



GANNAWARRA

Shire Council

Wednesday, 16 September 2020

6:30pm

Council Chambers

Kerang

AGENDA

Council Meeting

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	Nil	

Tom O'Reilly
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

1 WELCOME TO COUNTRY

Playing of the Welcome to Country video clip.

2 OPENING DECLARATION

We, the Councillors of the Shire of Gannawarra, declare that we will undertake the duties of the office of Councillor, in the best interests of our community, and faithfully, and impartially, carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in us, to the best of our skill and judgement.

3 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Meeting - 19 August 2020

5 DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A Councillor or member of Council staff has a conflict of interest in a matter if he or she has a *direct interest* or an *indirect interest* in that matter.

A person has a direct interest in a matter if there is a likelihood that the benefits, obligations, opportunities or circumstances of the person would be directly altered if the matter is decided in a particular way. This includes where there is a likelihood that the person will receive a direct benefit or loss that can be measured in financial terms or that the residential amenity of the person will be directly affected if the matter is decided in a particular way.

A person has an indirect interest in a matter if the person has:

- a close association in the matter because a family member, a relative or a member of their household has a direct or indirect interest in the matter
- an indirect financial interest in the matter
- a conflicting duty – although there are circumstances where a person does not have an indirect interest because of a conflicting duty
- received an ‘applicable gift’
- become an interested party in the matter by initiating civil proceedings or becoming a party to civil proceedings in relation to the matter.
- Because their residential amenity is likely to be altered if the matter is decided in a particular way.

Disclosure of conflict of interest

If a Councillor has a conflict of interest in a matter which is to be or is likely to be considered at a meeting of the Council, the Councillor must:

- if he or she will be present at the meeting, make a full disclosure of that interest by advising of the class and nature of the interest to either –
 - the Council immediately before the matter is considered at the meeting, *or*
 - in writing to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).


- Where the disclosure is made to the CEO in writing, the Councillor need only disclose the class of interest to the meeting, immediately before the matter is considered.
- The CEO must keep written disclosures in a secure place for three years after the date the Councillor who made the disclosure ceases to be a Councillor, and destroy the written disclosure when the three year period expires.
- While the matter is being considered or any vote taken, the Councillor with the conflict of interest must leave the room and notify the Mayor he or she is doing so. The Mayor must notify the Councillor that he or she may return to the room after consideration of the matter and all votes have been cast.
- A CEO must record in the minutes of the meeting the declaration of the conflict of interest, the class of the interest and, if the Councillor has disclosed the nature of the interest to the meeting, the nature of the interest.
- A failure by a Councillor to comply with Section 79 of the Act may result in a penalty of up to 120 penalty units.

6 ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS

6.1 ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS 19 AUGUST TO 15 SEPTEMBER, 2020

Author: Mel Scott, Executive Assistant - Chief Executive Office

Authoriser: Tom O'Reilly, CEO

Attachments: 1 [Assembly of Councillors - 7 September 2020](#) 

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the records of Assemblies of Councillors from 19 August to 15 September, 2020.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents to Council written records of Assembly of Councillors in accordance with Section 80A of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

In accordance with Section 80B of the *Local Government Act 1989*, the Officer preparing this report declares no conflict of interest in regards to this matter.

COUNCIL PLAN

Council Plan 2017-2021: Good Governance and a Healthy Organisation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In accordance with Section 80A of the *Local Government Act 1989* a written record of assembly of councillors must be reported at an Ordinary Council meeting and minuted as soon as practicable.

The record must include:

1. The names of all Councillors and members of Council staff attending
2. The matters considered
3. Any conflict of interest disclosures made by a councillor attending
4. Whether a councillor who has disclosed a conflict of interest left the assembly.

CONSULTATION

Consultation with Councillors and staff has occurred to ensure the accuracy of the Assemblies of Councillors records.


CONCLUSION

To ensure compliance with Section 80A of the *Local Government Act 1989*, it is recommended that Council note the Assembly of Councillors records as outlined in this report.



Assembly of Councillors Record Form

Date:	Monday, 7 September, 2020
Time:	9:04am – 1:13pm
Location:	Zoom - Videoconference
In Attendance: (Councillors)	Cr Lorraine Learmonth Cr Charlie Gillingham Cr Brian Gibson Cr Jenny Fawcett Cr Jodie Basile Cr Andrew Gibbs (from 11:07am to 11:54am) Cr Steve Tasker
Apologies:	Nil
In Attendance: (Officers)	Tom O'Reilly, Phil Higgins, Geoff Rollinson, Stacy Williams, Lisa Clue, Mel Scott, Wade Williams, Roger Griffiths, Paul Fernee, Brent Heitbaum, Narelle O'Donoghue, Carole Wandin, Kellie Burmeister
In Attendance: (Other)	Nil
Matters Discussed:	<p>Council Agenda Reports:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Policy Review – Policy No. 140 COVID-19 Hardship 1.2 Christmas Closure 1.3 Domestic Wastewater Management Plan 1.4 Application for Planning Permit P19.116 1.5 Geographic Place Naming – Koondrook Development Committee Proposal 1.6 Kangaroo Lake Land Transfer – Road Discontinuance - Decision 1.7 Draft Community Engagement Strategy 2020-2025 1.8 Community Grants Program 2020
	Break 10:10am to 10:20am
Matters Discussed:	<p>Councillor Updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rates and Charges • Protective Data Security Plan • NDIS Update <p>2021 Australia Day Arrangements</p>
Matters Discussed:	<p>Councillor Strategic Briefing Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2019/2020 Capital Works Program Update • Strategic Projects – Towards 2025 <p>Councillor Issues Raised</p>

