy perspective for an additional dwelling in this location, attention should be drawn to the specifics of this proposal and whether it is acceptable having regard to the site context and the applicable planning controls and policies. This is discussed below.

Whether the proposal is consistent with the provisions of the General Residential Zone and the neighbourhood character policy

The inclusion of the area in the General Residential Zone with its purpose to *encourage a diversity of housing types and housing growth particularly in locations offering good access to services and transport* recognises the locational attributes outlined above.

However, the General Residential Zone also includes a purpose to *encourage development that respects the neighbourhood character of the area.*

In addition to the Zone, neighbourhood character is referenced as an important consideration throughout the Planning Scheme including Clauses 11, 15, 16 and 22.11.

A number of matters raised by the objectors relate to the proposal not being consistent with the neighbourhood character.

In Planning Practice Note 43 (January 2018) neighbourhood character is defined as:

"…essentially the combination of the public and private realms. Every property, public place or piece of infrastructure makes a contribution, whether great or small. It is the cumulative impact of all these contributions that establishes neighbourhood character."

The Practice Note goes on to say:

"…Identifying the features and characteristics of the neighbourhood ... does not mean producing an exhaustive list of features in the neighbourhood. …Understanding the relationship between the features and characteristics of a neighbourhood is important…The key is to consider the interaction between features and characteristics."

It is noted that the site is not affected by a Neighbourhood Character Overlay, however the site is located in Central Bendigo Residential Character Precinct 2, which is described in Clause 22.11 as follows:

"This precinct forms part of the inner ring of suburbs that exemplify the distinctive character of early Bendigo. Most of the housing is from the Victorian, Edwardian and Inter-war periods. In parts of the precinct, dwellings are frequently weatherboard with picket fences creating a modest 'cottage' character. Elsewhere, brick and render are more common, particularly in the areas with larger houses and mansions. Setbacks vary according to the size of lot and housing, but are often consistent within a particular streetscape. Much of the area has heritage significance."

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The statement of desired future character seeks to ensure that: *The heritage qualities and the distinctive characteristics of each streetscape will be maintained and strengthened.*

The desired future character is to be achieved by the objectives and design responses outlined and discussed in the table below:

Objectives	**Recommended Design Response**
To retain buildings that contribute to the valued character of the area.	Retain and restore wherever possible, intact Victorian, Edwardian, Federation and Inter-war era dwellings. Alterations and extensions should be appropriate to the building era.
Comment: The proposal is retaining the existing dwelling on the site, with no changes proposed to the building fabric. A small garden shed (constructed post 1960) will be removed from the rear yard and relocated, however this does not require planning approval. *The proposal complies with this objective.*	
To encourage the consideration of the landscape setting of the dwelling.	Prepare a landscape plan to accompany all applications for new dwellings. Retain large, established trees and provide for the planting of new trees wherever possible.
Comment: The immediate surrounding area is characterised by an abundance of detached period homes which are modestly set in mature gardens, which contributes to the character of the area. In the previous application before the Tribunal, Council's expert witness Mr Glossop stated that vegetation plays a role in the area's character by way of street trees, planting in front and rear yards and space between and/or around buildings. *One 12 metre high, non-native (exotic) tree along with approximately three small to medium sized trees/shrubs will be required to be removed in order to facilitate the proposal. It should be noted that this tree could in fact be removed at any time, without requiring planning approval. The remainder of the vegetation surrounding the dwelling is proposed to be retained, including that within the front garden/setback.* *A landscape plan has been provided for the site and shows canopy trees (up to a height of 10m) located within the front and year yards of both dwellings, along with other trees, shrubs and ground covers. Following consultation, the applicant has suggested that a condition be included on the permit requiring the Landscape Plan to be amended to show a row of screening shrubs in front of the south eastern section of the privacy fence in the courtyard of dwelling 1, as it presents to Vine Street.* *Once established, these plantings will add to the garden character of the area and soften the appearance of the new development. Regard must also be given to the physical context of the site being a corner allotment which currently presents a high fence to its side street. Therefore, the proposed development provides opportunities to establish an open landscape setting instead of the current high fence to the Vine*	

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Objectives	Recommended Design Response
Street boundary. This presents a manner in which the proposal can enhance the landscape setting of the site. It is considered that the removal of the 12m high exotic tree is offset by the adequate replacement plantings. *Concerns were raised by objectors as to whether there was sufficient space on site for the identified vegetation. It is noted that the Landscape Plan has been prepared by a Landscape and Environmental Design consultant.* *The proposal complies with this objective.*	
To minimise site disturbance and impact of the building on the landscape.	Buildings should be designed to follow the contours of the site or step down the site.
Comment: The site is generally flat and only a small site cut is required to facilitate the proposed dwelling. *The proposal complies with this objective.*	
To maintain the consistency, where present, of building front setbacks.	The front setback should be not less than the average setback of the adjoining two dwellings.
Comment: The existing dwelling is proposed to be retained and as such there is no change to the front setback from Rowan Street. *The proposed dwelling will be setback 5.502 metres from Vine Street. Whilst the average setback from Vine Street of the two adjoining buildings (84 Rowan Street and 90 Vine Street) is 5.63 metres, it is noted that 84 Rowan Street is a side setback (as the dwelling fronts Rowan Street), and the proposed setback exceeds the requirements of ResCode with regards to street setback (Clause 55.03-1). As such, a variation of 0.128m is considered appropriate.* *The proposal complies (in part) with this objective.*	
To maintain the rhythm of dwelling spacing.	Buildings should be off-set from at least one side boundary.
Comment: The proposed dwelling will be offset 1.221-1.696 metres from the north-western property boundary and 0.2 metres from the proposed lot boundary, at ground level, which provides an offset from one boundary and is generally consistent with the rhythm of dwelling spacing within the streetscape. It is noted that garages and/or carports being located on the property boundary is not uncommon within Vine Street, nor is this design response contrary to the Heritage Design Guidelines, City of Greater Bendigo, August 2015. The upper floor will be setback 2.737-4.021 metres from the north-western property boundary and 1.745-2.955 from the proposed lot boundary which is generally consistent with the rhythm of dwelling spacing. *The proposal complies with this objective.*	
To minimise the dominance of car storage facilities	Locate garages and carports behind the line of the dwelling. Use rear access where available.
Comment: In order to provide car storage to the existing dwelling, it is proposed to apply roof sheeting to the pergola approved as part of DR/354/2020 and convert this	

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Objectives	Recommended Design Response
structure to a carport. The inclusion of roof sheeting to the approved works will not result in any adverse character impacts. An uncovered tandem car space is located to the front. *An attached single garage and tandem car space is proposed for the new dwelling. The garage is located 1 metre behind the front line of the dwelling which is consistent with the desired design response and is in proportion to the façade of the dwelling. As outlined above, this design response is not inconsistent with the streetscape.* *The proposal complies with this objective.*	
To respect the identified heritage qualities of the streetscape or adjoining buildings.	Where the streetscape contains identified heritage buildings, reflect the dominant building forms in the street, including roof forms, in the new building design.
Comment: The Eaglehawk and Bendigo Heritage Study identifies Rowan Street and surrounding streetscapes as being good residential heritage streetscapes, having important historical significance in the context of Bendigo's gold mining past. *There are no individually listed heritage buildings within this portion of Vine Street, with the nearest individually listed heritage building being at 76 Rowan Street (approximately 24m north-east of the site).* *Roof pitches in the surrounding area vary, adding a diversity of building heights. This is further accentuated by the hilly terrain.* *Whilst it is noted that the dwelling takes on a more dominant built form than that which is commonly found within the streetscape, particularly given the two-storey nature, the proposed dwelling incorporates common design elements within the streetscape with regards to front setback, porch/verandah, window proportions, the rhythm of dwelling spacing, materials and roof form, as discussed in this table. In addition, the massing of the dwelling at ground level and the proportions of the built form at the upper and lower levels, helps to minimise any potential dominance at the upper floor.* *The proposal complies (in part) with this objective.*	
To ensure that buildings and extensions do not dominate the streetscape. Respect the predominant building height in the street and nearby properties.	Where there is a predominance of single storey, the height of the dwelling at the front of the dwelling should match the typical single storey wall height.
Comment: In the previous application before the Tribunal, Council's expert witness Mr Glossop stated that due to the historic nature of the area and its heritage values, the immediate area is undergoing a low level of change. Where development has occurred, it has generally been an extension of the dwelling towards the rear or a second dwelling located at the rear. *Whilst it is noted that dwellings in the surrounding area are predominantly single storey, there are some instances of both established and more recent two storey development within the surrounding area (rear extension to 92 Vine Street, two storey dwelling at 104 Vine Street and further north-east along Rowan Street).*	

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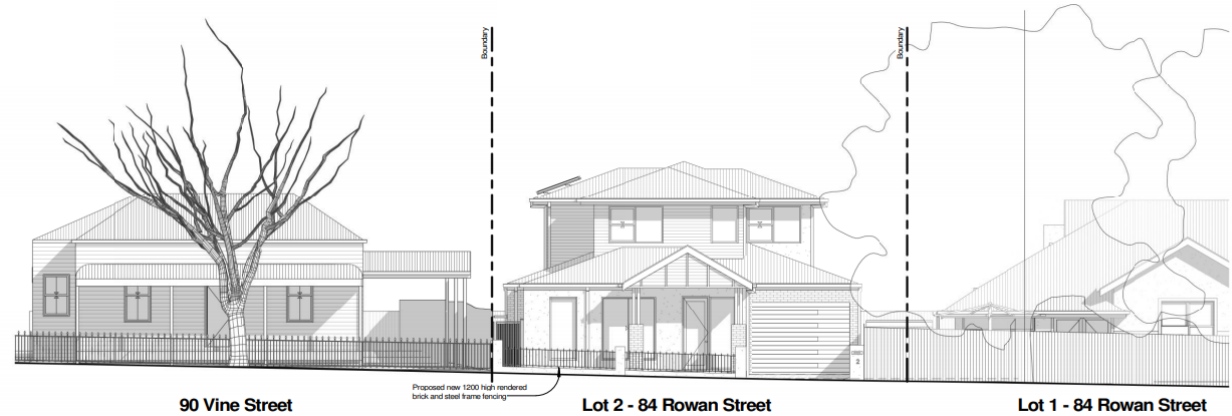
Objectives	Recommended Design Response
Whilst the new dwelling presents as a two-storey dwelling within a primarily single-storey streetscape, the proposal presents an acceptable design response for the following reasons: • *The front of the dwelling has a single storey wall height component, with the first-floor setback 3.196 metres from the front wall of the dwelling, a setback which is further accentuated by the 4.346 metre setback of the first floor from the front of the portico.* • *The setbacks of the upper floor are staggered* • *The massing/presence of the dwelling at the ground floor helps to keep the focus on the ground floor.* • *The proposed dwelling has a relatively high level of articulation and elements that draw on the character of the surrounding neighbourhood (i.e. a protruding porch which gives reference to the presence of porches and verandahs in the streetscape, a single garage, the use of windows).* • *The combination of a mix of building materials and variation between materials on the ground and upper levels.* • *The height of the dwelling is not considerably higher than surrounding dwellings as shown below:*  **Proposed South West - Streetscape** *The use of the above design elements will help ameliorate the visual prominence of a two storey building within the streetscape and integrate the development into the surrounding neighbourhood.* *It is considered that the dwelling would present as prominent as opposed to dominant within the streetscape.* *The proposal complies (in part) with this objective.*	
To use building materials and finishes that complement the dominant pattern within the streetscape.	In streetscapes where weatherboard predominates, use timber or other non-masonry cladding materials where possible, and render, bag or paint brick surfaces.
Comment: The materials of the proposed dwelling include brick, render and horizontal weatherboard style cladding which would be appropriate to the area as these are all materials found within the streetscape.	

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Objectives	Recommended Design Response
The proposal complies with this objective.	
To ensure front fences are appropriate to the era of the dwellings and maintain the openness of the streetscape.	Provide open style front fencing. Front fences should not exceed 1.2 metres other than in exceptional cases.
Comment: A new front fence was approved for the existing dwelling as part of DR/354/2020 and this is shown on the application plans. Given that a new crossover to Rowan Street is proposed, the plans will need to be amended to show access gates as part of the fence design. This can be conditioned on the permit. *A 1.2 metre high rendered brick and steel frame fence is proposed along the front boundary of the proposed Lot 2 which is consistent with the design of the proposed dwelling and front boundary treatments within the streetscape.* *The proposal complies with this objective.*	

When considering whether a proposal complies with the desired future character of an area, it is important to acknowledge that desired character is not only expressed in the neighborhood character policy itself, but also the purposes of the zone and broader planning policy framework regarding housing growth and infill development, which is discussed earlier in this report. As such, the desired outcome must be to strike a balance between the competing policy objectives.

It is noted that the above objectives and design responses are not mandatory controls and there will be few, if any, developments that fully achieve all of them.

In *Allison v Kingston CC & Ors [2010] VCAT 1361 (13 August 2010)* the Tribunal emphasises that respecting neighbourhood character does not mean duplication: *"…Subject to how the design responds to its context, an increase in built form by one additional storey is in principle, accepted as being respectful of surrounding lower scale. Therefore the fact that there are no other two storey dwellings in the street is not of itself a reason to reject this proposal".*

With this in mind, it is important to not dismiss the proposal as inappropriate in neighbourhood character terms simply because there are few examples of two storey dwellings in the nearby vicinity of the site. The design of the dwelling has taken into account the potential for the building to dominate and has added design elements to reduce this impact, which have been discussed above.

As such, whilst the proposal will result in a change in appearance of the site, the proposed design presents an acceptable outcome with regards to the desired balance between housing policy and neighbourhood character.

Whether the proposal will adversely affect the heritage significance of the place or precinct

The site is affected by the Heritage Overlay – Schedule 11 (HO11) – Rowan Street Precinct. As the existing dwelling was constructed in approximately 1922, the building is classified as being contributory to the heritage precinct.

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Planning policy through Clauses 15.03 and 22.06, along with the Heritage Overlay seeks to conserve, maintain and enhance the significance of heritage places and heritage elements that contribute to the significance of heritage places. Such strategies include encouraging appropriate development that respects places with identified heritage values and ensuring an appropriate setting and context for heritage places is maintained or enhanced.

A number of matters raised by the objectors relate to concerns that the proposal is not consistent with the Heritage Design Guidelines (height, scale, setbacks, spacing, dominance, proportions, impact on views to other heritage buildings), and the proposal not being consistent with or respecting the heritage or neighbourhood character and detracting from the heritage significance.

The statement of significance for this precinct is contained within the Bendigo and Eaglehawk Heritage Study (1993). It states that: "*This precinct contains some highly skillful designs and representative examples from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, marking the continuous prosperity of gold in that period. Intermixed are the gold sites themselves, with public buildings such as the Lutheran Church, showing nodes of early settlement. Apart from the buildings associated with the important gold era, there are the individually important sites and groups of sites which arose from the 1920s-1930s."*

The site was graded 'D' in the Heritage Study, indicative of a contributory grading.

Consideration has been given to the relevant decision guidelines of the Heritage Overlay including:

- The significance of the heritage place and whether the proposal will adversely affect the natural or cultural significance of the place.
- Any applicable heritage design guideline specified in the schedule to the overlay.
- Whether the location, bulk, form or appearance of the proposed building will adversely affect the significance of the heritage place.
- Whether the location, bulk, form and appearance of the proposed building is in keeping with the character and appearance of adjacent buildings and the heritage place.
- Whether the proposed works will adversely affect the significance, character or appearance of the heritage place.
- Whether the proposed subdivision will adversely affect the significance of the heritage place.
- Whether the proposed subdivision may result in development which will adversely affect the significance, character or appearance of the heritage place.

The City's local heritage policy at Clause 22.06 has been established to guide decisions on demolition and development of heritage places and seeks to maintain and enhance the significance of heritage places while accommodating the needs of residents to adapt and develop such places. The policy also requires new developments to be assessed against the relevant design suggestions in the *Greater Bendigo Heritage Design Guidelines, August 2015.*

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An assessment against the policy objectives and Heritage Design Guidelines is provided as follows:

- *Subdivision*

The Heritage Policy and Heritage Design Guidelines contain objectives which seek to ensure that subdivision and development which may result from it, does not adversely affect the significance of the heritage place, provides an appropriate setting for heritage places and retains the existing built form pattern where such pattern contributes to the significance of the heritage place.

The Guidelines further state that subdivision should result in development that respects the existing rhythm/pattern of surrounding buildings and spaces between them; that subdivisions should result in lots with a similar frontage to that of the dominant allotment pattern in the streetscape and that appropriate settings and elements be maintained including the retention of original garden areas, large trees and other contributory features.

Frontages within Vine Street generally range from 7.5-19 metres. The subdivision proposes the balance lot will have a frontage of 12.25 metres to Vine Street which is generally consistent with the streetscape. The subdivision provides for a 3 metre minimum curtilage from the rear of the existing dwelling to the new boundary which is consistent with the Guidelines.

The subdivision will result in the loss of one large non-native tree, however it is noted that tree controls do not apply to this schedule of the Heritage Overlay.

- *Infill Development/New Buildings*

The Heritage Policy and Guidelines contain objectives which:
- Encourage new buildings that do not adversely affect the significance, character or appearance of the heritage precinct and are visually recessive;
- Seek to ensure that the design of new buildings responds to the context of the heritage precinct and nearby contributory buildings including scale, height, mass, form, siting, setbacks and materials; and
- Encourage new development within a heritage precinct that is contemporary in appearance and does not copy historic styles or details.

The design advice within the Guidelines states that:
- Atypical buildings found in the heritage precinct should not be used as the reference point for new development design; the design approach should be respectful of the dominant characteristics of the precinct.
- The overall shape and volume and the arrangement of the parts of any new development should not dominate the contributory buildings within the heritage precinct.

It is acknowledged that the proposed building will be visible from the public realm and that it will introduce a new two-storey element to the streetscape, which is currently predominantly single storey.

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The new dwelling adopts a contemporary design which, as outlined above, references a number of the character and heritage elements found within the streetscape. The proposal is considered to present a traditional built form, without reproducing period detail.

The front setback is generally consistent with the adjoining dwelling at 90 Vine Street and the side setbacks are generally consistent with the rhythm of dwelling spacing within the streetscape. Whilst the City's Heritage team has acknowledged that the preference would be to avoid built form on either side boundary, the 1.0 metre setback to the garage slightly reduces the impact of this in the streetscape. As previously noted, garages or carports located on the property boundary is not uncommon within the immediate streetscape.

The proposal is considered to be an acceptable design response given that the dwelling incorporates a number of design elements, as outlined above, which assist in reducing the dominance of the dwelling within both the streetscape and 'backyardscape' to an acceptable level.

- *Car Parking/ Driveway/Access*

The Heritage Policy and Heritage Design Guidelines contain objectives that seek to ensure that car accommodation and car access points do not dominate the heritage place, are located at least 1 metre behind the primary façade and are designed to ensure that they do not dominate the contributory elements of a heritage place.

The application proposes to convert construct a single width crossover off Rowan Street, with the new dwelling to utilise the existing crossover onto Vine Street. This will result in a single-width crossover on each street frontage which is consistent with the Guidelines.

The pergola approved as part of DR/354/2020 which is located on the north-east side of the existing dwelling is proposed to be converted to a carport, with roof sheeting applied. An uncovered car space will be provided to the front of the carport.

A single-width, attached garage is proposed for the new dwelling. The garage is setback 1 metre behind the front wall of the dwelling in accordance with the Guidelines. The internal driveway has been tapered to match the single-width crossover, which allows for landscaping either side of the driveway, further minimising the appearance of hard surfaces.

- *Fences*

This policy seeks to retain and restore original fences where possible, encourage fences that respect the significance and appearance of the heritage place or precinct and encourage low and open style fences that retain views of heritage places.

The application proposes to demolish a portion of the existing 1.8 metre high iron side fence fronting Vine Street. This fence is non-original and does not make any contribution to the heritage precinct and its demolition is supported.

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It is proposed to construct a low scale rendered brick pillar and steel rod framed fence along the frontage of proposed Lot 2. The fence will have a height of 1.2 metres which is consistent with the *Heritage Design Guidelines* and is a modern interpretation of the character of fencing in the streetscape which is consistent with the contemporary design of the dwelling.

It is also proposed to construct a 1.8m high Colorbond fence along the shared boundary, which is supported.

Neighbourhood character and heritage share many attributes, but there are important differences between the two concepts which must be recognised. As outlined above, the proposal an acceptable outcome when considered against both the neighbourhood character and heritage policy frameworks.

Compliance with ResCode and whether the impacts on neighbours are acceptable

A key consideration is whether the proposal achieves residential subdivision outcomes that appropriately respond to the site and its context and whether the proposal would result in reasonable amenity impacts for surrounding properties and future residents.

It is a requirement of both Clause 55 and Clause 56 that a development/subdivision must meet all of the objectives of the clause and should also meet all of the standards. However, if the City is satisfied that an application for an alternative design solution meets the design objective, the alternative design solution may be considered. Non-compliance with a number of ResCode standards generally points to an overdevelopment of the site and a non-site responsive design.

The proposal has been found to generally comply with all relevant objectives and standards of Clause 55. However, the following are clauses where a variation to the ResCode standard is required, or those which are relevant to the objectors' concerns.

- *Clause 55.02-1 Neighbourhood character objectives (Standard B1)*

Has the objectives to *ensure that the design respects the existing neighbourhood character or contributes to a preferred neighbourhood character* and *to ensure that development responds to the features of the site and the surrounding area.*

As outlined earlier in this report, the design response is considered acceptable to the neighbourhood and the site.

- *Clause 55.03-1 Street setback objective (Standard B6)*

Has the objective to *ensure that the setbacks of buildings from a street respect the existing or preferred neighbourhood character and make efficient use of the site.*

As the site is on a corner and the existing dwelling fronts Rowan Street, in order to comply with the standard the new dwelling is required to be setback 3 metres from Vine Street. The proposed front setback is 5.502 metres which complies with this standard.

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- *Clause 55.03-2 Building height objective (Standard B7)*

Has the objective to *ensure that the height of buildings respects the existing or preferred neighbourhood character.* The clause requires consideration to be given to factors such as the design response, relationship between the proposed building height and the height of existing adjacent buildings and he visual impact of the building when viewed from the street and from adjoining properties.

The proposed building height of 7.050 metres does not exceed the maximum allowable height of 9 metres, thereby complying with the standard. As can be seen in the Streetscape Elevation, the design response allows for a graduated change of building height between the adjoining buildings and the new dwelling.

- *Clause 55.05-3 Site coverage objective (Standard B8)*

Has the objective to *ensure that the site coverage respects the existing or preferred neighbourhood character and responds to the features of the site.*

Concerns were raised by objectors with regards to the proposal presenting an overdevelopment of the site, with small lot sizes and a lack of outdoor space. The proposed site coverage is 47.52% which is well below the allowable 60%. It is noted that as development is proposed prior to subdivision, the site coverage is calculated as a whole. The proposal complies with this standard.

- *Clause 55.03-8 Landscaping objectives (Standard B13)*

Has the objectives to *encourage development that respects the landscape character of the neighbourhood, encourage development that maintains and enhances habitat for plants and animals in locations of habitat importance, to provide appropriate landscaping, and to encourage the retention of mature vegetation in site.*

The impact of the proposal on the landscape character was one of the issues raised by the objectors. As outlined earlier in this report, the proposal presents an acceptable landscape setting. The proposal complies in part with this standard.

- *Clause 55.04-3 Daylight to existing windows objective (Standard B19)*

Has the objective to allow adequate daylight into existing habitable room windows. Consideration must be given to the design response and the impact on the amenity of existing dwellings.

Concerns were raised by the adjoining landowner at 90 Vine Street that the proposal would significantly reduce daylight into the habitable room windows along the south-eastern side of the dwelling. The proposal complies with the standard by providing a light court to the existing windows that has a minimum area of 3 square metres and minimum dimension of 1 metre clear to the sky.

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- *Clause 55.04-5 Overshadowing open space objective (Standard B21)*

Has the objective to *ensure buildings do not significantly overshadow existing secluded private open space.*

Concerns were raised by objectors that the proposal would result in overshadowing and loss of light. Shadow plans were provided as part of the application which demonstrate that the proposal complies with this standard. Whilst some minor overshadowing will occur at 82 Rowan Street, this has been shown to be fully compliant with the standard. As such, it is considered that the proposal provides a reasonable standard of amenity with regards to sunlight and overshadowing.

- *Clause 55.04-6 Overlooking objective (Standard B22)*

Has the objective to *limit views into existing secluded private open space and habitable room windows.*

Concerns were raised by objectors that the proposal would result in overlooking of adjoining properties and a loss of privacy. High level windows (1.7 metre high window sills) have been utilised on the upper level of the north-east, north-west and south-east elevations to avoid overlooking into habitable room windows and secluded private open space of neighbouring properties and within the development.

1.7 metre high window sills along with the height of the boundary fencing blocks overlooking from the ground floor windows, alfresco area and balcony. This is compliant with the standard.

- *Clause 55.05-4 Private open space objective (Standard B28)*

Has the objective to *provide adequate private open space for the reasonable recreation and service needs of residents.*

Concerns were raised by objectors that the proposal was an overdevelopment of the site and presents a lack of outdoor space. 131.791 square metres of private open space, including in excess of 25 square metres of secluded private open space (spos) is provided for the existing dwelling. The SPOS can be conveniently accessed from the living room.

51.2 square metres of private open space, including the required 25 square metres of secluded private open space, is provided for the new dwelling, which complies with this standard. Whilst the SPOS can be conveniently accessed from the living area, the SPOS will, however, be overshadowed for a larger part of the day.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposal will result in a change to the current level of amenity, the proposal is generally compliant with the requirements of Clause 55 and as such is considered to provide reasonable levels of amenity for existing and new residents.

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- *Clause 56*

The proposal complies with all relevant objectives and standards of Clause 56 and as such is considered to meet the principal purpose of Clause 56 (Residential subdivision) which is to create liveable and sustainable neighbourhoods and urban places with character and identity. A full assessment is not provided here, given that the subdivision is being undertaken along with the development. The proposed location of the common boundary is not assessed as giving rise to any planning concerns. Servicing of the new lot will occur as a matter of course through the completion of the subdivision process.

Objector concerns

Issues raised by the objectors with regards to heritage, neighbourhood character, overdevelopment of the site, visual appearance, ResCode, amenity impacts and landscaping/garden setting have been addressed earlier in this report. The remaining specific issues are responded to as follows:

- *Car parking and traffic impacts*

Both the existing dwelling and proposed dwelling are provided with two on-site car spaces. As such, the provision of car parking complies with the requirements as set out at Clause 52.06 of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme. The functionality of the proposed car spaces and the traffic movements in and out of the proposed driveways has been assessed by the City's Traffic Engineering team as being appropriate. It is not expected that one additional dwelling would cause any unreasonable impacts on the flow of traffic within Rowan and Vine Streets much beyond that which would already exist from dwellings in the area.

- *Street trees*

Concerns were raised by objectors that the proposal would result in the removal of the street trees located within the Vine Street road reserve. The proposal does not require either street tree to be removed and it is noted that such removal would not be supported by the City. A note will be included on the permit in order to ensure that works near City trees must be undertaken in accordance with Council's *Urban Tree Management Policy, 2017* and Australian Standard 4970 – *Protection of trees on development sites*.

- *Property devaluation*

VCAT has, on a number of occasions, determined that property devaluation is not a material planning consideration.

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- *Impacts on easement of adjoining property*

Concerns were raised by the owner of the adjoining property at 82 Rowan Street with regards to the proposal seeking to connect to the existing drainage/sewerage easement located within their property boundaries. An easement on a property means another party or entity has a right to cross or use that land for a specified purpose. Notwithstanding this, the applicant engaged a plumber to check service access/locations, who advised that sewer can be accessed/connected between the existing carport and garden beds of 82 Rowan Street, to provide little to no interruption/issues to the current resident. This is not considered to be unreasonable and fully within the legal purpose of an easement.

- *Inaccuracy of application plans and documentation*

Concerns were raised by objectors in relation to the accuracy of the plans, with claims made that there were a number of inaccuracies in the plans relating to fence heights, setbacks etc. It is acknowledged that the 'boundary line' between proposed Lot 1 and 2 is incorrectly shown on the Proposed South West – Streetscape Elevation, with the proposed garage located 0.2m off the boundary. This inaccuracy has not impacted on the ability to accurately assess the plans and no further inaccuracies have been found.

- *Property boundary measurements*

Concerns were raised by objectors in relation to whether the plans have been developed based on a survey plan or based on the title. Following the consultation meeting, the applicant had the land surveyed which confirmed that fence lines did not accurately align with the title boundaries; with the fences located within the property boundaries. It is not uncommon for discrepancies such as this to occur with regards to fence locations and title boundaries. The plans have been drawn based on the title dimensions which for the purposes of considering a planning permit application, is the correct point of reference for the formal property details. Any adverse possession claims can be considered under the appropriate processes which sit outside planning permit considerations.

What has VCAT previously said about:
- The site and the previous development proposal; and
- 'Repeat' applications

In *Shadbolt v Greater Bendigo CC [2020] VCAT 450* which related to permit application DSD/612/2018 as outlined earlier within this report, Member Code made the following observations which are relevant in considering this new application:

- *"There are many aspects of the proposal that are a satisfactory response to relevant matters in the Scheme:*
  - *The site is suitable for an additional dwelling on strategic policy grounds.*
  - *The physical context of a corner site and its size and the statutory context of the General Residential Zone also lend in-principle support for the proposal.*
  - *The demolition of the carport and sheds is supported.*
  - *There are no issues of substance regarding compliance with the Scheme's relevant subdivision design objectives (Clause 56).*

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- *Most of the relevant ResCode objectives are also met, especially those with numeric standards. They include standards relating to site coverage, street setback, permeable areas, and overlooking.*
- *The mandatory garden area requirement is met.*
- *The removal, per se, of a mature 12 metres tall exotic tree in the rear yard of the existing dwelling to make way for the proposed dwelling is not in contest.*

- *The following aspects of the proposal were deemed to be unsatisfactory:*
  - *Character*
    - *Consistency of front setbacks is not met with the upper floor balcony, which also results in a space for meaningful landscaping*
    - *Upper floor minimum side setbacks do not respond to the rhythm of dwelling side setbacks,*
    - *Garage in line with ground floor of dwelling, which does not minimise the dominance of car storage.*
    - *Design and form of dwelling does not respect the 'modest cottage' heritage qualities, with particular reference made to the protruding entry and balcony form, and width of the upper floor.*
    - *Design and form foes not respect the predominant building height, and creates a dominant form in the streetscape, mainly caused by insufficient building setbacks at the upper floor.*
  - *Heritage*
    - *Setting – insufficient space between the proposal and the existing dwelling.*
    - *Building bulk – bulk and mass of the upper floor (overall shape and volume, width of upper floor and street and side setbacks of upper floor).*
    - *Garage – garage in line with front wall of dwelling and not set back.*
  - *Off-site Amenity*
    - *Upper floor setbacks are minimal resulting in off-site building bulk impacts and an unsatisfactory response to neighbourhood character.*
    - *SPOS of new dwelling inadequate, and location of SPOS of existing dwelling is problematic.*

The Tribunal concluded that *"this application essentially requires judgment in balancing consolidation objectives with character/heritage objectives. On the material presented in this proceeding, my judgment is that the former objectives do not outweigh the latter objectives, particularly as the longer term impacts on the community must be given priority".*

As such, it is evident from this previous proceeding that any development on the site must seek to strike a more appropriate balance between urban consolidation objectives and character/heritage objectives. Further, any development must not seek to simply respond to the previous comments and criticisms from the Tribunal but instead seek to provide a site responsive design.

The applicant has given consideration to the comments handed down by the Tribunal in the abovementioned decision and has sought to respond through a revised design with greater attention to the elements referred to within. These are discussed in greater detail below.

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Planning legal principles with reference to 'repeat' applications

There are numerous Tribunal cases dealing with repeat appeals and the factors that should be taken into account when considering such applications. One such decision is Batsis Nominees Pty Ltd v Hobsons Bay CC [2009] VCAT 928 (25 May 2009). That decision outlines four factors/principles that should be considered as justifying a departure from an earlier determination.

Unless a compelling case can be made about one or more of these factors, then there is no reasonable justification for departing from the basic findings in the previous application.

The factors/principles are listed and responded to in turn:

Principle:
Significant or material changes to the application itself which address the primary reasons for the previous proposal being refused.

Assessment:
The issues that led to the refusal of the previous application are summarised above. Whilst the proposal still presents as a second dwelling and subdivision, the following key changes have been made in response to the concerns raised:

- There has been a minimal increase (0.05 metres) in the front setback of the dwelling at ground floor and an increase in the front setback of the upper floor of 0.368 metres. Whilst these changes alone may seem minimal, it is the evident from the below image which shows the previous proposal (left) and new proposal (right) that the changes to the upper floor bulk have been significant. The increased setback along with the reduced size and altered layout of the upper floor better responds to the consistency of front setbacks.

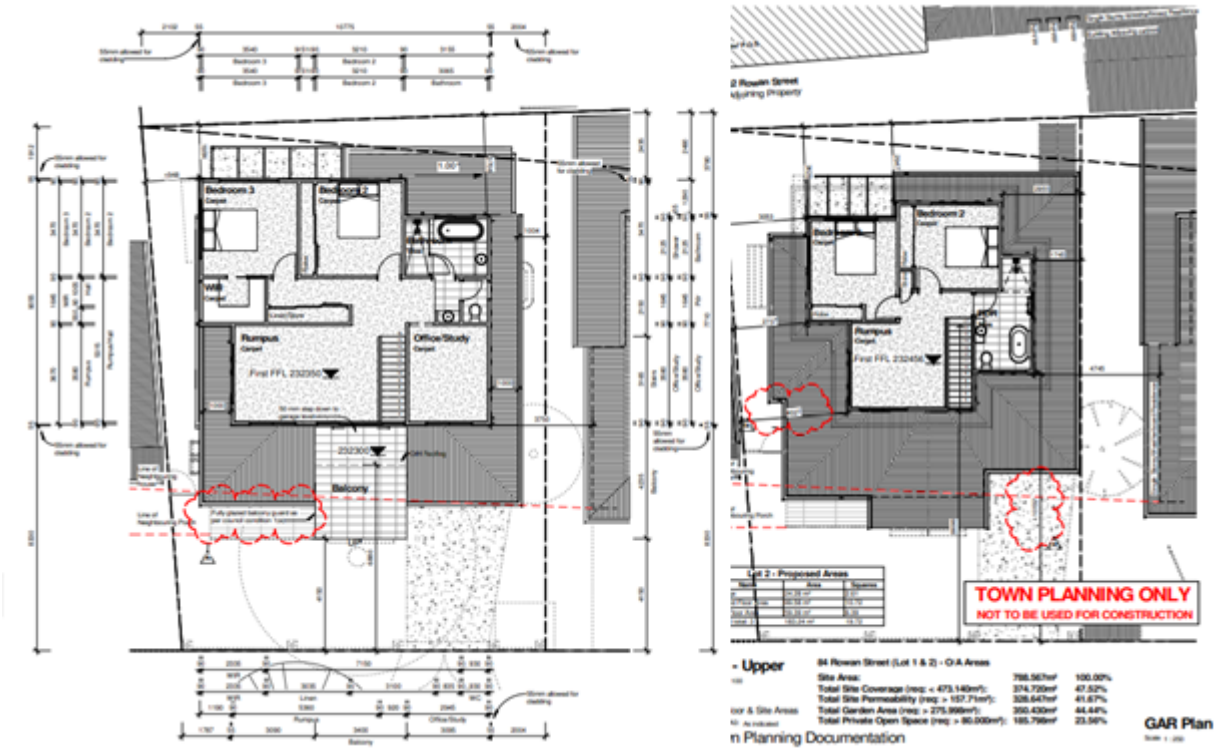

Figure 14: Previous (left) and current (right) first floor plans

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- The proposed dwelling will be offset 1.221-1.696 metres from the north-western property boundary and 0.2 metres from the proposed lot boundary, at ground level, which provides an offset from one boundary.
- The first floor has reduced in size from 91.85 square metres to 59.39 square metres. Upper floor setbacks have increased to 2.737-4.021 metres from the north-western property boundary and 1.745-2.955 from the proposed lot boundary, which is generally consistent with the rhythm of dwelling spacing. This reduces the bulk of the upper floor, provides for a more graduated increase in height and reduces off-site building bulk impacts.

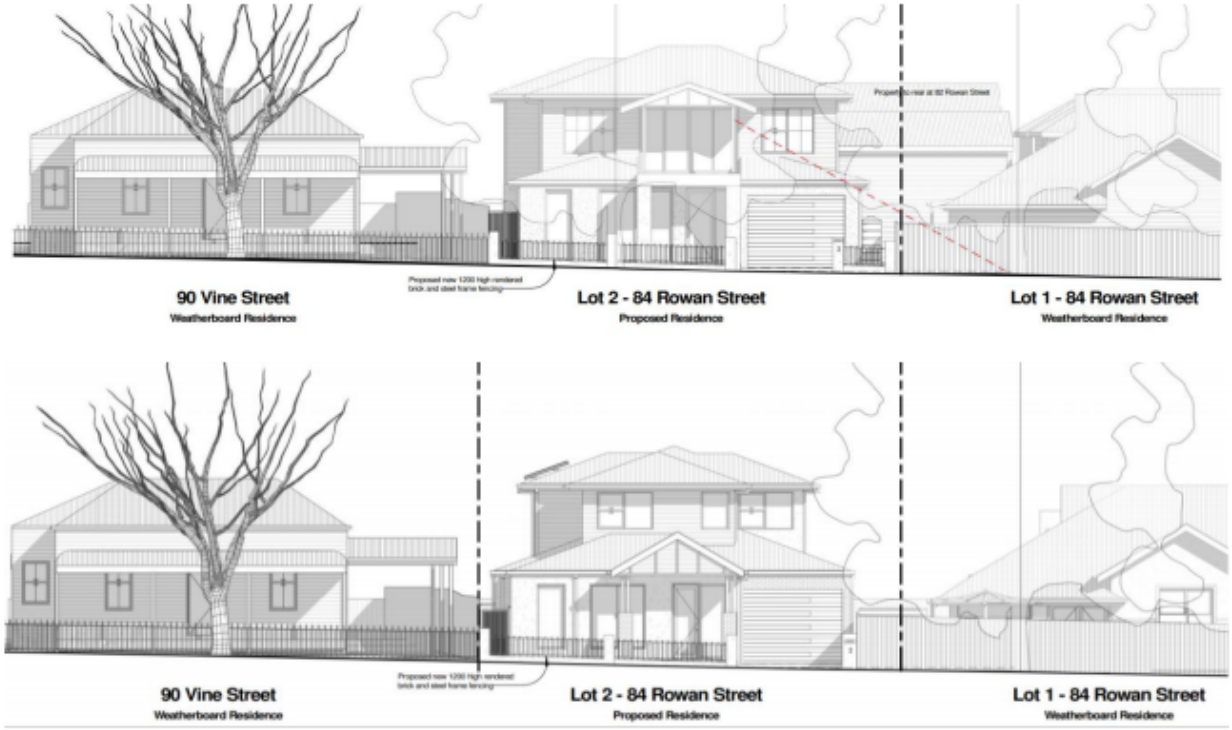

Figure 15: Previous (top) and current (bottom) streetscape elevation

- The increase in setbacks and removal of the protruding portico allows for more meaningful landscaping surrounding the dwelling, including canopy trees (up to a height of 10 metres) located the front and rear yards of both dwellings. The landscape plan shows a mix of trees, shrubs and ground covers which are more consistent with the landscape character and cottage garden setting of the surrounding area.
- The garage setback has increased and the garage is now located 1 metre behind the front wall of the dwelling which minimises the dominance of car storage to an acceptable level.
- The dwelling façade has been redesigned to give the ground floor more prominence/focus, including a more prominent roof form at ground level. The upper floor balcony and protruding entry has been removed which decreases the bulk of the upper floor.
- A 3 metre curtilage has now been provided to the rear of the existing dwelling.