Conflict of Interest Disclosures		
Matter No.	Councillor/Officer making disclosure	Councillor/Officer left meeting Yes/No
1.8 Community Grants Program 2020	Cr Charlie Gillingham	No
1.1 2019/2020 Capital Works Program Update	Cr Steve Tasker	Yes
Completed By:	Tom O'Reilly –Chief Executive Officer 	

7 BUSINESS REPORTS FOR DECISION

7.1 POLICY REVIEW - POLICY NO. 140 - COVID-19 HARDSHIP

Author: Phil Higgins, Director Corporate Services

Authoriser: Phil Higgins, Director Corporate Services

Attachments: 1 Policy No. 140 COVID-19 Hardship [↓](#)

RECOMMENDATION

That Council extend the operations of Policy No. 140 – COVID-19 Hardship until a further review on or before 17 March 2021.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In response to the impact that Coronavirus (COVID-19) was having and was likely to have on our local businesses and employment, the Council adopted Policy No. 140 – COVID-19 Hardship in April 2020. The policy was adopted to recognise the financial hardship being experienced and was put in place for six months. As Victoria is still under COVID-19 restrictions, this report seeks an extension of the timeline of the policy.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to extend the timeline of the operation of Council Policy No. 140 – COVID-19 Hardship.

ATTACHMENTS

Policy No. 140 – COVID-19 Hardship

DISCUSSION

Policy No. 140 – COVID-19 Hardship caters for the following rates and charges payment arrangements:-

- Council to hold interest on all outstanding debts during the COVID-19 pandemic and hold off on legal action of rates and charges; and
- The interest hold date will begin from the declaration of the State of Emergency, 16 March, 2020 and stay in place for 6 months, to be reviewed by 16 September, 2020.

RELEVANT LAW

Local Government Act 1989 – Sections 170 (Deferred payment); and 171A (Waiver by application – financial hardship).

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Council adopted Policy No. 140 - COVID-19 Hardship on 15 April, 2020, with a review date of 16 September, 2020.

OPTIONS

The Council can either conclude or extend the operations of Policy No. 140 - COVID-19 Hardship.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The impact of COVID-19 on our community is profound. The economic impact is highly visible in certain sectors of the retail, commercial and tourism areas. The forced restrictions have impacted community events (social) and regular sporting and cultural activities.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Policy No. 140 has been in place for six months. The policy has been actively promoted in the media through media releases, printed and radio press, web pages, social media and on our rate notices. Despite these actions the uptake of the policy provisions has been low.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The Policy was a new policy in April, 2020. The policy requires a simple notification about ratepayers being impacted by COVID-19, to activate the policy provisions.

COLLABORATION

The policy was established following evaluation of other councils in the region adopting similar responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

To date there have been 39 applications for assistance under this policy. The interest written off in 2019/20 was \$1,161.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

This policy is aligned to various state and national plans to provide assistance to our communities during the pandemic.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Policy No. 025 – Outstanding Debt

Council Policy No. 034 – Rate Relief

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

This report will be considered in an open Council meeting.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officer preparing this report declares that they have no conflict of interest in regards to this matter.



COVID-19 Hardship

COUNCIL POLICY NO. 140

1. POLICY OBJECTIVE

To outline options for Council to assist ratepayers who are experiencing temporary financial hardship due to the impacts of Coronavirus (COVID-19).

COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic on the 30 January 2020 and a State of Emergency was declared in Victoria on the 16 March 2020.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to ratepayers who have an outstanding rate or charge account with Council who are experiencing temporary financial hardship due to COVID-19.

This policy allows Council to withhold interest raised on outstanding charges levied, place a hold on referring accounts to Council's debt collection agency for recovery and allows Council to put in place payment plans tailored specifically to the debt holders needs.

3. REFERENCES

Local Government Act 1989

4. POLICY

Council to hold interest on all outstanding debts during the COVID-19 pandemic and hold off on legal action of rates and charges.

The interest hold date will begin from the declaration of the State of Emergency, 16 March 2020 and stay in place for 6 months, to be reviewed by 16 September 2020.

If the debt is not paid in full by this time and COVID-19 Hardship policy has not been extended, Council's Rate Relief – Policy No. 034 will apply and interest will be accrued from policy end date.

Rates notices will continue to be issued while interest holds are in place.

5. RELATED POLICIES

- Policy No. 034 – Rate Relief

6. RESPONSIBILITY

Council will review the COVID-19 Hardship policy within 6 months of the adopted date.

Council will notify account holders of outstanding balances at the expiry of COVID-19 Hardship policy timeframe.

7. FURTHER INFORMATION

Members of the public may inspect all Council policies at Gannawarra Shire Council's Kerang and Cohuna offices or online at www.gannawarra.vic.gov.au.

Records – Document Profile No. 3.000518
Originally adopted: 15 April 2020
To be reviewed: 15 October 2020



7.2 CHRISTMAS CLOSURE 2020**Author:** Phil Higgins, Director Corporate Services**Authoriser:** Phil Higgins, Director Corporate Services**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION****That Council:**

1. Acknowledge the closure of Council offices over the Christmas/New Year period from closing time on Thursday 24 December, 2020 through to Monday 4 January, 2021.
2. Advertise the office closure in the local newspaper, website and social media.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To enable Council staff to enjoy the Christmas holiday period with friends and family, it is proposed that Council close its main administration offices, libraries, Gannawarra Shire Children's Centre administration and Works Depot from Thursday, 24 December, 2020 and re-open on Monday, 4 January, 2021.

PURPOSE

To seek approval for Council to close its services over the Christmas holiday period and to advertise the closure in the local media.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

DISCUSSION

This holiday season, Christmas Day and Boxing Day are on a Friday and Saturday respectively, with both days recognised public holidays and Monday 28 December a day in lieu of Boxing Day.

In the spirit of a family friendly workplace, it is recommended to close Council's main administration offices, libraries, Gannawarra Shire Children's Centre administration and Works Depot from the usual closing time on Thursday, 24 December, 2020.

Whilst the above offices and depot will be closed, certain key and emergency services will be maintained. These include Community Care, Local Laws and emergency call out arrangements in the case of fire, flood or a significant rain event. These arrangements and contacts will be communicated with the closure.

Council will be closing other services for three days (29-31 December). This is outlined on the table below:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				24/12/20 (Business as usual)	25/12/20 (Public Holiday)	26/12/20 (Public Holiday)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27/12/20 (Closed)	28/12/20 (Day in lieu of Boxing Day)	29/12/20 (Closed)	30/12/20 (Closed)	31/12/20 (Closed)	1/1/21 (Public Holiday)	

RELEVANT LAW

The Christmas shutdown is detailed in the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement rather than in legislation.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Council considers Christmas closure annually. Last year the closure was for three days. In 2018/19 Christmas fell on a Tuesday, the office was closed for four days.

OPTIONS

Council has the following options:-

- Close the offices from close of business (COB) Thursday 24/12/20 until Monday 4/1/21 (three day closure); and
- Close the offices for greater than three days.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The Christmas to new-year period is traditionally aligned to a stronger social focus around families.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The outcome will be advertised to the community via local media and social media channels.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Not applicable

COLLABORATION

Any closure greater than the three days between Christmas and new-year would require appropriate negotiation with staff.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The Christmas to new-year period is a time where staff can take leave and from a financial perspective it can reduce leave liabilities on the balance sheet.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2017-2021: Good Governance and a Healthy Organisation. The leave proposed aligns with the Council's Enterprise Bargaining Agreement.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

This report will be considered in an open Council meeting.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officer preparing this report declared that they have no conflict of interest in regards to this matter.

7.3 DOMESTIC WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

Author: Narelle O'Donoghue, Manager Community Health

Authoriser: Stacy Williams, Director Community Wellbeing

Attachments: 1 **Draft Revised Gannawarra Domestic Wastewater Management Plan 2020-2023** [↓](#)

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the Gannawarra Shire Domestic Wastewater Management Plan, as presented and attached.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Domestic Wastewater Management Plan forms part of Council's obligations to prevent public health risk and contamination of the environment from the disposal of domestic wastewater.

Council is required by legislation to have such a plan in place and to approve and regulate any onsite wastewater management systems (septic tanks) that generate less than 5,000 litres per day.

Council first developed a Domestic Wastewater Management Plan for the Gannawarra Shire in 2007. The Council Plan 2017-2021 identified as a priority action a review of this plan.

A Domestic Wastewater Management Plan helps guide consistent decision making when Council's delegated officers are assessing applications to install or alter domestic wastewater systems. The plan also supports planning decisions to reduce or minimise future impacts from domestic wastewater.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present the recently reviewed Gannawarra Shire Domestic Wastewater Management Plan for adoption.

ATTACHMENTS

Draft Revised Domestic Wastewater Management Plan 2020-2023.

DISCUSSION

Council is responsible for onsite wastewater management systems in both private and commercial settings where the wastewater generated is less than 5,000 litres per day. Systems generating greater than 5,000 litres per day of wastewater are regulated by the Victorian Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

The purpose of a Domestic Wastewater Management Plan is to assist Council's Environmental Health Officers to fulfil their delegated responsibilities in the assessment of domestic wastewater systems operating, or intending to be installed, within the municipality and to provide appropriate strategies and actions to manage any issues relating to onsite wastewater management.

Council first adopted a Domestic Wastewater Management Plan in 2007. This plan was developed by RMCG Consultants for Business, Communities & Environment and consisted of a risk assessment of domestic wastewater across the Gannawarra Shire. The original 2007 plan was funded by the then Department of Sustainability and Environment.

The review of the 2007 document has taken into account changes that have occurred since that time.

A number of strategic actions within the 2007 plan have been achieved:

- Extension of town sewage system along Cohuna Island Road, Cohuna to connect the Cohuna Caravan Park, Cohuna Recreation Reserve and associated facilities, Apex Park and the Island Rise estate to reticulated sewerage.
- Installation of a Lower Murray Water Sewerage System at Murrabit.
- Connection of the majority of houses within Koondrook and Leitchville to reticulated sewerage.
- Undertaking a Kangaroo Lake Domestic Septic Tank and Groundwater Impacts Assessment.
- The establishment of processes between Council's Environmental Health, Planning and Building departments to strengthen systems around approval processes.
- Development of educational tools to assist households to understand and manage risks associated with their Onsite Wastewater Management systems.

While much has been achieved, it should be noted that the 2007 Domestic Wastewater Management Plan consisted of a large number of actions. Many have not been achieved due to resource limitations, competing priorities of Council's Environmental Health Officers, a low assessment of risk associated with these proposed actions, and a balancing of risk based and proportionate regulatory oversight of domestic householders across the Gannawarra Shire.