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- SPOS to the existing dwelling can now be conveniently accessed from a living area as a result of the modifications to the dwelling approved as part of a separate permit.
- SPOS of new dwelling has been improved by increased rear setbacks.

The current proposal seeks to respond to previous criticisms of Council and the Tribunal, and overall provides a more site responsive design which presents a clearer balance between urban consolidation and heritage/character objectives.

Principle:
Significant or material changes in the circumstances of the land or its surrounds.

Assessment:
The circumstances of the surrounding land have not changed significantly since the original decision.

With regards to changes to the site, it is noted that planning permit DR/354/2020 allowed for the partial demolition and alterations to the existing dwelling, demolition and construction of a fence and construction of a pergola. The partial demolition and alterations to the existing dwelling have been undertaken.

Principle:
Significant or material changes in planning controls and policy.

Assessment:
There have been no significant or material changes in planning controls or policy since the original decision.

Principle:
Significant or material changes in the interpretation of the facts or law relevant to the Tribunal's consideration.

Assessment:
There are no directly relevant material changes.

Having regard to the repeat appeal principles, two of the four factors are met, which means that there is justification to depart from the original decision to refuse an application that was seeking similar planning permission as this application.

Conclusion

Clause 71.02-3 Integrated Decision Making recognises that Bendigo has various needs and expectations and states that planning aims to meet these needs and expectations by addressing aspects of economic, environmental and social wellbeing affected by land use and development. It goes on to state that:

> *"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".*

It is evident that the proposal presents a conflict between infill development and supporting high densities, protecting heritage, neighbourhood character and residential amenity. However, as outlined above, on balance the proposal is in general accordance with the relevant Planning Scheme provisions and as such it can be concluded that the proposal presents an acceptable outcome when seeking to balance between the competing policy objectives.

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It is recommended that a Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit be issued with conditions.

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.

Proposed Notice of Decision Conditions

1. MODIFIED PLAN
   Before the use and development starts, amended 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 will then form part of the permit. The plans must be drawn to scale with dimensions. The plans must be modified to show:
   (a) The south-eastern section of the privacy fence in the courtyard to the existing dwelling increased in height to 1.8m to allow for secluded private open space.
   (b) An amended landscape plan as outlined in Condition 3.

2. NO ALTERATION TO LAYOUT
   The use and development permitted by this permit as shown on the endorsed plans or described in the endorsed documents must not be altered or modified (for any reason) except with the prior written consent of the responsible authority.

3. LANDSCAPE PLAN REQUIRED
   Before the development starts, 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 landscaping plan must be generally in accordance with the landscape concept plan dated 09/04/19 prepared by CBA Building Designers but modified to show:
   (a) A survey (*including botanical names*) of all existing vegetation to be retained and/or removed.
   (b) Details of surface finishes of pathways and driveways.
   (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.
   (d) The canopy tree in the front setback of Lot 2 must be shown to be a minimum of two metres tall when planted.
   (e) The inclusion of a row of screening shrubs in front of the south-eastern section of the privacy fence to the courtyard of the existing dwelling, as it presents to Rowan Street.

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

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4. 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.

5. COMPLETION OF LANDSCAPING
   Before the occupation of the development starts 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.

6. PRELIMINARY SITE ASSESSMENT
   The subdivision and development permitted by this permit as shown on the endorsed plans and/or described in the endorsed documents must be undertaken in accordance with the soil management recommendations outlined in the Preliminary Site Assessment prepared by Shane Muir Consulting Engineers, dated 4 February 2019.

7. GENERAL EXTERIOR TREATMENT
   The exterior treatment of the building*(s)* permitted by this permit including all exterior decoration, materials, finishes and colours must be to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. The exterior treatment of the building*(s)* must be maintained to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

8. REFRIGERATION AND AIR-CONDITIONING EQUIPMENT
   Any equipment required for refrigeration, air-conditioning, heating and the like must be suitably insulated for the purpose of reducing noise emissions and must be located so as to not be highly visible from the street to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

9. 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
   (c) Stormwater detention
   (d) stormwater quality

10. CONSTRUCTION OF WORKS
    Road works, drainage and other civil works must be constructed in accordance with the City of Greater Bendigo Infrastructure Design Manual and plans and specifications approved by the Responsible Authority:
    (a) Underground drainage

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11. CITY OF GREATER BENDIGO 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 & channel, footpath, seal, street lights, 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.

12. VEHICLE CROSSINGS
    (a) The driveway to Lot 1 between the property boundary and the kerb must be constructed in accordance with the Infrastructure Design Manual.
    (b) Vehicle crossings must be at 90º to the road and the property boundary.
    (c) The subdivision must ensure minimum sight lines for pedestrian safety are provided at the exit driveway frontage to comply with Clause 52.08-9.

13. USE OF CAR PARKING AREAS
    Areas set aside for the parking and movement of vehicles as shown on the endorsed plan must be made available for such use and must not be used for any other purpose.

14. PEDESTRIAN SIGHTLINES
    The minimum sight line for pedestrian safety must be provided at the exit lane frontage so as to accord with Clause 52.06-9 of the City of Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme.

15. FENCING OF SITE
    The fence(s) as shown on the endorsed plans must be erected and maintained to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

16. 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 services to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with the authorities' requirements and relevant legislation at the time.

17. 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.

18. 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.
    - A suitably qualified person for the provision of fibre ready telecommunication facilities to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with any

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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.
- 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.

19. COMPLETION OF DEVELOPMENT
Before a statement of compliance is issued for the subdivision:
- The dwelling(s) approved under this permit must be constructed to a state of practical completion to the satisfaction of the responsible authority; or
- The owner must enter into an agreement under section 173 of the Planning & Environment Act 1987 that covenants that the lots created by the subdivision will only be developed in accordance with the plans endorsed under this permit. The agreement will end upon completion of the development shown on the endorsed plans.

20. EXPIRY OF THE PERMIT - SUBDIVISION AND DEVELOPMENT
This permit will expire if:
(a) The plan of subdivision is not certified within two (2) years from the date of this permit; or
(b) The subdivision is not completed within five (5) years from the date of certification of the plan of subdivision; or
(c) All other development excluding subdivision is not completed within seven (7) years from the date of this permit.

The responsible authority may extend the time for certification of the plan, or for the completion of any part of the development excluding subdivision, if a request is made in writing before the permit expires or thereafter, within the period allowed by section 69 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

City of Greater Bendigo Engineering Note:

A Works within Road Reserves permit must be obtained from the City of Greater Bendigo Engineering Department prior to any work commencing in the road reserve.

CONSENT FOR WORK ON ROAD RESERVES
The applicant must comply with;
(a) The Road Management Act 2004,

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(b) Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2005, and
(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 note 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.

Street Tree Protection Note:

All works near City trees must be undertaken in accordance with Council’s *Urban Tree Management Policy, 2017* and Australian Standard 4970 - *Protection of trees on development sites*.

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14.4. 7 Winterborne Rise, Kennington 3550 - Construction of 4 Dwellings

Author	Shannon Rosewarne, Senior Statutory Planner
Responsible Director	Steve Hamilton, Director Strategy and Growth

Summary/Purpose

Application details:	Construction of 4 Dwellings
Application No:	DR/375/2021
Application Documents:	Documents
Applicant:	Kin Projects
Land:	7 Winterborne Rise, KENNINGTON 3550
Zoning:	General Residential Zone
Overlays:	Nil
No. of objections:	8
Consultation meeting:	A consultation meeting was not held, however written correspondence was undertaken between the applicant and objectors and objectors were provided with a right of reply.
Key considerations:	• Planning policy • Neighbourhood character • Density of development • Car parking and traffic impacts • Amenity impacts • Compliance with Clause 55 (Rescode) • Objections received
Conclusion:	The application is recommended for approval on the basis that it represents an acceptable outcome with regard to the requirements of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme.

RECOMMENDATION

Pursuant to section 61 of the Planning and Environment Act (1987), Council issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit for the construction of 4 dwellings at 7 Winterborne Rise, KENNINGTON 3550 subject to the conditions at the end of this report.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Margaret O'Rourke
Seconded: Cr David Fagg

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

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Policy Context

Community Plan Reference:

City of Greater Bendigo Community Plan 2017-2021:

- Goal 4 Presentation and managing growth
- Goal 6 Embracing our culture and heritage

Attachments

1. Planning Assessment Report

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Attachment 1 - 7 Winterborne Rise - Planning Assessment

PLANNING ASSESSMENT REPORT

Background Information

The subject land is affected by a covenant which specifies building materials, minimum floor areas of 120 square metres for dwellings, excluding garages, verandahs and the like. Legal advice has been sought in relation to the covenant which confirms that the proposal does not breach the restrictive covenant.

Report

Subject Site and Surrounds

The site is located on the western side of Winterborne Rise in Kennington. It has an area of approximately 1,149 square metres and is irregular in shape with a frontage of 21.78 metres to Winterborne Rise. The site is currently vacant.

The adjoining land to the south east (No.6) is developed with a single storey brick dwelling dating to the 1990s, with a front setback of approximately 11.86 metres. The site adjoins two lots to the north west (No. 3 and No. 4 Cardogen Place) which are both developed with brick dwellings, also dating to the 1990s. No. 3 is a single storey dwelling whilst No. 4 is split level with the garage underneath. At the rear of the site there is a lot of approximately 1,925 square metres containing a detached dwelling fronting Lowndes Street.

The surrounding residential area predominantly comprises a mix of detached dwellings and medium density developments with pitched, hipped or gable roof forms, with dwellings mainly constructed of brick. Single storey detached dwellings are predominant, but there are some examples of two storey developments and attached construction.

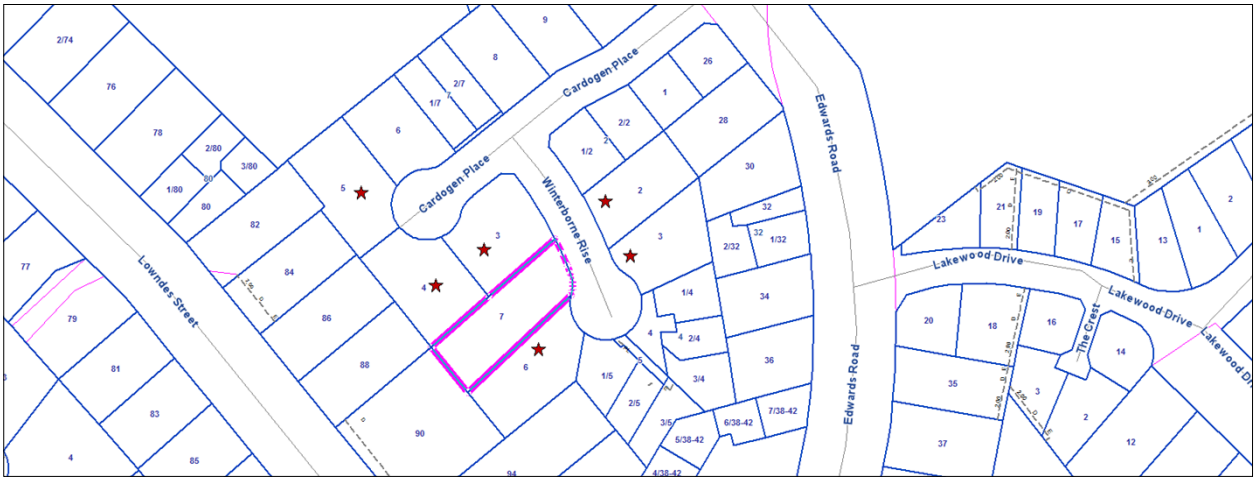

Figure 1: Location map showing subject site. Objectors properties marked with a star. (Note 2 objectors not shown as they reside elsewhere in the municipality)

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Figure 2: Aerial photograph showing subject site and surrounds.

Proposal

The proposal is for the construction of four dwellings on the site. The front and rear dwellings are proposed to be two storey while the dwellings in the middle of the site will be single storey.

The design of the dwellings is contemporary and features gable roof forms. Proposed materials include face brickwork, charred timber cladding, powdercoated window aluminium frames and concrete roof tiles.

The proposed development will have a maximum height of 8.08 metres.

Dwellings 1 and 4 will comprise:

- Ground floor level – master bedroom with ensuite, open plan kitchen, dining and living area, single garage and deck
- First floor level – 3 bedrooms, bathroom, ensuite

Dwellings 2 and 3 will each comprise a double garage, 3 bedrooms, open plan kitchen, dining and living area, bathroom, ensuite, toilet, laundry and deck.

Vehicle access to the site is proposed off Winterborne Rise with a single width shared driveway proposed for Dwellings 2, 3 and 4, whilst Dwelling 1 will have a separate single width driveway.

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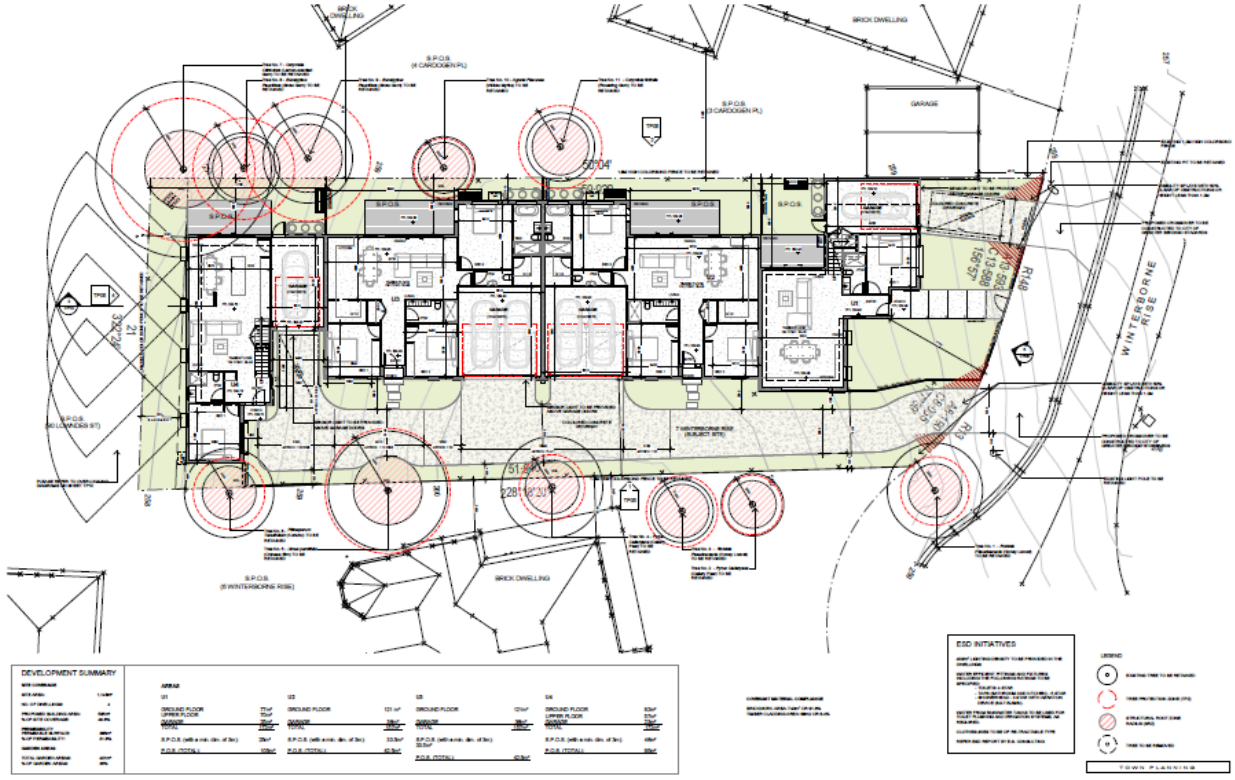

Figure 3: Proposed site layout and ground floor plan

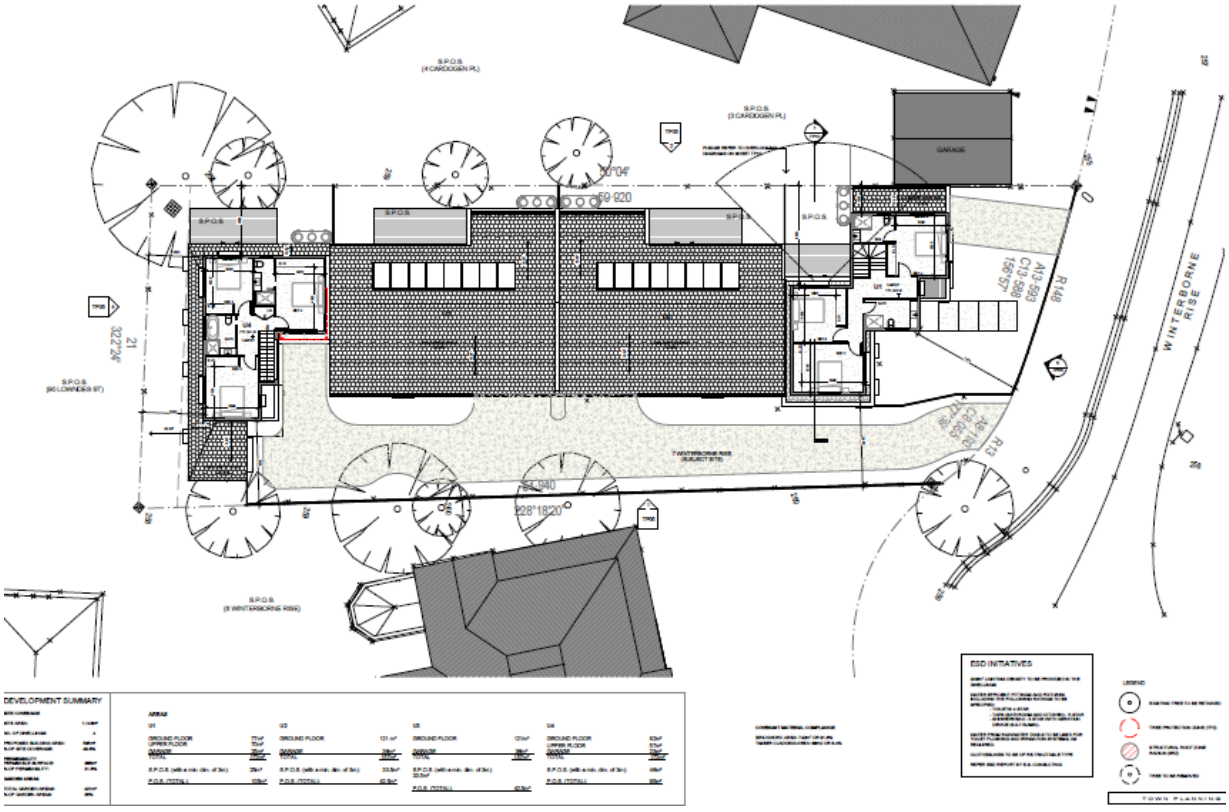

Figure 4: Proposed first floor layout plan

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Figure 5: Proposed elevation plans

Planning Controls - Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme

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

Planning Policy Framework

- Clause 11 Settlement
- Clause 11.01-1S Settlement
- Clause 11.01-1R Settlement – Loddon Mallee South
- Clause 15.01-2S Building design
- Clause 15.01-5S Neighbourhood character
- Clause 15.02-1S Energy and resource efficiency
- Clause 16.01-1S Housing supply

Local Planning Policy Framework

- Clause 21.04 Strategic directions
- Clause 21.05 Compact Greater Bendigo
- Clause 22.10 Environmentally Sustainable Development Policy
- Clause 22.24 Strathdale/Kennington Residential Character Policy

Other Provisions

- Clause 32.08 General Residential Zone
- Clause 52.06 Car parking
- Clause 55 Two or more dwellings on a lot

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- Clause 65.01 Approval of an application or plan

Permit Triggers

The need for a planning permit is triggered by:

- Clause 32.08-6 of the General Residential Zone, which states that a permit is required to construct more than one dwelling on a lot and that a development must meet the requirements of Clause 55.

Consultation/Communication

Referrals

The following internal departments have been consulted on the proposal:

Referral	Comment
Traffic Engineering	No objection subject to standard conditions relating to construction of vehicle access.
Drainage Engineering	No objection subject to standard conditions requiring detailed drainage plans, construction of works for underground drainage and a S173 Agreement in relation to onsite treatment and stormwater detention systems.
Environmentally Sustainable Design	No objection, recommended that the proposed environmentally sustainable design measures referred to within the Sustainable Design Assessment (SDA) be noted on the plans as a condition of permit, including details of the proposed rainwater tanks and connections, location of bicycle parking and conditions of permit requiring the implementation of the SDA.

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, 8 objections were received, with the grounds of objection being:

- Concerns about the density of development on the site and effects on the amenity of the area.
- Increased traffic movements will impact on pedestrian safety, in particular children at school pick up times. There is no footpath in the street.
- Concern that there is limited parking available in the street and the proposal will increase traffic flow and congestion in Winterborne Rise unacceptably. At school pick up times there are on average 13 cars parked in the street and cars park on the naturestrip.

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- The proposal will result in an increase of 36% in traffic movements in the street. The street is already used by school traffic and a childcare centre has been approved on the corner of Edwards Road and Cardogen Place. The proposal will compound the existing congestion and result in insufficient car parking for residents and visitors and a loss of amenity for existing residences.
- The existing units in the street have insufficient parking and use available on street parking. The proposed development does not provide for sufficient on-site parking and will likely generate a demand for more than 2 spaces per dwelling.
- Bins for collection will further limit parking and no provision has been made for storage on-site and kerbside placement.
- Proposal will decrease on-street parking with two crossovers proposed.
- The design and location of the proposed crossovers do not meet Council standards.
- The road reserve in Winterborne Rise will not support a significant increase in traffic
- The site is situated close to Kennington Primary and traffic in Cardogen Place and Winterborne Rise is approximately 60-70 movements each weekday. Parents picking up their children from school park in these streets. Further movements in Winterborne Rise add more congestion to a narrow street and will place children in danger.
- Concerns that the proposal will have a negative impact on drainage infrastructure for the area and insufficient information on stormwater detention.
- Concerns about increased noise due to increased density and noise generated by heating and cooling units and water pumps.
- Concern the proposed buildings will not fit with the style of the area.
- Winterborne Rise and Cardogen Place comprise predominantly low density housing with one single detached dwelling per site. The proposed dwellings are not in keeping with the aesthetic and character of the existing streetscape as they are double storey, will create visual bulk within the streetscape and the density of the development is out of character with the area.
- There is already a significantly higher than average proportion of medium density housing compared to surrounding streets, making it a busy court. The proportion of medium density to low density housing should be equitable. There are no other sites that have 4 dwellings per block and no other sites that have more than one dwelling without street frontage. This will dramatically alter the street.
- Concerns about loss of solar access.
- Concerns about overlooking as the fence heights documented are incorrect.
- The proposal will create a precedent for high density development, which is not what the residents of Greater Bendigo enjoy about the town.
- Double storey, high density housing set among a residential area at the top of a hill will mean that the feel of a rural environment, backdrops of trees and skylines will be lost.
- The majority of two storey development in the area is situated on low lying blocks which means that their rooflines are not significantly higher than those surrounding them. The proposed development is not consistent with this and will be an eye-sore.

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- The proposal will result in an urbanised feel to the street, with visual bulk of buildings and distinct lack of generous setbacks between dwellings and a high percentage of site coverage and minimal ability to plant trees.
- Concerns the development will result in visual bulk and detract from the relatively open feel of the area, affecting amenity. The property is a lot higher than the road pavement, so having a two storey dwelling at the front of the property will be very dominating over the surrounding streetscape.
- Setback requirements are not met.
- The objectives of the Strathdale/Kennington Residential Character Policy SK6 are not met.
- Devaluation of property

The applicant provided a written response to the objections received and this was circulated to objectors, who were provided with a right of reply. None of the objections were withdrawn as a result of this further consultation. The objections are discussed below either by theme or as part of the Clause 55 assessment.

Planning Assessment

Planning policy

The site at 7 Winterborne Rise, Kennington is identified as being within the urban growth boundary and is located close to an activity centre within an established residential area.

The proposal is supported by Clause 16.01-1S (Housing supply) which seeks to facilitate well located, integrated and diverse housing that meets community needs, by providing for infill development in established urban areas to support urban consolidation and encouraging higher density housing development on sites that are well located in relation to jobs, services and public transport, and by encouraging well designed housing that provides a high level of internal and external amenity.

The location of the site is well placed to take advantage of existing services and infrastructure. The proposal is supported by Clause 21.05-3 (10-minute neighbourhoods) of the LPPF which seeks to promote neighbourhoods where people can access many of their daily needs within a 10 minute walk or cycle trip from where they live. Clause 21.05-4 (Housing density and diversity) of the LPPF also encourages development that provides greater choice in housing types and densities that respond to community needs. The proposal is consistent with this policy objective.

From a strategic planning perspective, the site is appropriately located for higher density development, is within walking distance of an activity centre in Kennington providing for a range of retail and services, in an area which is well serviced by existing infrastructure and facilities. These include Kennington Primary School, a kindergarten and a childcare centre on Crook Street, open space and recreation facilities including Kennington Reservoir and Strathdale Park and public transport with a bus route servicing the Kennington area and walking and cycling connections to provide for sustainable transport modes.

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Clause 15.01-5S (Neighbourhood character) of the Planning Scheme seeks to ensure development contributes to existing or preferred neighbourhood character and ensures that development responds to its context and reinforces a sense of place and the valued features and characteristics of the local environment and place by emphasising the:

- Pattern of local urban structure and subdivision.
- Underlying natural landscape character and significant vegetation.
- Heritage values and built form that reflect community identity.

Objectors have raised concerns that the proposal will adversely impact the existing neighbourhood character and the density of development is not appropriate for the area. These matters are discussed in detail below.

Clause 22.10 contains the City's Environmentally Sustainable Development policy. The application has addressed this policy through the submission of a Sustainable Design Assessment including a BESS report. The BESS report undertaken demonstrates the proposal will achieve a score of 50%, which achieves best practice. The City's Environmental Sustainability Officer has recommended some further details be provided to demonstrate how the sustainability measures will be implemented, with proposed measures to be noted on plans.

The site is included within the Strathdale/Kennington Bendigo Residential Character Policy at Clause 22.24 of the LPPF. The site falls within Precinct SK6. The policy describes the area as follows:

"The areas in this precinct are newly developed with small setbacks and numbers of larger dwellings. In general gardens are establishing with a mix of natives and exotics, however in parts substantial remnant indigenous and native trees (mostly iron bark) provide a backdrop that is distinctive. The streetscapes have an open feel created by a lack of fencing forward of the dwellings."

The statement of desired future character is: *The garden settings of the dwellings will be strengthened.*

A response to the design objectives is provided below.

Objectives	**Response**
To maintain and strengthen the garden settings of the dwellings and the backdrop of remnant indigenous trees.	Retain established indigenous trees. Prepare a landscape plan to accompany all development proposals that utilities a mix of exotic and native species.
Comment: The site is clear of vegetation. A landscape plan has been prepared as part of the application which provides for the planting of trees, shrubs, groundcovers and lawn areas. The proposal provides for an acceptable level of landscaping on the site to complement the development, including within front, side and rear setbacks and along the common driveway. It is recommended that a modified plan be required as a condition of permit specifying number of species and the inclusion of some native species.	

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Objectives	Response
To minimise site disturbance and impact of the building on the landscape.	Buildings should be designed to follow the contours of the site or step down the site.
Comment: Complies. The dwellings have been designed with regard to the natural ground level and no significant excavation is proposed.	
To maintain the consistency, where present, of building front setbacks.	The front setback should be not less than the average setback of the adjoining two dwellings.
Comment: The proposal provides for a setback which is less than the average setback of the adjoining two dwellings, however the objective is considered to be met as there is variation in setbacks within the street and the proposed setback provides for an appropriate transition between dwellings through staggering the front wall of Dwelling 1.	
To reflect the existing rhythm of dwelling spacing.	Buildings should be setback from one side boundary.
Comment: Complies. *The proposed development provides for a setback to the south eastern boundary.*	
To ensure that new buildings and extensions do not dominate the streetscape.	Respect the predominant building height in the street and nearby properties.
Comment: Two of the dwellings are proposed to be two storey while two dwellings will be single storey. Whilst the other dwellings in the street are single storey, the policy doesn't preclude two storey development and there are other examples of two storey development in proximity to the site. *Dwelling 1 has been articulated through the use of varying materials, the stepped façade, and the upper floor being slightly recessed from the ground floor footprint. In responding to the objections received, the applicant has further noted that although the adjoining property to the south is a single storey dwelling; this building is situated on the top of the slope with a high-pitched roof. The roof ridge closely aligns with the ceiling of the first floor of Dwelling 1. In addition, the two storey dwellings in the proposed development are located in the lower parts of the site, with the highest point being the middle of the site where the single storey dwellings are proposed, to further reduce the height impacts of the proposed development.* *Given the above considerations, the proposed height of the development is acceptable and not be overly dominant within the streetscape.*	
To encourage innovative architecture that reflects the garden setting.	Buildings should be individually designed to respond to the dominant characteristics of the area and to the site.
Comment: The design of the development provides for an appropriate level of articulation by breaking up massing along the front and north west elevations in particular, and through the use of a variety of materials and brick colours in addition to variation in dwelling design. The proposal also provides for a garden setting for the dwellings, with the layout allowing for planting along the driveways and within the front and rear yards.	

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Objectives	Response
To maintain and enhance the continuous flow of the garden settings and the openness of the streetscape	Provide no fencing forward of the dwelling.
Comment: A low, 1.2 metre high Colorbond front fence is proposed along the frontage. A solid front fence is not in keeping with the existing streetscape and a better design response would be to provide no front fencing to maintain the openness of the streetscape and provide for views to the front garden. It is recommended that the fence be deleted from the plans as a condition of permit.	

General Residential Zone

The site is zoned General Residential Zone under the Planning Scheme. The purposes of the zone include encouraging development that respects the neighbourhood character of the area and encouraging a diversity of housing types and housing growth, particularly in locations offering good access to services and transport.

The site is appropriately zoned for residential development and is very well located in terms of access to local facilities and transport, as noted previously. The proposal has demonstrated that the site is capable of containing four dwellings with associated private open space and car parking and satisfies the minimum garden area requirement of 35%.

The design of the proposed development provides for an acceptable response to the existing and preferred neighbourhood character of the area.

Density of development

Objectors have raised concerns about the high density of the development, noting there are already a significant number of medium density developments in this street. The zone, however, does not prescribe an appropriate density and seeks to encourage a diversity of housing types and housing growth, particularly in locations offering good access to services and transport.

The proposal is an infill development which will provide for additional medium density housing in Kennington, in a location which is well serviced with social and physical infrastructure, as outlined previously.

An assessment of the proposal has demonstrated that it satisfies the objectives of Clause 55. The scale of the development is considered appropriate for the site and the development is not likely to result in unreasonable off-site amenity impacts.

Car parking and traffic impacts

Objectors have raised concerns about the availability of on-street parking, the adequacy of onsite parking provision and traffic congestion within the street.

Under Clause 52.06, the proposal is required to provide for 2 car spaces per dwelling, with at least one space per dwelling being a covered space. The proposal meets this requirement with the provision of double garages for Dwellings 2 and 3 and single

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garages with tandem spaces for Dwellings 1 and 4. There is no statutory requirement for visitor car spaces to be provided for this proposal under Clause 52.06, as it is for less than 5 dwellings. At least one vehicle could park immediately in front of the site on the street.

Whilst objectors are concerned that parking is limited and at capacity during school pick up times, with vehicles are routinely parking on naturestrips, it is noted that the nearby primary school contains on site car parking and there is on street parking along Edwards Road and Crook Street. Further to this, each of the properties within Winterborne Rise provides for off street parking. In the event that vehicles are parked illegally in the street, parking regulations can be enforced through local laws. It is considered unreasonable to refuse the application based on parking grounds considering that the land is zoned for residential development and the parking requirements under the Scheme are met.

Winterborne Rise is classed as an access place under the Planning Scheme, which is a minor street providing local residential access with shared traffic, pedestrian and recreation use, but with pedestrian priority. Access places are capable of carrying 300 – 1,000 vehicles per day.

There are 10 existing dwellings with vehicle access onto this street and a further four are proposed by this development. Assuming 10 vehicle movements per day per dwelling, there would be approximately 140 vehicle movements per day generated by dwellings in the street. The traffic movements generated by the proposed development will not seriously compromise the function of the road. Whilst the street may be congested for short periods on weekday afternoons, this traffic is unrelated to development within the street itself and not a reason to refuse the application.

Amenity impacts

Concerns around amenity impacts have been raised by objectors due to the increase in density of development and potential for noise emissions from heating and cooling units and the like. The development is not expected to increase noise levels to an unacceptable level. A condition of permit can require heating and cooling units to be insulated for the purpose of reducing noise emissions to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

Concerns have also been raised about bin collections and bin storage. Residents will be required to place bins on the naturestrip in front of the site for collection. It is likely that bins will only be out for 24 hours or less, as is the usual practice elsewhere in the city, as this is governed by a local law.

A condition of permit will require a bin storage area which is suitably screened to be provided on site, as there is no access from the common driveway through to the rear yards for most of the proposed dwellings. The bin storage area could be accommodated within the common driveway area toward the rear of the site.

Devaluation of property

VCAT has previously held that devaluation of property is not a valid planning consideration.

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Clause 55 – Two or more dwellings on a lot

The purpose of Clause 55 (two or more dwellings on a lot and residential buildings), includes the need to achieve residential development that respects neighbourhood character and provides reasonable standards of amenity for existing and new residents.

It is a requirement of Clauses 55 that a development must meet all of the objectives of the clause and should also meet all of the standards. A small number of standards have been assessed as not being met in relation to this application, however the overall objectives are met. An assessment of the key objectives and standards in relation to this proposal is provided below.

- *Clause 55.02-1 Standard B1 - Neighbourhood character*

Winterborne Rise contains a mix of single detached dwellings and medium density developments. Existing dwellings in the street are single storey. Brick is the predominant building material and roof forms are hipped or gabled. Dwellings in the street date from the early 1990s to early 2000s.

The proposed development provides for an acceptable design response and has considered the site context. The development provides for acceptable front and side setbacks, landscaping which will complement the development, materials in keeping with those used for surrounding dwellings and the scale and form of the development are appropriate. The development will integrate with the existing streetscape.

- *Clause 55.02-4 Standard B4 – Infrastructure*

The site is located within an established urban area and all services are available to the site. Objectors have raised concerns about the adequacy of existing drainage infrastructure and a lack of detail about stormwater drainage. The City's Drainage Engineer has requested conditions of permit requiring on site stormwater detention. Detailed drainage plans will be required to be submitted for approval prior to the commencement of construction.

- *Clause 55.02-5 Standard B5 - Integration with the street*

Dwelling 1 has been designed to address the street. No high front fences are proposed. A low front fence is proposed but it is recommended that this be deleted as the style of fence is not compatible with the area.

- *Clause 55.03-1 Standard B6 - Street setback*

Under this standard, the required setback to Winterborne Rise is 9 metres. The proposal does not comply with the standard, with a proposed averaged front setback of 7.18 metres. As such, a variation to the standard is sought. The application notes that there is variation in the front setbacks within the street, with the adjoining dwelling to the north (3 Cardogen Place) having a setback of approximately 7.12 metres and the adjoining dwelling to the south (6 Winterborne Rise) having a setback of approximately 11.86 metres. The development has adopted a staggered setback to the street to provide a gradual transition between the two adjoining dwellings which is considered acceptable.

- *Clause 55.03-2 Standard B7 – Building Height*

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The objective is to ensure that the height of buildings respects the existing or preferred neighbourhood character. The maximum height allowed under this standard is 9 metres, unless the slope of the natural ground level at any cross section wider than 8 metres of the site of the building is 2.5 degrees or more, in which case the maximum building height should not exceed 10 metres. Changes of building height between existing buildings and new buildings should be graduated.

The proposal complies with the standard, as the maximum height of the development is 8.08 metres.

Objectors have raised concerns about the height of the development given the surrounding dwellings are predominantly single storey, however this does not preclude two storey development being approved. In this case, the height of the development will not result in unacceptable visual impacts within the streetscape or from adjoining properties as upper floors of the proposed two storey dwellings have been recessed from the ground floor footprint to ensure heights are graduated and building bulk has been further minimised through the staggered building footprints.

- *Clause 55.03-3 Standard B8 - Site coverage*

Standard B8 states that the maximum site coverage should not exceed 60%. The proposal provides for a site coverage of 46.6%, below the allowable 60% site coverage.

- *Clause 55.03-4 Standard B9 - Permeability and stormwater management*

The proposal achieves the minimum 20% permeability standard with a proposed permeability of 31.8%.

- *Clause 55.03-8 Standard B13 - Landscaping*

The proposal provides for appropriate level of landscaping which will provide for a garden setting for the dwellings. A landscaping plan has been prepared which will provide for the planting of a mix of trees, shrubs, groundcovers and lawn areas. Further detail of plant quantities will be required as a condition of permit.