There have also been a number of regulatory changes since 2007 that have strengthened compliance and enforcement relating to domestic wastewater systems. This includes an updated Australia and New Zealand Standards (2008) and a new Environment Protection Authority Code of Practice for Onsite Wastewater Management (2016). The Victorian Government also intends that a new *Environment Protection Amendment Act 2018* will take effect from 1 July 2021.

RELEVANT LAW

Section 29 of the *State Environment Protection Policy (Waters) 2018* (Vic) requires a municipal council to have a Domestic Wastewater Management Plan in place and to approve and regulate any onsite wastewater management systems (septic tanks) that generate less than 5,000 litres per day.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

The Domestic Wastewater Management Plan was originally adopted by Council on 26 September 2007. This is the first time since then that the plan has been reviewed.

OPTIONS

To ensure legislative compliance and its content is current, the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan must be reviewed and updated at no more than intervals of five years.

An internal audit must be conducted to assess progress every three years and a report on progress of the implementation of the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan published on the Council website.

The revised plan therefore has a review date of 2023.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Gannawarra Shire Council recognises it has a key role in addressing potential risks to public health and the environment that result from treatment and disposal of wastewater from homes and businesses in unsewered areas.

The Domestic Wastewater Management Plan highlights prevention and mitigation activities to reduce the likelihood, or minimise the consequences of negative environmental and health outcomes that may occur in the area.

Council's enforcement and continued review of existing policies and legislation as well as engaging a partnership approach with various agencies responsible for wastewater activities throughout the community combine to ensure that all measures possible are addressed to reduce the likelihood of contamination caused by poor wastewater practices.

While focus will remain on educating the community on best practice management of onsite domestic wastewater management systems, enforcement where necessary will support risk reduction to the wider community and ensure compliance.

Section 2.2 of the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan details the risks associated with domestic wastewater and Section 6 includes the relevant wastewater management issues, risk assessment results and options for improving wastewater management across the municipality.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Draft reviewed Domestic Wastewater Management Plan was released for public comment on 19 March 2020 with comments invited through to 17 April 2020. In light of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic, a further period of public comment was provided on 23 June 2020 through to 24 July 2020. No submissions from the community were received.

Direct communication with Stakeholder Groups identified within the draft Domestic Wastewater Management Plan was conducted. A total of six (6) submissions were received.

In reviewing the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan internal consultation with Council's Environmental Health, Planning, Building and Engineering departments has taken place.

Feedback received on the Draft reviewed Plan was considered and incorporated into the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The *State Environment Policy (Water) 2018*, was Gazetted on 23 October 2018 to protect Victoria's water resources by seeking to protect human health and the environment by reducing the harmful effects of pollution and waste.

The Gannawarra Shire Domestic Wastewater Management Plan will be further reviewed in the second half of 2021 following the introduction of the new *Environment Protection Amendment Act 2018*, which comes into force on 1 July 2021. This will ensure that the plan is consistent with the new Act, associated regulations and policies and will remain relevant through to the full review date of 2023.

COLLABORATION

The Gannawarra Shire Domestic Wastewater Management Plan lists a number of stakeholders: Environment Protection Authority, Coliban Water, Lower Murray Water; Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water; North Central Catchment Management Authority; Goulburn Murray Water; and Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. In addition Council's Planning, Building, Engineering and Environmental Health Services are all stakeholders.

All stakeholders have been consulted in the development of the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan and will be routinely consulted when reviewing the Plan and assessing risk.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

This report contains no budgetary implications however the Action Plan (Section 7) does contain actions that will require consideration by Council in future budget processes to enable initiatives to be implemented.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

The Gannawarra Shire Domestic Wastewater Management Plan, including identified and assessed municipal risks, align to the current arrangements and risks identified across Victoria and enforceable under state-wide legislation. The Domestic Wastewater Management Plan is also consistent with other municipal strategic plans and will be used to support decision making relating to domestic wastewater into the future.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

The development of a Domestic Wastewater Management Plan links closely to Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy (2013), Arbovirus Plan (2017), Urban and Rural Strategy Plan (2007), Lake Charm, Kangaroo Lake and Gunbower Creek Environs Strategy (2013), and the Shire of Gannawarra Planning Scheme.

The Domestic Wastewater Management Plan supports Council's priority area of Sustainable Natural and Built Environments within the Council Plan 2017-2021. The Council Plan incorporates the Statutory Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan developed in accordance with the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*. The Public Health and Wellbeing Act provides the regulatory framework for protecting human health through environmental and public health controls and risk reduction strategies.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