- *Clause 55.03-9 Standard B14 – Access*

The proposal seeks to construct two crossovers for the development onto Winterborne Rise. The width of proposed accesses will take up less than 33% of the site frontage, in accordance with the standard. The location of crossovers will enable on-street parking in front of the site. Conditions of permit will require crossovers to be constructed in accordance with the City's Infrastructure Design Manual standard drawings.

- *Clause 55.03-10 Standard B15 – Parking*

The proposal provides for secure parking which is close and convenient to dwellings. The development provides for sufficient setbacks between habitable windows and the shared accessway, in accordance with the requirements under this standard.

- *Clause 55.04-1 Standard B17 – Side and rear setbacks*

The objective of this clause is to ensure that the height and setback of a building from a boundary respects the existing or preferred neighbourhood character and limits the impact on the amenity of existing dwellings. The development largely complies with the

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setback requirements of the standard with the exception of Dwelling 1 which encroaches slightly into the side setback, adjacent to the north western boundary. There are no appreciable adverse amenity impacts resulting from this encroachment. There is a garage built to the boundary on the adjoining property to the north and the development will result in minimal overshadowing impacts. It is considered that the overall objective is met.

- *Clause 55.04-2 Standard B18 – Walls on boundaries*

Only the garage wall for Dwelling 1 is proposed to be constructed on a boundary, all other walls will be offset from boundaries. The garage wall will have a length of 6 metres and a height not exceeding 3.6 metres, therefore this standard is met.

- *Clause 55.04-3 Standard B19 – Daylight to existing windows and Clause 55.04-4 Standard B20 – North facing windows*

The proposed development complies with Standards B19 and B20 as it maintains daylight and solar access to existing habitable room windows on adjoining dwellings in accordance with the requirements of the standards.

- *Clause 55.04-5 Standard B21 – Overshadowing open space*

There will be some minor overshadowing of adjoining properties, but this is compliant with the standard.

- *Clause 55.04-6 Standard B22 – Overlooking*

The objective is to limit views into existing secluded private open space and habitable room windows. The standard requires avoidance of direct views into secluded private open space and habitable windows within 9 metres of a window, balcony, terrace, deck or patio.

Objectors have raised concerns about overlooking, in relation to fence heights in particular.

The plans show fixed obscure glazing to west facing upper floor windows for the rear dwelling to a height of 1.7 metres above the floor level, which complies with the standard. Highlight windows for habitable rooms have been proposed elsewhere on the upper level where there is an outlook to an adjoining property. The sill height must be 1.7 metres above floor level. This will be required as a condition of permit.

The plans show 1.8 metre high Colorbond fences along the side and rear boundaries to be retained, however objectors have raised concerns about the accuracy of the fence heights. A site inspection revealed that some fences are less than 1.8 metres in height.

Additional screening will be required in some locations to ensure no overlooking to adjoining properties occurs. This screening will be required to be shown on the plans as a condition of permit.

- *Clause 55.04-7 Standard B23 – Internal views*

The proposal complies with this standard and there are no concerns with overlooking within the development.

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- *Clause 55.04-8 Standard B24 – Noise impacts*

Amongst other things, this standard states that noise sources, such as mechanical plant, should not be located near bedrooms of immediately adjacent existing dwellings. Noise from heating and cooling plant has been raised as a concern by an objector. There is reasonable separation between the proposed dwellings and the adjoining dwellings, however as noted previously, a condition of permit can be included requiring insulation of heating and cooling equipment to reduce noise emissions.

- *Clause 55.05-6 Standard B30 – Storage*

Storage areas have not been shown on plans. Garden sheds of a minimum of 6 cubic metres will be required to be provided for each dwelling as a condition of permit.

- *Clause 55.06-1 Standard B31 - Design detail*

The development is a contemporary design and will be primarily constructed of brick and will feature some charred timber cladding on the front elevation of Dwelling 1. Roof forms will be gable with concrete roof tiles. No eaves or verandahs are proposed. Window and door proportions are appropriate to the scale of the dwellings. The proposed materials and roof forms are generally in keeping with the surrounding dwellings. The front façade of Dwelling 1 has sought to ensure the garage does not dominate the façade by providing for a single car garage.

- *Clause 55.06-2 Standard B32 – Front fence*

The objective of this clause is to encourage front fence design that respects the existing or preferred neighbourhood character. A 1.2m high Colorbond fence is proposed along the frontage. Most of the other properties in the street have no front fence, with only one having a brick pillar and steel picket fence. The proposed front fence is therefore not consistent with the existing streetscape and it is recommended that it be deleted from the plans as a condition of permit.

- *Clause 55.06-3 Standard B33 - Common property*

The objective of this clause is to ensure car parking, access areas and other communal open space is practical, attractive and easily maintained and to avoid future management difficulties in common ownership areas. The shared driveway for the three rear dwellings will be common property and will be functional and capable of efficient management.

- *Clause 55.06-4 Standard B34 - Site services*

No provision has been made for bin storage areas and mailboxes on the application plans. These will be required to be shown as a condition of permit. It is recommended that a screened bin storage area be provided within the common driveway area towards the rear of the site.

Conclusion

The application is recommended for approval on the basis that it represents an acceptable outcome with regard to the requirements of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme.

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The proposal complies with the objectives of Clause 55 and largely meets the standards, with some minor modifications to the plans required. The design of the development provides for an acceptable design response in relation to the existing and preferred neighbourhood character.

The proposed development will add to the diversity of housing available in the Kennington area in a location which is close to an activity centre and is well serviced. The proposal is supported by State and local planning policy which encourages higher density development in such locations to support urban consolidation and 10-minute neighbourhoods.

It is therefore recommended that Council support the proposal and issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit, subject to conditions.

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.

Proposed Notice of Decision Conditions

1. MODIFIED PLAN REQUIRED
   Before the use and/or development start(s), amended 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 will then form part of the permit. The plans must be drawn to scale with dimensions. The plans must be generally in accordance with the plans submitted with the application but modified to show:
   (a) Elevations to be correctly labelled
   (b) North eastern elevation plan for Dwelling 4
   (c) Provision of a suitably screened bin storage area within the common driveway area
   (d) Garden sheds of a minimum of 6 cubic metres within private open space for each dwelling
   (e) Mailboxes within the front setback
   (f) Deletion of the proposed Colorbond front fence
   (g) Sill heights for highlight windows for habitable rooms to be a minimum of 1.7m above floor level
   (h) Existing fence heights to be accurately shown
   (i) Provision of permanent fixed screening above existing fences no more than 75% transparent to height of at least 1.7 metres above floor level on the north western boundary and south western boundary, where required, to demonstrate compliance with Standard B22.

2. NO LAYOUT ALTERATION
   The use and development permitted by this permit as shown on the endorsed plans and/or described in the endorsed documents must not be altered or

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modified (for any reason) except with the prior written consent of the responsible authority.

3. SUSTAINABILE DESIGN ASSESSMENT
Before the development starts, amended 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 will then form part of this permit. The plans must be drawn to scale with dimensions and must be generally in accordance with the plans submitted with the application (identified as Project No. UP2101, UP Architects, Rev. A dated 18/5/2021 but modified to show:
(a) All environmentally sustainable design measures referred to within the approved sustainable Design Assessment (SDA) are to be notated on plan in table form including:
i. Double glazing to be used within all habitable rooms
ii. All WELS ratings for fittings and fixtures to be notated on plan
iii. Location of electric heat pump hot water storage units
(b) Details of rain water tanks to be located on plan, including:
i. Mark-up plan showing roof catchment area to be diverted to the 3000L Rainwater tank for each dwelling
ii. Location of pumps for distribution to toilets will be locate; or
iii. Downpipes to be connected to the tanks (no downpipes to be located under the dwelling slab) and those downpipes that will be fully charged
iv. Where any volume of roof area not going to tank will be discharged to
v. Revised STORM report deleting the rain garden; or submit a management plan detailing ongoing maintenance for the raingarden which will form part of the section 173 agreement as per drainage condition
(c) Location of bicycle storage

4. SUSTAINABLE DESIGN ASSESSMENT
(a) All works must be undertaken in accordance with the endorsed Sustainable Design Assessment (SDA) including Built Environment Sustainable Scorecard (BESS) and STORM reports to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. No alterations to the SDA may occur without the prior written consent of the responsible authority.
(b) Prior to the commencement of occupation, a report must be submitted to the responsible authority. The report must be to the satisfaction of the responsible authority and must confirm via photographic evidence that all measures specified in the SDA have been implemented in accordance with the approved plan. The report must include the final NatHERS certificates (or alternative NCC compliance methodology documentation) for the new dwellings in the development.

5. MODIFIED LANDSCAPE PLAN
Before the development starts, 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 landscaping plan must be generally in accordance with the landscape plan dated 15/4/2021 prepared by UP Architects but modified to show:

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(a) 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.

6. COMPLETION OF LANDSCAPING
Before the occupation of the development starts 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.

7. 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.

8. GENERAL EXTERIOR TREATMENT
The exterior treatment of the buildings permitted by this permit including all exterior decoration, materials, finishes and colours must be to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. The exterior treatment of the building*(s)* must be maintained to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

9. REFRIGERATION & AIR-CONDITIONING EQUIPMENT
Any equipment required for refrigeration, air-conditioning, heating and the like must be suitably insulated for the purpose of reducing noise emissions and must be located so as to not be highly visible from the street to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

10. DETAILED DRAINAGE
Prior to the commencement of the development, 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) Underground drainage
(b) A point of discharge
(c) Water quality
(d) Stormwater detention
- Allowable discharge: Q 10% = 11.4 l/s

11. CONSTRUCTION OF WORKS Road works, drainage and other civil works must be constructed in accordance with the City of Greater Bendigo Infrastructure Design Manual and plans and specifications approved by the Responsible Authority and must include:
(a) Underground drainage

12. SECTION 173
Prior to the commencement of the development, the applicant/owner must enter into an Agreement under Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. Such Agreement must covenant that;

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(a) The owner will maintain each on-site treatment system and/or detention system and not modify 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 each onsite treatment and detention system.

13. VEHICLE CROSSINGS
Vehicular access to the subject land from any roadway or service lane (and vice versa) must be by way of a vehicle crossing(s) constructed at right angles to the road, to suit the proposed driveway(s) and vehicles that will use the crossing. The driveways between the property boundary and the kerb must be constructed in accordance with the Infrastructure Design Manual SD 240 Single Residential Driveway. A Works within Road Reserves permit must be obtained from the City of Greater Bendigo Engineering Department prior to any work commencing in the road reserve.

14. SEALED CAR PARK
Areas set aside for the parking of vehicles together with the aisles and drives must be properly formed to such levels that they can be utilised in accordance with the endorsed plan and must be drained and provided with an impervious all weather seal coat. The areas must be constructed, drained and maintained in a continuously useable condition to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

15. USE OF CAR PARKING AREAS
Areas set aside for the parking and movement of vehicles as shown on the endorsed plan must be made available for such use and must not be used for any other purpose.

16. FENCING OF SITE
The fence(s) as shown on the endorsed plans*(s)* must be erected and maintained to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

17. CONSTRUCTION PHASE
All activities associated with the construction of the development permitted by this permit must be carried out to the satisfaction of the responsible authority and all care must be taken to minimise the effect of such activities on the amenity of the locality.

18. NO MUD ON ROADS
In the event of mud, crushed rock or other debris being carried onto public roads or footpaths from the subject land, appropriate measures must be implemented to minimise the problem to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

19. EXPIRY
This permit will expire if the development permitted by this permit is not completed within 2 years from the date hereof. The time within which the development must be completed may be extended, on written request to the responsible authority, before or within 6 months after the expiry of this permit where the development has not yet started or 12 months where the development has commenced.

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City of Greater Bendigo Engineering Unit Note:

CONSENT FOR WORK ON ROAD RESERVES
The applicant must comply with;
• The Road Management Act 2004,
• Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2005 and
• 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 note 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.

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15. WELLBEING AND FAIRNESS

15.1. Decommissioning, and designating a Bushfire Place of Last Resort – Neighbourhood Safer Place at Redesdale Recreation Reserve, 2631 Kyneton Redesdale Road, Redesdale

Author	Sue Moses, Municipal Fire Prevention Officer
Responsible Director	Vicky Mason, Director Health and Wellbeing

Purpose

This report seeks Council approval to relocate of a Bushfire Place of Last Resort – Neighbourhood Safer Place in the municipality at Redesdale. The alteration within the site, although at the same address, requires a formal process to 'decommission' the previous arrangement and 'designate,' the new location within the Reserve as per CFA process. To *decommission* a Bushfire Place of Last Resort – Neighbourhood Safer Place in the municipality at Redesdale Recreation Reserve, 2631 Kyneton Redesdale Road, Redesdale, and *Designate* a Bushfire Place of Last Resort – Neighbourhood Safer Place at the same address, but to another location within the Reserve.

Summary

The location of the Bushfire Place of Last Resort - Neighbourhood Safer Place at Redesdale that requires formal 'designating' is at the same address as the existing Bushfire Place of Last Resort – Neighbourhood Safer Place, at the Redesdale Recreation Reserve, but the location within the footprint will change.

Previously the Bushfire Place of Last Resort - Neighbourhood Safer Place occupied the large grassed area of the reserve. The proposal is to decommission this as Bushfire Place of Last Resort - Neighbourhood Safer Place and designate a more consolidated area between the Hall and the Pavilion to meet CFA requirements.

Each year The Bushfire Places of Last Resort - Neighbourhood Safer Places are required to be assessed by the CFA under The CFA ACT 1958, Sect 50G (5) a and b.

This year the CFA advised the Bushfire Places of Last Resort – Neighbourhood Safer Place at Redesdale would not meet the CFA criteria due to vegetation on surrounding properties unless additional work could be guaranteed to occur on three surrounding properties. This was not considered as achievable mainly due to the rocky nature of the terrain.

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RECOMMENDATION

That Council

Decommission the previous Redesdale Recreation Reserve 2631 Kyneton Redesdale Road as a Bushfire Place of Last Resort – Neighbourhood Safer Place, (the grassed open space part of the reserve) and designate the Redesdale, Redesdale Recreation Reserve 2631 Kyneton Redesdale Road as a Bushfire Place of Last Resort – Neighbourhood Safer Place, in the area of open space near the hall and the pavilion.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr David Fagg
Seconded: Cr Greg Penna

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

Policy Context

The State Government included the requirement for Neighbourhood Safer Places (since renamed to be Bushfire Places of Last Resort – Neighbourhood Safer Place), in the Emergency Services Legislation Amendment Act 2009.

The City of Greater Bendigo commitment to this is described in the:

Community Plan 2017– 2021

2.5Create safe and resilient communities

2.5.1 Strengthen community safety – Help protect the community from risks and harm associated with fire, through the implementation of fire prevention activities.

2.5.2 Strengthen community resilience – Undertake emergency management planning that builds community resilience, especially with increasing risks of bushfire, flood, and heat events.

- Integrated Municipal Emergency Management Plan - City of Greater Bendigo
- City of Greater Bendigo Municipal Fire Management Plan
- City of Greater Bendigo Municipal Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan.

Background Information

The 2009 Bushfire Royal Commission recommended that Neighbourhood Safer Places – Bushfire Places of Last Resort, be established to provide a ‘place of last resort’ for people in bushfire affected areas, as a place to go if all their other plans fail. The intent being that for those who had not developed a fire plan or get caught out or their plans failed have a local place to go where they have some chance of survival.

The Legislation requires Councils to identify, designate, establish and maintain Bushfire Places of Last Resort – Neighbourhood Safer Place, in their municipal district. The role of the CFA is to certify the selected sites against Fire Rating Criteria.

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There are currently 11 sites designated in the City of Greater Bendigo. None are enclosed buildings.

Each year the sites are required to be assessed by the CFA.

Previous Council Decision(s) Date(s):

- December 2009 – Council adopts Municipal Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan.
- December 2009 – Council designates eight Neighbourhood Safer Places
- October 2010 – Council adopts two additional Neighbourhood Safer Places.
- September 2017 –The Bushfire Place of Last Resort - Neighbourhood Safer Place at Canterbury Park Eaglehawk Football Oval at 2 Simpsons Road Eaglehawk was decommissioned due redevelopment works, and a new site was designated adjacent at Canterbury Park, 20 Simpsons Road Eaglehawk at the carpark and events area.
- January 2018 – Council designates the Axedale Primary School oval at 81 High Street Axedale as a Bushfire Place of Last Resort – Neighbourhood Safer Place.

Report

Each year The Bushfire Places of Last Resort - Neighbourhood Safer Places are required to be assessed by the CFA under The CFA ACT 1958, Sect 50G (5) a and b. This year the CFA advised the Bushfire Places of Last Resort – Neighbourhood Safer Place at Redesdale would not meet the CFA criteria due to vegetation on surrounding properties unless additional work could be guaranteed to occur on three surrounding properties. This was not considered as achievable mainly due to the rocky nature of the terrain.

Alternatives were considered following discussion by the Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee, the Redesdale Brigade and the Redesdale Recreation Committee.

The new consolidated site within the reserve was considered the most suitable option and has been since been assessed by CFA as compliant.

The site will be signed accordingly, there will be information provided to the community via media and social media, information on the CFA website and consent will be published in the Government Gazette.

Priority/Importance:

This is of high priority to ensure there is a Bushfire Place of Last Resort - Neighbourhood Safer Place for the Redesdale community and visitors to the area in time for the fire season.

Options/Alternatives:

Council may choose not to designate the proposed Bushfire Place of Last Resort - Neighbourhood Safer Place at Redesdale or may wish to consider an alternative site, however:

- The existing site within the Reserve has been assessed by CFA as no longer being a viable option
- Consultation has occurred with relevant parties and an alternative site/land to the Recreation Reserve could not be identified

Therefore, retaining the Bushfire Place of Last Resort - Neighbourhood Safer Place, at the Reserve, at a new location within the Reserve, is regarded as a good solution.

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Not providing a Bushfire Place of Last Resort – Neighbourhood Safer Place at all would not be regarded as in the best interests in the community as these locations provide a last resort option in the event of a fire for people who have failed to leave the area early enough to find safety.

Next steps:

The intent is for the process as per below to occur to ensure the community is aware of the change.

- complete the process in the CFA'S NSP online business system.
- ·amend council's website
- ·ensure organisations/are notified
- install signage at the site
- CFA to amend any community bushfire information
- Communicate the change to the local community
- amend the Integrated Municipal Emergency Management Plan - City of Greater Bendigo, and the Municipal Fire Management Plan

Progress:

The Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMPC) discussed the matter as an agenda item at the August MFMPC meeting and resolved that the CFA and Municipal Fire Prevention Officer (MFPO) would consider all alternative options after CFA advised that to retain the existing site additional requirements for managing vegetation on surrounding properties were required. It was considered that these additional requirements could not be guaranteed to be met largely but not limited to the rocky nature of the surrounding properties making vegetation management problematic.

On August 31, 2021 the CFA advised that the alternative site as presented has been assessed as compliant. MFMPC approval has been obtained via email and will for formalised at the November MFMPC meeting.

Risk Analysis:

Perceived conflict of use: The proposal instead reduces safety concerns at the site as under the previous arrangement people attending the site to use the Bushfire Place of Last Resort - Neighbourhood Safer Place, would gather on the open space, that could also be used at a staging area for CFA which would include trucks parking. The two uses and areas will now be separate.

The Hall at the Reserve could also be declared a Relief Centre, however if there was immediate fire in the area, it would not be safe to direct people to the hall until the danger/fire had passed by which time there would not be people using the Bushfire Place of Last Resort - Neighbourhood Safer Place. Therefore, a Relief Centre would not be stood up at a time when there was immediate fire in the landscape.

It is worth noting that the Bushfire Place of Last Resort - Neighbourhood Safer Place uses the outdoor open space, not the Hall. The Hall building would not be compliant in its current state to be a Bushfire Place of Last Resort - Neighbourhood Safer Place. There are very strict criteria for buildings to become Bushfire Place of Last Resort - Neighbourhood Safer Place.

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Signage and publicity around a Bushfire Place of Last Resort – Neighbourhood Safer Place, advises people that they use the space at their own risk and cannot expect any emergency services or agencies to be present.

Consultation/Communication

Internal Consultation: The proposed change has involved communication between the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer, Resilient Communities Officers (Emergency Management), the Municipal Emergency Management Officer (MEMO) and Works. Once finalised the change will appear on Council's website and intranet

External Consultation:

Consultation with the community will occur as a combined approach with CFA and Council on websites, media releases and social media.

Resource Implications

Signs already at the site will be moved to reflect the change, and new signage has been purchased to replace any damaged signs.

Installation of the signs will be funded by Fire Prevention and does not require any variation to the budget.

Communications will occur as a combined approach with CFA and Council on websites, media releases and social media.

Attachments

Nil

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16. STRENGTHENING THE ECONOMY

Nil

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17. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

17.1. Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025

Author	Sam Johnston, Coordinator Investigations
Responsible Director	Vicky Mason, Director Health and Wellbeing

Purpose

The draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025 has been developed in accordance with the Domestic Animals Act 1994. It has been developed with governance provided by an internal working group to ensure the City's Plan will help to guide and assist the management of domestic animals in the municipality, for the benefit of all over the next four years.

This report seeks Council's support to release the draft Domestic Animal Management Plan for public consultation/exhibition for 21 days, prior to Council endorsement of the final Plan.

Summary

The draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025 has been developed in accordance with the Domestic Animals Act 1994. It has been developed with governance provided by an internal working group to ensure the City's Plan will help to guide and assist the management of domestic animals in the municipality, for the benefit of all over the next four years.

This report seeks Council's support to release the draft Domestic Animal Management Plan for public consultation/exhibition for 21 days, prior to Council endorsement of the final Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Greater Bendigo City Council resolve to:

1. Endorse the release of the draft Domestic Animal Management Plan for public consultation/exhibition for 21 days.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Julie Sloan
Seconded: Cr Andrea Metcalf

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

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Policy Context

Community Plan Reference:

City of Greater Bendigo Community Plan 2017-2021:

Goal 1 Lead and govern for all

Objective 1.2 Explain the reason for its decisions

Goal 2 Wellbeing and fairness

Objective 2.5 Create safe and resilient communities

Goal 4 Presentation and managing growth

Objective 4.4 Keep Greater Bendigo attractive with good quality public facilities and places

Goal 6: Embracing our culture and heritage

Objective 6.2 Build pride in and shared responsibility for our public spaces

Greater Bendigo Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021

Goal 1 Healthy and Well

Objective Promote healthy lifestyles

Goal 2 Safe and Secure

Objective Increase community safety

Goal 5 Liveable

Objective Facilitate supportive built and natural environments

Background Information

The City has a legislative requirement under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (the Act) to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) every four years. As part of the review of the current plan and preparation of the new plan, a period of community consultation has been undertaken to ensure the views of the community are adequately reflected.

Council must have a DAMP to satisfy the clauses set out in Part 5A of the Act to consider the following:

- Set out a method for evaluating whether the animal control services are adequate
- Outline programs for training of authorised officers so as to properly administer and enforce the Act
- Outline programs to:
    - Promote and encourage responsible pet ownership
    - Ensure the community understand the obligations of responsible pet ownership
    - Minimise risk of dog attacks
    - Address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats
    - Encourage registration and identification of dogs and cats

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    - Minimise potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance
    - Effectively identify and manage all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs
- Review existing orders and Local Laws
- Provide platform for review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats
- Periodic evaluation of the DAMP

Report

The City has a legislative requirement under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (the Act) to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP). As part of the review of the current plan and preparation of the new plan, a period of community consultation has been undertaken to ensure the views of the community are adequately reflected.

The City's current DAMP (2016-2021) was adopted by Council and has served the community and the City well with some great outcomes – most notably the establishment of the City's dog parks. To support Council's vision of creating the world's most liveable community, the Safe and Healthy Environments team has the equally aspirational goal of every domestic animal in the municipality being responsibly owned. The DAMP importantly establishes actions the City will take to achieve that goal.

The objective is that Council will have a comprehensive plan informed by community engagement that promotes responsible pet ownership and manages domestic animals across the municipality, to align with and meet the expectations of the community.

Council must have a DAMP to satisfy the clauses set out in Part 5A of the Act to consider the following:

- Set out a method for evaluating whether the animal control services are adequate
- Outline programs for training of authorised officers so as to properly administer and enforce the Act
- Outline programs to:
    - Promote and encourage responsible pet ownership
    - Ensure the community understand the obligations of responsible pet ownership
    - Minimise risk of dog attacks
    - Address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats
    - Encourage registration and identification of dogs and cats
    - Minimise potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance
    - Effectively identify and manage all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs
- Review existing orders and Local Laws
- Provide platform for review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats

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- Periodic evaluation of the DAMP

Since the current DAMP (2016-2021) was adopted by Council, a number of changes have occurred that require consideration in the new DAMP, including but not limited to, the City bringing the animal pound and shelter services in-house through the Bendigo Animal Relief Centre (BARC). New legislation has also been introduced in relation to puppy farms and pet shops. In particular, the provision of the animal pound and shelter services has broadened the City's operational roles not previously considered in this review process, to create a more holistic approach to domestic animal management.

The key issues in reviewing/developing the DAMP that the City needs to identify a way forward include:

- Attitudes to responsible cat ownership in the community
- Animal hoarding, particularly cats
- Impact of cats on the indigenous fauna population
- Barriers to responsible pet ownership being registration, microchipping and de-sexing
- Management of domestic animals in the public domain

The draft DAMP has a number of action that aims to address these key issues.

The purpose of the engagement is to ensure that the review of the current DAMP and the development of a new strategy is thorough, not limited to conventional approaches, satisfies the City's legislative obligations and where possible meets the community's expectations.

Priority/Importance:

It is a high priority that the City has a Council adopted Domestic Animal Management Plan.

Options/Alternatives:

Council are required by the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* to have a DAMP, not having a DAMP is not an option. The only other option considered would be to apply for an extension of time within which to prepare the DAMP.

Timelines:

September 2021 – Council endorse and support the release of the draft DAMP for a period of 21 days seeking community feedback.

October 2021 – The City considers submissions and finalises the draft DAMP.

November 2021 – Council consider the final draft DAMP for adoption.

December 2021 – DAMP is submitted to Minister

Progress:

N/A

Risk Analysis:

Council must have a Domestic Animal Management Plan in place by 4 December 2021 or risk not being in compliance with the Domestic Animals Act 1994.

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There is significant risk if Council does not have rigorous management processes in place to manage dog attacks and other nuisance issues, with the relevant delegations in place. In addition, Council need competent and trained staff to ensure the enforcement of dog attack issues.

Consultation/Communication

The draft DAMP has been developed in accordance with the requirements of the Domestic Animals Act 1994.

Internal Consultation:

The draft DAMP has been developed with broad internal consultation and collaboration with relevant units and key positions, detailed in the following table:

Unit	Key contributors
Health and Wellbeing	Director Health and Wellbeing
Communications	Media & Communications Specialist
Parks and Open Space	Coordinator Arboriculture and Environmental Management
Community Wellbeing	Early Years Senior Coordinator
Climate Change and Environment	Senior Environment Officer
Safe and Healthy Environments	Manager Safe and Healthy Environments Coordinator Investigations Coordinator Parking Strategy Team Leader Local Laws Operations Manager - BARC

Direct consultation has also been undertaken with the Local Laws team involved in delivering the current DAMP to ensure a thorough review has been undertaken.

External Consultation:

The draft DAMP has also been developed following a period of community consultation. A survey was developed to ensure that the requirements of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 were met and to ensure that the DAMP would balance the needs of the community, pet owners and non-pet owners.

Residents were invited to participate in an online survey to provide feedback including experiences and opinions to provide guidance on the direction of the next Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP).

The survey was open for almost four weeks, and received a record number of online responses, with a total of 1131 contributions from the community.

In addition over 70 stakeholders, mostly organisations and businesses, were contacted in relation to the DAMP and invited to make a submission or provide feedback via the survey.

The survey results are below.

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DEMOGRAPHICS

1131 Contributions	**1583 page views (95.35% bounce rate)**
78% female	21% male
72% Urban residents	21% semi-rural residents
66% own dogs	35% own cats
21% own both dogs and cats	20% don't own dogs or cats

ANIMALS IN THE COMMUNITY

	98% believe there are positive health and wellbeing benefits associated with owning a pet
71% feel public spaces are safe from nuisance pets	22% don't feel public spaces are safe from nuisance pets
66% believe City's Animal LL are fair and reasonable	18% disagree
87% feel animals not used for breeding should be desexed	7% disagree

ON THE TOPIC OF CATS

	81% know about the current cat curfew
	78% see cats breaking curfew
80% support a 24/7 cat containment law	15% believe cats should be allowed to wonder
8% are feeding community cats	Only 17% of these knew if the cat was desexed

ON THE TOPIC OF DOGS

72% believe dog waste in residential streets is an issue	**43% believe dog waste in sporting facilities is an issue**
	88% know about the requirement to carry a bag while walking a dog
50% people are impacted by barking dogs	About 20% of these people reported it to Council
35% households been impacted by a dog attack	About 30% of these people reported it to Council
	76% support dogs on leads at all times unless designated otherwise
81% people are familiar with K/Flat dog park	80% people are familiar with Strathdale dog park
49% believe there are sufficient designated off lead dog areas	20% believe there are not sufficient designated off lead dog areas

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SUPPORT FOR RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP

83% people support discounted registration for desexed pets	**78% want discounted pet desexing opportunities**
60% want dog training support	47% want assistance choosing the right pet
	32% people are aware of current cat desexing program (NDN)

Furthermore, a number of submissions were also submitted during the period of consultation. The table summarises the submissions received.

Topic/ Issue/ Initiative /Objective:	**Raised by:**	**Response:**
Expanding the current Community Cat Program initiative to include colony cats	Community – 1 response	An expansion of the program does not align with Council's legislative requirements and will warrant further investigation into these possible collaborations.
Increase in cat containment orders	Community – 2 responses	Draft DAMP indicates an action to review current cat curfew
Dogs required to be on leash at all times in public places	Community	Survey results show 76% of respondents highlight an area for review. An action of the draft DAMP is to Conduct a feasibility study on the requirement to keeps dogs on leashes in public areas unless designated otherwise
Legislation around cat attack are not consistent with those for dog attacks	Community – 1 response	The Act currently does not include provisions for cat attacks.
Review of designated off leash dog areas in Huntly	Community – 1 response	A review of all designated off leash dog areas will form part of the DAMP's action plan
Order for dogs to be excluded from the playing surface of the Huntly Epsom Rec Reserve Soccer Pitches	Community – 1 response	This will be considered as part of the review to keep dogs on leashes in public areas unless otherwise designated

The issues where there is likely to be strong differences in opinion are:

- Cat containment as the draft DAMP indicates that the current curfew will be reviewed

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    - 80% of survey respondents support a 24/7 cat containment order
- A feasibility review whether Greater Bendigo remain a default off leash municipality.
    - 76% support dogs on leads at all times unless designated otherwise

Resource Implications

The draft DAMP has been developed using existing resources.

The budget implications of implementing the draft DAMP if adopted following public exhibition are within the current unit operating budget.

Attachments

1. Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan

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Domestic Animal Management Plan

2021-2025

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Companion animals have been part of our lives since recorded history. Dogs and cats are imbedded in day to day activity for many Greater Bendigo residents and are considered part of society. Therefore, it is vital that Council undertakes sensible planning to ensure that pets, pet owners and non-pet owners can coexist in a harmonious way.

Over the past 4 years, more than 50% of Customer Service Requests received by the Health and Wellbeing Directorate are related to domestic animals, indicating that many Bendigo residents are impacted by the dogs and cats that reside in our community.

This will be Council's fourth Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP). The new Plan will build on the achievements and work from the previous Plans and establish a framework to guide future service programs and actions up to and including the year 2025 (appendix A).

The Plan has been prepared by the City of Greater Bendigo Animal Services Team in response to Council's responsibilities under the Domestic Animals Act.

Key Initiatives from past Plans and Programs

- Changed delivery of Animal Services from a contract provider to in-house staff
- Provided a flexible 24/7 service delivery model
- Introduced noise recorders and software to assess noise nuisance
- Introduced a designated Compliance Team
- Introduced polices to enable more dogs to be taken home instead of to the animal shelter
- Development of 4 dog parks
- Introduced laws to require dogs to be leashed at popular recreation areas, shopping areas and around children's play areas
- Introduced laws to prevent dogs from exercising on the playing surface of the QEO
- Introduced laws to require dog walkers to carry a bag to pick up their dog waste
- Introduced laws to regulate the keeping of animals according to regulatory planning land use principles
- Introduced a sunset to sunrise Cat Curfew to minimise wondering cats
- Developed a plan to deal with animals in emergencies
- Developed and implemented procedure to provide guidance to staff who may be working with victims of family violence
- Developed and introduced various work processes to assist in dealing with dog attack and nuisance complaints
- Introduced subsidised desexing and discounted micro-chipping for cats and dogs
- Introduced a rewards program for owners displaying responsible pet ownership
- Promoted the need to register not only dogs but cats as well
- Raised awareness in the community in relation to being a responsible pet owner
- Improved community safety in public areas
- Introduced GPS vehicle monitoring and duress alert process to assist with field officer safety and allocation of jobs to officers according to their location.

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Evaluation of implementation of the domestic animal management plan

1 INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT

1.1 PURPOSE OF DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

The *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (the Act) requires council to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan every four years. The purpose of the new DAMP is to build on the achievements of the previous Plans and to provide the City of Greater Bendigo with a strategic framework that helps deliver policy direction, service programs, initiatives

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and action plans for animal management for the period 2021-2025. The Animal Services team have the aspirational goal that every domestic animal in the municipality is responsibly owned.

The plan sets out a method for evaluating whether the animal management services provided by council are adequate to give effect to requirements of the Act and the Domestic Animal Regulations 2015.

The Plan applies to any land within the City of Greater Bendigo where domestic animals are kept or proposed to be kept.

The Plan is informed by evidence, and action orientated. It sets priorities that are achievable and measurable within allocated resources.

The plan must also outline programs for the training of authorised officers along with programs, services and strategies to:

- ensure that people comply with the Act, the regulations and any related legislation; and
- minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals; and
- address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats; and
- encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats; and
- minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance; and
- effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations; and
- provide for the review of existing orders made under this Act and local laws that relate to the Council's municipal district with a view to determining whether further orders or local laws dealing with the management of dogs and cats in the municipal district are desirable; and
- provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary; and
- provide for the periodic evaluation of any program, service, strategy or review outlined under the plan.

Council is also required to review and where appropriate amend the Plan and publish an evaluation of the implementation of the plan in the council annual report.

The following guiding principles will continue to underpin the delivery of domestic animal management services at The City of Greater Bendigo:

- Working towards achieving best practice in domestic animal management
- Achieving lasting improvements and rewarding responsible pet ownership
- Proactive animal management and education
- Balance the needs of pet owners with the needs of other members of the community and the environment
- Protecting the environment from any negative impacts from domestic animals
- Recognising the physical, mental and social benefits of pet ownership
- Reducing the number of unwanted animals in society
- Council to play a key leadership role in animal management
- Adopting a whole of community approach to animal management

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1.2 PROCESS APPLIED IN DEVELOPING THE PLAN

Public consultation has provided the community with the opportunity to express their views on matters pertaining to how domestic animals are managed by The City. Residents were invited to participate in an online survey to provide feedback including experiences and opinions to help provide guidance on the direction of the next Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP).

The survey was open for almost four weeks, and received a record number of online responses, with a total of 1131 contributions from the community.

In addition, over 70 stakeholders, mostly organisations and businesses including domestic animal related businesses, land care groups, support for wildlife, and sporting associations were contacted in relation to the DAMP and invited to make a submission or provide feedback via the survey.

In excess of 50 notices with scannable QR codes were placed in public spaces to provide people with fast and direct access to information about the DAMP and the opportunity to contribute their feedback.

It was important to consider the views and opinions of people who do not own pets as well as those who do. Fortunately, the survey did identify a reasonable portion (20%) of people contributed who did not own a cat or a dog.

The information received through the community consultation will guide the City of Greater Bendigo in ensuring its service meets the expectations of the community, including the needs of pet owners, domestic animals, as well as those that who don't own pets but may be impacted by them.

Key findings from the community survey revealed that:

- 98% believe there are positive health and wellbeing benefits associated with owning a pet
- 71% feel public spaces are safe from nuisance pets
- 87% feel animals not used for breeding should be desexed
- 80% support a 24/7 cat containment law
- 8% are feeding community cats
- 76% support dogs on leads at all times unless designated otherwise

A Working Group was established with representatives across council, to ensure that all connections with our community were considered. This included staff from across the organisation in the Community Wellbeing, Parks and Open Spaces, Communications, Active and Healthy Lifestyles, and Safe and Healthy Environments Units.

Greater Bendigo City Council is committed to achieving better outcomes for everyone in the municipality, including both pet owners and non-pet owners.

1.3 DEMOGRAPHIC AND PROFILE OF COUNCIL

The City of Greater Bendigo is situated in Central Victoria and its geographical position provides links between the Melbourne metropolitan area and the north of the State. Greater Bendigo is approximately 150km from Melbourne. Bendigo is the major regional centre for north central Victoria.

Greater Bendigo covers almost 3,000 square kilometres and includes the urban centre of Bendigo and smaller towns such as Heathcote, Axedale, Huntly, Marong, Elmore, Goornong and Redesdale. The City of Greater Bendigo has a population of approximately 120,000 residents.

The Dja Dja Warrung and Taungurung are recognised as the Traditional Owners of the land. There are two appointed registered Aboriginal parties for the area – Dja Dja Warrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation and Taungurung Clans Aboriginal Corporation.

Bendigo is described as a city within a forest as it is surrounded by natural bushland and Box Ironbark forests. The area has a strong historical link to the mining of gold, since gold was discovered in the 1850s.

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1.4 CONTEXT AND CURRENT SITUATION

Animal Services are provided as part of the Health and Wellbeing Directorate within the City. The Animal Services Team consistently reviews industry trends and animal management initiatives to keep abreast of new and improved ways of providing the service.

Animal Attendants working within the shelter facility (Bendigo Animal Relief Centre- BARC) provide industry acknowledged "fear free" housing and management of animals. The City of Greater Bendigo's animal management staff have been recognised as being subject matter experts, and have been invited to participate and contribute to multiple external programs with a focus on animal welfare and animal ethics

The City's service delivery includes:

Program/Service:	Service level for 2020/2021 period
Identification & registration.	Currently 19,801 cats and dogs registered.
Managing domestic animal complaints.	Received 4177 customer service requests.
Pound and shelter services.	BARC is open to the public for adoptions 7 days a week, excluding public holidays. In the last year it has provided care for 2671 animals and provided rehoming opportunities for 1086 of these animals.
Micro-chipping and/or desexing programs.	Discounts for micro-chipping are offered year-round when combined with a new pet registration. Discount cat desexing offered in partnership with National Deseing Network has sterilised 72 cats in the 20/21 period.
Responsible Pet Ownership (RPO) school information sessions.	Recent addition of in-house pound and shelter services has provided an opportunity to focus on RPO programs provided by the shelter. This has been heavily affected by COVID recently.
Animal management officer accessibility.	Two full time positions that provide "community patrol" and respond to customer requests, as well as an after-hours emergency service available outside of business hours, seven days a week.

These services are provided by the following roles.

LOCAL LAWS OFFICERS

Local Laws Officers are responsible for functions including:

- Active patrols and pickups to reunite dogs with their owners and to discourage wandering at large
- Managing unwanted animals
- Patrolling popular walk areas for dog faeces management
- Impounding of livestock found or reported wandering
- Trespassing cats
- Animal registration and identification process
- Providing advice to pet owners and the community
- Providing an after-hours service
- Assisting victims of family violence in relation to managing their pets.

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SENIOR LOCAL LAWS OFFICERS

The City has four Senior Local Laws Officers who are responsible for functions including:

- Investigating dog attacks
- Investigating problem barking and other nuisance issues
- Investigating animal welfare concerns
- Promoting responsible pet ownership
- Dealing with restricted breeds and dangerous dogs
- Auditing properties where dangerous, menacing or restricted breed dogs are kept
- Registration and management of domestic animal businesses
- Management of various neighbourhood issues and complaints relating to animals
- Ensuring compliance to various legislation and codes of practice relevant to pets and livestock.

ANIMAL ATTENDANTS

The Bendigo Animal Relief Centre (BARC) operates 7 days a week and has a team of animal attendants, including senior animal attendants specific to cattery and kennels, to ensure appropriate care is provided to animals every day of the week. Animal Attendants are responsible for:

- Cleaning animal housing areas
- Providing feed, medication and other daily requirements for animals in care
- Providing exercise and environmental enrichment
- Liaising with the public in relation to surrendering animals into care
- Assisting with reuniting stray animals with their owners
- Assessment of animals' suitability for adoptions including behavioural assessments
- Managing adoptions of animals
- Providing education to animal owners on how to best manage their pets.

VETERINARY NURSE AND STAFF WITH ASSOCIATED SKILL SET

Staff at the Bendigo Animal Relief Centre are required to provide medical care and attention to animals, including micro-chipping. A designated veterinary nurse is employed full time and is supported by other staff with veterinary nurse and animal technician experience. This ensures that the BARC has a team of people capable of providing a service which includes:

- Initial assessment of animal health and veterinary requirements
- Micro-chip implanting
- Dispensing medication under the direction of a vet
- Assessing and monitoring animals requiring intensive veterinary care.

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THE ANIMAL SERVICES MANAGEMENT TEAM

The Animal Services Management Team consists of a Team Leader of Local Laws, Operations Manager for BARC, and an overarching Coordinator. The Animals Services Management team is responsible for:

- Planning service delivery
- Managing income and expenditure
- Developing work plans, policy and work instructions
- Managing risk and workplace health and safety
- Mentoring, coaching, training and supervising staff
- Maintaining a process for the issuing of permits where there are more than the prescribed number of animals being kept
- Developing a new Domestic Animal Management Plan on 4-year cycles
- Reporting of statistical data to the Attorney Generals Department and the Office of Local Government
- Maintaining a data base of all customer interactions and requests for service
- Promotion of health, leisure and social capital associated with pet ownership
- Managing dog access to public places (parks, reserves and streets)
- Maintaining a process for dealing with animals in the event of an emergency
- Managing the impacts of cats, including compulsory confinement
- Assessing and reviewing open space planning for dogs and associated laws and orders.
- Developing and maintaining a Health Management Plan for pound and shelter services
- Implementation of community focused programs to support responsible pet ownership
- Increasing reclaiming rates and rehoming rates of stray and surrendered animals.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

The City's Customer Service Charter is the guiding document for responding to requests for animal services. The average response time across the previous 12 months was following a request for service, for first contact with the customer is approximately 1.32 days. The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework has a target of 2 days.

What customers can expect from our Customer Service team:

- We will listen carefully to them
- We will be friendly and professional, and treat them with courtesy, respect and understanding
- We will keep them informed
- We will provide accurate and consistent information delivered in a way that is easy to understand and in a timely manner
- We will respect and protect their personal information and adhere to privacy requirements
- We will provide a 24-hour emergency service
- We will provide a website which contains current, quality, easily accessible information.

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What we expect from our customers:

- Being courteous and respectful to our staff
- Respecting the rights of other customers
- Providing us with complete and accurate information
- Working with us to resolve problems
- Providing feedback on our services.

1.5 DOMESTIC ANIMAL STATISTICS

Key statistics at a glance for the financial year period 2020/2021

Dogs	
Number of registered dogs	14,653
Number of impounded dogs (by Rangers & public)	757
Number of impounded dogs returned to owner	638
Number of dogs rehomed	295
Number of dogs euthanised	55
Number of active declared dogs (dangerous, menacing, restricted)	12
Cats	
Number of registered cats	5,148
Number of impounded cats: (by Rangers & public)	754
Number of impounded cats returned to owner	159
Number of cats rehoused	673
Number of domestic cats euthanised	44
Number of wild cats euthanised	472
Domestic Animal Businesses	
Breeding and/or rearing establishments	2
Dog training establishments	3
Pet shops	7
Shelters and pounds	2
Boarding establishments	10
Customer Service Requests and Complaints	
Dogs at large	428
Dog rush (person or animal)	80
Dog attack	185
Dog – barking	568
Request for collection dogs	932

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Dog registration follow up	238
Management of Keeping of Animals Local Law enquiries	132
Cat management	934
Other, including, injured animals, restricted breed, loan of citronella collars, dog waste, livestock wondering and business registration	674
Prosecutions	6
Total requests for service	***4177***

2. TRAINING OF AUTHORISED OFFICERS

2.1 CONTEXT AND CURRENT SITUATION

The objective of training and development is to ensure all staff involved in animal management have the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out their work in a safe and professional manner. The City of Greater Bendigo is committed to ensuring all staff involved in animal management are equipped for the demands of their role and are competent in their job.

All Animal Management Officers receive extensive, on the job training. In addition, they receive additional formal training in:

- customer service including conflict resolution
- dog & cat handling
- bite prevention
- stock handling
- captive bolt use
- traffic control and driver safety
- self-preservation and harm reduction
- family violence
- first aid.

Additional training may be considered for Senior Local Laws officers, and may include:

- prosecutions
- statement taking and evidence gathering
- restricted breed dog identification
- aggressive dog apprehension.

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2.2 OUR PLANNED TRAINING FOR AUTHORISED OFFICERS

Staff will continue to receive training in customer service, health and safety, workplace behaviours and the delivery of community education information and will be encouraged to attend industry related information sessions and seminars for networking opportunities and to keep up with latest trends and innovations.

An annual skills audit is undertaken to identify any gaps in the skills available within the Animal Management Team. A professional development plan is prepared each year arising out of this audit.

The annual performance reviews include a review of the staff member's skills and training undertaken in the previous year.

All new staff are taken through an induction program and receive regular updates offering opportunity to undertake training using the City's Learning Opportunities Program.

An inclusion as part of the formal training will now include recognising and responding to family violence. The training will ensure staff understand their interactions with the community to become competent in responding to family violence concerns. Consideration has been given to other avenues the City can respond to family violence situations including respite care for animals and assistance with managing ownership in accordance with recent legislative changes.

2.3 OUR PLAN

Considering above, the activities and objectives for the next 4 years are listed below:

Objective 1: Maintain a training register for individual officers detailing completed and proposed training.		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Maintain a skills matrix for employed staff, to identify required and proposed training.	**Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.**	**6 monthly review of matrix, to ensure its accuracy and to determine whether proposed training goals have been met for each officer.**

Objective 2: Ensure all new Authorised Officers have completed their minimum training requirements within 12 months of appointment.		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Identify minimum training requirements for Authorised Officers and record when officers have completed each course.	**Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.**	**Annually review spread sheet and ensure each officer has completed their minimum training requirements.**

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Objective 3: Provide opportunities for additional training each year.		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Identify additional training opportunities e.g. prosecutions training, advanced conflict management and mediation.	**Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.**	**Annually review how many officers have undertaken training that was in addition to their minimum requirements.**

Objective 4: Provide and maintain performance training / planning process for individual officers.		
Activity	When	**Evaluation**
Complete annual development plan and review process for each staff member.	**Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.**	**Completion of annual development plan and review process with the intention of identifying training needs to deal with skill gaps and emerging issues or legislative changes.**

3. **PROGRAMS TO PROMOTE AND ENCOURAGE RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP AND COMPLIANCE WITH LEGISLATION**

3.1 CONTEXT AND CURRENT SITUATION

On 1st July 2019, The City of Greater Bendigo brought the pound and shelter services back under direction of the council. This provided the opportunity to further develop a proactive approach to responsible pet ownership, tailored to the needs and desires of the community.

This Council delivered service (Bendigo Animal Relief Centre - BARC) has been operational since 1st July 2019. Council can utilise BARC to provide a platform to promote responsible pet ownership, and together they are able to deliver:

- Discount micro-chipping services 5 days of the week, if an animal is registered at the same time
- Assistance with updating microchip details or people who don't understand the requirements of the different microchip databases
- Discount cat desexing opportunities to eligible residents of Bendigo
- Education and assistance around choosing the right type of pet
- Linking people with online courses such at *Petcademy* to educate pet owners to understand their pets needs
- Online resources to assist with educating owners on their legal obligations

In 2020, BARC was independently audited and found to meet and exceed all industry standards and comply with all legislative requirements.

3.2 OUR ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CURRENT ORDERS:

Council permits dogs to be exercised off leash throughout the municipality except within the following designated on-leash areas where Council has invoked a s26 Order under the Act requiring dogs to be on a leash:

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- Rosalind Park
- Lake Weeroona
- Strathdale Park & Kennington Reserve
- White Hills Botanic Gardens
- Rotary Park Strathdale
- Botanical Gardens Kangaroo Flat
- Barrack Reserve Heathcote
- Canterbury Gardens Eaglehawk
- Cooinda Park Golden Square
- Lake Neangar & Lake Tom Thumb Eaglehawk
- Council allows shared use of Rodda Field Strathdale
- Dogs must also be on a leash within 10 meters of any public barbeque or outdoor eating areas.

Council also has an order prohibiting dogs from the surface of the Queen Elizabeth Oval.

CURRENT LOCAL LAWS:

Community Local Law prohibits dogs from Crusoe Reservoir.

Local Law No 2 relates to the keeping of animals. It:

- Regulates the numbers of dogs and/or cats that can be kept at a property
- Ensures animals do not cause a nuisance to anyone by noise, dust, odour, or other condition, cause damage to flora or fauna or pollute any drain, watercourse or water catchment
- Keep land occupied by animals clear and clean of any waste, food scraps and excrement
- Ensures fencing is sufficient to contain animals
- Ensures the immediate collection and removal of any excrement left by animals in a public place
- Requires owners carry a bag or similar device to pick up excrement left by animals in a public place.

CURRENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

Current policies and procedures include education and enforcement strategies associated with council's programs to promote and encourage responsible pet ownership.

3.3 OUR PLAN

Over the next 4 years, the City of Greater Bendigo intends to meet the following objectives by completing the associated actions.

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Objective 1: Increase pet registrations		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Continue with discounts for desexed pets.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	**Increase in the number of newly registered pets and renewed registrations.**
Provide education on the purpose of pet registration through increased community presence, and support owners to complete registration details (e.g. assist with sighting desexing tattoos, obtaining microchip numbers).	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	
Pound service discounts for registered pets.	2022.	
Online payment options for registrations.	2022.	
Review registration fees to encourage new registrations (e.g. free registration for pets under 6 months of age).	2022.	
Objective 2: Increase pet micro-chipping		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Continue to provide discount micro-chipping 5 days a week, with the intention to increase the service to 7 days a week.	Ongoing, will continue, increased service delivery planned for late 2022.	**Increase in the number of stray or surrendered animals received which carry a microchip.**
Consider micro-chipping events to reach a wider range of pet owners.	**Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.**	

Objective 3: Increase dog waste removal		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Empower community to encourage owners to clean up after their dogs.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	**Decrease in the amount of customer service requests received in relation to dog waste in public spaces.**
Trial the provision of environmentally friendly dog waste bags through the council offices for owners to use, in line with Council's Single Use Plastics policy.	2022.	
Continue with Local Laws Officer presence at popular dog walking/exercise locations.	**Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.**	

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Objective 4: Increase the number of desexed pets not intended for breeding		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Provide discount registration for desexed pets.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	**Decrease in the number of unwanted litters, and increase the percentage of registered pets that are desexed.**
Provide discount cat desexing to eligible residents.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	
Promote increased sociability and trainability of desexed pets.	**Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.**	

Objective 5: Assist residents with choosing the right pet		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Provide education sessions/presentations to help people analyse what pet might be right for them.	2022.	**Decrease in the number of surrendered animals due to the animal not suiting the owner's needs.**
Continue to provide advice and guidance for pets being adopted from the shelter.	**Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.**	

Objective 6: Promote responsible pet ownership to the younger generation		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Visiting local schools to educate the next generation of pet owners of the importance of responsible pet ownership.	**Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.**	**Aim to speak to a student cluster in 75% of local schools by 2025.**

Objective 7: Increase cat containment		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Promote and share existing resources from Safe Cat / Safe Wildlife campaign.	2022.	**Decrease in the number of complaints relating to nuisance caused by wondering cats.**
Provide flyers, information and advice on how to contain cats.	**Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.**	

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4. PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS OVER-POPULATION RATES AND ANY HIGH EUTHANASIA RATES

4.1 CONTEXT AND CURRENT SITUATION

Registration is seen as a solution to reduce high euthanasia rates as registered dogs and cats are almost always reunited with their owners, if picked up by City staff.

The City's promotion of registration requirements has a strong emphasis on the return of lost pets as a key reason to register.

Changes in legislation introduced mid 2018 required pet shops to only sell dogs and cats provided by a rescue group, pound or shelter to assist with the rehoming of animals. These animals are required to be desexed and micro-chipped before being made available to their new homes.

The Domestic Animals Regulation Amendment (2019) limits the number of female dogs a dog breeder may keep from April 2020. Victoria is the first state to introduce this cap on dog numbers and it severely affects the financial viability of puppy farms.

This amendment also saw the introduction of the Pet Exchange Register (PER), managed by Animal Welfare Victoria (DELWP). The PER improves traceability and accountability of all animals sold, providing the public with a means to search the register and check details of the seller.

4.2 OUR ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CURRENT ORDERS:

Currently, Council has a cat curfew under s25 of the Act from sunset to sunrise that applies across the municipality making it an offence for a cat to be outside the owner's property. This is to reduce incidence of breeding to decrease the number of unwanted cat litters in the community and reduce the occurrences of nuisance.

Council also are aware of several covenants placed on the title of properties within several recent residential estates which prohibits the keeping of greyhounds and cats whilst requiring dogs be on leash when outside the owner's property.

CURRENT LOCAL LAWS:

Local Law No 2 regulates the number of animals that can be kept at a property and provides the framework for compliance actions

CURRENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

Compliance policy provides a framework for enforcement action such as issuing of caution and infringement notices for dogs/cats found at large or follow up of registration and identification requirements.

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Current policies and procedures include:

- All cats and dogs over the age of 3 months must be registered and those being registered for the first time must also be micro-chipped
- Loaning of humane trigger plate traps under strict guidelines for residents to trap feral and trespassing domestic cats
- All dogs and cats are desexed prior to being adopted and rehomed through BARC
- All dogs and cats reclaimed from BARC are micro-chipped and registered
- All dogs and cats taken to BARC are held for 8 days for the owner to reclaim
- Unclaimed animals become property of the City and are rehomed or euthanised
- All dogs and cats to be rehoused must pass the appropriate temperament tests and veterinarian checks
- Investigate all reports of inappropriate breeders.

4.3 OUR PLAN

Considering above, the activities and objectives for the next 4 years are listed below:

Objective 1: Work with the community to further reduce euthanasia rates for impounded cats and dogs.		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Raise awareness of the benefits of desexing pets.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	**Increase shelter reclaim rates of cats and dogs found wondering.**
Provide discounted registration costs for desexed pets.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	
Educate community on the effect that feeding un-owned cats has on over-population.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	
Promote lost/found pets online and on social media platforms to reunite them with their owner.	**Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.**	

Objective 2: To provide transparency to our public in relation to overpopulation and high euthanasia rates		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Provide access to statistics on the euthanasia rates at the shelter.	**Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.**	**Public awareness of the number of animals which are euthanised (published in the annual report).**

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Objective 3: Provide discount cat desexing to eligible residents, and encourage ownership of community cats		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Continue to work with the National Desexing Network to provide low cost cat desexing to eligible residents.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	**Increase in the number of cats entering the program from the previous comparable period.**
Complete and lodge a grant application to run a low-cost desexing program to support disadvantaged Victorian families within our municipality.	**Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.**	

Objective 4: Create more options for animals who are not suitable for adoptions through a shelter		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Increase community foster carers to provide care for vulnerable animals such as neonatal kittens which are vulnerable to disease and ill-health in shelters.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	**Increased opportunities for animals to enter foster care and options for rehoming.**
Continue to expand our network of rescue organisations, providing the option to transfer animals to other organisations which may be better equipped to manage behavioural or medical requirements.	**Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.**	

5. REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION

5.1 CONTEXT AND CURRENT SITUATION

All dogs and cats over the age of 3 months must be micro-chipped and registered with the Council where it resides.

The registration fees help fund the animal management services provided by Council and the responsible pet ownership campaign and other education programs run by the State Government.

An animal found with a registration or microchip marker has a much higher chance of being reunited with its owner and not being taken to the animal shelter.

It has been identified that the number of registered animals has not increased alongside the estimated increase in pet ownership. Increasing awareness of registration requirements and the benefits of registration has been identified as a priority for the Animal Services team.

5.2 OUR ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CURRENT ORDERS:

Dogs and cats are required to be micro-chipped at time of renewal of registration (s.10C). All dogs and cats over the age of three months must be registered.

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CURRENT LOCAL LAWS:

City of Greater Bendigo's Local Law No 2 as mentioned in previous sections regulates the number of dogs and cats that can be kept at a property.

CURRENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

Fees for the registration of cats and dogs is undertaken as part of the City's annual budget process and is subject to the financial policies of Council including Hardship Policy.

City of Greater Bendigo's Local Laws No 2 regulates the number of animals to be kept at a property.

Instrument of delegation provides delegated authority to staff to register or refuse to register a dog or a cat or dangerous or restricted breed dogs.

Relevant procedures include Dog Seizure Procedure and After-Hours Response Procedure. The Compliance Policy provides a framework for enforcement action.

OUR CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

Compliance activities include:

- Conduct random door knocking each year to check for unregistered cats and dogs
- Ensuring all dogs and cats are registered and micro-chipped prior to their release from BARC
- All registered animals found wandering, where possible, are returned to their owners in the first instance
- All officers carry microchip scanners and public areas are patrolled regularly to undertake random checks for unregistered animals. Officers also have mobile access to registration data in the field to be more efficient in returning animals to their owners
- Registration checks are commonly undertaken on reports where it is suspected that unregistered animals may reside
- Follow up of failure to register or renew animal registration through the issue of caution notices and infringement notices in accordance with the City's Compliance Policy
- Unpaid infringement notices are lodged with Fines Victoria for follow up.

5.3 OUR PLAN

Considering above, the activities and objectives for the next 4 years are listed below:

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Objective 1: Increase awareness of importance and benefits of pet registration		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Use social media platforms to communicate the benefits of registration, such as increased chances of being reunited with owner.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	**Increased animal registrations.**
Provide clarity and transparently of how funding from pet registration is utilised by Council.	**2023.**	

Objective 2: Continue to remind people of the requirement to register their pets		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Issue reminder notices to all pets who have been previously registered and not renewed.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	**Increased animal registrations.**
Send SMS reminders for all unpaid registrations, along with messaging of its importance.	**2022.**	

Objective 3: Increase convenience of registration payments		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Provide online platform for pet owners to pay their registration renewal, update details, and submit new animal registrations.	2022.	**Increased animal registrations.**
Provide assistance to owners to complete their registration by assisting to gather the required information (e.g. microchip numbers).	**2022.**	

Objective 4: Consider additional incentives for registered pets		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Consider further discounts for pets which have been consistently registered on time and have demonstrated responsible pet ownership (e.g. pay 3 years rego, get the 4th for free).	2023.	**Increased animal registrations.**
Consider "no fee" reclaims of registered animals found lost/wondering (with certain time frame).	**2022.**	

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6 NUISANCE

6.1 CONTEXT ANDCURRENT SITUATION

The regulations for managing dog and cat nuisance, relating to noise, trespassing and wandering at large are contained within the Domestic Animals Act.

Three common types of nuisance complaints that Animal Management Services deal with are noise from barking dogs, dog faeces in public spaces, and trespass of cats.

EXCESSIVE BARKING

Barking dog complaints can be a source of great irritation within the community and are extremely time consuming and difficult for Officers to resolve. Responses to our recent survey indicate that 50% of residents are impacted by barking dogs, and 20% of these are reported to council.

Investigating such complaints can be a long process as Officers have to gather sufficient evidence to prove the nuisance exists. This is often subjective, and the problem can stop and then start again sometime later.

City Officers can issue notices to the dog owner to abate the nuisance, issue infringement notices or have the matter heard in the Magistrates Court to seek an order from the Court to abate the nuisance.

Excessive barking can have several causes including:

- Housing environment, including inadequate yard space and lack of stimulation
- Inadequate exercise and interactions with people and or other dogs
- Inadequate shelter from weather conditions
- Hunger or thirst
- A medical condition such as illness or injury
- Provocation or disturbance - movement outside the dog's property (e.g. passers-by, other dogs barking, possums, cats)
- Changes to the family structure, routine or territory
- Learned behavior – dogs often bark more if they learn that their owner makes a fuss over them when they bark
- Contact seeking - dogs are social animals, barking and howling are ways that dogs can communicate with each other over distance
- Territorialism (visitors to the property) and communication.

Not all barking dog complaints can be prevented. The objective is to resolve complaints as quickly and smoothly as possible. Sometimes the behaviour is so ingrained that professional advice is required. In these cases, advice from a veterinarian or referral to a qualified behaviourist is recommended. The City has established a list of behaviourists to whom owners of dogs with a barking problem can be referred.

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The process for dealing with barking dogs tries to balance the interests and rights of both the dog owner and the resident affected by the noise. Often cases are resolved reasonably quickly after the initial complaint, but some require an investigation to be undertaken which may take some time to determine if a problem exists.

DOG FAECES

The pollution of footpaths, parks and reserves by dog faeces is a concern raised by residents in recent surveys, with 72% of people feeling that dog waste on public streets was a significant issue.

It is generally accepted that dog faeces left in public spaces is smelly, unsightly and unpleasant to step in. However, it can also host disease and or parasites which can infect other dogs that come into contact with it, or worse, be transmitted to people.

Toxocara Canis is the roundworm that can be found in the faeces of infected dogs and can be passed onto humans.

Dog faeces is not a fertiliser and breaks down slowly. Leaving it lying around encourages other dogs to mark their spot. Dog faeces litter can lead to bacteria and algae in our water ways which can harm birds, fish, frogs and insects.

The City presently has a Local Law which requires dog owners to pick up their dog's faeces from public places. There is also a requirement that dog owners take a bag or other suitable device with them for picking up their dog faeces when walking their dog. It is not proposed to modify these requirements. 88% of survey respondents indicated that they are aware of these requirements.

CAT TRESPASS

There is currently a dusk-to-dawn cat containment requirement in The City of Greater Bendigo. Our survey responses show that a majority of residents are aware of the curfew (81%) however nearly the same number of residents observe cats breaking this curfew.

Cats can create a nuisance to residents by leaving faeces in gardens and children's play areas, spraying plants and buildings with their urine, fighting with other cats which often involve loud and disturbing vocalisation, and upsetting resident cats which reside on the property where the other cat is trespassing.

It is important to note that not all these cats would be owned. Research recently conducted by Monash University indicates that 22% of Victorians are feeding or otherwise caring for a community cat which they believe is not owned, but who the cat relies on for food and potentially other additional care.

Our survey supported these finding, with 8% of respondents admitting to feeding or providing care for a cat which was 'unowned' and lived within the community.

Cat trespass can be significantly reduced by increased containment requirements, and a reduction in the number of un-owned cats living among the community.

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Cats have a major impact on Victoria's biodiversity, with wild cats being one of the most significant threats to the survival of the state's threatened wildlife. Around 46% of Australia's endangered wildlife can be found in towns and cities (Ives et al. 2015), so it is a topic that requires consideration for both urban and rural cats.

The main environmental impact of wondering cats is through direct predation, but cats also spread diseases that affect, humans, livestock and our wildlife. These diseases can cause abortions in livestock which reduced farmers' productivity and create scar tissue in livestock meat which reduces farmers' incomes.

6.2 OUR ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CURRENT ORDERS:

As per Chapter 4.2, Council currently has a cat curfew under s25 of the Act from sunset to sunrise that applies across the municipality making it an offence for a cat to be outside the owner's property. This is to reduce incidence of breeding to decrease the number of unwanted cat litters in the community and reduce the occurrences of nuisance.

As per Chapter 3.2, Council has Orders in place requiring dogs and/or cats to be restrained in a specific manner when in public places.

As per Chapter 3.2, Council also has an Order prohibiting dogs from the playing surface of the Queen Elizabeth Oval.

CURRENT LOCAL LAWS:

As per Chapter 3.2, Council's Local Law No 2 regulates the numbers of dogs and/or cats that can be kept at a property and requires dog owners remove and dispose of faeces deposited by their dogs in public places.

CURRENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

Current policies and procedures relating to management of customer concerns relating to a nuisance caused by pets in the community includes:

- Nuisance Animals Policy
- Investigation Manual for Nuisance
- Compliance Policy
- After Hours Response Procedure
- Trespassing Livestock Procedure
- Issuing of Infringement and Caution Notices Procedure
- Internal Review Procedure
- Guidelines for Dealing with Animal Matters.

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OUR CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

The City has a comprehensive manual and procedures for dealing with nuisance issues and has several trained staff dedicated to managing the nuisance issues that arise from animals. Our staff respond to over 500 barking dog requests per year.

6.3 OUR PLAN

Considering above, the activities and objectives for the next 4 years are listed below:

Objective 1: Manage dog nuisance complaints		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Maintain technology such as noise recorders for assessing nuisance.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	**Reduction in the number of complaints in relation to a nuisance caused by dogs, including barking and faeces in public spaces.**
Continue to use barking dog complaint/investigation policy/manual.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	
Review education material about managing dog nuisance issues on the website.	**Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.**	

Objective 2: Manage cat nuisance complaints		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Provide education material about cat enclosures.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	**Reduction in the number of complaints in relation to a nuisance caused by cats including trespass.**
Review education material about managing cat nuisance issues on the website.	2022.	
Participate in the National Desexing Network programs to provide all eligible residents with discount cat desexing.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	
Provide accessible discount micro-chipping.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	
Provide affordable options for residents feeding/caring for community cats to become responsible cat owners.	2021.	
Provide cat traps for hire at no cost (refundable deposit required).	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	
Consider 24-hour cat containment to bring the requirement of keeping cats contained in line with that of keeping dogs contained.	**2022.**	

7 DOG ATTACKS

7.1 CONTEXT AND CURRENT SITUATION

There are several reasons why dogs will roam, including opportunity and boredom. Roaming dogs can be a problem as they can cause traffic hazards, act aggressively towards people and other animals, deposit faeces, be

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destructive, spread disease, can develop instinctive behaviours and act independently (disobedience). Dogs that are used to roaming and having freedom can develop behavioural problems and are likely to protest when confined, which in turn can lead to residential amenity issues.

Roaming dogs are more likely to be involved in a rush or an attack on a person or another animal. The City treats all dog attacks as a matter of priority and is a vital component of the Animal Management Officer's role.

A majority of dog attack investigations are for attacks on other dogs, followed by attacks on other animals (e.g. other pet animals or livestock).

Our Survey shows that 35% of respondents have experienced a dog rush or attack, however it most likely to go unreported to council for investigation. Development of a program to educate residents on how to identify a dog attack, and the process for reporting it, are considered in the Plan.

7.2 OUR ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS. COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CURRENT ORDERS:

Chapter 3.2 references the Orders requiring dogs to be restrained in a specific manner when in public places and from being present in specific areas of the municipal district.

CURRENT LOCAL LAWS:

There are currently no Local Laws relevant to dog attacks. Instead the provisions of the Domestic Animals Act are used when responding to reports of dog attack.

CURRENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

Current policies and procedures relating to management of customer concerns relating to a nuisance caused by pets in the community includes:

- Dog attack procedure
- Destruction Procedure
- Dangerous Dog Declaration Procedure
- Menacing Dog Declaration Procedure
- Procedure for Prosecuting Dog Attack
- Dog Seizure Procedure
- After Hours Response Procedure
- Issuing of Infringements Procedure
- Nuisance Animals Policy
- Compliance Policy.

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OUR CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

Officers respond to reports of dogs wandering at large as a high priority to reduce dog attacks.

All declared dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs are recorded on the Victorian Declared Dog Register (VDDR) including type of declaration.

7.3 OUR PLAN

Considering above, the activities and objectives for the next 4 years are listed below:

Objective 1: Increase awareness of safety around dogs and reduce number of attacks.		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Maintain a designated dog attack consequence web page which explains the implications for dog and owner if the dog attacks. Also provide information on how to avoid dog bites.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	**Reduction in number of dog attacks and increase in compliance of suitable restrain/containment of dogs.**
Publicise key dog attack prevention messages (e.g.: confinement of dogs to property, leash laws etc.) through social media articles and website.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	
Undertake letter box drops in areas where a dog has attacked.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	
Ensure annual audits of properties where dangerous, menacing or restricted breed dogs are housed and properties where a Magistrate has imposed an order to contain.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	
Visit schools to educate children on how to be safe around dogs, minimising bites in the home and teaching them how to minimise being bitten or attacked by a dog.	2023.	
Develop an awareness program to increase dog attack reporting.	**2023.**	

Objective 2: Reduce harassment and wandering by dogs.		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Conduct a feasibility study on the requirement to keeps dogs on leashes in public areas unless designated otherwise.	Commence 2022.	**Reduced rate of impounded dogs as a result of wandering, and decreased reports of harassment caused by wandering dogs.**
Promote the importance of desexing at an early age.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	
Identify and patrol properties where containment is not sufficient and other high-risk areas.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	

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Benchmark data of dog attack against previous years to identify trends or useful information.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.
Educate the community about dog confinement and penalties for owners not keeping their dog confined.	2022.
Increase the use of media to educate the community on the importance of preventing their dog from wandering.	**2023.**

8 DANGEROUS, MENACING AND RESTRICTED BREED DOGS

8.1 CONTEXT AND CURRENT SITUATION

The Domestic Animals Act 1994 provides that Council must outline programs, services and strategies to effectively identify all Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed dogs in the district and to ensure that these dogs are kept in compliance with the Act and Regulations.

A dog is considered a **Dangerous Dog** regardless of its breed or actions if It is left to guard non-residential premises, or it has been trained to attack or bite a person or clothing attached to or worn by a person.

Any dog, regardless of its breed or size, can be declared Dangerous if the dog has attacked and bitten a person or other animal and caused serious injury, or has menaced people more than once.

A dog can be declared **Menacing** if the dog causes a non-serious bite injury to a person or animal, or the dog rushes at, or chases a person in an aggressive manner.

Restricted Breed Dogs (RBD's) are five specific breeds of dogs that are considered a higher risk to community safety than other breeds of dogs.

In 2003 the Government introduced Restricted Breed Dog Legislation into Victoria to regulate the ownership and keeping of dogs whose importation is prohibited under the Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956 of the Commonwealth.

The following dog breeds are restricted:

- American Pit Bull Terrier (or Pit Bull Terrier)
- Fila Brasileiro
- Japanese Tosa
- Dogo Argentino
- Perro de Presa Canario (or Presa Canario).

Only the American Pit Bull Terrier (or Pit Bull Terrier) and Dogo Argentino are known to be in Victoria.

The State Government has developed a Standard for identifying RBDs and all dogs fitting the Standard including part breeds, except where exemptions are given by the Standard, are considered an RBD. RBDs not registered prior to 30 September 2011 are not allowed to be kept in Victoria.

At July 2021 the City had a total of 8 Dangerous Dogs, 3 Menacing Dogs and 1 Restricted Breed Dog (Pit Bull).

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8.2 OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CURRENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

Current policies and procedures relating to the management of Dangerous, Menacing and RBDs in the community includes:

- Dangerous and Restricted Breed Dogs Inspection Procedure
- Dog Seizure Procedure
- Destruction Procedure
- Dangerous Dog Declaration Procedure
- Menacing Dog Declaration Procedure
- Procedure for Prosecuting Dog Procedure
- Issuing of Infringements Procedure
- Compliance Policy details the enforcement framework for decision making with issuing notices to comply, infringement notices, or filing charges for prosecution.
- Internal procedure requiring two officers to be present when visiting a property where a Dangerous Dog is kept
- Officers are duly authorised and delegated via Council's Instrument of Delegation the provisions to destroy a Dangerous or an RBD under certain circumstances, declare a dog to be Dangerous or Menacing or to register/refuse the registration of an RBD.

CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES:

Staff are trained in identifying RBDs and respond to community reports with inspections conducted of industrial areas for dogs guarding premises.

The City has implemented a formal registration and annual audit program for properties where declared Dangerous or restricted breed dogs reside. Unannounced audits are also undertaken during this time or in response to reports from the community. Any serious breaches of audit requirements are dealt with by enforcement actions.

PRESCRIBED REQUIREMENTS FOR KEEPING DANGEROUS, MENACING AND RESTRICTED BREED DOGS

There are a clear set of requirements which must be met to appropriately house and contain a Dangerous or RBD, and to prevent incidents caused by Menacing Dogs.

The prescribed requirements for keeping RBDs include:

- Desexing
- Microchip identification

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- Warning signs on property
- Muzzled and on leash outside property
- Must wear a prescribed collar at all times
- Registered on the Victorian Declared Dog Register (VDDR)
- Housed in an enclosure or secured yard
- Annual inspection by a City Officer
- Requirement to notify the City of change of address, ownership or if the dog dies or goes missing
- Higher rate of registration with no pension concession
- Harsh penalties (Crimes Act) for attacking a person, including 10 years jail if the dog kills a person or 5 years jail if the dog endangers someone's life.

The prescribed requirements for keeping a Dangerous Dog are similar to RBD requirements, however there are colour difference of the warning signs and they also must be in an enclosure on a residential property (not secured yard) or within prescribed perimeter fencing when guarding nonresidential property.

The City may require a declared Menacing Dog to be muzzled when outside the owner's premises to prevent the dog from being able to bite. The City may also require the dog to be under effective control of a person by means of a chain, cord or leash whenever it is outside the owner's premises.

A Menacing Dog Declaration can be upgraded to a Dangerous Dog Declaration if the owner of the Menacing Dog has been issued with two infringement notices for failing to comply with requirements such as leashing or muzzling their dog while in public places.

8.3 OUR PLAN

Considering above, the activities and objectives for the next 4 years are listed below:

Objective 1: To reduce the risk of dog attack by ensuring that all Declared Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs investigations are managed quickly and efficiently.		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Respond to complaints regarding Menacing, Dangerous and RBDs as a matter of priority.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	**All complaints are actioned in accordance with the customer service charter, resulting in successful compliance action.**
Review policies and delegations in relation to declaring a dog Dangerous or Menacing.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	
Benchmark data of dog attack against previous years to identify trends or useful information.	**Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.**	

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Objective 2: To reduce the risk of dog attack by ensuring that all Declared Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs are kept in compliance with the Domestic Animals Act requirements.		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Ensure that all properties where Declared dogs and RBDs are kept have random, unannounced inspections annually, and inspect industrial properties were guard dogs may be kept.	**Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.**	**100% of required properties audited annual, with an increase in compliance of suitable restrain/containment of dogs.**
Ensure all Declared Dogs are accurately registered on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry.	**Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.**	

9 DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES

9.1 CONTEXT AND CURRENT SITUATION

The City of Greater Bendigo has several registered Domestic Animal Businesses (DABs). These businesses operate under approved Codes of Practice and are subject to regular audit.

Under the provisions of the Domestic Animal Act 1994 a Domestic Animal Business is:

- An animal shelter
- A Council pound (operated by the Council or a contractor on behalf of Council);
- A pet shop;
- A dog and/or cat breeding establishment where there are three or more fertile females and the proprietor is not a member of an applicable organisation. If the proprietor is a member or an applicable organisation, they are allowed up to nine fertile females;
- A dog training establishment (where the business is run for profit); or
- An establishment that is rearing dogs or cats (where the business is run for profit); or
- A dog and/or cat boarding establishment (where the business is run for profit to provide overnight, day-care or homecare boarding).

9.2 OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CURRENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

Current policies and procedures relating to a Domestic Animal Business include the Instrument of Delegation which provides delegation to staff to implement the DAB provisions of the Act regarding:

- Refuse to register or renew the registration of the premises
- Refuse to transfer the registration to a new premises

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- Suspend the registration of the premises; or impose terms, conditions, limitations or restrictions on the registration of a premises
- Revoke the registration of a premises.

Compliance Policy provides the framework to guide compliance and enforcement action including but not limited to issuing notices to comply, infringement notices, refuse to register or revoking the registration or filing charges for prosecution regarding DABs.

In addition, Domestic Animal Business must be audited annually, and must comply with relevant legislation mentioned previously relating to the number of animals which can be kept at a property, and animal registration requirements.