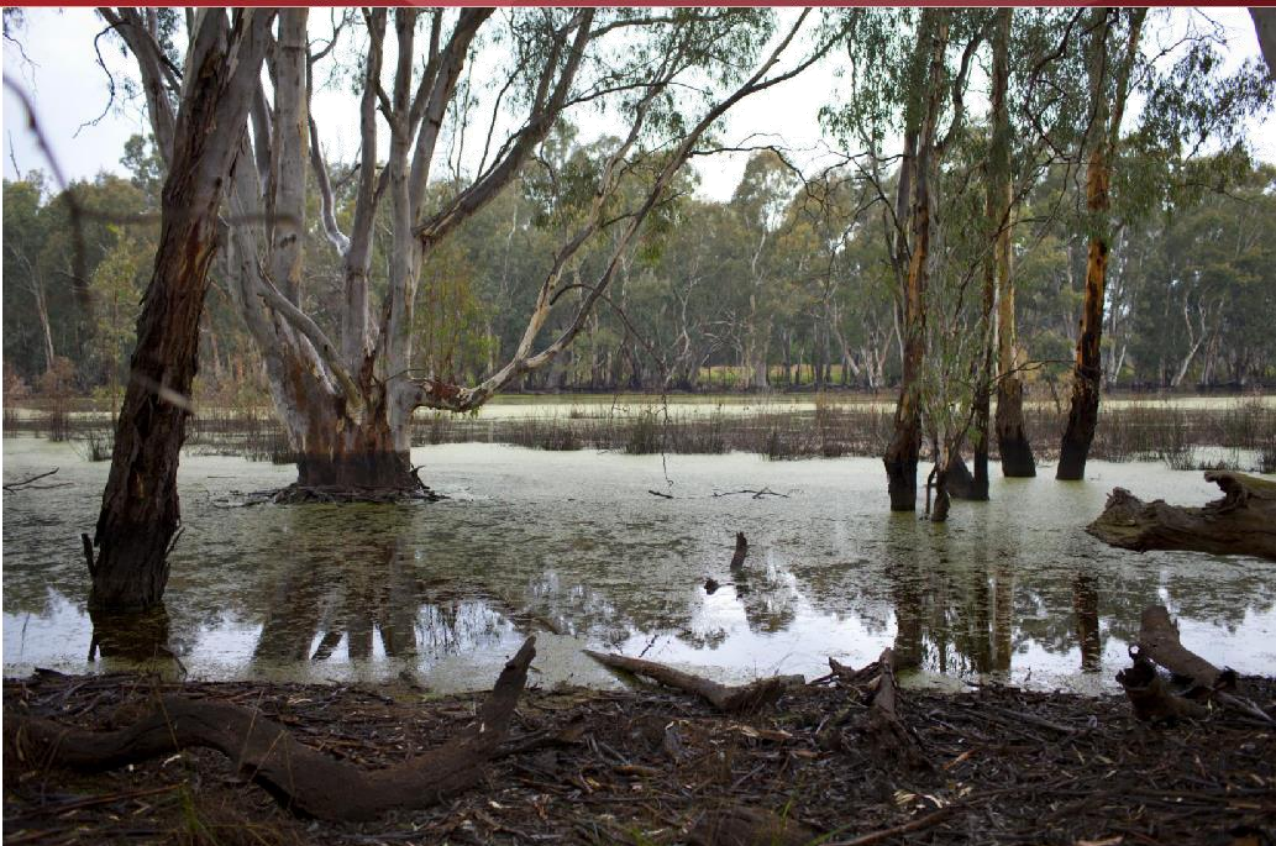
This report will be considered in an open Council meeting.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officer preparing this report declares that they have no conflict of interest in regards to this matter.

GANNAWARRA SHIRE

DOMESTIC WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN



2020-2023



Gannawarra Shire Council acknowledges the traditional owners of the land, their rich culture and connection to Country, and pays respect to Elders past, present, and emerging.

Disclaimer

Information contained in this document is based on available information at the time of writing. All figures and diagrams are indicative only and should be referred to as such. This is a strategic document which deals with technical matters in a summary way only. While the Gannawarra Shire Council has exercised reasonable care in preparing this document it does not warrant or represent that it is accurate or complete. Council or its officers accept no responsibility for any loss occasioned to any person acting or refraining from acting in reliance upon any material contained in this document.

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Executive Summary

The Shire of Gannawarra is located in northern Victoria and is home to a significant number of environmental assets including the Ramsar listed Kerang Lakes, Gunbower Forest and the Murray River.

Some residential areas of the Shire have been sewered for a number of years. Other towns and areas rely on septic tanks for onsite wastewater management. It is estimated that there are between 2,000 and 2,500 septic tanks across the Shire.

The development of a Municipal Domestic Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) provides an opportunity for Council to strategically assess wastewater disposal within the municipality and develop appropriate strategies and actions to prevent or minimise wastewater issues.

The effectiveness of onsite domestic wastewater management varies throughout the Shire. There are instances where domestic wastewater is not managed effectively and others where old systems continue to provide an effective means of disposal.

The prolonged dry conditions have served to mask the more obvious signs of poor wastewater management.

Challenges for wastewater management in the Shire of Gannawarra result from a combination of factors, including:

- Poor land capability for disposal which reduces the ability to dispose treated wastewater to land;
- Small allotments and inadequate space for wastewater disposal;
- Inadequately sized disposal areas;
- Ageing and/or poorly maintained domestic wastewater management systems (septic systems);
- Household behaviour reducing system efficiency including high water use within the home and over-watering of gardens;
- Mosquito breeding in pooled stagnant water; and
- Increased use of grey water due to ongoing dry conditions.

The DWMP addresses potential risks to public health and the environment that result from the treatment and disposal of wastewater from homes and businesses in unsewered areas.

While the scope of a DWMP does not extend to the disposal of sludge from septic tank systems as this is regulated through the Environment Protection Authority (EPA), this has been included in this DWMP due to Council managing an EPA licensed disposal site.

The development of the DWMP is consistent with government policy direction, including the State Environment Protection Policy (Waters) 2018, which requires Council to develop such a plan.

1 Introduction

Local governments throughout Victoria are required to prepare a Domestic Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) to address potential risks to public health and the environment that result from treatment and disposal of wastewater from homes and businesses in unsewered areas.

The development of a DWMP is consistent with Government policy direction, including the State Environment Protection Policy (Waters) 2018 that requires councils to develop such plans.