9.3 OUR PLAN

Considering above, the activities and objectives for the next 4 years are listed below:

Objective 1: Identify and register all Domestic Animal Businesses in the municipality and ensure that they are in compliance with the Domestic Animals Act.		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Inspect and audit all registered domestic animal businesses annually.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	**100% of registered DABs inspected annually, with reduced number of non-compliance.**
Investigate any reports/complaints of unregistered DAB within 48 hours.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	**Number of reports actions within 48 hours.**
Provide relevant Code of Practice to proprietors of existing and proposed DABs.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	**Relevant information distributed.**
Monitor newspapers and online advertisements to identify unregistered businesses and compare information to the Pet Exchange Register.	**Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.**	**Number of new businesses identified and registered.**

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10 OTHER MATTERS

10.1 CONTEXT AND CURRENT SITUATION

POPULATION OF UN-OWNED CATS

Both community consultation and survey feedback highlighted the many issues caused by an over-population of cats in the community.

There is evidence that community cat populations can be realistically and affordably managed through Trap, Neuter, Release programs (TNR). These programs are not aligned with Council's legislative requirements under the Domestic Animals Act and therefore unable to be realistically considered for inclusion in the 2021-2025 DAMP. It has been suggested that there are similar programs operating in areas across Victoria which would warrant further investigation and possible collaboration.

Desexing is an effective management strategy to reduce stray cat population. The Bendigo Community Cat Program offered by BARC, which provides low cost desexing options for eligible people caring for community cats, aims at reducing community cat populations via the same principal at NTR programs and can be done while meeting compliance under the Domestic Animals Act.

Similar programs have been implemented at Banyule City Council and have demonstrated that free cat desexing has resulted in a significant decrease in not only stray cat admissions to the contracted shelter, but also neighbourhood complaints in relation to the nuisance caused by cats.

The City has also partnered with the National Desexing Network (NDN) to provide discounted cat desexing to eligible residents. This program has proved popular with 72 cats desexed in the last 12 months. This included 42 female cats, of which 5 were pregnant or in-season, and 30 male cats.

As a conservative measure, desexing these 72 cats has prevented at least 720 kittens in the first year, with each female cat able to produce on average 10 kittens and male cats being able to contribute to even more kittens by mating with more than one female.

78% of survey respondents would like support in the form of discounted desexing, and so the partnership with the NDN will continue.

EMERGENCY HOUSING PROVISIONS FOR PETS

There are many situations that might call for emergency housing for an animal when an owner is not able to care for them. In many of these situations, it is best practise to not encourage "surrendering' an animal for rehoming, as the bond between the owner and the pet is vital in supporting the owner though the experience they are managing, which has led to the requirement for emergency boarding. Situations may include escape from Family violence, homelessness, or the requirement for medical treatment or rehabilitation.

Emergency housing for pets has been identified as a need and will be further considered and addressed under the service delivery model for BARC.

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THE CONTRIBUTIONS PETS MAKE TO HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

98% of respondents to our survey recognised that pets, especially dogs and cats, can improve their owner's health. Benefits of owning a pet have been proved to include a reduction in stress, anxiety, and depression. They can ease loneliness, encourage exercise and playfulness, and even improve your cardiovascular health. Caring for an animal can help children grow up more secure and active. Pets also provide valuable companionship for older adults.

The importance of pets has been widely identified by the City's Health and Wellbeing Directorate and future consideration is being made into how further support can be provided to isolated and vulnerable residents to support a desire for pet ownership.

10.2 OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CURRENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

The shelter service provided by BARC currently works with several other organisations to provide emergency accommodation to animals whose owners might be experiencing family violence, homelessness, or other significant disruption which threatens the relationships they have with their pet.

There currently is an existing Emergency Animal Welfare Plan that sits as part of the Integrated Municipal Emergency Management Plan that contains Council's actions and responses for animal management and welfare in an emergency.

CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES:

All processes fit within the Victorian Code of Practise for the management of Shelter and Pounds, as well as the Health Management Plan for the Bendigo Animal Relief Centre.

Discount cat desexing is delivered in accordance with the Domestic Animal Act by ensuring that all desexed cats are micro-chipped and registered.

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10.3 OUR PLAN

Considering above, the activities and objectives for the next 4 years are listed below:

Objective 1: Support the community to manage community cats responsibly		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Provide support to residents who are feeding/caring for a community cat by providing affordable desexing, micro-chipping and registration.	2021-2022.	**The Bendigo Community Cat Program has commenced trial and aims to provide a desexing, micro-chipping and registration service for 50 cats being cared for by eligible residents.**
Continue to partner with the National Desexing Network to provide discount cat desexing.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	
Provide education and resources on the effect feeding a stray cat can have to increased disease transmission and over population.	**Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.**	

Objective 2: Establish a community centric emergency management plan for animals		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Investigate options to support people experiencing homelessness who own pets.	2023.	**Successful service provision.**
Increase community awareness and promote services available for people and animals exposed to family violence.	2022.	
Consider support options for people and pets required to evacuate (e.g. flood, fire).	**2024.**	

Objective 3: Encourage pet ownership as a means of health and wellbeing of the City's residents		
Activity	**When**	**Evaluation**
Provide assistance to people seeking companionship with an animal by providing guidance and assistance on choosing the right animal.	Ongoing, will continue for 2021-2025 Plan.	**Increase pet ownership, especially by those living in isolation and those living with disabilities.**
Increase community awareness and of the benefits of owning a pet through targeted campaigns.	**2022.**	

11 ANNUAL REVIEW OF PLAN AND ANNUAL REPORTING

Under section 68A (3) of the Domestic Animals Act, Council must:

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- Review its DAMP annually and, if appropriate, amend the Plan;
- Council must provide the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions Secretary with a copy of the plan, including any amendments to the Plan;
- Publish an evaluation of its implementation of the Plan in its annual report.

The actions of the Domestic Animal Management Plan will be reported and monitored via the City's business planning software which assists in monitoring strategic plan actions.

The DAMP will continue to be monitored annually against several key performance indicators. A number of these indicators form part of the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) and infringement activity is reported to the Attorney General. All performance indicators are reported in the City's annual report. The performance indicators are:

- Number of dog and cat registrations
- Number of dogs and cats entering BARC
- Number of dog and cats reclaimed from BARC
- Number of dogs and cats rehoused from BARC
- Number of dogs and cats euthanised
- Number of dog management requests
- Number of cat management requests
- Total requests for animal services
- Number of prosecutions undertaken
- Number of successful prosecutions
- Number of infringement notices
- Response times for service delivery.

EVALUATION OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Activity	When	Evaluation
Conduct annual review of Domestic Animal Management Plan.	Annually as part of Plan.	**Ensure actions are delivered as per Plan and the content remains current with the needs of the Community and the Act.**
Update DAMP as required.	As required.	**Provide the DAMP to Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions including if amendments are undertaken.**
Report on the implementation of the DAMP in Council Annual Report.	**Annually.**	**Report completed.**

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APPENDIX A – ACTIVITY SUMMARY

2. TRAINING OF AUTHORISED OFFICERS

OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITY
1: Maintain a training register for individual officers detailing completed and proposed training.	Maintain a skills matrix for employed staff, to identify required and proposed training.
2: Ensure all new Authorised Officers have completed their minimum training requirements within 12 months of appointment.	Identify minimum training requirements for Authorised Officers and record when officers have completed each course.
3: Provide opportunities for additional training each year.	Identify additional training opportunities e.g. prosecutions training, advanced conflict management and mediation.
4: Provide and maintain performance training / planning process for individual officers.	Complete annual development plan and review process for each staff member.

3. PROGRAMS TO PROMOTE AND ENCOURAGE RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP AND COMPLIANCE WITH LEGISLATION

OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITY
1: Increase pet registrations.	Continue with discounts for desexed pets.
	Provide education on the purpose of pet registration through increased community presence, and support owners to complete registration details (e.g. assist with sighting desexing tattoos, obtaining microchip numbers).
	Pound service discounts for registered pets.
	Online payment options for registrations.
	Review registration fees to encourage new registrations (e.g. free registration for pets under 6 months of age).
2: Increase pet micro-chipping.	Continue to provide discount micro-chipping 5 days a week, with the intention to increase the service to 7 days a week.
	Consider micro-chipping events to reach a wider range of pet owners.
3: Increase dog waste removal.	Empower community to encourage owners to clean up after their dogs.
	Trial the provision of environmentally friendly dog waste bags through the council offices for owners to use, in line with Council's Single Use Plastics policy.
	Continue with Local Laws Officer presence at popular dog walking/exercise locations.
4: Increase the number of desexed pets not intended for breeding.	Provide discount registration for desexed pets.
	Provide discount cat desexing to eligible residents.

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	Promote increased sociability and trainability of desexed pets.
5: Assist residents with choosing the right pet.	Provide education sessions/presentations to help people analyse what pet might be right for them.
	Continue to provide advice and guidance for pets being adopted from the shelter.
6: Promote responsible pet ownership to the younger generation.	Visiting local schools to educate the next generation of pet owners of the importance of responsible pet ownership.
7: Increase Cat Containment.	Promote and share existing resources from Safe Cat / Safe Wildlife campaign.
	Provide flyers, information and advice on how to contain cats.

4. PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS OVER-POPULATION RATES AND ANY HIGH EUTHANASIA RATES

OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITY
1: Work with the community to further reduce euthanasia rates for impounded cats and dogs.	Raise awareness of the benefits of desexing pets.
	Provide discounted registration costs for desexed pets.
	Educate community on the effect that feeding un-owned cats has on over-population.
	Promote lost/found pets online and on social media platforms to reunite them with their owner.
2: To provide transparency to our public in relation to overpopulation and high euthanasia rates.	Provide access to statistics on the euthanasia rates at the shelter.
3: Provide discount cat desexing to eligible residents and encourage ownership of community cats.	Continue to work with the National Desexing Network to provide low cost cat desexing to eligible residents.
	Complete and lodge a grant application to run a low-cost desexing program to support disadvantaged Victorian families within our municipality.
4: Create more options for animals who are not suitable for adoptions though a shelter.	Increase community foster carers to provide care for vulnerable animals such as neonatal kittens which are vulnerable to disease and ill-health in shelters.
	Continue to expand our network of rescue organisations, providing the option to transfer animals to other organisations which may be better equipped to manage behavioural or medical requirements.

5. REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION

OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITY
1: Increase awareness of importance and benefits of pet registration.	Use social media platforms to communicate the benefits of registration, such as increased chances of being reunited with owner.
	Provide clarity and transparently of how funding from pet registration is utilised by Council.

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2: Continue to remind people of the requirement to register their pets.	Issue reminder notices to all pets who have been previously registered and not renewed.
	Send SMS reminders for all unpaid registrations, along with messaging of its importance.
3: Increase convenience of registration payments.	Provide assistance to owners to complete their registration by assisting to gather the required information (e.g. microchip numbers)
	Provide online platform for pet owners to pay their registration renewal, update details, and submit new animal registrations.
4: Consider additional incentives for registered pets.	Consider further discounts for pets which have been consistently registered on time and have demonstrated responsible pet ownership (e.g. pay 3 years rego, get the 4th for free).
	Consider "no fee" reclaims of registered of animals found lost/wondering (with certain time frame).

6 NUISANCE

OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITY
1: Manage dog nuisance complaints.	Maintain technology such as noise recorders for assessing nuisance.
	Continue to use barking dog complaint/investigation policy/manual.
	Review education material about managing dog nuisance issues on the website.
	Provide accessible discount micro-chipping.
2: Manage cat nuisance complaints.	Provide education material about cat enclosures.
	Review education material about managing cat nuisance issues on the website.
	Participate in the National Desexing Network programs to provide all eligible residents with discount cat desexing.
	Provide accessible discount micro-chipping.
	Provide affordable options for residents feeding/caring for community cats to become responsible cat owners.
	Provide cat traps for hire at no cost (refundable deposit required).
	Consider 24-hour cat containment to bring the requirement of keeping cats contained in line with that of keeping dogs contained.

7 DOG ATTACKS

OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITY
1: Increase awareness of safety around dogs and reduce number of attacks.	Maintain a designated dog attack consequence web page which explains the implications for dog and owner if the dog attacks. Also provide information on how to avoid dog bites.

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	Publicise key dog attack prevention messages (e.g.: confinement of dogs to property, leash laws etc.) through social media articles and website.
	Undertake letter box drops in areas where a dog has attacked.
	Ensure annual audits of properties where dangerous, menacing or restricted breed dogs are housed and properties where a Magistrate has imposed an order to contain.
	Visit schools to educate children on how to be safe around dogs, minimising bites in the home and teaching them how to minimise being bitten or attacked by a dog.
	Develop an awareness program to increase dog attack reporting.
2: Reduce harassment and wandering by dogs.	Conduct a feasibility study on the requirement to keeps dogs on leashes in public areas unless designated otherwise.
	Promote the importance of desexing at an early age.
	Identify and patrol properties where containment is not sufficient and other high-risk areas.
	Benchmark data of dog attack against previous years to identify trends or useful information.
	Educate the community about dog confinement and penalties for owners not keeping their dog confined.
	Increase the use of media to educate the community on the importance of preventing their dog from wandering.

8 DANGEROUS, MENACING AND RESTRICTED BREED DOGS

OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITY
1: To reduce the risk of dog attack by ensuring that all Declared Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs investigations are managed quickly and efficiently.	Respond to complaints regarding Menacing, Dangerous and Restricted Breed dogs as a matter of priority.
	Review policies and delegations in relation to declaring a dog Dangerous or Menacing.
	Benchmark data of dog attack against previous years to identify trends or useful information.
2: To reduce the risk of dog attack by ensuring that all Declared Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs are kept in compliance with the Domestic Animals Act requirements.	Ensure that all properties where Declared and Restricted Breed Dogs are kept have random, unannounced inspections annually, and inspect industrial properties were guard dogs may be kept.
	Ensure all Declared Dogs are accurately registered on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry.

9 DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES

OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITY
1: Identify and register all Domestic Animal Businesses in the municipality	Inspect and audit all registered domestic animal businesses annually.

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and ensure that they are in compliance with the Domestic Animals Act.	Investigate any reports/complaints of unregistered DAB within 48 hours.
	Provide relevant Code of Practice to proprietors of existing and proposed DABs.
	Monitor newspapers and online advertisements to identify unregistered businesses and compare information to the Pet Exchange Register.

10 OTHER MATTERS

OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITY
1: Support the community to manage community cats responsibly.	Provide support to residents who are feeding/caring for a community cat by providing affordable desexing, micro-chipping and registration.
	Continue to partner with the National Desexing Network to provide discount cat desexing.
	Provide education and resources on the effect feeding a stray cat can have to increased disease transmission and over population.
2: Establish a community centric emergency management plan for animals.	Investigate options to support people experiencing homelessness who own pets.
	Increase community awareness and promote services available for people and animals exposed to family violence.
	Consider support options for people and pets required to evacuate (e.g. flood, fire).
3: Encourage pet ownership as a means of health and welling of The City's residents.	Provide assistance to people seeking companionship with an animal by providing guidance and assistance on choosing the right animal.
	Increase community awareness and of the benefits of owning a pet through targeted campaigns.

11 ANNUAL REVIEW OF PLAN AND ANNUAL REPORTING

OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITY
1: Evaluation of implementation of the Domestic Animal Management Plan.	Conduct annual review of Domestic Animal Management Plan.
	Update DAMP as required.
	Report on the implementation of the DAMP in Council Annual Report.

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18. EMBRACING OUR CULTURE AND HERITAGE

Nil

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19. LEAD AND GOVERN FOR ALL

19.1. Draft Financial Statements and Performance Statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2021

Author	Nathan Morsillo, Manager Financial Strategy
Responsible Director	Andrew Cooney, Director Corporate Performance

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to approve the draft Financial Statements and Performance Statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2021.

Summary

The City must prepare an annual report in respect of each financial year which includes financial statements, performance statements and sign-off from the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO). This report seeks Council's approval of the draft Financial Statements and Performance Statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2021.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve:

1. On the recommendation of the Audit and Risk Committee, to adopt the draft 2020/2021 Financial Statements and the draft 2020/2021 Performance Statement as presented.
2. To authorise two of the Mayor, Cr Alden, Cr O'Rourke, and/or Cr Metcalf as the Finance Committee/Audit and Risk Committee representatives to certify the Financial Statements and the Performance Statement in their final form on behalf of Council.
3. To authorise the Principal Accounting Officer to make any non-material changes to the Financial Statements and the Performance Statements that may arise.
4. For the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee to be notified of any material changes proposed to be made to any of the Statements so that it may be decided whether the Audit and Risk Committee needs to meet further to consider such proposed changes prior to two Councillors signing off the Statements.
5. For a copy of the Statements in their final form be forwarded to the members of the Audit and Risk Committee.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Margaret O'Rourke
Seconded: Cr Matthew Evans

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

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Policy Context

Community Plan Reference:

City of Greater Bendigo Community Plan 2017-2021:

Goal 1	**Lead and Govern for All**
Objective 1.3	Be innovative and financially responsible
Strategy 1.3.2	Ensure value for investment on behalf of the community

Background Information

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires the following:

Section 98 Annual report

1. A Council must prepare an annual report in respect of each financial year.
2. An annual report must contain the following:
    a. a report of operations of the Council;
    b. an audited performance statement;
    c. audited financial statements;
    d. a copy of the auditor's report on the performance statement;
    e. a copy of the auditor's report on the financial statements under Part 3 of the Audit Act 1994;
    f. any other matters prescribed by the regulations.

Council submits the Financial Statements to the Minister for Local Government once it has resolved to provide 'in principle' approval for the Financial Statements and Performance Statement.

The Council must authorise two Councillors to certify the Financial Statements and Performance Statement in their final form after any changes recommended, or agreed to, by the auditor have been made.

Report

The City of Greater Bendigo has prepared its annual Financial Statements and Performance Statement for the financial year ending 30 June 2021. These statements have been presented to the Audit and Risk Committee. The Audit and Risk Committee have reviewed the statements and provided a recommendation for Council to approve the statements in principle.

The Council must authorise two Councillors to certify the statements, being the Mayor Cr Alden and Cr O'Rourke or Cr Metcalf (or their delegates) as members of both Council's Finance and Audit and Risk Committees for the full financial year. At the time of drafting this report, the statements are in the process of being reviewed by the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO) and are considered to be in their final draft form. When the statements have been finalised, they can be signed.

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Headline results in the financial statements

The statements, including comprehensive income, balance sheet, cash flows, equity and capital works summarise the financial position as at 30 June 2021. The following section highlights items of note in the Financial Statements.

The year end result reported a $11.8M operating surplus. The budgeted operating surplus was $8.7M, resulting in a favourable variance of $3M to budget. This result is in line with applicable Accounting Standards, which includes recognition of assets as income to the City's accounts (i.e. including non-cash adjustments).

The City is experiencing a more challenging fiscal environment as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated economic impacts on the community. The City remains in a stable financial position, but like many businesses will need to reduce expenditures to match reduced income.

The statements include reporting on the following:

- Total income of $213.5M for the financial year
- Total operating expenses, including non-cash items of $201.7M
- The City delivered $40.6M of Capital Works during 2020/2021 ($51.9M in 2019/2020). Capital Works projects requiring carried forward funding totalled $11.9M ($8.9M in 2019/2020).

Cash balances at 30 June 2021 are $96M, an increase of $28.5M from prior year. This increase is due to additional grants received in the period; the sale of Lyttleton Terrace; and the timing of settlement for strategic land purchases approved by Council falling into next financial year. A large percentage of the cash balance has some form of restriction or intended allocation for future needs. These include:

- Trust funds and deposits $3.2M
- Reserves $8.5M
- Grant funds held for future projects and programs $9.5M
- Sale proceeds to contribute to future fit out costs for Bendigo GovHub $5.5M
- Cash held to fund carried forward capital works $11.9M
- Statutory Reserve funds allocated for specific future purposes $9.5M

An important ratio reported by Councils is the Working Capital Ratio, which demonstrates the level of current assets to current liabilities. The City's Working Capital Ratio is 1.60:1 (2019/2020 was 1.86:1). This is categorised by VAGO's financial sustainability assessment criteria to be of low risk.

The Performance Statement also includes information on Council's performance against elements of the annual plan adopted in the 2020/2021 budget.

Impacts of COVID-19 on the 2020/2021 Financial Statements

The COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on revenue and expenses in the year, with significant shutdowns to services. However, many units with reduced revenue also experienced reduced outgoings. The City recast an original budget developed in January 2020 through to a revised July 2020 adopted version. From the original base budget, there was $4.69M in reduced User Fees & Charges revenue. After that, revenue for fees and charges were lower than this revised budget by another $3.2M. However, during the

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financial year expenditure overall was also lower than originally expected – as recreational pools and a variety of other services could not be opened. Within the overall financials, there was also additional COVID related grants revenue received from State and Commonwealth Governments.

The financial impact of these closures has been reflected in the results for 2020/2021 and appropriate commentary appears throughout the annual financial and performance statements.

The financial statements have been prepared based upon conditions existing as at 30 June 2021. Since this date, Victoria has again been impacted COVID-19. Although this will not impact the financial statements for the 2020/2021 financial year, this will influence the City's future operations. This subsequent event to the reporting date has been noted at section 8.5 of the financial statements.

Variances between actual and the 2020/2021 budget

The City's year end results include:

- $2.7M unfavourable variance for User Fees and Charges due to impacts of COVID-19.
- $7.2M favourable variance for Operational and Capital Government Grants
- $2.4M unfavourable variance for non-monetary contributions
- $3.7M underspend on employee costs due to vacancies and reduced casual and other FTE as a result of COVID-19. Note that budgets included Working for Victoria (WFV) funds ($4.6M).
- $9.5M favourable variance for general expenses. Portions of this reduced expenditure match reduced revenues in, for example, Bendigo Venues & Events.

Note 1 of the Financial Statements details actual results to budget and includes explanation of significant variances. This includes variance analysis for Income and Expenditure, at Note 1.1 and the Capital Works statements, at Note 1.2 of the Financial Statements.

Performance Statement

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) requires Councils to report against prescribed indicators and measures as part of their Annual Report.

During the fourth quarter reporting period, data and information has been collected and finalised to fulfil the requirements of the LGPRF. This data and information are used in both the Report of Operations and the Performance Statement in the Annual Report. Only the data and information that goes into the Performance Statement is required to be audited. There are a larger set of indicators which will be reported through the LGPRF framework and published on the www.knowyourcouncil.com website.

Indicators and associated audited commentary have been reviewed to include (in many cases) reference to the COVID-19 pandemic for the impact of these.

Risk Analysis:

The Financial Statements have been prepared by Council Officers and then reviewed and audited by the Victorian Auditor General Office (VAGO) appointed auditor.

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Consultation/Communication

Consultation:

These statements were examined and recommended by the Audit and Risk Committee at its meeting of 9 September 2021.

Resource Implications

The annual audit charges for Council's Financial Statements are $51,300 and Performance Statements costs approximately $5,200. Funds for these audits are included in Council's annual budget. There is also an additional charge of $1,100 for the audit of the Roads to Recovery funding program which is also completed by VAGO under the same engagement.

Attachments

1. Greater Bendigo City Council Draft Annual Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2021
2. Greater Bendigo City Council Draft Performance Statement for the year ended 30 June 2021

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Attachment 1 - Greater Bendigo City Council Draft Annual Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2021

Greater Bendigo City Council
ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

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Greater Bendigo City Council
Financial Report
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Certification of the Financial Statements

In my opinion, the accompanying financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989*, the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014*, the Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.

Nathan Morsillo, FCPA
Principal Accounting Officer

Date : <*Date*>
Bendigo

In our opinion the accompanying financial statements present fairly the financial transactions of the Greater Bendigo City Council for the year ended 30 June 2021 and the financial position of the Council as at that date.

At the date of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances that would render any particulars in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.

We have been authorised by the Council and by the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014* to certify the financial statements in their final form.

TBC
Councillor
Date : <*Date*>
Bendigo

TBC
Councillor
Date : <*Date*>
Bendigo

Craig Niemann
Chief Executive Officer
Date : <Date>
Bendigo

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Comprehensive Income Statement
For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

	Note	2021 $'000	2020 $'000
Income			
Rates and charges	3.1	126,357	121,744
Statutory fees and fines	3.2	4,435	5,123
User fees	3.3	20,215	23,277
Grants - operating	3.4	34,135	27,970
Grants - capital	3.4	10,931	8,086
Contributions - monetary	3.5	2,754	3,981
Contributions - non monetary	3.5	12,546	12,097
Interest on investments		350	1,081
Share of net profits of associates	6.2	162	120
Other income	3.7	1,638	2,410
Total income		**213,523**	**205,889**
Expenses			
Employee costs	4.1	73,014	68,653
Materials and services	4.2	69,935	73,053
Depreciation	4.3	40,582	39,382
Amortisation - intangible assets	4.4	656	634
Amortisation - right of use assets	4.5	2,758	2,264
Bad and doubtful debts		512	749
Borrowing costs		1,820	1,993
Finance costs - leases	4.6	351	409
Net loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	3.6	11,161	3,347
Other expenses	4.7	956	3,001
Total expenses		**201,745**	**193,485**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		**11,778**	**12,404**
Other comprehensive income			
Items that will not be reclassified to surplus or deficit in future periods			
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	6.1	80,317	(770)
Total comprehensive result		**92,095**	**11,634**

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Balance Sheet
As at 30 June 2021

	Note	2021 $'000	2020 $'000
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	5.1	95,075	66,480
Trade and other receivables	5.1	11,410	12,246
Inventories		145	166
Non-current assets classified as held for sale		-	250
Prepayments		1,448	967
Accrued revenue		399	436
Total current assets		**108,477**	**80,545**
Non-current assets			
Trade and other receivables	5.1	31	44
Investments in associates	6.2	3,555	3,393
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	6.1	1,691,935	1,616,766
Right-of-use assets	5.8	6,892	9,325
Forestry plantations		105	105
Intangible assets	5.2	2,105	2,210
Total non-current assets		**1,704,623**	**1,631,843**
Total assets		**1,813,100**	**1,712,388**
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	5.3	12,856	11,369
Trust funds and deposits	5.3	3,284	3,129
Unearned income	5.3	14,474	3,955
Provisions	5.5	18,929	18,090
Interest-bearing liabilities	5.4	15,599	4,142
Lease liabilities	5.8	2,618	2,625
Total current liabilities		**67,760**	**43,310**
Non-current liabilities			
Provisions	5.5	11,482	12,465
Interest-bearing liabilities	5.4	24,961	37,582
Lease liabilities	5.8	4,536	6,765
Total non-current liabilities		**40,979**	**56,812**
Total liabilities		**108,739**	**100,122**
Net assets		**1,704,361**	**1,612,266**
Equity			
Accumulated surplus		774,557	766,929
Reserves	9.1	929,804	845,337
Total Equity		**1,704,361**	**1,612,266**

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Statement of Changes in Equity
For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

2021	Note	Total $'000	Accumulated Surplus $'000	Revaluation Reserve $'000	Other Reserves $'000
Balance at beginning of the financial year		1,612,266	766,929	816,385	28,952
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		11,778	11,778	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	6.1	80,317	-	80,317	-
Transfers to other reserves	9.1	-	(17,118)	-	17,118
Transfers from other reserves	9.1	-	12,968	-	(12,968)
Balance at end of the financial year		**1,704,361**	**774,557**	**896,702**	**33,102**

2020	Total $'000	Accumulated Surplus $'000	Revaluation Reserve $'000	Other Reserves $'000
Balance at beginning of the financial year	1,603,992	749,326	817,155	37,511
Impact of change in accounting policy - AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers	(1,753)	(1,753)	-	-
Impact of change in accounting policy - AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities	(1,607)	(1,607)	-	-
Adjusted Opening balance	**1,600,632**	**745,966**	**817,155**	**37,511**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	12,404	12,404	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement) 6.1	(770)	-	(770)	-
Transfers to other reserves 9.1	-	(11,566)	-	11,566
Transfers from other reserves 9.1	-	20,125	-	(20,125)
Balance at end of the financial year	**1,612,266**	**766,929**	**816,385**	**28,952**

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Statement of Cash Flows
For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

	Note	2021 Inflows/ (Outflows) $'000	2020 Inflows/ (Outflows) $'000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Rates and charges		128,561	121,744
Statutory fees and fines		4,545	5,623
User fees		17,217	25,276
Grants - operating		44,653	31,310
Grants - capital		10,930	5,008
Contributions - monetary		2,754	3,981
Interest received		385	1,170
Trust funds and deposits taken		410	(9)
Other receipts		1,673	1,391
Net GST refund/payment		729	454
Employee costs		(72,632)	(66,430)
Materials and services		(70,934)	(79,410)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	9.2	**68,291**	**50,108**
Cash flows from investing activities			
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	6.1	(40,658)	(51,894)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	3.6	6,859	874
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		**(33,799)**	**(51,020)**
Cash flows from financing activities			
Proceeds from borrowings		3,000	-
Finance costs		(1,820)	(1,969)
Repayment of lease liabilities		(2,913)	(2,609)
Repayment of borrowings		(4,164)	(3,960)
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities		**(5,897)**	**(8,538)**
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		28,595	(9,450)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		66,480	75,930
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	5.1	**95,075**	**66,480**
The following notes also provide details on the city's cash position			
Financing arrangements	5.6		
Restrictions on cash assets	5.1		

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Statement of Capital Works
For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

	Note	2021 $'000	2020 $'000
Property			
Land		461	1,183
Buildings		8,256	15,660
Total property		**8,717**	**16,843**
Plant and equipment			
Plant, machinery and equipment		3,900	3,181
Fixtures, fittings and furniture		157	516
Fountains, statues and monuments		102	237
Total plant and equipment		**4,159**	**3,934**
Infrastructure			
Land improvements		1,195	4,302
Bridges		276	886
Sealed roads		11,601	13,199
Unsealed roads		2,976	3,045
Pathways		4,216	3,335
Drainage		3,196	3,798
Public furniture and fittings		4,322	2,552
Total infrastructure		**27,782**	**31,117**
Total capital works expenditure	6.1	**40,658**	**51,894**
Represented by:			
New asset expenditure		13,112	12,203
Asset renewal expenditure		26,768	32,602
Asset expansion expenditure		-	6,679
Asset upgrade expenditure		778	410
Total capital works expenditure		**40,658**	**51,894**

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OVERVIEW

Introduction

The Greater Bendigo City Council was established by an Order of the Governor in Council on 10th September 1993 and is a body corporate. The Council's main office is located at 15 Hopetoun Street, Bendigo, Victoria.

Statement of compliance

These financial statements are a general purpose financial report that consists of a Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Cash Flows, Statement of Capital Works and Notes accompanying these financial statements. The general purpose financial report complies with the Australian Accounting Standards (AAS), other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board, the Local Government Act 1989, and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014.

Significant accounting policies

(a) Basis of accounting

The accrual basis of accounting has been used in the preparation of these financial statements, whereby assets, liabilities, equity, income and expenses are recognised in the reporting period to which they relate, regardless of when cash is received or paid.

Judgements, estimates and assumptions are required to be made about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated judgements are based on professional judgement derived from historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and also in future periods that are affected by the revision. Judgements and assumptions made by management in the application of AAS's that have significant effects on the financial statements and estimates relate to:

- the determination of depreciation for buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment (refer to Note 6.1)
- the determination of employee provisions (refer to Note 5.5)
- the determination of landfill provisions (refer to Note 5.5)
- the determination of whether performance obligations are sufficiently specific so as to determine whether an arrangement is within the scope of *AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers* or *AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities* (refer to Note 3)
- the determination, in accordance with *AASB 16 Leases* , of the lease term, the estimation of the discount rate when not implicit in the lease and whether an arrangement is in substance short-term or low value (refer to Note 5.8)
- whether or not *AASB 1059 Service Concession Arrangements: Grantors* is applicable
- other areas requiring judgements

Unless otherwise stated, all accounting policies are consistent with those applied in the prior year. Where appropriate, comparative figures have been amended to accord with current presentation, and disclosure has been made of any material changes to comparatives.

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(b) Impact of Covid-19

On 16 March 2020 a state of emergency was declared in Victoria due to the global pandemic COVID-19 virus, known as coronavirus. A state of disaster was subsequently declared on 2 August 2020. While the impacts of the pandemic have varied through the 2020-21 year, the City has noted the following significant impacts on its financial operations:

COVID-19 impacted revenue and expenses, with significant shut-downs to services across the organisation. However many reduced revenue units also experienced reduced outgoings.

Within the overall financials, there was additional COVID-19 support related grants revenue (and associated capital and operational future commitments) which were received. This included, within the adopted budget, $4.6M for the Working for Victoria program. The majority of this grant for the year was spent during the financial year.

The City recast the original budget developed in February 2020 through to a revised July 2020 adopted version. From the original base budget, there was $4.69M in reduced User Fees & Charges revenue.

Subsequent to that, revenue for fees and charges were lower than this revised budget by an additional $4.5M. However during the financial year, expenditure overall was also lower than expected – as larger decreases in some expenditure e.g. (Bendigo Venues & Events / shows and events) were experienced. Note 1.1 provides some additional details on variances related to COVID-19.

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Note 1 Performance against budget

The performance against budget notes compare the City's financial plan, expressed through its annual budget, with actual performance. The *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014* requires explanation of any material variances. The City has adopted a materiality threshold with explanations provided if the operational expense variance is greater than 10% and is greater than $2,500,000 (capital expenditure greater than 10% and $1,000,000). Explanations have not been provided for variations below the materiality threshold unless the variance is considered to be material because of its nature.

These notes are prepared to meet the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1989* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014.*

1.1 Income and expenditure

	Budget 2021 $'000	Actual 2021 $'000	Variance 2021 $'000	Variance 2021 %	Ref
Income					
Rates and charges	126,592	126,357	**(235)**	0%	
Statutory fees and fines	4,479	4,435	**(44)**	-1%	
User fees	23,012	20,215	**(2,797)**	-12%	**1**
Grants - operating	30,646	34,135	**3,489**	11%	**2**
Grants - capital	7,212	10,931	**3,719**	52%	**3**
Contributions - monetary	2,945	2,754	**(191)**	-6%	
Contributions - non monetary	15,000	12,546	**(2,454)**	-16%	
Interest on investments	1,174	350	**(824)**	-70%	
Share of net profits of associates	94	162	**68**	72%	
Other income	2,061	1,638	**(423)**	-21%	
Total income	**213,215**	**213,523**	**308**	**0%**	
Expenses					
Employee costs	76,788	73,014	**3,774**	5%	
Materials and services	79,457	69,935	**9,522**	12%	**4**
Depreciation	40,497	40,582	**(85)**	0%	
Amortisation - intangible assets	634	656	**(22)**	-3%	
Amortisation - right of use assets	-	2,758	**(2,758)**	100%	**5**
Bad and doubtful debts	268	512	**(244)**	-91%	
Borrowing costs	1,849	1,820	**29**	2%	
Finance costs - leases	-	351	**(351)**	100%	
Net loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	4,857	11,161	**(6,304)**	-130%	**6**
Other expenses	92	956	**(864)**	-939%	
Total expenses	**204,442**	**201,745**	**2,697**	**1%**	
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	**8,773**	**11,778**	**3,005**	**34%**	

*The budget for other income at Interest Revenue has been realligned to be comparable against actual revenue.

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1.1 Income and expenditure (cont.)

(i) Explanation or material variations

1. User Fees

The unfavourable result is largely due to COVID-19 restrictions and cancellations in Bendigo Venue & Events ($2.8M) and forced closures in Bendigo & Heathcote Visitors centres ($0.5M). This City also provided significant support through it's financial hardship policy and rental wavers, with reduced rental income in Property Services ($1.0M) and Rate recoupment costs surrended ($0.2m).

2. Grants - Operating

Operating Grants were favourable to budget by $3.49M (11%) predominately due to additional grants received for Community Partnership Programs ($1.4M), Healthy Heart Victoria & Recreation Planning ($0.9M), Outdoor Dining ($0.5M), plus additional funding required due to lockdown restrictions on Support Services ($0.6M).

3. Grants Capital

Addiitional grant funding received in relation to Blackspot projects ($5.2M) offset by Recreation grants not yet utilised ($1.5M).

4. Materials & Services

Materials and services costs were favourable to budget by $9.5M (12%) primarily due to venue closures and the inability to run a series of programs and events due to restrictions in place. Bendigo Venues & Events had reduced expenditure ($2.0M) which directly correlates to a decline in User fees income, the same pertains to Tourism & Major Events ($1.0M). There were also reductions in consultancy fees ($1.0M), utilities ($1.0M), training ($0.5M) & general office expenses ($0.5M). Amotisation of lease liabilities were originally budgeted to Materials and Services but have been split out in accordance with new accounting standards ($2.7M).

5. Amortisation Right of Use Assets

Amotisation of lease liabilities were originally budgeted to Materials and Services but have been split out in accordance with new accounting standards ($2.7M).

6. Net loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

During the year the former council offices site was sold to the State Governement. The Land & Buildings had a combined WDV of $7.1M and was sold for $5.5M. There was also a significant increase in write off of WIP balances. This relates to balances that remained in WIP at 30.06.2020 but after being assessed during the 20/21 year was deemed non capital and written off. The total amount written off from the opening WIP balance was $3.25M, some of the larger projects and costs written off from WIP are 19/20 rehab works at the Eaglehawk landfill site ($250k), Garden Gully Pavilion non capital works such as landscaping ($200k) and the pool renewal maintenance works program ($130k).

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1.2 Capital works

	Budget 2021 $'000	Actual 2021 $'000	Variance $'000	Variance %	Ref
Property					
Land	530	461	(69)	-13%	
Buildings	10,148	8,256	(1,892)	-19%	1
Total property	**10,678**	**8,717**	**(1,961)**	**-18%**	
Plant and equipment					
Plant, machinery and equipment	4,231	3,900	(331)	-8%	
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	515	157	(358)	-70%	
Fountains, statues and monuments	55	102	47	85%	
Total plant and equipment	**4,801**	**4,159**	**(642)**	**8%**	
Infrastructure					
Land improvements	4,180	1,195	(2,985)	-71%	2
Bridges	510	276	(234)	-46%	
Sealed roads	8,570	11,601	3,031	35%	3
Unsealed roads	2,850	2,976	126	4%	
Pathways	3,450	4,216	766	22%	
Drainage	1,510	3,196	1,686	112%	4
Public furniture and fittings	1,860	4,322	2,462	132%	5
Total infrastructure	**22,930**	**27,782**	**4,852**	**21%**	
Total capital works expenditure	**38,409**	**40,658**	**2,249**	**6%**	
Represented by:					
New asset expenditure	9,557	13,112	3,555	37%	
Asset renewal expenditure	28,072	26,768	(1,304)	-5%	
Asset upgrade expenditure	780	778	(2)	0%	
Total capital works expenditure	**38,409**	**40,658**	**2,249**	**6%**	

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1.2 Capital works (cont.)

(i) Explanation of material variations

1. Buildings

The Bendigo Botanical Gardens Central Hub, Kennington recreation reserve pavillion and the Hargreaves Mall shade structure had a combined annual budget allocation of $4.35M of which on $523k was expended during the 20/21 financial year.Other projects not spent during the year are the White Hills Clubrooms renewal ($250k) and the Strathfieldsaye Community Hub at Club Court ($300k) The remaining budget allocation of all 3 projects will be carried forward for delivery in the 21/22 finanical year. $3.6M worth of the 19/20 budget allocation was carried forward to the 20/21 year for delivery of which $2.5M was delivered during the 20/21 financial year.

2. Land Improvements

A number of significant land improvement projects were not delivered during the 20/21 finanical year. These include the Wolstencroft Reserve Project ($950k), Tom Flood Oval renewal ($650k), and the Eaglehawk Tennis courts renewal ($480k). All these programs will be carried forward for delivery into the 21/22 financail year. The Synthetic pitch renewal project at Epsom Recreation reserve had a saving of $200k compared to budget.

3. Sealed Road

The City received funding for both the Blackspot program and Safe Travel in Local Streets (STILS) road safety programs. These projects were not included in the adopted budget as this funding had not been announced. Some of the significant road safety projects delivered during the year were works on Olympic parade, Maiden Gully ($650k), Bancroft Street, Bendigo ($640k), Nelson & Wood Street, California Gully ($630k), Tannery Lane Roundabout, Strathfieldsaye ($587k) and Storys Road widening project ($582k).

4. Drainage

A large number of civil infrastructure projects have a drainage component involved however the budget is allocated to the major component of the project. The Patas road project had a total project cost of $1.6m however $460k of this related to drainage works, the Averys Road roundabout project expenditure also included $232k worth of drainage works. $368k was also carried forward from the 19/20 financial year for completion of the Burns street drainage project.

5. Public Furniture & Fittings

There was $1.1m worth of carry forward projects from the 19/20 financial year that were delivered in the 20/21 year. Projects included the Weeroona Oval Lighting ($210k)and the Canterbury Park Lighting ($320k). Projects that were budgeted under other asset classes but had a public furniture and fittings component also contributed to the variance. Projects included Ewing Park Oval Development (220k), Wolstencroft reserve Playground Equipment ($155k), Dower Park Netball Courts ($135k), View Street Zebra Crossing ($106k), Bancroft Street Road Sfaety Project ($173k).

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Note 2 Analysis of Council results by program

The City delivers its functions and activities through the following programs.

2 (a) Corporate Performance

The Corporate Performance Directorate leads, enables and strengthens the organisation to ensure it has the resources and capability to deliver on the Community Plan. The Directorate does this through developing our people and culture, systems and processes, good governance practices and financial stewardship to ensure the delivery of high quality services and programs. The Directorate leads innovation and business transformation to ensure we are ready to meet the challenges and opportunities of the future in partnership with our community.

Health and Wellbeing

The Health and Wellbeing Directorate plans and delivers a broad and diverse range of community services and programs aimed at supporting people to live their lives fully and be active, safe, engaged and healthy. The focus of the Directorate is on developing policy, plans and programs in partnership with the community, delivering services, and supporting the delivery of community infrastructure projects.

Presentation and Assets

The Presentation and Assets Directorate provides and maintains high quality assets and services that help make Greater Bendigo a great place to live, while planning and delivering new assets and services to support Bendigo's ongoing growth. Demonstrating and committing to environmentally responsible thinking and practices and encouraging this throughout the organisation and community is an important focus for the Directorate. Business units include Engineering, Resource Recovery and Education, Works, Parks and Open Space and Property Services.

Strategy and Growth

The Strategy and Growth Directorate incorporates responsibility for Bendigo Art Gallery, Business Services, Bendigo Venues and Events, Regional Sustainable Development, Statutory Planning, and Tourism and Major Events. The overarching role of the Directorate is to contribute to the economic, cultural and social prosperity of our region by identifying and supporting investment opportunities, employment generation and the integrated planning for the sustainable growth of our City and region.

Further details on the services provided by each directorate can be found within the City's annual Budget.

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2 (b) Summary of revenues, expenses, assets and capital expenses by program

2021	Income $'000	Expenses $'000	Surplus/ (Deficit) $'000	Grants included in income $'000	Total assets $'000
Corporate Performance *	157,238	18,582	138,656	18,646	131,319
Health and Wellbeing	23,853	41,229	(17,376)	11,806	213,231
Presentation and Assets	23,505	117,118	(93,613)	12,582	1,405,706
Strategy and Growth	8,927	24,816	(15,889)	2,032	62,844
	213,523	**201,745**	**11,778**	**45,066**	**1,813,100**

2020	Income $'000	Expenses $'000	Surplus/ (Deficit) $'000	Grants included in income $'000	Total assets $'000
Corporate Performance *	152,077	27,392	124,685	14,699	110,278
Health and Wellbeing	20,264	41,101	(20,837)	10,353	207,884
Presentation and Assets	24,266	97,113	(72,847)	9,877	1,332,923
Strategy and Growth	9,281	27,879	(18,598)	1,126	61,303
	205,888	**193,485**	**12,403**	**36,055**	**1,712,388**

* Includes the Office of the CEO for the purpose of this reporting.

Further details relating to individual services, areas, and expenditure to support the Community Plan is best reviewed in the City's budget, published annually. The City's budget can be accessed at www.bendigo.vic.gov.au. A variety of other service details, reporting and ratios are also accessible for all Local Government Entities at knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au.

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Note 3 Funding for the delivery of our services	**2021**	**2020**
3.1 Rates and charges	**$'000**	**$'000**

The City declares rates on the Capital Improved Value (CIV) of all rateable property within the municipal district. The CIV is the value of the land and all its improvements. Valuations are undertaken annually by the Valuer General of Victoria.

The valuation base used to calculate general rates for 2020/21 was $23,877,068,000 (2019/20 $22,598,798,000).

General rates	104,298	100,861
Supplementary rates and rate adjustments	1,546	1,209
Garbage charge	11,595	10,854
Recyclable charge	5,078	4,930
Organics charge	3,840	3,702
Interest on rates and charges	-	188
Total rates and charges	**126,357**	**121,744**

The date of the latest general revaluation of land for rating purposes within the municipal district was 1 January 2020, and the valuation will be first applied in the rating year commencing 01 July 2020. Annual rates and charges are recognised as revenues when the City issues annual rates notices. Supplementary rates are recognised when a valuation and reassessment is completed and a supplementary rates notice issued.

3.2 Statutory fees and fines

Building and planning	2,498	2,319
Parking	213	466
Regulatory service	283	338
Fines	900	1,184
Other fees and charges	541	816
Total statutory fees and fines	**4,435**	**5,123**

Statutory fees and fines (including parking fees and fines) are recognised as revenue when the service has been provided, the payment is received, or when the penalty has been applied, whichever first occurs.

3.3 User fees

Aged and health services	1	38
Leisure centre and recreation	472	365
Child care / children's programs	3,571	3,350
Parking	2,534	3,185
Saleyard yarding	1,164	1,214
Regulatory service	952	1,224
Ticket income *	1,444	2,991
Sales income	858	613
Waste management services	6,641	7,334
Other fees and charges	2,578	2,963
Total user fees	**20,215**	**23,277**
User fees by timing of revenue recognition		
User fees recognised over time	1,444	2,991
User fees recognised at a point in time	18,771	20,286
Total user fees	**20,215**	**23,277**

User fees are recognised as revenue at a point in time, or over time, when (or as) the performance obligation is satisfied. Recognition is based on the underlying contractual terms. * Ticket income consists of ticket sales through Ulumburra Theatre, the Capital Theatre, Bendigo Art Gallery and the Visitor Information Centre.

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3.4 Funding from other levels of government

Grants were received in respect of the following :	2021	2020
Summary of grants	**$'000**	**$'000**
Commonwealth funded grants	24,210	24,444
State funded grants	20,856	11,612
Total grants received	**45,066**	**36,056**
(a) Operating Grants		
Recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Financial Assistance Grants - Unallocated	13,195	14,056
Financial Assistance Grants - Local Roads	3,544	3,606
Aged Services	4,393	3,627
Health services - immunisation	9	10
Recurrent - State Government		
Aged	46	50
Arts and culture	328	344
Community safety	369	458
Environment	58	64
Family and children	247	121
Health services - immunisation	79	67
Maternal and child health	1,574	1,476
Rural access initiative	723	887
School crossing supervisors	260	278
Youth	46	53
Total recurrent operating grants	**24,871**	**25,097**
Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Aged	25	753
Arts & Culture	5	-
Inclusive employment initiative	389	96
Transport	80	50
Non-recurrent - State Government		
Arts and culture	41	205
Business development	598	22
Business Support	555	
Community and strategy planning	171	165
Community Employment Connectors	260	-
Community safety	35	5
Community welfare	-	51
Emergency management	73	77
Environment	61	52
Family and children	259	90
GovHub	1,000	-
Gender equality	-	11
Recreation / healthy communities	952	998
Tourism / events projects	226	70
Transport	-	190
Working for Victoria	4,404	-
Youth	39	38
Other	91	-
Total non-recurrent operating grants	**9,264**	**2,873**
Total operating grants	**34,135**	**27,970**

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3.4 Funding from other levels of government (cont.)

(b) Capital Grants	**2021**	**2020**
Recurrent - Commonwealth Government	**$'000**	**$'000**
Roads to recovery	2,246	2,246
Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Airport	93	-
Parks and open spaces	231	-
Non-recurrent - State Government		
Airport	94	-
Community safety	-	14
Emergency management	-	203
Family and children	86	350
Footpaths	365	-
Heritage	99	21
Libraries infrastructure	-	400
Local roads and streets	5,491	3,422
Parks and open spaces	352	178
Recreation / healthy communities	1,861	804
TAC towards zero	13	160
Tourism / events	-	70
Waste	-	168
Water management	-	50
Total non-recurrent capital grants	**8,685**	**5,840**
Total capital grants	**10,931**	**8,086**

(c) Unspent grants received on condition that they be spent in a specific manner		
Operating		
Balance at start of year	9,430	10,320
Reclassification of unspent grant to unearned income due to change in Accounting Standard	-	(1,753)
Received during the financial year and remained unspent at balance date	9,097	9,430
Received in prior years and spent during the financial year	(9,270)	(8,567)
Balance at year end	**9,257**	**9,430**
Capital		
Balance at start of year	350	1,203
Reclassification of unspent grant to unearned income due to change in Accounting Standard	-	(425)
Received during the financial year and remained unspent at balance date	-	-
Received in prior years and spent during the financial year	(78)	(428)
Balance at year end	**272**	**350**

Grant income is recognised at the point in time when the City satisfies its performance obligations as specified in the underlying agreement.

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3.5 Contributions	**2021 $'000**	**2020 $'000**
Monetary	2,754	3,981
Non-monetary - developer contributed assets	12,284	10,354
Non-monetary - donated / gifted assets	262	1,743
	12,546	12,097
Total contributions	**15,300**	**16,078**

Contributions of non monetary assets were received in relation to the following asset classes.

Artworks	262	852
Land	3,834	544
Buildings	183	-
Sealed roads	4,265	4,046
Unsealed roads	48	149
Pathways	1,324	2,678
Drainage	2,358	3,828
Bridges	272	-
Total non-monetary contributions	**12,546**	**12,097**

Monetary and non monetary contributions are recognised as revenue when the City obtains control over the contributed asset.

3.6 Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

Proceeds of sale	6,859	874
Written down value of assets disposed	(17,770)	(4,221)
Disposal of assets classified as held for sale	(250)	-
Total net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	**(11,161)**	**(3,347)**

The profit or loss on sale of an asset is determined when control of the asset has passed to the buyer.

3.7 Other income

Rental income	1,281	1,439
Net increase in market value of forestry plantation	-	22
Net increase in market value of water rights	-	28
Revenue from volunteer services	97	703
Other income	260	218
Total other income	**1,638**	**2,410**

Interest is recognised as it is earned.
Other income is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and is recognised when the City gains control over the right to receive the income.

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Note 4	**The cost of delivering services**	**2021**	**2020**
4.1	**(a) Employee costs**	**$'000**	**$'000**
	Wages and salaries	65,676	62,200
	WorkCover	856	644
	Superannuation	6,256	5,594
	Fringe benefits tax	226	215
	Total employee costs	**73,014**	**68,653**

The City received $4.4M as part of the working for Victoria program funded by the State Government, of which $3.5M was spent on employing additional staff during the year.

(b) Superannuation

The City made contributions to the following funds:

Defined benefit fund		
Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	356	378
Employer contributions - other funds	-	-
	356	**378**
Employer contributions payable at reporting date.	-	-
Accumulation funds		
Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	3,114	3,032
Employer contributions - other funds	2,786	2,184
	5,900	**5,216**
Employer contributions payable at reporting date.	257	203

Refer to note 9.3 for further information relating to the City's superannuation obligations.

4.2 Materials and services

Contract payments (by Service Unit)		
Resource Recovery and Education	11,391	10,834
Parks and Open Space	3,920	3,864
Capital Venues and Events	814	2,496
Library Services	3,191	3,123
Active and Healthy Lifestyles	2,276	2,515
Major Projects	487	845
Works	1,234	1,299
Regional Sustainable Development	583	1,148
Tourism and Major Events	535	515
Art Gallery	471	652
Engineering	972	899
Business Services	652	521
Property Services	527	522
Statutory Planning	412	478
Safe and Healthy Environments	488	532
Other contract payments	2,651	2,636
Administration expense	6,061	6,834
Utility expenses	5,303	5,611
Materials, concrete products and hardware	5,966	6,273
Maintenance and consumables	11,337	10,856
Plant and equipment operating expenses	4,879	5,751
Contributions and donations	4,013	3,435
Insurance	1,772	1,414
Total materials and services	**69,935**	**73,053**

* The City has disclosed larger categories of Contract payments by Service Unit.

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4.3 Depreciation	**2021 $'000**	**2020 $'000**
Property	8,546	8,425
Plant and equipment	3,206	3,300
Infrastructure	28,830	27,657
Total depreciation	**40,582**	**39,382**

Refer to note 5.2, 5.8 and 6.1 for a further detailed breakdown of depreciation and amortisation charges and accounting policy.

4.4 Amortisation - Intangible assets		
Landfill airspace	656	634
Total Amortisation - Intangible assets	**656**	**634**

4.5 Amortisation - Right of use assets		
Property	1,617	1,184
Plant and equipment	1,106	1,047
Other	35	33
Total Amortisation - Right of use assets	**2,758**	**2,264**

4.6 Finance Costs - Leases		
Interest - Lease Liabilities	351	409
Total finance costs	**351**	**409**

4.7 Other expenses		
Auditors' remuneration - VAGO - audit of the financial statements, performance statement and grant acquittals	58	50
Auditors' remuneration - internal	34	37
Cost of service for volunteer services	97	703
Discount rate movement of landfill provision	(628)	843
Landfill rehabilitation and aftercare	1,395	1,368
Total other expenses	**956**	**3,001**

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Note 5 Our financial position	**2021**	**2020**
5.1 Financial assets	**$'000**	**$'000**
(a) Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash on hand	24	28
Cash at bank	7,480	9,915
Term deposits	87,571	56,537
Total cash and cash equivalents	**95,075**	**66,480**

The City's cash and cash equivalents are subject to external restrictions that limit amounts available for discretionary use. These include:

- Trust funds and deposits (Note 5.3)	3,284	3,129
Total restricted funds	**3,284**	**3,129**
Total unrestricted cash and cash equivalents	**91,791**	**63,351**

Intended allocations

Although not externally restricted the following amounts have been allocated for specific future purposes by the City:

- Other reserves - excluding unexpended grants and donation reserve	8,572	10,384
- Other reserves - unexpended grants and donations	9,529	9,780
- Other reserves - sale proceeds to contribute to future fit out costs for GovHub site	5,500	-
- Cash held to fund carried forward capital works	11,947	8,921
- Statutory Reserve funds allocated for specific future purposes	9,501	8,788
Total funds subject to intended allocations	**45,049**	**37,873**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits at call, and other highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, net of outstanding bank overdrafts.

Other financial assets are valued at fair value, at balance date. Term deposits are measured at original cost. Any unrealised gains and losses on holdings at balance date are recognised as either a revenue or expense.

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5.1 Financial assets (cont.) (b) Trade and other receivables	2021 $'000	2020 $'000
Current		
Rates debtors	2,437	4,898
Infringement debtors	4,146	3,891
Provision for doubtful debts - infringements	(1,385)	(963)
GST receivable	959	1,688
Non statutory receivables		
Footpath, kerb and channel debtors	273	273
Loans to community organisations	-	9
Loans for heritage restoration works	2	6
General debtors - grants	2,986	689
General debtors - other	2,123	1,866
Allowance for doubtful debts - general debtors	(131)	(111)
Total current trade and other receivables	**11,410**	**12,246**
Non-current		
Non statutory receivables		
Footpath, kerb and channel debtors	1	1
Loans for heritage restoration works	30	43
Total non-current trade and other receivables	**31**	**44**
Total trade and other receivables	**11,441**	**12,290**

Short term receivables are carried at invoice amount. A provision for doubtful debts is recognised when there is objective evidence that an impairment has occurred. Long term receivables are carried at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

(c) Ageing of Receivables

The ageing of the City's trade and other receivables (excluding statutory receivables) that are not impaired was:		
Current (not yet due)	3,047	99
Past due by up to 30 days	947	861
Past due between 31 and 180 days	838	953
Past due between 181 and 365 days	59	130
Past due by more than 1 year	393	733
Total trade and other receivables	**5,284**	**2,776**

(d) Ageing of individually impaired Receivables

At balance date, other debtors representing financial assets with a nominal value of $1,516,155 (2020: $1,073,420) were impaired. The amount of the provision raised against these debtors was $1,516,155 (2020: $1,073,420). They individually have been impaired as a result of their doubtful collection. Many of the long outstanding past due amounts have been lodged with the City's debt collectors or are on payment arrangements. The largest component of the increase as at 30 June 2021 is in relation to Statutory amounts held by Fines Victoria, predominantly related to parking and animal infringements. The City has no control over collection once information is remitted to Fines Victoria, and the increase in provision is in line with infringement debts >3 years old increasing, and changed Victorian economic conditions.

The ageing of receivables that have been individually determined as impaired at reporting date was:		
Current (not yet due)	-	-
Past due by up to 30 days	-	-
Past due between 31 and 180 days	7	-
Past due between 181 and 365 days	61	-
Past due by more than 1 year	1,448	1,074
Total trade & other receivables	**1,516**	**1,074**

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5.2 Non-financial assets	**2021**	**2020**
Intangible assets	**$'000**	**$'000**
Landfill air space	1,861	1,966
Water rights	244	244
Total intangible assets	**2,105**	**2,210**

	Landfill	**Water Rights**	**Total**
	$'000	**$'000**	**$'000**
Gross carrying amount			
Balance at 1 July 2020	4,539	244	4,783
Other additions	551	-	551
Balance at 1 July 2021	5,090	244	5,334
Accumulated amortisation and impairment			
Balance at 1 July 2020	(2,573)	-	(2,573)
Amortisation expense	(656)	-	(656)
Balance at 1 July 2021	(3,229)	-	(3,229)
Net book value at 30 June 2020	1,966	244	2,210
Net book value at 30 June 2021	**1,861**	**244**	**2,105**

Intangible assets with finite lives are amortised as an expense on a systematic basis over the asset's useful life. Amortisation is generally calculated on a straight line basis, at a rate that allocates the asset value, less any estimated residual value over its estimated useful life. Estimates of the remaining useful lives and amortisation method are reviewed at least annually, and adjustments made where appropriate.

5.3 Payables

(a) Trade and other payables		
Trade payables	7,318	4,050
Sundry creditors	5,212	4,961
Accrued expenses	326	2,358
Total trade and other payables	**12,856**	**11,369**
(b) Trust funds and deposits		
Refundable security holding deposits	2,691	2,230
Fire service levy (held for the state revenue office)	421	677
Other	172	222
Total trust funds and deposits	**3,284**	**3,129**
(c) Unearned income		
Grants received in advance - operating	4,636	2,056
Grants received in advance - capital	7,934	1,408
Pre sold ticket income	1,904	491
Total unearned income	**14,474**	**3,955**

Amounts received as deposits and retention amounts controlled by the City are recognised as trust funds until they are returned, transferred in accordance with the purpose of the receipt, or forfeited. Trust funds that are forfeited, resulting in the City gaining control of the funds, are to be recognised as revenue at the time of forfeit.

Purpose and nature of items

Fire Service Levy - the City is the collection agent for fire services levy on behalf of the State Government. Payments receipted by the City before the end of financial year are held in trust until the payment is made to the State Revenue Office on due dates.

Refundable security holding deposits - deposits are taken by the City as a form of surety in a number of circumstances, including in relation to building works, tender deposits, contract deposits and the use of civic facilities.

Pre sold ticket income - sales for upcoming performances, predominantly at the Capital and Ulumburra theatres, are held as a deposit and only recognised as income once the performance has occurred.

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5.4 Interest-bearing liabilities

	2021 $'000	2020 $'000
Current		
Borrowings - secured	15,599	4,142
	15,599	**4,142**
Non-current		
Borrowings - secured	24,961	37,582
	24,961	**37,582**
Total	**40,560**	**41,724**

Borrowings are secured against a charge over the City's rate revenue.

The maturity profile for the City's borrowings is:

Not later than one year	15,599	4,142
Later than one year and not later than five years	19,780	29,470
Later than five years	5,181	8,112
	40,560	**41,724**

Borrowings are initially measured at fair value, being the cost of the interest bearing liabilities, net of transaction costs. The measurement basis subsequent to initial recognition depends on whether the City has categorised its interest-bearing liabilities as either financial liabilities designated at fair value through the profit and loss, or financial liabilities at amortised cost. Any difference between the initial recognised amount and the redemption value is recognised in net result over the period of the borrowing using the effective interest method.
The classification depends on the nature and purpose of the interest bearing liabilities. The City determines the classification of its interest bearing liabilities at initial recognition. The City has an $11M interest only liability due for repayment in November 2021.

5.5 Provisions

2021	Employee $ '000	Landfill restoration $ '000	Total $ '000
Balance at beginning of the financial year	16,590	13,965	30,555
Additional provisions	7,138	-	7,138
Amounts used	(5,944)	(1,823)	(7,767)
Change in provision estimate	-	1,946	1,946
Change in the discounted amount arising because of time and the effect of any change in the discount rate	(833)	(628)	(1,461)
Balance at the end of the financial	**16,951**	**13,460**	**30,411**

2020			
Balance at beginning of the financial year	15,367	11,689	27,056
Additional provisions	6,277	-	6,277
Amounts used	(5,202)	(248)	(5,450)
Change in provision estimate	-	1,681	1,681
Change in the discounted amount arising because of time and the effect of any change in the discount rate	148	843	991
Balance at the end of the financial	**16,590**	**13,965**	**30,555**

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5.5 Provisions (cont.)

	2021	2020
(a) Employee provisions	**$'000**	**$'000**
Current provisions expected to be wholly settled within 12 months		
Annual leave	4,278	4,096
Long service leave	1,773	1,833
Sick leave	17	19
	6,068	**5,948**
Current provisions expected to be wholly settled after 12 months		
Annual leave	1,258	1,103
Long service leave	7,660	7,650
Sick leave	189	224
	9,107	**8,977**
Total current employee provisions	**15,175**	**14,925**
Non-current		
Long service leave	1,776	1,665
Total non-current employee provisions	**1,776**	**1,665**
Aggregate carrying amount of employee provisions:		
Current	15,175	14,925
Non-current	1,776	1,665
Total aggregate carrying amount of employee provisions	**16,951**	**16,590**

The calculation of employee costs and benefits includes all relevant on-costs and are calculated as follows at reporting date.

Annual Leave
Liabilities for annual leave expected to be wholly settled within 12 months of the reporting date is recognised in the provision for employee benefits in respect of employee services up to the reporting date, classified as current liabilities and measured at their nominal values.

Liabilities that are not expected to be wholly settled within 12 months of the reporting date are recognised in the provision for employee benefits as current liabilities, measured at the present value of the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled using the remuneration rate expected to apply at the time of settlement.

Long service leave, Sick Leave (contracted employees)
Liability for long service leave (LSL), sick leave for contracted employees and service recognition is recognised in the provision for employee benefits. LSL is measured at present value. Unconditional LSL is disclosed as a current liability. Conditional LSL that has been accrued, where an employee is yet to reach a qualifying term of employment, is disclosed as a non - current liability.

Effective 6 May 1996, the Sick Leave Gratuity Scheme (former City of Bendigo) arrangements and payments ceased to operate. However a number of staff who are entitled to this scheme remain employed by the City. It shall be adjusted annually within one (1) month of the publication of the Consumer Price Index.

Effective 1 April 1998, the Accumulated Sick Leave Scheme arrangements and payments cease to operate. However a number of staff who are entitled to this scheme remain employed by Greater Bendigo City Council. This balance is adjusted based on the individuals applicable pay rate.

	2021	2020
Key assumptions:		
- discount rate	1.49%	0.87%
- index rate	2.95%	4.25%

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5.5 Provisions (cont.)

	2021	2020
(b) Landfill restoration	**$'000**	**$'000**
Current	3,754	3,165
Non-current	9,706	10,800
	13,460	**13,965**

The City is obligated to restore the active Eaglehawk landfill site and also the closed sites at White Hills and Flora Hill (Wolstencroft site). The forecast life of the site is based on current estimates of remaining capacity and the forecast rate of infill. The provision for landfill restoration has been calculated based on the present value of the expected cost of works to be undertaken. The expected cost of works has been estimated based on current understanding of work required to reinstate the sites to a suitable standard. Accordingly, the estimation of the provision required is dependent on the accuracy of the forecast timing of the work, work required and related costs.

Key assumptions:	2021	2020
- discount rate	1.49%	0.87%
- index rate	2.68%	2.68%

5.6 Financing arrangements

The City has the following funding arrangements in place as at 30 June 2021.		
Bank overdraft	3,500	3,500
Credit card facilities	400	400
Interest-bearing liabilities	40,560	41,724
Total facilities	**44,460**	**45,624**
Used facilities	40,623	41,771
Unused facilities	**3,837**	**3,853**

5.7 Commitments

The City has entered into the following commitments. Commitments are not recognised in the Balance Sheet. Commitments are disclosed at their nominal value and presented inclusive of the GST payable.

2021	Not later than 1 year	Later than 1 year and not later than 2 years	Later than 2 years and not later than 5 years	Later than 5 years	Total
	$'000	**$'000**	**$'000**	**$'000**	**$'000**
Operating					
Aquatic and leisure facilities	1,849	-	-	-	1,849
Building essential services	95	102	204	102	503
Car parking	124	109	-	-	233
Cleaning contracts	837	800	785	396	2,818
Communications	24	24	-	-	48
Community events	369	215	156	119	859
Contract management	390	130	168	-	688
Exhibitions	95	-	-	-	95
Internal audit	42	-	-	-	42
IT / telecommunications	777	462	335	24	1,598
Organics collection	1,226	1,228	2,511	1,284	6,249
Processing organic waste	2,022	2,024	1,500	-	5,546
Recyclable garbage collection	1,564	1,582	3,114	-	6,260
Sanitary services	31	31	62	31	155
Theatre costs	177	-	-	-	177
Transportation of waste from Eaglehawk Landfill	1,543	1,605	-	-	3,148
Waste Disposal	3,800	3,895	3,992	-	11,687
Total	**14,965**	**12,207**	**12,827**	**1,956**	**41,955**
Capital					
Car Parking	239	39	-	-	278
Construction works	11,469	-	-	-	11,469
Garbage Bins	300	300	900	-	1,500
Plant	461	-	-	-	461
Rehabilitation Works	271	3,726	-	-	3,997
Total	**12,740**	**4,065**	**900**	**-**	**17,705**

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5.7 Commitments (Cont.)

2020	Not later than 1 year	Later than 1 year and not later than 2 years	Later than 2 years and not later than 5 years	Later than 5 years	Total
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
Operating					
Aquatic and leisure facilities	1,695	807	-	-	2,502
Building essential services	88	55	46	-	189
Car parking	153	176	275	-	604
Cleaning contracts	686	642	1,284	430	3,042
Cleaning public bins	5	-	-	-	5
Communications	79	79	-	-	158
Community events	161	93	31	-	285
Contract management	122	125	108	9	364
Exhibitions	250	-	-	-	250
Internal audit	12	-	-	-	12
IT / telecommunications	97	78	12	-	187
Media campaign	67	-	-	-	67
Organics collection	1,068	1,095	3,451	2,447	8,061
Processing organic waste	833	503	1,583	-	2,919
Recyclable garbage collection	1,380	1,414	4,458	1,561	8,813
Sanitary services	5	-	-	-	5
Security services	2	-	-	-	2
Theatre costs	120	13	-	-	133
Transportation of waste from Eaglehawk Landfill	954	978	1,002	-	2,934
Total	**7,777**	**6,058**	**12,250**	**4,447**	**30,532**
Capital					
Car Parking	340	265	265	-	870
Construction works	1,739	-	-	-	1,739
Total	**2,079**	**265**	**265**	**-**	**2,609**

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5.8 Leases

At inception of a contract, an asessment is made whether a contract is, or contains, a lease. A contract is, or contains, a lease if the contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration. To identify whether a contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset, it is necessary to assess whether:

- The contract involves the use of an identified asset;
- The customer has the right to obtain substantially all of the economic benefits from use of the asset throughout the period of use; and
- The customer has the right to direct the use of the asset.

This policy is applied to contracts entered into, or changed, on or after 1 July 2019.

As a lessee, the City recognises a right-of-use asset and a lease liability at the lease commencement date. The right-of-use asset is initially measured at cost which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability adjusted for:

· any lease payments made at or before the commencement date less any lease incentives received; plus

· any initial direct costs incurred; and

· an estimate of costs to dismantle and remove the underlying asset or to restore the underlying asset or the site on which it is located.

The right-of-use asset is subsequently depreciated using the straight-line method from the commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the right-of-use asset or the end of the lease term. The estimated useful lives of right-of-use assets are determined on the same basis as those of property, plant and equipment. In addition, the right-of-use asset is periodically reduced by impairment losses, if any, and adjusted for certain measurements of the lease liability.

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments that are not paid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease or, if that rate cannot be readily determined, an appropriate incremental borrowing rate. Generally, the City uses an appropriate incremental borrowing rate as the discount rate.

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability comprise the following:

· Fixed payments

· Variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate, initially measured using the index or rate as at the commencement date;

· Amounts expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee; and

· The exercise price under a purchase option that the City is reasonably certain to exercise, lease payments in an optional renewal period if the City is reasonably certain to exercise an extension option, and penalties for early termination of a lease unless the City is reasonably certain not to terminate early.

When the lease liability is remeasured in this way, a corresponding adjustment is made to the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset, or is recorded in profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset has been reduced to zero.

Right-of-Use Assets

	Property	Plant & Equipment	Other, etc.	Total
2021	**$'000**	**$'000**	**$'000**	**$'000**
Balance at 1 July 2020	3,674	5,517	134	9,325
Additions	268	-	-	268
Disposls	(28)	-	-	(28)
Amortisation charge	(1,532)	(1,106)	(35)	(2,673)
Balance at 30 June 2021	**2,382**	**4,411**	**99**	**6,892**
2020				
Balance at 1 July 2020	2,628	6,380	167	9,175
Additions	2,230	184	-	2,414
Amortisation charge	(1,184)	(1,047)	(33)	(2,264)
Balance at 30 June 2021	**3,674**	**5,517**	**134**	**9,325**

Lease Liabilities	**2021**	**2020**
Maturity analysis - contractual undiscounted cash flows	**$'000**	**$'000**
Less than one year	2,872	2,921
One to five years	4,485	6,330
More than five years	371	862
Total undiscounted lease liabilities as at 30 June:	**7,728**	**10,113**
Lease liabilities included in the Balance Sheet at 30 June:		
Current	2,618	2,625
Non-current	4,536	6,765
Total lease liabilities	**7,154**	**9,390**

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Note 6 Assets we manage

6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

Summary of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

	At Fair Value 30 June 2020 $'000	Additions $'000	Contributions $'000	Revaluation $'000	Depreciation $'000	Disposal $'000	Write-off $'000	Transfers $'000	At Fair Value 30 June 2021 $'000
Property	554,592	461	4,017	72,582	(8,546)	(7,143)	(2,158)	20,262	**634,067**
Plant and equipment	85,018	4,057	262	-	(3,205)	(883)	-	252	**85,501**
Infrastructure	923,164	-	8,267	7,735	(28,831)	-	(4,333)	34,182	**940,184**
Work in progress	53,992	36,140	-	-	-	-	(3,253)	(54,696)	**32,183**
	1,616,766	**40,658**	**12,546**	**80,317**	**(40,582)**	**(8,026)**	**(9,744)**	**-**	**1,691,935**

Summary of Work in Progress	Opening WIP	Additions	Write-off	Transfers	Closing WIP
Property	21,081	8,256	(1,444)	(20,264)	**7,629**
Plant and equipment	344	102	(87)	(252)	**107**
Infrastructure	32,567	27,782	(1,722)	(34,180)	**24,447**
Total	**53,992**	**36,140**	**(3,253)**	**(54,696)**	**32,183**

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6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (cont.)

(a) Property

	Land - specialised	Land - non specialised	Land under roads	Total Land	Heritage buildings	Buildings - specialised	Buildings - non specialised	Total Buildings	Total Property
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
At fair value 1 July 2020	234,952	11,868	8,946	**255,766**	134,459	307,970	7,409	**449,838**	**705,604**
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2020	-	-	-	**-**	(49,700)	(101,152)	(160)	**(151,012)**	**(151,012)**
	234,952	11,868	8,946	**255,766**	84,759	206,818	7,249	**298,826**	**554,592**
Movements in fair value									
Additions	42	419	-	**461**	-	-	-	**-**	**461**
Contributions	3,226	-	609	**3,835**	166	114	-	**280**	**4,115**
Disposal	-	(6,935)	-	**(6,935)**	-	-	(216)	**(216)**	**(7,151)**
Write-off	(604)	-	-	**(604)**	-	(3,573)	-	**(3,573)**	**(4,177)**
Transfers	-	-	-	**-**	-	20,262	-	**20,262**	**20,262**
Revaluation	34,089	1,790	2,388	**38,267**	38,134	(7,106)	2,228	**33,256**	**71,523**
	36,753	(4,726)	2,997	**35,024**	38,300	9,697	2,012	**50,009**	**85,033**
Movements in accumulated depreciation									
Depreciation and amortisation	-	-	-	**-**	(2,280)	(6,182)	(84)	**(8,546)**	**(8,546)**
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	-	-	-	**-**	-	-	8	**8**	**8**
Accumulated depreciation of write-offs	-	-	-	-	-	2,019	-	**2,019**	**2,019**
Accumulated depreciation of Contributions	-	-	-	**-**	(78)	(20)	-	**(98)**	**(98)**
Revaluation	-	-	-	**-**	(4,262)	5,085	236	**1,059**	**1,059**
	-	-	-	-	(6,620)	902	160	**(5,558)**	**(5,558)**
At fair value 30 June 2021	271,705	7,142	11,943	**290,790**	172,759	317,667	9,421	**499,847**	**790,637**
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2021	-	-	-	**-**	(56,320)	(100,250)	-	**(156,570)**	**(156,570)**
	271,705	**7,142**	**11,943**	**290,790**	**116,439**	**217,417**	**9,421**	**343,277**	**634,067**

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6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (cont.)

(b) Plant and Equipment

	Plant and equipment	Office equipment, furniture and fittings	Artworks	Fountains, statues and monuments	Total plant and equipment
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
At fair value 1 July 2020	30,275	9,998	59,191	11,173	**110,637**
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2020	(13,814)	(7,692)	-	(4,113)	**(25,619)**
	16,461	2,306	59,191	7,060	**85,018**
Movements in fair value					
Additions	3,900	157	-	-	**4,057**
Contributions	-	-	262	-	**262**
Transfers	-	-	-	252	**252**
Disposal	(2,372)	(135)	-	-	**(2,507)**
	1,528	22	262	252	**2,064**
Movements in accumulated depreciation					
Depreciation and amortisation	(2,597)	(488)	-	(120)	**(3,205)**
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	1,490	134	-	-	**1,624**
	(1,107)	(354)	-	(120)	**(1,581)**
At fair value 30 June 2021	31,803	10,020	59,453	11,425	**112,701**
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2021	(14,921)	(8,046)	-	(4,233)	**(27,200)**
	16,882	**1,974**	**59,453**	**7,192**	**85,501**

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6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (cont.)
(c) Infrastructure

	Sealed roads	Unsealed roads	Bridges	Pathways	Drainage	Land improvements	Public furniture and fittings	Landfill	Total Infrastructure
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
At fair value 1 July 2020	678,219	54,073	75,751	144,732	383,930	72,417	39,386	4,807	**1,453,315**
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2020	(262,109)	(17,647)	(30,779)	(49,655)	(114,366)	(35,223)	(17,368)	(3,004)	**(530,151)**
	416,110	36,426	44,972	95,077	269,564	37,194	22,018	1,803	**923,164**
Movements in fair value									
Contributions	4,365	69	680	1,326	2,393	-	-	-	**8,833**
Write-off	(5,908)	(3,129)	(298)	(530)	(686)	(452)	(1,019)	-	**(12,022)**
Transfers	14,021	3,190	1,181	4,204	4,137	4,005	3,444	-	**34,182**
Revaluation	2,433	763	(838)	(882)	1,883	-	-	-	**3,359**
Impairment losses recognised in operating result	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
	14,911	893	725	4,118	7,727	3,553	2,425	-	**34,352**
Movements in accumulated depreciation									
Depreciation and amortisation	(12,921)	(2,324)	(777)	(3,588)	(3,719)	(2,881)	(2,019)	(602)	**(28,831)**
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	4,342	1,278	275	381	317	348	748	-	**7,689**
Accumulated Depreciation of Contributions	(101)	(22)	(408)	-	(35)	-	-	-	**(566)**
Revaluation	(719)	3,071	1,253	1,994	(1,223)	-	-	-	**4,376**
	(9,399)	2,003	343	(1,213)	(4,660)	(2,533)	(1,271)	(602)	**(17,332)**
At fair value 30 June 2021	693,130	54,966	76,476	148,850	391,657	75,970	41,811	4,807	**1,487,667**
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2021	(271,508)	(15,644)	(30,436)	(50,868)	(119,026)	(37,756)	(18,639)	(3,606)	**(547,483)**
	421,622	**39,322**	**46,040**	**97,982**	**272,631**	**38,214**	**23,172**	**1,201**	**940,184**

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6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (cont.)