Improved domestic wastewater management is an important issue for Gannawarra Shire. While some residential areas have been sewerred, a number of small towns and areas surrounding sewerred towns rely on onsite domestic wastewater management systems, commonly known as septic tank systems.

The exact number of septic systems in the Shire is unknown but is thought to total between 2,000 and 2,500. This number is based on the number of lots with dwellings outside of sewerred districts in the Gannawarra Shire. As at the review date for this plan, Council had complete records for 641 of these systems.

While development outside of sewerred areas across the Gannawarra Shire has remained relatively low, there are pressures on land in terms of development in high-amenity areas near lakes and the Murray River and associated tributaries such as the Gunbower Creek.

The initial DWMP was created with funding received from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (formerly DSE). This plan is based on the initial plan developed for Gannawarra Shire Council by RM Consulting Group in 2007.

The review of this DWMP provided an opportunity for Council to strategically assess the wastewater issues within the municipality. The reviewed plan articulates Council's policy on domestic wastewater and its management into the future.

A further review will be conducted in 2023. The review will take into consideration changes to legislation, local context, actions achieved and what new actions need to be incorporated to drive further improvements in the management of domestic wastewater across the municipality into the future.

2 Context

2.1 Goals and Objectives

The goals of the Gannawarra Shire DWMP are to:

- Protect public health;
- Promote environmental best practice by reducing the impact of domestic wastewater on the local environment; and
- Promote sustainable development across the municipality by ensuring domestic wastewater is managed within the capability of the land.

The objectives of the DWMP are to:

- Develop a policy for management of domestic wastewater to enable consistent decision making;
- Develop a case for the provision of sewerage to urban and township areas where appropriate;
- Identify opportunities for improvement in Council management systems.
- Develop an appropriate financial model to adequately resource the implementation, system inspection and monitoring of the DWMP.

2.2 Risks Associated with Domestic Wastewater

The following summary of risks associated with domestic wastewater is drawn from *Domestic Wastewater Management: a planning guide for local government (2005)* prepared by the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV):

Public Health Risks

- Raw sewage can carry a range of pathogens including bacteria, viruses, protozoa, Helminths (intestinal worms), and inhaled moulds and fungi;
- Human diseases caused from these pathogens range from mild gastroenteritis to cholera, dysentery and hepatitis;
- The public can be exposed to these pathogens via contaminated drinking water, swimming or boating in contaminated water bodies, eating contaminated foodstuffs such as shellfish, or contact with domestic animals that have been exposed; and
- Septic overflows can cause organic rich pooling, increasing mosquito breeding capacity resulting in a public pest and possible disease vector.

Environmental Risks

- Contamination of groundwater by nitrate, ammonia and faecal pathogens;
- Seepage can raise the groundwater table causing salinity in certain areas;
- Surface runoff adds nitrogen and phosphorus to water catchments, stimulating algal and weed growth and causes land degradation, namely erosion;
- Effluent carries suspended solids, ammonia and organic matter, which can affect fish, aquatic plants and micro-organisms;
- Effluent can be carried into other bodies of water and cause further pollution; and
- Risks associated with the inappropriate disposal of raw sewage by unauthorised persons.

Economic Risks

- Indirect perception that the area is unsafe could decrease tourist-generated revenue;
- Tourism capacity could be limited where enforced maximum seasonal septic loads exist;
- Algal blooms or large mosquito outbreaks could impact on tourism potential;
- Poor septic management decreases land amenity and economic value;
- A build-up of salt or soil nutrient concentration decreases land productivity;
- Contaminated water bodies can negatively impact on aquaculture and agriculture using the water;
- For home owners, replacing failing systems or connection to reticulated sewerage can be very expensive; and
- Possibility of increased maintenance to stormwater drains which receive effluent due to excessive weed growth and scouring.

Legal Risks

- Council can be found liable for failure to discharge their statutory responsibilities; and
- Risk of litigation is increasing as law firms become more proactive in seeking cases.

A further risk is the lack of resources to address poor onsite wastewater system management that may lead to the above outcomes.

2.3 State Legislation and Policies

The list of legislative requirements regarding domestic wastewater management are summarised below.

Environment Protection Act 1970

The Environment Protection Act 1970 (The Act) is the primary legislation used to regulate onsite wastewater management systems. The Act outlines the need for permits for the installation of new, or the alteration of existing onsite wastewater management systems, as well as the provision to require certain conditions relating to the installation and use of onsite wastewater management systems and their need for ongoing maintenance.

Environment Protection Amendment Act 2018 (comes into force 1 July 2021)

From 1 July 2021, the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) will enforce new laws aimed at preventing harm to public health and the environment from pollution and waste. When the amended Act comes into force, the EPA will have enhanced powers to prevent risks to the environment and human health. Stronger sanctions and penalties may be issued to hold environmental polluters to account.

The General Environmental Duty is a centrepiece of the new laws. It applies to all Victorians. If activities are conducted that pose a risk to human health and the environment, those risks must be understood. Reasonably practicable steps must be taken to eliminate or minimise them. In an Australian first, the General Environmental Duty is criminally enforceable.

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008

The Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 provides the legislation for Council to address potential public health nuisances which may arise from inadequately performing or failing septic tank systems. It is also a means to address any public health issues that cannot be addressed by the Environment Protection Act 1970.

Environment Protection Authority Code of Practice Onsite Wastewater Management No 891.4 - July 2016

The Code of Practice Onsite Wastewater Management (The Code) provides standards and guidance to ensure the management of onsite wastewater (up to 5,000 L/day) protects public health and the environment as well as uses resources efficiently.

The Code has been written to support the wastewater industry, regulators such as local governments and property owners to design, install and/or manage onsite wastewater management systems in accordance with the Environment Protection Act 1970 and the State Environment Protection Policy (Waters) 2018.

State Environment Protection Policy (Waters) 2018

The State Environment Protection Policy (Waters) 2018 sets a statutory framework for the protection of the uses and values of Victoria's fresh and marine water environments. In relation to onsite domestic wastewater management, this policy ensures that residential developments and

subdivisions located outside areas provided with reticulated sewerage are able to adequately contain domestic wastewater within the property boundaries.

Section 29 requires councils to develop a Domestic Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) that;

(a) identifies the public health and environmental risks associated with the onsite domestic wastewater management systems;

(b) sets out strategies to minimise those risks;

(c) identify, cost, prioritise and evaluate options to provide –

(i) solutions to prevent discharge of sewage beyond allotment boundaries and minimise impacts on groundwater; and

(ii) for the compliance assessment and enforcement of onsite domestic wastewater management systems in accordance with the plan; and

(d) if applicable, have regard to the Guidelines for planning permit applications in open, potable water supply catchment areas and any relevant guidelines authorised by the Authority.

A DWMP must be reviewed and updated at intervals of no more than five years.

An internal audit must be conducted to assess progress and report on progress of the implementation of the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan every three years with a report published on the Council website.

Australian and New Zealand Standards

The following standards are relevant to the design, construction and installation of onsite wastewater management systems:

AS/NZS 1546.1:2008 Onsite Domestic Wastewater Treatment Units – Septic Tanks

AS/NZS 1546.2:2008 Onsite Domestic Wastewater Treatment Units – Waterless Composting Toilets

AS/NZS 1546.3:2008 Onsite Domestic Wastewater Treatment Units – Aerated Wastewater

AS/NZS 1547:2000 Onsite Domestic Wastewater Management

AS/NZS 3500 National Plumbing and Drainage – Domestic Installations

2.4 Stakeholder Roles, Responsibilities and Regional Planning

Within Gannawarra Shire, there are a number of stakeholders with direct and indirect roles and responsibilities in domestic wastewater management. These are listed and described below:

- Gannawarra Shire Council;
- Environment Protection Authority;
- Coliban Water;
- Lower Murray Water;
- Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water;
- North Central Catchment Management Authority;

- Goulburn Murray Water; and
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

2.4.1 Gannawarra Shire Council

The Gannawarra Shire Council is responsible for the following areas in relation to the treatment and disposal of domestic wastewater:

- Ensure new subdivisions in unsewered areas are provided with reticulated sewerage or that allotments are capable of treating and containing domestic wastewater onsite;
- Issuing permits to install new septic tank systems and issuing certificates to use septic tanks;
- Refusing permits if it is not an EPA approved system, if the site is unsuitable and/or the area for the treatment and disposal of effluent is not sufficient;
- Ensuring that septic systems operate correctly;
- Ensuring that any Nuisance conditions arising from septic tank systems are abated;
- Submitting an annual report to the EPA on septic tank activity; and
- Ensuring that property owners comply with conditions on septic tank permits and certificates.

2.4.2 Environment Protection Authority

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is responsible for the protection of the Victorian environment. The EPA's responsibilities for the management of domestic wastewater include:

- Declaration of State Environment Protection Policies (SEPPs) that set environmental objectives to be achieved;
- Establishing standards for discharge to surface water and off-site;
- Approving the design and type of septic tank systems which can be installed for the issue of a permit to install a septic tank system;
- The publication and updating of the Septic Tank Code of Practice;
- Receipt and collation of municipal annual returns to enable the Authority to identify trends impacting on the environment in sensitive areas and to provide a basis for future domestic wastewater planning and research;
- Promoting provision of sewerage to unsewered areas;
- Approval of systems discharging more than 5,000 litres per day; and
- Regulating the disposal of raw sewage from the pump out of domestic wastewater management systems by sewage sludge contractors. The Environment Protection Act 1970 includes works approval and licensing requirements administered by EPA Victoria, to ensure appropriate control of such discharges.

2.4.3 Landholders

Landholder's responsibilities include:

- Connecting to a sewerage system where it is available;
- Obtaining a septic tank permit before a building permit is issued and installing the system;
- Obtaining a certificate to use the system once installed;
- Obtaining a permit to make alterations to the existing system; and
- Complying with the conditions of the permit.

2.4.4 Coliban Water, Lower Murray Water and Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water

Water and sewerage services across the municipality are provided and maintained by Coliban Water, Lower Murray Water and Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water.

It is a legislative requirement under the Water Act for water authorities to manage the implementation of all new sewerage schemes. Where a town is identified for connection to reticulated sewer, councils must discuss sewerage provision options with their local water authority. Water authorities are unable to identify the need for sewerage, as their role is restricted to service provision only. They can provide support to councils and the EPA, but they cannot require communities to connect and pay for scheme that they may commercially benefit from.

Urban water corporations supply treated water for drinking, and in doing so they must ensure they comply with the requirements of the Victorian Safe Water Drinking Act 2003. Source water for drinking supplies is taken from waterways and channels, along with groundwater. Urban water corporations are also referral authorities under the Water Act 1989 and Planning and Environment Act 1987.