Acquisition

The purchase method of accounting is used for all acquisitions of assets, being the fair value of assets provided as consideration at the date of acquisition plus any incidental costs attributable to the acquisition. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset (or paid to transfer a liability) in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date.

Where assets are constructed by the City, cost includes all materials used in construction, direct labour, borrowing costs incurred during construction, and an appropriate share of directly attributable variable and fixed overheads.

In accordance with the City's policy, the threshold limits have applied when recognising assets within an applicable asset class and unless otherwise stated are consistent with the prior year.

	Depreciation Period	Threshold Limit
Asset recognition thresholds and depreciation periods		**$'000**
Land and land improvements		
land	n/a	-
buildings	20-150 years	10-20
Plant and equipment		
plant and equipment	2-25 years	2
office equipment, furniture and fittings	2-25 years	2
artwork	n/a	-
fountains, statues and monuments	80-100 years	5
Infrastructure		
sealed roads	2-100 years	5-10
unsealed roads	15-100 years	5-10
pathways	25-50 years	5
bridges	100 years	10
drainage	100-200 years	5-20
public furniture and fittings	15-40 years	2-5
land improvements	20-80 years	5
landfill	6-10 years	-
Intangible assets		
landfill airspace	6-10 years	-

Land under roads

The City recognises land under roads it controls at fair value.

Depreciation and amortisation

Buildings, land improvements, plant and equipment, infrastructure, and other assets having limited useful lives are systematically depreciated over their useful lives to the City in a manner which reflects consumption of the service potential embodied in those assets. Estimates of remaining useful lives and residual values are made on a regular basis with major asset classes reassessed annually. Depreciation rates and methods are reviewed annually.

Where assets have separate identifiable components that are subject to regular replacement, these components are assigned distinct useful lives and residual values and a separate depreciation rate is determined for each component.

Road earthworks are not depreciated on the basis that they are assessed as not having a limited useful life.

Straight line depreciation is charged based on the residual useful life as determined each year.

Depreciation periods used are listed above and are consistent with the prior year unless otherwise stated.

Repairs and maintenance

Where the repair relates to the replacement of a component of an asset and the cost exceeds the capitalisation threshold the cost is capitalised and depreciated. The carrying value of the replaced asset is expensed.

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6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (cont.)

Valuation of land and buildings

Valuation of land and buildings were undertaken by a qualified independent valuer James Collins, JLC Valuation and Consulting Member No: 62579. The valuation of land and buildings is at fair value, being market value based on highest and best use permitted by relevant land planning provisions. Where land use is restricted through existing planning provisions the valuation is reduced to reflect this limitation. This adjustment is an unobservable input in the valuation. The adjustment has no impact on the comprehensive income statement.

Specialised land is valued at fair value using site values adjusted for englobo (undeveloped and/or unserviced) characteristics, access rights and private interests of other parties and entitlements of infrastructure assets and services. This adjustment is an unobservable input in the valuation. The adjustment has no impact on the comprehensive income statement.

Any significant movements in the unobservable inputs for land and land under roads will have a significant impact on the fair value of these assets.

The date of the current valuation is detailed in the following table.

Details of the City's land and buildings and information about the fair value hierarchy as at 30 June 2021 are as follows:

	Level 1	Level2	Level 3	Date of Valuation
Land	-	7,142	-	Jun-21
Specialised land	-	-	271,705	Jun-21
Land under roads	-	-	11,943	Jun-21
Buildings	-	9,421	-	Jun-21
Buildings - specialised	-	-	217,417	Jun-21
Buildings - heritage	-	-	116,439	Jun-21
Total	**-**	**16,563**	**617,504**	

Valuation of infrastructure

Valuation of Infrastructure assets and specialised buildings has been determined in accordance with contemporary asset management standards and are independently verified. The valuation process is managed by Mr Ian McLauchlan, Manager Engineering (Certified Practicing Engineer) and Mr Paul Nicholson, Coordinator GIS and Asset Information utilising internal professional engineering and technical resources. The valuation process for sealed roads, unsealed roads, pathways, bridges and drainage is performed annually with a third of each asset class inspected and valued. Valuation of Public furniture and land improvements are completed on a three year cycle having last been valued at 30 June 2018. Due to significant change with the GIS and asset information team and the way asset information is captured, this could not be undertaken for 30 June 2021. The valuation process for the land improvements and public furniture and fittings asset classes has been rescheduled for 31 December 2021.

The date of the current valuation is detailed in the following table.

The valuation is at fair value based on replacement cost less accumulated depreciation as at the date of valuation.

Details of the City's infrastructure and information about the fair value hierarchy as at 30 June 2021 are as follows:

	Level 1	Level2	Level 3	Date of Valuation
Sealed roads	-	-	421,622	Jun-21
Unsealed roads	-	-	39,322	Jun-21
Pathways	-	-	97,982	Jun-21
Bridges	-	-	46,040	Jun-21
Drainage	-	-	272,631	Jun-21
Public furniture and fittings	-	-	23,172	Jun-18
Land improvements	-	-	38,214	Jun-18
Landfill	-	-	1,201	N/A
Total	**-**	**-**	**940,184**	

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6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (cont.)

Description of significant unobservable inputs into level 3 valuations

Specialised land and land under roads is valued using a market based direct comparison technique. Significant unobservable inputs include the extent and impact of restriction of use and the market cost of land per square metre. The extent and impact of restrictions on use varies and results in a reduction to surrounding land values between 10% and 95%. The market value of land varies significantly depending on the location of the land and the current market conditions. Currently land values range between $1 and $1,557 per square metre.

Specialised buildings are valued using a depreciated replacement cost technique. Significant unobservable inputs include the current replacement cost and remaining useful lives of buildings. Current replacement costs are calculated on a square metre basis and ranges from $280 to $10,230 per square metre. The remaining useful lives of buildings are determined on the basis of the current condition of buildings and vary from 1 years to 100 years. Replacement cost is sensitive to changes in market conditions, with any increase or decrease in cost flowing through to the valuation. Useful lives of buildings are sensitive to changes in expectations or requirements that could either shorten or extend the useful lives of buildings.

Infrastructure assets are valued based on the depreciated replacement cost. Significant unobservable inputs include the current replacement cost and remaining useful lives of infrastructure. The remaining useful lives of infrastructure assets are determined on the basis of the current condition of the asset and vary from 1 year to 200 years. Replacement cost is sensitive to changes in market conditions, with any increase or decrease in cost flowing through to the valuation. Useful lives of infrastructure are sensitive to changes in use, expectations or requirements that could either shorten or extend the useful lives of infrastructure assets.

	2021	2020
Reconciliation of specialised land	**$'000**	**$'000**
Land under roads	11,943	8,946
Land	271,705	234,952
Total specialised land	**283,648**	**243,898**

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6.2 Investments in associates, joint arrangements and subsidiaries	**2021 $'000**	**2020 $'000**
(a) Investments in associates		
North Central Goldfields Regional Library Corporation (NCGRLC)	3,555	3,393

North Central Goldfields Regional Library Corporation (NCGRLC)

Background

The City is a member of the North Central Goldfields Regional Library Corporation. The City has a 61.05% share of the net assets (61.11% 2020). At 30 June 2021 the City's equity in the corporation was $3,554,173 (30 June 2020 $3,392,290).

Fair value of the City's investment in NCGRLC	**3,555**	**3,393**
The City's share of accumulated surplus/(deficit)		
The City's share of accumulated surplus at start of year	2,509	2,518
Share of equity adjustment	(1)	(2)
Transfers (to) from reserves	90	(7)
The City's share of accumulated surplus at end of year	**2,598**	**2,509**
The City's share of reserves		
The City's share of reserves at start of year	703	699
Share of equity adjustment	(2)	(2)
Transfers (to) from reserves	(91)	6
The City's share of reserves at end of year	**610**	**703**
Movement in carrying value of specific investment		
Carrying value of investment at start of year	3,393	3,273
Share of surplus(deficit) for year	165	124
Share of equity adjustment	(3)	(4)
Carrying value of investment at end of year	**3,555**	**3,393**
The City's share of expenditure commitments		
Operating commitments	314	222
The City's share of expenditure commitments	**314**	**222**

Associates are all entities over which the City has significant influence but not control or joint control. Investments in associates are accounted for using the equity method of accounting, after initially being recognised at cost.

Committees of management

All entities controlled by the City that have material revenues, expenses, assets or liabilities, such as committees of management, have been included in this financial report. Any transactions between these entities and the City have been eliminated in full.

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Note 7 People and relationships

7.1 Council and key management remuneration

(a) Related Parties

Parent entity

Greater Bendigo City Council is the parent entity.

Subsidiaries and Associates

Interests in associates are detailed in Note 6.2.

(b) Key Management Personnel

Details of persons holding the position of Councillor or other members of key management personnel at any time during the year are:

Councillors	Matt Emond - Deputy Mayor (01/07/2020 to 24/10/2020)
	James Williams (01/07/2020 to 24/10/2020)
	George Flack (01/07/2020 to 24/10/2020)
	Malcolm Pethybridge (01/07/2020 to 24/10/2020)
	Susie Hawke (01/07/2020 to 24/10/2020)
	Jennifer Alden - Councillor (01/07/2020 to 24/10/2020) and Mayor (06/11/2020 to 30/06/2021)
	Andrea Metcalf - Councillor (01/07/2020 to 24/10/2020) and Deputy Mayor (06/11/2020 to 30/06/2021)
	Margaret O'Rourke - Mayor (01/07/2020 to 24/10/2020) and Councillor (06/11/2020 to 30/06/2021)
	Rod Fyffe - Councillor (01/07/2020 to 24/10/2020) and (06/11/2020 to 30/06/2021)
	Gregory Penna (06/11/2020 to 30/06/2021)
	Matthew Evans (06/11/2020 to 30/06/2021)
	Vaughan Williams (06/11/2020 to 30/06/2021)
	Julie Sloan (06/11/2020 to 30/06/2021)
	David Fagg (06/11/2020 to 30/06/2021)
Executive	Chief Executive Officer
	Director - Corporate Performance
	Director - Health and Wellbeing
	Director - Presentation and Assets
	Director - Strategy and Growth

	2021 No.	2020 No.
Total Number of Councillors	14	10
Total of Chief Executive Officer and other Key Management Personnel	5	5
Total Number of Key Management Personnel	19	15

(c) Remuneration of Key Management Personnel	2021 $	2020 $
Total remuneration of key management personnel was as follows:		
Short-term benefits	1,506	1,566
Long-term benefits	29	28
Post employment benefits	142	116
Total	**1,677**	**1,710**

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7.1 Council and key management remuneration (cont.)

The numbers of key management personnel whose total remuneration from the City and any related entities, fall within the following bands:

	2021 No.	2020 No.
$0,000 - $9,999	-	1
$10,000 - $19,999	5	-
$20,000 - $29,999	5	1
$30,000 - $39,999	2	7
$50,000 - $59,999	1	-
$80,000 - $89,999	2	-
$100,000 - $109,999	-	1
$140,000 - $149,999	1	-
$200,000 - $209,999	1	-
$230,000 - $239,999	1	2
$240,000 - $249,999	-	1
$250,000 - $259,999	1	-
$260,000 - $269,999	-	1
$350,000 - $359,999	-	1
$370,000 - $379,999	1	-
	20	**15**

(d) Senior Officer Remuneration

A Senior Officer is an officer of the City, other than Key Management Personnel, who:
a) has management responsibilities and reports directly to the Chief Executive; or
b) whose total annual remuneration exceeds $151,000 (2020: $150,000)

The number of Senior Officers are shown below in their relevant income bands:

Income Range:	2021 No.	2020 No.
< $151,000	16	8
$151,000 - $159,999	6	6
$160,000 - $169,999	3	4
$170,000 - $179,999	5	2
$180,000 - $189,999	-	2
	30	**22**

Total Remuneration for the reporting year for Senior Officers included above, amounted to:	4,107	3,343

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	2021	2020
7.2 Related party disclosure	**$'000**	**$'000**

(a) Transactions with related parties

During the period the City entered into the following transactions with related parties.

Income		
Financial services provided to NCGRLC	79	78
Hire of Bendigo Town Hall	-	4
Reimbursment for two dishwashers	2	-
Rent and outgoings received from NCGRLC for the Bendigo Library headquarters	42	36
	123	**118**
Expenses		
Contribution to NCGRLC	3,191	3,123
Reimbursement for running the Bendigo Regional Archive Centre (BRAC), paid to NCGRLC	92	92
Grants paid	31	-
Room hire / other expenses, paid to NCGRLC	-	3
	3,314	**3,218**

(b) Outstanding balances with related parties

There was no material balances outstanding at the end of the reporting period in relation to transactions with related parties.

(c) Loans to/from related parties

There are no loans in existence at balance date which have been made, guaranteed or secured by the City to a related party.

(d) Commitments to/from related parties

The aggregate amount of commitments in existence at balance date that have been made, guaranteed or secured by the City to a related party are as follows:

The City had an agreement with the North Central Goldfields Regional Library Corporation to provide accounting and financial services to 30 June 2023 for which a fee is paid. The agreement had an option to extend until 30 June 2025. The City also has a 10 year lease agreement for buildings with the Corporation which commenced on 1 July 2015, for which rental is charged.

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Note 8 Managing uncertainties

8.1 Contingent assets and liabilities

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Balance Sheet, but are disclosed and if quantifiable, are measured at nominal value. Contingent assets and liabilities are presented inclusive of GST receivable or payable, respectively.

(a) Contingent assets

Construction of infrastructure assets by developers in the course of creating new subdivisions results in the infrastructure assets being vested in the City when the City issues a statement of compliance. These assets are bought to account as revenue and capitalised.
At reporting date, developers had commenced construction of assets that will eventually be transferred to the City contingent upon the City issuing a statement of compliance.

Operating lease receivables

The City has entered into commercial property leases on its investment property, consisting of surplus freehold office complexes. These properties held under operating leases have remaining non-cancellable lease terms of between 1 and 10 years. All leases include a CPI based revision of the rental charge annually.

	2021	2020
	$'000	$'000
Not later than one	1,362	1,385
Later than one year and not later than five years	1,934	2,907
Later than five years	479	477
	3,775	**4,769**

(b) Contingent liabilities

Superannuation

The City has obligations under a defined benefit superannuation scheme that may result in the need to make additional contributions to the scheme, matters relating to this potential obligation are outlined below. As a result of the volatility in financial markets the likelihood of making such contributions in future periods exists.

Future superannuation contributions

There were no contributions outstanding and no loans issued from or to the above schemes as at 30 June 2021. The expected contributions to be paid to the defined benefit category of vision super for the year ending 30 June 2022 is $390,000.

Landfill

The City has confirmed the presence of ten past and one current landfill sites that may require some form of rehabilitation or remediation works. The Eaglehawk, White Hills and Wolstencroft sites have had a rehabilitation plan developed. This has allowed the City to include an accurate provision within the financial statements for each of the three sites at the 30 June 2021. The remainder of the former landfill sites that have been identified are considered a low risk and the level of rehabilitation works required, if any , is unknown.

Other matters

In May 2020, Council approved the sale of the Lyttleton Terrace site to Development Victoria for the purpose of the Bendigo GovHub, a new building that will house both Council staff and other government entities as tenants. In future years, this will result in a Right of Use lease asset and corresponding lease liability. As at 30 June 2021, there was no signed rental or tenancy agreements in place.

(c) Guarantees for loans to other entities

The amount disclosed for financial guarantee in this note is the nominal amount of the underlying loan that is guaranteed by the City, not the fair value of the financial guarantee. The City maintains representation on Bendigo Stadium Ltd board and finance committee as part of arrangements related to the loan guarantee provided. In August of 2020 Councillors agreed to support additional guarantee arrangements for refinancing of a loan at Bendigo Stadium Ltd up to the value of $13M.

Financial guarantee contracts are not recognised as a liability in the balance sheet unless the lender has exercised their right to call on the guarantee or the City has other reasons to believe that it is probable that the right will be exercised.

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8.1 Contingent assets and liabilities (cont.)

Name of Organisation	Council Guarantee Amount	Current Loan Guarantee Exposure	Financial Institution	Date Approved by Council	Guarantee Expires
Bendigo Stadium Ltd	$13,819,898	$12,602,166	Bendigo Bank	4/05/2016	1/05/2027

8.2 Change in accounting standards

Certain new Australian Accounting Standards and interpretations have been published that are not mandatory for the 30 June 2021 reporting period. The City assesses the impact of these new standards. As at 30 June 2021 there were no new accounting standards or interpretations issued by the AASB which are applicable for the year ending 30 June 2022 that are expected to materially impact the City.

8.3 Financial instruments

(a) Objectives and policies

The City's principal financial instruments comprise cash assets, term deposits, receivables (excluding statutory receivables), payables (excluding statutory payables) and bank borrowings. Details of the significant accounting policies and methods adopted, including the criteria for recognition, the basis of measurement and the basis on which income and expenses are recognised, in respect of each class of financial asset, financial liability and equity instrument is disclosed in the notes of the financial statements. Risk management is carried out by senior management under policies approved by the City. These policies include identification and analysis of the risk exposure to the City and appropriate procedures, controls and risk minimisation. Details are reviewed by the City's Audit & Risk Committee.

(b) Market risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of the City's financial instruments will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. The City's exposure to market risk is primarily through interest rate risk with only insignificant exposure to other price risks and no exposure to foreign currency risk.

Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk refers to the risk that the value of a financial instrument or cash flows associated with the instrument will fluctuate due to changes in market interest rates. The City's interest rate liability risk arises primarily from long term loans and borrowings at fixed rates which exposes the City to fair value interest rate risk. Cash flow interest rate risk is the risk that the future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. The City has minimal exposure to cash flow interest rate risk through its cash and deposits that are at floating rates.

Investment of surplus funds is made with approved financial institutions under the City's investment policy. The City manages interest rate risk by adopting an investment policy that ensures:

- diversification of investment product;
- monitoring of return on investment; and
- benchmarking of returns and comparison with budget.

There has been no significant change in the City's exposure, or its objectives, policies and processes for managing interest rate risk or the methods used to measure this risk from the previous reporting period.

Interest rate movements have not been sufficiently significant during the year to have an impact on the City's year end result.

(c) Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that a contracting entity will not complete its obligations under a financial instrument and cause the City to make a financial loss. The City has exposure to credit risk on some financial assets included in the balance sheet. Particularly significant areas of credit risk exist in relation to outstanding fees and fines as well as loans and receivables from sporting clubs and associations. To help manage this risk:

- The City have a policy for establishing credit limits for the entities the City deals with;
- The City may require collateral where appropriate; and
- The City only invests surplus funds with financial institutions which have a recognised credit rating specified

Receivables consist of a large number of customers, spread across the ratepayer, business and government sectors. Credit risk associated with the council's financial assets is minimal because the main debtor is secured by a charge over the rateable property.

There are no material financial assets which are individually determined to be impaired.

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8.3 Financial instruments (cont.)

The City may also be subject to credit risk for transactions which are not included in the balance sheet, such as when the City provides a guarantee for another party. Details of our contingent liabilities are disclosed in Note 8.1(b).

The maximum exposure to credit risk at the reporting date to recognised financial assets is the carrying amount, net of any provisions for impairment of those assets, as disclosed in the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements. The City does not hold any collateral.

(d) Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk includes the risk that, as a result of the City's operational liquidity requirements it will not have sufficient funds to settle a transaction when required or will be forced to sell a financial asset at below value or may be unable to settle or recover a financial asset.

To help reduce these risks the City:

- Publishes and maintains a ten year longterm financial plan;
- adheres to budget principles which targets a minimum and average level of cash and cash equivalents to be maintained;
- have readily accessible standby facilities and other funding arrangements in place;
- have a liquidity portfolio structure that requires surplus funds to be invested within various bands of liquid instruments;
- monitor budget to actual performance on a regular basis; and
- set limits on borrowings relating to the percentage of loans to rate revenue and percentage of loan principal repayments to rate revenue.

The City's maximum exposure to liquidity risk is the carrying amounts of financial liabilities as disclosed on the face of the balance sheet and the amounts related to financial guarantees disclosed in Note 8.1(c), and is deemed insignificant based on prior periods' data and current assessment of risk.

There has been no significant change in the City's exposure, or its objectives, policies and processes for managing liquidity risk or the methods used to measure this risk from the previous reporting period.

With the exception of borrowings, all financial liabilities are expected to be settled within normal terms of trade. Details of the maturity profile for borrowings are disclosed at Note 5.4.

Unless otherwise stated, the carrying amounts of financial instruments reflect their fair value.

(e) Sensitivity disclosure analysis

Taking into account past performance, future expectations, economic forecasts, and management's knowledge and experience of the financial markets, the City believes the following movements are 'reasonably possible' over the next 12 months:

- A parallel shift of +1 % and -1% in market interest rates (AUD) from year-end rates of 0.34%.

These movements will not have a material impact on the valuation of the City's financial assets and liabilities, nor will they have a material impact on the results of the City's operations.

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8.4 Fair value measurement

Fair value hierarchy

The City's financial assets and liabilities are not valued in accordance with the fair value hierarchy , the City's financial assets and liabilities are measured at amortised cost.

The City measures certain assets and liabilities at fair value where required or permitted by Australian Accounting Standards. AASB 13 Fair value measurement, aims to improve consistency and reduce complexity by providing a definition of fair value and a single source of fair value measurement and disclosure requirements for use across Australian Accounting Standards.

All assets and liabilities for which fair value is measured or disclosed in the financial statements are categorised within a fair value hierarchy, described as follows, based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement as a whole:

Level 1 — Quoted (unadjusted) market prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities
Level 2 — Valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is directly or indirectly observable; and
Level 3 — Valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is unobservable.

For the purpose of fair value disclosures, the City has determined classes of assets and liabilities on the basis of the nature, characteristics and risks of the asset or liability and the level of the fair value hierarchy as explained above.

In addition, the City determines whether transfers have occurred between levels in the hierarchy by re-assessing categorisation (based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement as a whole) at the end of each reporting period.

Revaluation

Subsequent to the initial recognition of assets, non-current physical assets, other than plant and equipment, are measured at their fair value, being the price that would be received to sell an asset (or paid to transfer a liability) in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. At balance date, the City reviewed the carrying value of the individual classes of assets measured at fair value to ensure that each asset materially approximated its fair value. Where the carrying value materially differed from the fair value at balance date, the class of asset was revalued.

Fair value valuations are determined in accordance with a valuation hierarchy. Changes to the valuation hierarchy will only occur if an external change in the restrictions or limitations of use of an asset result in changes to the permissible or practical highest and best use of the asset. In addition, the City undertakes a formal revaluation of land, buildings, and infrastructure assets on a regular basis ranging from 1 to 5 years. The valuation is performed either by experienced council officers or independent experts.

Impairment of assets

At each reporting date, the City reviews the carrying value of its assets to determine whether there is any indication that these assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs of disposal and value in use, is compared to the assets carrying value. Any excess of the assets carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the comprehensive income statement, unless the asset is carried at the revalued amount in which case, the impairment loss is recognised directly against the revaluation surplus in respect of the same class of asset to the extent that the impairment loss does not exceed the amount in the revaluation surplus for that same class of asset.

8.5 Events occurring after balance date

The state of Victoria was placed into a lockdown due to Covid-19 outbreak on the 21st of August 2021. This has resulted in the closure of a number of facilities and has reduced the level of service delivery during this time. This closure does not alter the information provided within these financial statements and accopanying notes. The City will continue to monitor the non-financial and financial impacts of Covid-19 on its operations.

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Note 9 Other matters

9.1 Reserves (a) Asset revaluation reserves	Balance at beginning of reporting period $'000	Increment (decrement) $'000	Balance at end of reporting period $'000
2021			
Property			
Land	170,577	38,267	208,844
Buildings	120,482	34,315	154,797
Plant and equipment	1,541	-	1,541
Library resources	820	-	820
Artwork	48,582	-	48,582
	342,002	**72,582**	**414,584**
Infrastructure			
Roads, bridges and pathways	377,146	7,075	384,221
Drainage	69,649	660	70,309
Public furniture and fittings, statues and monuments	9,399	-	9,399
Land improvements	18,189	-	18,189
	474,383	**7,735**	**482,118**
Total asset revaluation reserves	**816,385**	**80,317**	**896,702**
2020			
Property			
Land	170,577	-	170,577
Buildings	120,482	-	120,482
Plant and equipment	1,541	-	1,541
Library resources	820	-	820
Artwork	47,307	1,275	48,582
	340,727	**1,275**	**342,002**
Infrastructure			
Roads, bridges and pathways	377,463	(317)	377,146
Drainage	71,377	(1,728)	69,649
Public furniture and fittings, statues and monuments	9,399	-	9,399
Land improvements	18,189	-	18,189
	476,428	**(2,045)**	**474,383**
Total asset revaluation reserves	**817,155**	**(770)**	**816,385**

The asset revaluation reserve is used to record the increased (net) value of the City's assets over time.

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9.1 Reserves (cont.) (b) Other reserves	Balance at beginning of reporting period $'000	Transfer from accumulated surplus $'000	Transfer to accumulated surplus $'000	Balance at end of reporting period $'000
2021				
Open Space	4,713	508	(5)	5,216
Development Contributions	4,075	460	(250)	4,285
Tree Amenity	-	48	-	48
Native Vegetation	-	95	-	95
Waste Management	7,873	363	(2,475)	5,761
Land and Buildings	-	6,387	(730)	5,657
Car Parking	511	-	-	511
Defined Benefits	2,000	-	-	2,000
Unexpended Grants and Donations	9,780	9,257	(9,508)	9,529
Total Other reserves	**28,952**	**17,118**	**(12,968)**	**33,102**
2020				
Open Space	4,223	898	(408)	4,713
Development Contributions	4,278	263	(466)	4,075
Waste Management	8,742	330	(1,199)	7,873
Land and Buildings	177	643	(820)	-
Car Parking	661	-	(150)	511
Defined Benefits	3,000	-	(1,000)	2,000
Long Service Leave	4,096	-	(4,096)	-
Unexpended Grants and Donations	12,334	9,432	(11,986)	9,780
Total Other reserves	**37,511**	**11,566**	**(20,125)**	**28,952**

Open Space - Statutory developer contribution funds to be used for future recreation facility additions or improvements.
Development Contributions - Statutory developer contribution funds for future drainage, road, fencing and tree planting.

Waste Management - This reserve was established to make some provision for a replacement waste treatment facility when the Eaglehawk Landfill is exhausted and to contribute to rehabilitation requirements for closed landfill sites.

Defined Benefits - This reserve is used to assist with the funding of any call that may be made on the City as a result of shortfall in the Local Authorities Superannuation Fund Defined Benefits Plan.

Unexpended Grants and Donations - This reserve is used to set aside grant and donation monies in relation to specific projects received in one financial year that will not be expended until a later financial year. Funds in this account are predominantly not discretionary.

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9.2 Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities to surplus/(deficit)	**2021 $'000**	**2020 $'000**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	11,778	12,404
Depreciation / amortisation	43,996	42,280
(Profit) / loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	11,161	3,347
Contributions - non monetary assets	(12,546)	(12,097)
Share of net (profits) / losses of associates accounted for using the equity method	(162)	(120)
Gain from water and forestry rights	-	(50)
Borrowing Costs	2,171	2,211
Change in assets and liabilities:		
(Increase) / decrease in trade and other receivables	849	(530)
(Increase) / decrease in other assets	(444)	1,047
(Increase) / decrease in other liabilities	10,679	-
(Increase) / decrease in inventory	21	30
Increase / (decrease) in trade and other payables	1,487	(1,914)
Increase / (decrease) in provisions	(699)	3,500
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	**68,291**	**50,108**

9.3 Superannuation

The City makes the majority of its employer superannuation contributions in respect of its employees to the Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (the Fund). This Fund has two categories of membership, accumulation and defined benefit, each of which is funded differently. Obligations for contributions to the Fund are recognised as an expense in the Comprehensive Operating Statement when they are made or due.

Accumulation

The Fund's accumulation category, Vision MySuper/Vision Super Saver, receives both employer and employee contributions on a progressive basis. Employer contributions are normally based on a fixed percentage of employee earnings (for the year ended 30 June 2021, this was 9.5% as required under Superannuation Guarantee (SG) legislation).

Defined Benefit

The City does not use defined benefit accounting for its defined benefit obligations under the Fund's Defined Benefit category. This is because the Fund's Defined Benefit category is a pooled multi-employer sponsored plan.

There is no proportional split of the defined benefit liabilities, assets or costs between the participating employers as the defined benefit obligation is a floating obligation between the participating employers and the only time that the aggregate obligation is allocated to specific employers is when a call is made. As a result, the level of participation of The City in the Fund cannot be measured as a percentage compared with other participating employers. Therefore, the Fund Actuary is unable to allocate benefit liabilities, assets and costs between employers for the purposes of AASB 119.

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9.3 Superannuation (cont.)

Funding arrangements

The City makes employer contributions to the Defined Benefit category of the Fund at rates determined by the Trustee on the advice of the Fund Actuary.

A triennial actuarial review for the Defined Benefit category as at 30 June 2020 was conducted and completed by the due date of 31 December 2020.

The vested benefit index (VBI) of the Defined Benefit category of which The City is a contributing employer was 104.6%. The financial assumptions used to calculate the VBI were:

Net investment returns	5.6% pa
Salary information	2.5% pa for two years and 2.75% pa thereafter
Price inflation (CPI)	2.0% pa.

As at 30 June 2021, an interim actuarial investigation is underway as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category.

Vision Super has advised that the estimated VBI at 30 June 2021 was 109.7%. The financial assumtions used to calculate this VBI were:

Net investment returns	4.8% pa
Salary information	2.75% pa
Price inflation (CPI)	2.25% pa.

The VBI is used as the primary funding indicator. Because the VBI was above 100%, the 30 June 2020 actuarial investigation determined the Defined Benefit category was in a satisfactory financial position and that no change was necessary to the Defined Benefit category's funding arrangements from prior years.

Employer contributions

Regular contributions

On the basis of the results of the 2020 triennial actuarial investigation conducted by the Fund Actuary, the City makes employer contributions to the Fund's Defined Benefit category at rates determined by the Fund's Trustee. For the year ended 30 June 2021, this rate was 9.5% of members' salaries (9.5% in 2019/2020). This rate is expected to increase in line with any increases in the SG contribution rate and was reviewed as part of the 30 June 2020 triennial valuation.

In addition, the City reimburses the Fund to cover the excess of the benefits paid as a consequence of retrenchment above the funded resignation or retirement benefit.

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9.3 Superannuation (cont.)

Funding calls

If the Defined Benefit category is in an unsatisfactory financial position at an actuarial investigation or the Defined Benefit category's VBI is below its shortfall limit at any time other than the date of the actuarial investigation, the Defined Benefit category has a shortfall for the purposes of SPS 160 and the Fund is required to put a plan in place so that the shortfall is fully funded within three years of the shortfall occurring. The Fund monitors its VBI on a quarterly basis and the Fund has set its shortfall limit at 97%.

In the event that the Fund Actuary determines that there is a shortfall based on the above requirement, the Fund's participating employers (including the City) are required to make an employer contribution to cover the shortfall.

Using the agreed methodology, the shortfall amount is apportioned between the participating employers based on the pre-1 July 1993 and post-30 June 1993 service liabilities of the Fund's Defined Benefit category, together with the employer's payroll at 30 June 1993 and at the date the shortfall has been calculated.

Due to the nature of the contractual obligations between the participating employers and the Fund, and that the Fund includes lifetime pensioners and their reversionary beneficiaries, it is unlikely that the Fund will be wound up.

If there is a surplus in the Fund, the surplus cannot be returned to the participating employers.

In the event that a participating employer is wound-up, the defined benefit obligations of that employer will be transferred to that employer's successor.

The 2020 triennial actuarial investigation surplus amounts

An actuarial investigation is conducted annually for the Defined Benefit category of which the City is a contributing employer. Generally, a full actuarial investigation is conducted every three years and interim actuarial investigations are conducted for each intervening year. A full investigation was conducted as at 30 June 2020.

The Fund's actuarial investigation identified the following for the Defined Benefit category of which the City is a contributing employer:

	2020 (Triennial) $m	2019 (Interim) $m
- A VBI Surplus	100.0	151.3
- A total service liability surplus	200.0	233.4
- A discounted accrued benefits surplus	217.8	256.7

The VBI surplus means that the market value of the fund's assets supporting the defined benefit obligations exceed the vested benefits that the defined benefit members would have been entitled to if they had all exited on 30 June 2020.

The total service liability surplus means that the current value of the assets in the Fund's Defined Benefit category plus expected future contributions exceeds the value of expected future benefits and expenses as at 30 June 2020.

The discounted accrued benefit surplus means that the current value of the assets in the Fund's Defined Benefit category exceeds the value of benefits payable in the future but accrued in respect of service to 30 June 2020.

The City was notified of the 30 June 2020 VBI during August 2020 (2019: August 2019).

The 2021 interim actuarial investigation

An interim actuarial investigation is being conducted for the Fund's position as at 30 June 2021 as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category. It is anticipated that this actuarial investigation will be completed by October 2021.The City was notified of the 30 June 2021 VBI during August 2021 (2020: August 2020).

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9.3 Superannuation (cont.)

Superannuation contributions

Contributions by the City (excluding any unfunded liability payments) to the above superannuation plans for the financial year ended 30 June 2021 are detailed below:

			2021	2020
Scheme	**Type of Scheme**	**Rate**	**$'000**	**$'000**
Vision super	Defined	9.50%	356	378
Vision super	Accumulation fund	9.50%	3,114	3,032

There were no contributions outstanding and no loans issued from or to the above schemes as at 30 June 2021. The expected contributions to be paid to the defined benefit category of vision super for the year ending 30 June 2022 is $390,000.

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Note 10 Change in accounting policy

AASB 1059 Service Concession Arrangements: Grantors (AASB 1059) (applies 2020/21 for LG Sector)

The City has adopted *AASB 1059 Service Concession Arrangements: Grantors* , from 1 July 2020. This has resulted in no material adjustments to the amounts recognised in the financial statements.

AASB 2018-7 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards - Definition of Material (applies 2020/21 for LG Sector)

The City has adopted AASB 2018-7 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards - Definition of Material, from July 1 2020. All information has been disclosed where material in nature, amount and impact to ensure primary users of the general purpose financial statements are informed and can make decisions on the basis of the information disclosed regarding the entity.

AASB 2019-1 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards - References to the Conceptual Framework (applies 2020/21 for LG Sector)

The City has adopted AASB 2019-1 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards - References to the Conceptual Framework* from 1 July 2020. Financial statements present fairly the financial position,financial performance and cash flows of the Cuty. There is a fair presentation of the effects of transactions, other events and conditions in accordance with definitions and recognition criteria for assets, liabilities, income and expenses set out in the Framework Conceptual for Financial Reporting.

It is not expected that these standards will have any significant impact on the City.

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Attachment 2 - Greater Bendigo City Council Draft Performance Statement for the year ended 30 June 2021

Greater Bendigo City Council
PERFORMANCE STATEMENT

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

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Description of Municipality

The City of Greater Bendigo is located in the geographic centre of Victoria about 90 minute drive north of Melbourne. Greater Bendigo has an estimated population of 119,980 at 30 June 2021 and covers approximately 3,000 square kilometres of the central Victorian landscape, including smaller towns and villages such as Heathcote, Axedale, Huntly, Marong, Elmore, Goornong, Neilborough, Sebastian, Woodvale, Raywood, Mia Mia and Redesdale.

The resident population of Greater Bendigo at 30 June 2020 was estimated at 118,093, which represents an average annual growth rate of 1.6% or 1,887 people.

The service age structure of Greater Bendigo shows different populations at their different life stages. Looking at age structure this way can better inform the level of demand on specific age based services as well as specific housing needs. At the 2016 Census the age structure shows that overall 19.2% of the population was aged between 0 and 15 and 17.8% of residents were over the age of 65. Compared to regional Victoria, Greater Bendigo has a higher proportion of people in the younger age groups and lower proportion of those 65 and over (18.2% and 20.4% respectively).

Additional demographic information is contained earlier in the annual report.

The Covid-19 pandemic has once again had a significant impact on the operations of the City. In line with government restrictions, the City closed a number of facilities and reduced service delivery throughout the year. The financial impact of these closures has been reflected in the results for 2020-21 and appropriate commentary appears throughout the annual financial and performance statements.

The City will continue to monitor the non-financial and financial impacts of Covid-19 on its operations.

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Sustainable Capacity Indicators					
Indicator/measure	Results 2018	Results 2019	Results 2020	Results 2021	Material Variations
Population					
Expenses per head of municipal population [Total expenses / Municipal population]	$1,551	$1,606	$1,638	$1,588	
Infrastructure per head of municipal population [Value of infrastructure / Municipal population]	$11,140	$11,573	$11,525	$11,970	
Population density per length of road [Municipal population / Kilometres of local roads]	36.46	37.10	37.65	38.19	
Own-source revenue					
Own-source revenue per head of municipal population [Own-source revenue / Municipal population]	$1,286	$1,359	$1,302	$1,184	Own source revenue reduced in 2020/2021 due to lower user fees in the year, and other reduced revenue as part of COVID support or reduced service provided by the City.
Recurrent grants					
Recurrent grants per head of municipal population [Recurrent grants / Municipal population]	$243	$222	$232	$226	
Disadvantage					
Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage [Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage by decile]	4	4	4	4	
Workforce turnover					
Percentage of staff turnover [Number of permanent staff resignations and terminations / Average number of permanent staff for the financial year x100]	8.9%	14.0%	8.5%	10.9%	

Definitions
"adjusted underlying revenue" means total income other than:
(a) non-recurrent grants used to fund capital expenditure; and
(b) non-monetary asset contributions; and
(c) contributions to fund capital expenditure from sources other than those referred to above
"infrastructure" means non-current property, plant and equipment excluding land
"local road" means a sealed or unsealed road for which the council is the responsible road authority under the Road Management Act 2004
"own-source revenue" means adjusted underlying revenue other than revenue that is not under the control of council (including government grants)
"relative socio-economic disadvantage", in relation to a municipality, means the relative socio-economic disadvantage, expressed as a decile for the relevant financial year, of the area in which the municipality is located according to the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage

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Service Performance Indicators					
Service/*indicator*/*measure*	Results 2018	Results 2019	Results 2020	Results 2021	Material Variations
Aquatic Facilities ***Utilisation*** *Utilisation of aquatic facilities* [Number of visits to aquatic facilities / Municipal population]	1.60	4.23	4.26	2.92	Reduction in visits as the public were under stay at home orders
Animal Management ***Health and safety*** *Animal management prosecutions* [Number of successful animal management prosecutions / Number of animal management prosecutions]	New in 2020	New in 2020	100%	100%	
Food Safety ***Health and safety*** *Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications* [Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises followed up / Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises] x100	87.12%	80.88%	85.19%	71%	Lower quantity of non-compliance notifications year-on-year due to lockdown restrictions on hospitality sector.
Governance ***Satisfaction*** *Satisfaction with council decisions* [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed in making decisions in the interest of the community]	54	57	53	54	
Libraries ***Participation*** *Active library borrowers in municipality* [Number of active library borrowers in the last three years / The sum of the population for the last three years] x100	14.07%	12.91%	12.47%	10.34%	Decrease in active borrowers due to COVID-19 restrictions forcing libraries to close. In line with non-essential services.

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Service Performance Indicators (cont.)					
Service/*indicator*/*measure*	Results 2018	Results 2019	Results 2020	Results 2021	Material Variations
Maternal and Child Health (MCH) ***Participation*** *Participation in the MCH service* [Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x100	77.85%	78.45%	78.02%	77.34%	
Participation *Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children* [Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x100	80.20%	78.47%	82.97%	72.20%	Reduction in Material & Child Health Services. Programs could not operate when there were stay at home orders.
Roads ***Satisfaction*** *Satisfaction with sealed local roads* [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed on the condition of sealed local roads]	57	60	60	61	
Statutory Planning ***Decision making*** *Council planning decisions upheld at VCAT* [Number of VCAT decisions that did not set aside council's decision in relation to a planning application / Number of VCAT decisions in relation to planning applications] x100	71.43%	58.33%	75.00%	87.50%	The last two years have been consistent with 8 planning decisions being disputed in VCAT. This year 7 out of 8 decisions were upheld. Prior year was 6 out of 8 were upheld. FY2018-19 was an outlier as 7 out of 12 decisions were upheld.
Waste Collection ***Waste diversion*** *Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill* [Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x100	46.84%	58.00%	50.80%	50.19%	

Definitions
"active library member" means a member of a library who has borrowed from the library
"annual report" means an annual report prepared by a council under section 98 of the Act
"class 1 food premises" means food premises, within the meaning of the Food Act 1984, that have been declared as class 1 food premises under section 19C of that Act
"class 2 food premises" means food premises, within the meaning of the Food Act 1984 , that have been declared as class 2 food premises under section 19C of that Act
"critical non-compliance outcome notification" means a notification received by council under section 19N(3) or (4) of the Food Act 1984 , or advice given to council by an authorized officer under that Act, of a deficiency that poses an immediate serious threat to public health
"local road" means a sealed or unsealed road for which the council is the responsible road authority under the Road Management Act 2004
"major non-compliance outcome notification" means a notification received by a council under section 19N(3) or (4) of the Food Act 1984, or advice given to council by an authorized officer under that Act, of a deficiency that does not pose an immediate serious threat to public health but may do so if no remedial action is taken
"MCH" means the Maternal and Child Health Service provided by a council to support the health and development of children within the municipality from birth until school age
"population" means the resident population estimated by council

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Financial Performance Indicators									
	Results	Results	Results	Results	Forecasts				
Dimension/*indicator* /*measure*	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Material Variations
Efficiency									
Expenditure level									
Expenses per property assessment [Total expenses / Number of property assessments]	$3,039	$3,158	$3,279	$3,230	$3,235	$3,299	$3,300	$3,375	
Revenue level									
Average rate per property assessment [General rates and municipal charges / Number of property assessments]	New in 2020	New in 2020	$1,710	$1,794	$1,766	$1,845	$1,895	$1,972	
Liquidity									
Working capital									
Current assets compared to current liabilities *[Current assets / Current liabilities] x100*	201.52%	244.18%	185.97%	160.09%	178.24%	153.57%	141.02%	139.41%	At the end of 2020/2021 cash and investments were $29M greater than the previous year due to additional government grants combined with delays in programs due to lockdown restrictions. However, while cash holdings were higher, the increased grants and lockdowns delaying the City's ability to deliver programs resulted in significant funds being classified as current liabilities (Income received in advance, $14m). In addition, a long term interest only loan ($11M) is due in the next 12 months and hence has been reclassified as current. The forward Financial Plan maintains adequate cash holdings for commitments
Unrestricted cash									
Unrestricted cash compared to current liabilities [Unrestricted cash / Current liabilities] x100	81.31%	103.54%	73.67%	68.98%	78.95%	47.73%	40.56%	27.95%	
Obligations									
Loans and borrowings									
Loans and borrowings compared to rates [Interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x100	42.34%	39.00%	34.27%	32.10%	32.71%	33.25%	33.26%	29.60%	
Loans and borrowings repayments compared to rates [Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x100	5.37%	5.33%	4.89%	4.74%	13.59%	6.14%	6.68%	7.04%	
Indebtedness									Increased grants and lockdowns delaying the City's ability to deliver programs resulted in significant funds being classified as Current Liabilities 'income received in advance' ($14m). Also a long term interest only loan ($11M) is due for repayment in 2021/2022 which as a result was reclassified to Current Liabilities during 2020/2021
Non-current liabilities compared to own source revenue [Non-current liabilities / Own source revenue] x100	36.42%	33.28%	36.95%	28.86%	30.70%	29.95%	28.87%	25.52%	

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Financial Performance Indicators (cont.)									
	Results	Results	Results	Results	Forecasts				
Dimension/*indicator* /*measure*	2018	2019	2020	2021	2021	2022	2023	2024	Material Variations
Asset renewal and upgrade									
Asset renewal and upgrade compared to depreciation [Asset renewal and asset upgrade expense / Asset depreciation] x100	New in 2020	New in 2020	99.74%	67.88%	79.39%	81.70%	82.71%	84.49%	Capital expenditure in 2021 was lower overall than previous years - in part due to some significant renewal and upgrade projects being delivered in 2021/2022. Renewal allocations have been increased in the 10 year plan, which begins to improve this ratio in future years.
Operating position									
Adjusted underlying result									
Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit) [Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit)/ Adjusted underlying revenue] x100	-0.39%	0.38%	-5.17%	-6.84%	-1.52%	-0.91%	0.51%	1.25%	Lower user fees due to COVID-19 closures (over $4.6m) have impacted on the underlying surplus. The 10 year Financial Plan forecasts a gradual improvement in the underlying result, however funding the full value of depreciation on the City's $1.7 billion asset base remains a challenge.
Stability									
Rates concentration									
Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue [Rate revenue / Adjusted underlying revenue] x100	62.93%	62.63%	66.18%	70.84%	68.39%	69.05%	69.37%	69.59%	Rates as a percentage of underlying income increased in 2020/2021 due to lower user fees in the year.
Rates effort									
Rates compared to property values [Rate revenue / Capital improved value of rateable properties in the municipality] x100	0.54%	0.54%	0.53%	0.53%	0.52%	0.52%	0.51%	0.50%	

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Financial Performance Indicators (cont.)						
Retired indicators ***Service / indicator / measure***	**Results** 2018	**Results** 2019	**Results** 2020	**Results** 2021		**Comments**
Animal Management ***Health and safety*** *Animal management prosecutions* [Number of successful animal management prosecutions]	8	4	Retired in 2020	Retired in 2020		This measure was replaced by AM7 from 1 July 2019.
Efficiency ***Revenue level*** *Average residential rate per residential property assessment* [Residential rate revenue / Number of residential property assessments]	$1,677.94	$1,758.73	Retired in 2020	Retired in 2020		This measure was replaced by E4 from 1 July 2019.
Obligations ***Asset renewal*** *Asset renewal compared to depreciation* [Asset renewal expense / Asset depreciation] x100	87.42%	78.64%	Retired in 2020	Retired in 2020		This measure was replaced by O5 in 1 July 2019.

Definitions
"adjusted underlying revenue" means total income other than:
(a) non-recurrent grants used to fund capital expenditure; and
(b) non-monetary asset contributions; and
(c) contributions to fund capital expenditure from sources other than those referred to above
"adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)" means adjusted underlying revenue less total expenditure
"asset renewal expenditure" means expenditure on an existing asset or on replacing an existing asset that returns the service capability of the asset to its original capability
"current assets" has the same meaning as in the AAS
"current liabilities" has the same meaning as in the AAS
"non-current assets" means all assets other than current assets
"non-current liabilities" means all liabilities other than current liabilities
"non-recurrent grant" means a grant obtained on the condition that it be expended in a specified manner and is not expected to be received again during the period covered by a council's Strategic Resource Plan
"own-source revenue" means adjusted underlying revenue other than revenue that is not under the control of council (including government grants
"rate revenue" means revenue from general rates, municipal charges, service rates and service charges
"recurrent grant "means a grant other than a non-recurrent grant
"residential rates" means revenue from general rates, municipal charges, service rates and service charges levied on residential properties
"restricted cash" means cash and cash equivalents, within the meaning of the AAS, that are not available for use other than for a purpose for which it is restricted, and includes cash to be used to fund capital works expenditure from the previous financial year
"unrestricted cash" means all cash and cash equivalents other than restricted cash.

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Other Information

1. Basis of Preparation

Council is required to prepare and include a performance statement within its annual report. The performance statement includes the results of the prescribed sustainable capacity, service performance and financial performance indicators and measures together with a description of the municipal district and an explanation of material variations in the results. This statement has been prepared to meet the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1989* and Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014 (as per the transitional provisions of the Local Government Act 2020).

Where applicable the results in the performance statement have been prepared on accounting bases consistent with those reported in the Financial Statements. The other results are based on information drawn from council information systems or from third parties (e.g. Australian Bureau of Statistics).

The performance statement presents the actual results for the current year. For the prescribed financial performance indicators and measures, the results are as forecast by the council's strategic resource plan. The Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014 requires explanation of any material variations in the results contained in the performance statement. Council has adopted materiality thresholds relevant to each indicator and measure and explanations have not been provided for variations below the materiality thresholds unless the variance is considered to be material because of its nature.

The forecast figures included in the performance statement are those adopted by council in its four year budget on 24 June 2021. The four year budget includes estimates based on key assumptions about the future that were relevant at the time of adoption and aimed at achieving sustainability over the long term. Detailed information on the actual financial results is contained in the General Purpose Financial Statements. The four year budget can be obtained by contacting council or located on the Greater Bendigo City Council Website.

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Certification of the Performance Statements

In my opinion, the accompanying performance statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989 and* the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014.*

Nathan Morsillo, FCPA
Principal Accounting Officer
Date :
Bendigo

In our opinion the accompanying performance statement of Greater Bendigo City Council for the year ended 30 June 2021 presents fairly in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989 and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations2014.

The performance statement contains the relevant performance indicators, measures and results in relation to service performance, financial performance and sustainable capacity.

As at the date of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances that would render any particulars in the performance statement to be misleading or inaccurate.

We have been authorised by the Council and by the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014* to certify this performance statement in its final form.

TBC
Councillor
Date :
Bendigo

TBC
Councillor
Date :
Bendigo

Craig Niemann
Chief Executive Officer
Date :
Bendigo

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Audit opinion Performance Statement

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19.2. Customer Service Delivery 2020/2021

Author	Michael Smyth, Manager Business Transformation
Responsible Director	Andrew Cooney, Director Corporate Performance

Purpose

To provide Council with an update of customer service activities and performance for 2020/2021

Summary

Like many of Council's functions during 2020/21, customer service was impacted by COVID-19 and the restrictions that were imposed. Customer Service Centres were closed at times, officers were required to deliver services remotely and systems were modified at short notice and with little testing. This required a shift in the way services were delivered and for customers to also adapt to alternative ways that services were offered.

There were a number of interruptions and adjustments required to be implemented. Our staff worked diligently to deliver and communicate the changes and ensure that customers received consistent service and opportunities for enhanced experiences.

Overall, service interactions increased with customer contacts (phone, email and webchat) growing from 122,421 in 2019/20 to 147,098 in 2020/21. Phone contact remained the most popular form of contact but there has also been a significant increase in the use of electronic contacts with email being the preferred choice.

5,305 customers were served at the Bendigo and Heathcote counters which is less than the estimated 18,000 customers who attended the counter in 2018/19. This is highly influenced by changing customer behaviour throughout the COVID restrictions and also a transition to a modernised service for customers which included:

- Enabling customers to conduct more business with Council online, at a time and location that suits their needs
- Responding to customers electronically where possible
- Broadening electronic payment options as a choice for almost all payments
- Removing cash payments from the reception counters and educating customers about alternative agencies that accept cash payments on behalf of the City
- Introducing scheduled appointments for customers to meet with Planners, Building Inspectors, Environmental Health Officers and Engineers

As a result of these and other changes service delivery was maintained and 87% of requests were completed within the agreed service levels.

In addition to the improvements put in place, an Internal Audit of customer service delivery has been undertaken during the year. This audit identified strengths in service delivery and opportunities to build on strengths and improve practices. One clear outcome is to expand the use of existing processes and the Pathway Request System across the whole organisation for customer request/complaint management.

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RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the performance on customer service delivery, responses to the COVID-19 restrictions and the changes to customer service processes in 2020/2021.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Andrea Metcalf
Seconded: Cr David Fagg

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

Policy Context

Community Plan Reference:

City of Greater Bendigo Community Plan 2017-2021:

Goal 1 Lead and govern for all

Objective 4 Be accountable and efficient in its use of the community's money

Background Information

Customer service contacts are measured through phone, email, webchat and counter system reporting. The majority of these contacts are resolved at the first point of call. The remainder are logged in the Pathway Customer Request System and performance is measured through reporting from this system.

Previous Council Decision(s) Date(s): Council, at its meeting in 15 July 2020, requested "a report be brought back to a Council meeting with all of the information to show what Council does with its customer service activities."

Report

The 2020/2021 year was remarkable due to the impact of COVID restrictions on counter service and periods of staff working from home. Snap lockdowns from COVID outbreaks continue to require rapid responses to deliver service to the community. Many services have been further developed to offer electronic and "contactless" options and the community is becoming more accustomed to using alternate service delivery methods.

Customer contact volumes have continued to increase during the year. There were 147,098 phone calls, emails and webchats received by the customer support team compared to 122,421 in the previous year. These contacts resulted in 50,919 requests (44,237 2019/2020). Counter operations were significantly restricted during the year however 5,305 customers were served at the Bendigo and Heathcote counters since January 27 when counter data collection commenced.

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	2020/21	2019/20
Phone calls to 5434 6000 received	110,708	93,788
Emails received	33,203	26,102
Webchats received	3,187	2,531
Counter enquiries	5,305*	No data
Customer requests logged	50,919	44,237

*Counter data collection commenced 27/1/21 and COVID restrictions impacted counter operations.

Of the 50,919 requests logged 44,489 or 87% were completed within service levels. This compares to 90% in the previous year.

To continue to deliver service and to cope with increased demand many changes were required to our systems and processes. Some of the changes introduced to improve the customer experience include:

- Appointments with Planners, Building Inspectors, Environmental Health Offices and Engineers
- Call back requests logged in Pathway for Building Inspectors, Environmental Health Officers and Engineers
- SMS reminders for rates and animal registrations
- Removed cash payments from the reception counters
- Mailed out disabled parking permits
- Reception Concierge service
- Qless – Ticketing system in Reception areas. Manages customer queuing and provides valuable customer information
- Knowledgebank – key source of information – also accessible from home - to inform Customer Support Officers while serving customers.

Additional opportunities have been identified to further improve customer service include:

- Improved system for phone, email and webchat contacts to offer customers a great experience across all channels
- Call back requests logged in Pathway for Planners
- Revised Bpay view payments file after discount period has expired
- Setup online payment options for the remaining invoices which currently don’t offer this option
- Review service levels alignment with customer expectations
- Reviewing and updating Customer Service Charter

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During the year an Internal Audit reviewed customer service delivery. The audit identified the City is well placed to enhance its customer service practices to ensure consistent, positive customer service outcomes by leveraging the existing knowledge and experience of the Customer Support team and practices already used across the organisation.

The Community Satisfaction Survey result for customer service this year was 70 which is a slight increase from the previous years score of 69. Customer service is rated in line with the State wide and Regional Centres group averages (index scores of 70 and 71 respectively).

In September 2021, Customer Service refresher training will be delivered for City staff, commencing with the leadership team.

Consultation/Communication

Not applicable.

Resource Implications

Not applicable.

Attachments

Nil

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19.3. Appointment and Reappointment of Independent Members to the Audit and Risk Committee

Author	Anna Connolly, Risk and Assurance Advisor
Responsible Director	Andrew Cooney, Director Corporate Performance

Purpose

To recommend the appointment of Mr Robert Stephenson as an independent external member of the Audit and Risk Committee of Council for an initial term of three years, concluding on the 30 September 2024 and to re appoint Jovana Obradovic-Tantra for a second three year term concluding on the 30 September 2024.

Summary

The Audit and Risk Committee of Council includes four independent, external members. Where possible, the members are appointed on 'staggered' terms to ensure that a level of continuity for the Committee remains. Council recently advertised for an independent, external member following the conclusion of the term of a current member. Following the completion of the recruitment process, the panel recommends that Mr Robert Stephenson is appointed to the Committee. Mr Stephenson holds a Bachelor of Business (Accounting) and is a Certified Practicing Accountant. He has held senior roles at La Trobe University, with the most recent as the Head of Campus until July 2020. He also has a number of professional memberships and has both current and previous experience as a member on a number of boards and committees.

Council and the Audit and Risk Committee would like to acknowledge Mr Shannon Buckley, who has made a very valuable contribution as an Independent Member of the Audit and Risk Committee for the past three years with his term concluding on the 30 September 2021.

The Committee's Charter also outlines that each external member can be appointed for a maximum of two terms (maximum of 6 years) without the role needing to be advertised. Ms Jovana Obradovic-Tantra has completed her first three year term and in accordance with the Charter is being recommended for second term of three years, which will conclude on 30 September 2024.

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RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Approve the appointment of Mr Robert Stephenson to the position of Independent Member of the Audit and Risk Committee for an initial period of three years, concluding on 30 September 2024.
2. Formally acknowledge and thank Mr Shannon Buckley for his valuable contribution to the Audit and Risk Committee for the past three of years.
3. To approve the reappointment of Ms Jovana Obradovic-Tantra to her second term as an Independent Member of the Audit and Risk Committee with her tenure concluding on the 30 September 2024.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Andrea Metcalf
Seconded: Cr Dave Fagg

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

Policy Context

Community Plan Reference:

City of Greater Bendigo Community Plan 2017-2021:

Goal 1: Lead and Govern for all

Objective 2.1 Be innovative and financially responsible

Background Information

As outlined in the Audit and Risk Committee Charter, the Committee comprises of seven members, which include three Councillors and four independent external members who are appointed by Council. In accordance with the Local Government Act (2020), the Committee members must:

- include members who are Councillors of the Council
- consist of a majority of members who are not Councillors of the Council and who collectively have:
    - expertise in financial management and risk;
    - experience in public sector management; and
- not be a member of Council staff.

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It is recommended that Mr Robert Stephenson be appointed as an independent member on the Audit and Risk Committee from the 1 October 2021. The other independent members on the Committee are Chair, Mr Warren Pollock (reappointed 1 October 2019), Ms Jovana Obradovic-Tantra (appointed 1 October 2018 and recommended for reappointment until 30 September 2024), and Mr Stephen Brown (appointed 1 October 2020). The three existing members collectively have a mix of the required skills in financial management, risk and public sector management.

Report

With an Independent Member position of the Audit and Risk Committee available, the position was advertised externally. From a strong field of candidates, the interview panel, consisting of Council's Mayor, Chief Executive Officer and the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee have recommended Robert Stephenson be appointed to the role.

Mr Stephenson has a Bachelor of Business (Accounting) and is a Certified Practicing Accountant. He has held senior roles at La Trobe University, with the most recent as the Head of Campus until July 2020. He also has a number of professional memberships and has both current and previous experience as a member on a number of boards and committees.

Priority/Importance:

Following the conclusion of the term of a member of the Committee, a vacancy the here is a vacancy from 30 September 2021. Consistent with the requirements of the Audit and Risk Committee Charter, it is proposed to appoint Mr Stephenson from 1 October 2021. This will allow time for induction to be undertaken prior to the first Committee meeting in November 2021.

Options/Alternatives:

1. Do nothing – the City would be in breach of the Audit and Risk Committee Charter and the Local Government Act 2020.
2. To appoint Mr Robert Stephenson to the position for an initial term of three years and to reappoint Ms Jovana Obradovic-Tantra for a second term of a further three years.

The recommendation is option 2, to appoint Mr Robert Stephenson to the role and to reappoint Ms Jovana Obradovic-Tantra for a second term of a further three years

Timelines:

If approved, Mr Stephenson will be appointed to the position of the Independent Member of the Audit and Risk Committee from the 1 October 2021 for an initial term of 3 years and Jovana Obradovic-Tantra would be reappointed for a second term of a further three years (maximum 6 years).

Risk Analysis:

If the position/s remained vacant, the City would not meet the requirements as set out in the Audit and Risk Committee Charter for the number of independent members required for the Committee. The City would also be breaching the Local Government Act 2020, with legislation stating that there is a requirement to have more independent members on the Committee than Councillors.

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There is a risk that the level of expertise that is required for the Committee is not met, however with a competitive recruitment process undertaken this risk has been minimised with varied skills and experience across the independent members.

Consultation/Communication

Internal Consultation:

Internal consultation was undertaken in preparation for the recruitment of this position.

External Consultation:

This position was advertised externally in the Bendigo Advertiser and on the City of Greater Bendigo website. Following the advertising, a competitive recruitment process took place, with Robert Stephenson recommended for appointment to the position.

Shannon Buckley was notified that his position was expiring and that the position would be advertised externally with the members of the Audit and Risk Committee also notified of this.

Jovana Obradovic-Tantra was involved in a formal review prior to being recommended for reappointment for a further three year term.

Resource Implications

The independent members of the Audit and Risk Committee are remunerated $875 (ex GST) per meeting for attendance and the Chair is remunerated $1125 (ex GST) per meeting. These positions are budgeted each year on an ongoing basis, with 4-5 meetings held each year.

Attachments

Nil

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19.4. Contracts Awarded Under Delegation Report

Author	Lee Taig, Contract & Procurement Officer, Governance
Responsible Director	Andrew Cooney, Director Corporate Performance

Policy Context

Community Plan Reference:

City of Greater Bendigo Community Plan 2017-2021:

- Goal 1 Lead and govern for all

RECOMMENDATION

That the contracts awarded under delegation, as outlined in this report, be acknowledged by Council.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Julie Sloan
Seconded: Cr Andrea Metcalf

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

Attachments

1. Contracts Awarded

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Attachment 1 - Contracts Awarded Under Contract Council Report September 2021

Capital Contracts							
Contract No	Project	Successful Contractor	Delegated Officer	Date Signed	Price	Practical Completion	Budget
CT000580	Supply and Delivery of One (1) Suction Street Sweeper	Bucher Municipal Pty Ltd	Brian Westley	11/08/2021	$366,380.68	29/12/2021	$370,000.00
Service Contracts							
Contract No	Project	Successful Contractor	Delegated Officer	Date Signed	Price	Contract Term & Options	Budget
CT000584	Supply of Kitchen Caddies and Compostable Caddy Liners	Source Separation Systems Pty Ltd	Brian Westley	23/06/2021	Schedule of Rates	5 year initial term 2 X 1 year options	$2,100,000.00
CT000574	Provision of Water Cooling Tower, Chilled & Hot Water System Services & Maintenance	Hydro-Chem Pty Ltd	Brian Westley	7/07/2021	Schedule of Rates	3 year initial term 2 X 2 year options	$84,000.00

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19.5. Bendigo Stadium Ltd Financial Update

Author	Jacqueline Murphy, Senior Business Services Officer
Responsible Director	Steve Hamilton, Director Strategy and Growth

Purpose

To inform Council on the request received from the Board of Bendigo Stadium (BSL) to fix the interest rate for the current long-term loan BSL have with Bendigo Bank Limited.

Summary

BSL has significant liabilities to Bendigo Bank, which the City guarantees. With financial pressures, brought on by COVID-19 restrictions, in 2020 the City approved a recommendation to increase the loan amount and term.

The current long term loan with Bendigo Bank is $13M with a payback period of 12 years at a variable interest rate, this was approved by Council August, 2020.

Bendigo Bank has offered a five-year fixed rate business banking loan, which will result in significant savings for BSL each month. As the City is guarantor for BSL's current loan, to restructure or amend any part of the loan details, the City needs to provide approval.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note:

1. At its ordinary meeting in August 2020, Council approved to act as guarantor for a loan for Bendigo Stadium Limited;

2. The Board of Bendigo Stadium Limited, on the advice of the entity's Finance Committee, are intending to fix the interest rate of the loan for a period of five-years;

3. The revised loan arrangement provides additional cashflow and interest rate certainty for BSL and decrease risk for Council as the guarantor of the loan.

That Council approve:

4. BSL's request for Council as guarantor, to fix the current Bendigo Bank loan of $13M to fixed five-year term.

Cr Metcalf declared a conflict of interest (general conflict of interest) in the Lead and Govern For All Report No. 19.5 (Bendigo Stadium Limited Financial Update) as she Council's representative on the Board of the Stadium.

Cr Metcalf left the meeting.

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RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Margaret O'Rourke
Seconded: Cr David Fagg

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

Cr Metcalf returned to the meeting.

Policy Context

Community Plan Reference:

City of Greater Bendigo Community Plan 2017-2021:

Goal 1 - Lead and govern for all - Effective community engagement will guide well-informed, responsive decision-making and financially responsible resource allocations, which are transparent and accountable.

Objective 1.4 - Be accountable and efficient in its use of the community's money.

Goal 2 - Wellbeing and fairness - Inclusive policies, partnerships and projects that increase access, improve health and learning opportunities, by building better connections and quality of life for all.

Objective 2.3 - Promote community connection.

Goal 3 - Strengthening the economy - Advocacy, innovation and support to grow jobs, attract visitors and diversify the local and regional economy.

Objective 3.1 - Support our local businesses and industry to be strong, vibrant and to grow and develop.

Background Information

The Bendigo Stadium is a major asset of the City, hosting weekly community sporting programs along with major sporting and entertainment events.

Bendigo Stadium is recognised as one of the most progressive sporting venues in regional Australia. The Bendigo Stadium attracts over 12,000 patrons each week, through operating as a sports venue for domestic volleyball and basketball competitions as well as being a licensed club venue with 10,000 members.

Bendigo Stadium is also home to our very own Bendigo Spirit and Bendigo Braves elite basketball teams providing our grassroots athletes a chance to play at the highest level in Bendigo.

In 2016 and again in 2020, Council agreed to guarantee BSL's Bendigo Bank loan – the business has been significantly impacted since March 2020 with restrictions on operation due to COVID-19, this will continue to have a profound effect on BSL's financial performance for many months post-COVID.

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Report

BSL is requesting approval to refinance their existing loan with Bendigo Bank. The term and amount of the loan remains unchanged, ($13M over a 12-year payback period), however Bendigo Bank has offered a new fixed, five-year rate.

The revised loan rate will reduce the monthly payments for BSL, providing cash flow relief.

Details of the restructure loan agreement, for Council's approval, as guarantor are outlined below;

- Fixed interest rate for five-years;
- 12-year term and loan amount $13M, remains unchanged;
- Amount owing on the loan will be $7.4M after five years, rolling over to a variable rate;
- No fees will be associated with changing the loan from variable to fixed;
- Total business loan equating to $13M

Timelines:

- 23 July, letter from BSL's Board Chair and Chief Executive Office, requesting Council's approval for loan restructure;
- 6 September, Council briefing;
- 20 September, Council meeting.

Progress:

Risk Analysis:

Risk of not approving the change:

Currently there is a significant financial risk to BSL being able to manage cashflows and remain open – especially with the current restrictions on operations and hosting major events, due to COVID-19.

These risks include:

- BSL continuing to not have the financial capacity to service their current loan;
- Repayment(s) being required to be made by the City as guarantor;
- BSL does not have the cash flow to rebuild and recover post COVID-19.

Consultation/Communication

This report has been a collaborative piece of work in conjunction with BSL Board and Senior Management Team in consultation with City of Greater Bendigo officers.

Councillors have received regular reports on the financial performance of BSL and the impacts of COVID-19 on BSL's operations and finances.

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Resource Implications

Attachments

Nil

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20. URGENT BUSINESS

Nil

21. NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil

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22. COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Cr Williams reported as follows:

- *Unfortunately, less content as still unable to attend a number of events due to ongoing restrictions and the cancellation of a number of community events*
- *Concern regarding the ongoing mental health of business operators during this time*
- *Continued to attend many online meetings, including the workshops on the 3-year program for footpaths and bus shelters and on the very important transport strategy*
- *Was fortunate to officially open the online Bendigo Northern Group Half-Yearly Conference of the Country Women's Association of Vic Inc at which was conveyed the progress with affordable housing, updates in the Kangaroo Flat area and the Positive Ageing Program*

"Cr Sloan reported as follows:

Thank you Mayor Alden, I am pleased to table my councillor report about joining with our community and reflecting on key events.

Covid restrictions and lockdowns continued to interrupt plans for ward meetings, listening posts and face to face meetings. Communication and connection with community members, groups and township progress associations has been made via phone, email and online meetings. A range of issues have been raised by residents including tree planting, forest protection, asset maintenance, infrastructure development, gravel roads, heritage issues and local amenity. These matters have been addressed by submission of resident or councillor requests and by the provision of information.

I attended online activities and meetings including the AGM of Empowering Eaglehawk, Planning application consultation, an E-Vehicle Seminar, Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Steering Committee, Audit and Risk Committee, Victorian Local Government Grants Commission Information session, and completed In-house and Municipal Association of Victoria Media Training.

I am, along with Cr's Metcalf and Fagg, continue key forward planning to enable meetings to occur with a range of community groups including Goornong District Action Group, Woodvale Progress Association, Whipstick Northern Corridor Progress Association, and Town Meetings with the communities of Elmore, Eaglehawk and White Hills. I look forward to meeting in person when safe to do so. As another way of keeping in touch and sharing information with our community, I contributed an article for Long Gully Neighbourhood Centre's Newsletter about the City's key strategic plans and opportunities to participate in the process.

Between lockdowns I visited the mega-bat colony in the Park and followed up on their status. I also visited Truscott Reserve Dog Park to view improvements currently underway, including shade-tree planting. My little dog Mackie enjoyed the small dog retreat area which offers smaller dogs a safe place to explore. I also made a trip to the Koomba St. section of Wanyarram Dhelk (Good Waterhole) Bendigo Creek project to view progress on healing storm water before it flows into Bendigo Creek.

I had the pleasure of viewing the bulb festival Blooming Borough in Eaglehawk linked to Bendigo Bloom Festival and appreciated the work undertaken by Parks and Open Space team to maintain our beautiful gardens and open spaces that enable our community to enjoy and connect with nature.

Thank you, that concludes my councillor report".

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Cr Penna reported as follows:

- *Enjoyed the 1:1 meeting with the Mayor which was very productive*
- *Chaired Positive Ageing Advisory Committee meeting*
- *Visited a number of planning application sites*
- *Participated in the workshops on the 3-year footpath and bus shelter program and the transport strategy*
- *Continuation of the many emails and telephone calls from the community*

Cr O'Rourke reported as follows:

- Continues to enjoy the ad hoc community engagement with members of the community during supermarket shopping trips!
- Attended a number of online meetings
- Looking forward to engaging with the Eppalock Ward community in the future face-to-face
- Highlighted the support services offered by Be.Bendigo to assist local businesses to survive during the COVID-19 restrictions
- Participated in the transport strategy and priorities workshop and the importance of all being on the same page when advocating for funding from various government levels
- Congratulations to the Parks and Open Space staff for the superb display of 50,000 tulip bulbs through the municipality and wonderful to see the locals and regional visitors enjoying the display

Cr Metcalf reported as follows:

"Cr Williams I did the launch of the CWA conference last year and I can say that you have missed a delicious afternoon tea!

I agree with Cr. O'Rourke about talking to the community while doing the supermarket shop. I had a proud Melbourne supporter talk to me on Saturday about public space in Huntly and what Council is planning to do out there.

Online is the way to go this month and this has been for councillor briefing and meetings until recently. It's disappointing that the councillor listening posts and meetings with the community have been cancelled as I know how much councillors enjoy these.

I joined the Bendigo Writers Festival Bookmark event "Peter Doherty in Conversation" hosted by Dr Julie Rudner the director of the Bendigo Campus Latrobe University really informative.

Professor Doherty from Melbourne University spoke about the Covid journey in this State and the response from different medical sciences in this State. It was really fascinating and a link to the talk was provided to those who attended which I have shared with people I know. There were people from the other side of the world listening to this too.

Thank-you to Rosemary Sorensen for organising this in her role as the Director of the Writers Festival. It bodes well for the festival".

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Cr Fagg reported as follows:

"As for most of us around this table, it has been very difficult to meet with community groups, and to discuss important issues through community engagement. It seems for the foreseeable future, that we will need to adapt to online methods of communication.

In the last month, amongst the many emails and phone calls with residents, I was able to take part in several meetings, some in person and some online:

- Meeting with Bendigo BMX club, to discuss possible improvements to the site, and future competitive events that they will be hosting
- Meeting with council staff to kick-start a management plan for the Long Gully Creek trail, to further improve our walking and cycling network
- Met with council staff to further discussions about housing developments at the Eaglehawk Train Station site, and other housing affordability ideas.
- Along with other councillors, met with John Dewar from La Trobe university to express our concerns at their current change plan, which will reduce opportunities for students in the region.
- Met with council staff to progress ideas on housing affordability
- Attended an online workshop on Community Leadership by the MAV
- Met with representatives of the Karen community regarding their response to the Covid-19 pandemic".

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23. MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor Cr Jennifer Alden, reported on her attendance at the following meetings and events:

- Participated in the Central Bendigo Finding Flood Solutions Community Discussion held online.
- Attended the media event for GovHub commencement of constructions with the Hon. Jacinta Allan MP Member for Bendigo East and Ms Maree Edwards Member for Bendigo West.
- Attended the 'When he came home' book launch by author Dianne Dempsey.
- Chaired the online Public Space Advisory Committee meeting.
- Spoke at the media event for Golden Dragon Museum to announce funding for the Collection Redevelopment Project.
- Participated in the Regional Cities Victoria online meeting.
- Presented at the Inquiry into the Australian Local Power Agency Bill 2021 and Australian Local Power Agency (Consequential Amendments) Bill 2021.
- Chaired the Pandemic Relief and Recovery Committee online meeting.
- Participated in the Bendigo Manufacturing Group online meeting.
- Panel member for the Audit and Risk Committee independent member interviews.
- Spoke at the virtual event for the Crosbie Forest Biodiversity Benchmark Study Report launch.
- Attended the Public Health and Wellbeing working group online meeting.
- Participated in Regional Mayoral Briefing with Acting Minister for Local Government Hon. Mary-Anne Thomas MP.
- Participated in the Audit and Risk Committee – City of Greater Bendigo online meeting.
- Participated in the Bendigo Maubisse Friendship Incorporated online meeting.
- Attended media event for the Bloom launch in the Conservatory Gardens.
- Attended the Peter Doherty in Conversation: A Bendigo Writers Festival Bookmark online event.
- Participated in the Regional Cities Victoria Mayors online meeting.
- Attended a media event for social housing in Eaglehawk with Ms Maree Edwards, Member for Bendigo West.
- Participated in photo opportunity to remind businesses and the community regarding ID Checks.
- Presided at the online Citizenship Ceremony held on National Citizenship Day attended by 21 new citizens.
- Spoken with residents, businesses and community groups regarding a wide range of issues.
- Participated in numerous radio, newspaper, television media interviews and photo opportunities.

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24. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

The Chief Executive Officer, Mr Craig Niemann, reported as follows:

"The Mayor and I were pleased to attend a media event in August with Member for Bendigo East, Jacinta Allan; Member for Bendigo West, Maree Edwards and Traditional Owners from Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation to celebrate the commencement of construction of the Bendigo GovHub at the Lyttleton Terrace site. In recent weeks, a crane has been installed on site and soon the largest timber frame in Victoria will rise from the ground.

This is the second crane now on Bendigo's skyline, with the other one located at the site of the new Bendigo Law Courts.

The recent restrictions on construction contractors travelling from Melbourne to regional Victoria may have an impact on both projects as well as affecting other smaller local projects.

The advice that White Night has been rescheduled to 2022 due to the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic was disappointing. White Night was scheduled to take place this year on 2 October. Visit Victoria will continue to work closely with us to deliver the event with new dates to be announced in due course.

During the month I participated in meetings of Regional Cities Victoria, MAV Rural North Central and a meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee.

I also participate in numerous meetings regarding COVID-19 which are held with stakeholders and assist in the provision of up-to-date information. Over the weekend, a number of COVID-19 exposure sites were listed for Bendigo and there has been high demand at the Bendigo Showgrounds drive-through testing site today. Increased testing capacity is being considered. Please stay informed by visiting the Department of Health and Human Services website.

Victoria's roadmap to delivering the National Plan has been released and is set against COVID-19 thresholds including hospitalisation rates, vaccination targets. The roadmap is available on the Department of Health and Human Services website.

City of Greater Bendigo's spectacular tulip displays are blooming around Rosalind Park, Conservatory Gardens and other gardens around the municipality. Approximately 50,000 tulips have been planted and are creating a stunning splash of rainbow colours that will be in full bloom until mid-October.

For those who cannot visit the displays in person, a camera has been set up in the Conservatory Gardens and is a live link through the Bendigo Tourism website which allows viewers to watch the tulips bloom".

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25. CONFIDENTIAL (SECTION 66) REPORTS

25.1. Confidential Report pursuant to Section 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020 relating to Council business information.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council close the meeting to members of the public pursuant to Sections 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020 to consider a report relating to Council business information.

MOTION

Moved: Cr Margaret O'Rourke
Seconded: Cr Greg Penna

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:08 pm.

Confirmed:

October 18, 2021 **Chair**

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