2.4.5 North Central Catchment Management Authority

The core business of the North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) is to coordinate the development and implementation of the North Central Regional Catchment Strategy in partnership with the community. The North Central CMA is a referral authority under the Catchment and Land Protection Act. Key strategies relevant to the DWMP include:

- Regional River Health Strategy;
- River Health Plans;
- Floodplain Management Strategy;
- Nutrient Management Strategies;
- Streamflow Management plans;
- Bulk Water Entitlements;
- Rural Drainage Strategies;
- Groundwater Management Plans;
- Wetland Management Plans;
- Dryland Salinity Management Plans.

2.4.6 Goulburn Murray Water

Goulburn Murray Water (GMW) is a rural water authority and manages water storage, delivery and drainage systems across northern Victoria. The GMW Corporate Plan sets out the strategic direction of the organisation across the following key areas: services, environment, people, assets, finances and relationships. GMW is also a referral authority under the Water Act 1989 and Planning and Environment Act 1987.

2.4.7 Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) is responsible for management of Victoria's natural resources.

2.4.8 Municipal Association of Victoria

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) is committed to improving and raising the profile of domestic wastewater management in Victoria. The MAV has been working in partnership with Victorian councils, EPA Victoria, DELWP, water authorities and other stake holders to develop a range of planning and management tools to assist council's with the management of domestic wastewater.

The *Model Land Capability Assessment Report* provides an example of an all-encompassing land capability assessment (LCA). It is aimed at providing environmental health officers with a suitable template by which to assess LCA reports, and simultaneously provide LCA assessors with a model that generally provides adequate information to environmental health officers for making a sound judgment on an application. It was updated in 2014 and remains a relevant guide for councils developing DWMPs.

2.5 Linkages to other Council Plans

Council has a number of strategic plans outlining the vision and objectives for the municipality and its communities including the Council Plan 2017-2021 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) and the Shire of Gannawarra Planning Scheme.

This DWMP also links closely to Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy (2013), Arbovirus Plan (2017), Urban and Rural Strategy Plan (2007) and Lake Charm, Kangaroo Lake and Gunbower Creek Environs Strategy (2013).

2.5.1 Gannawarra Planning Scheme

The Gannawarra Shire Planning Scheme recognises that there are a number of key issues facing the Gannawarra Shire in terms of appropriately managing wastewater. From a land use and development perspective it is recognised that the efficient and effective management of domestic wastewater has a role to play in guiding settlement patterns and safeguarding our natural assets and resources.

The key issues facing the Gannawarra Shire in terms of land use planning and wastewater management are listed in Clause 21.01-3 to Clause 21.10-3 of the Gannawarra Planning Scheme and include:

- Improvements in road access and wastewater management may allow additional land to be considered for development in the future. (Clause 21.01-3)
- Land with water frontage (Murray River, Gunbower Creek, Kerang lakes, water courses and wetlands) is increasingly targeted for residential development. While this type of development can be facilitated, it needs to be managed to ensure environmental values are maintained. (Clause 21.01-3)
- Ensuring that natural assets are maintained and improved as a result of any development. (Clause 21.03-2)
- Promoting consistent planning and management along the river corridor by councils, government agencies and community organisations. (Clause 21.03-3)
- Minimising the impacts of unsewered towns and individual wastewater treatment systems on land in the catchment. (Clause 21.05-2)
- Protecting water quality, environmental and landscape values of nearby waterbodies, including lakes, rivers and streams. (Clause 21.07-2)
- Supplying reticulated sewerage wherever practicable; unless each lot can contain and absorb wastewater without impacting downstream or on nearby land. (Clause 21.07-2)
- Providing services including water supply, sewerage, electricity, telecommunications and reticulated drainage in a cost effective manner. (Clause 21.10-3)
- Providing reticulated sewerage to all residential developments wherever practicable; and where this is not feasible, ensuring that wastewater is contained on the lot or treated through a local treatment system (Clause 21.10-3)

3 Project Management

3.1 Development Process

The Gannawarra DWMP 2007 was prepared using the Municipal Association of Victoria's Model Municipal Domestic Wastewater Management Plan. The process undertaken included:

- Development of a project brief;
- Engagement of a consultant team;
- Field investigation of towns and areas;
- Risk assessment and options evaluation;
- Development of action plans;
- Development of policy and planning tools to assist with implementation of the action plans; and
- Workshops with the Project Advisory Group.

A review of wastewater issues in the Golf Links Estate, Cohuna and the township of Quambatook was undertaken prior to the commencement of this process. A number of community meetings were held to discuss sewerage options at the Golf Links Estate prior to development of the 2007 DWMP.

Paladin White was commissioned by Gannawarra Shire Council in 2006 to provide land capability for effluent disposal assessments of Kangaroo Lake, Lake Charm, Racecourse Lake and Macorna. This information was used as supporting material to the development of the initial DWMP.

3.2 Land Capability – Minimum Lot Size Guidelines

In parallel with the development of the DWMP, Minimum Lot Size Guidelines have been prepared based on land capability for effluent disposal.

It should be noted that Clause 32.03-3 (Low Density Residential Zone) of the Victorian Planning Provisions states the following for the subdivision of land:

Each lot must be at least the area specified for the land in a schedule to this zone. Any area specified must be at least:

- 0.4 hectare for each lot where reticulated sewerage is not connected. If no area is specified each lot must be at least 0.4 hectare.

The Minimum Lot Size Guidelines will provide a tool for Council to use to ensure that future subdivisions are designed to ensure sustainable effluent disposal.

3.3 Review

A review of the original 2007 Gannawarra DWMP was undertaken in 2020. In accordance with the State Environment Policy (Water) 2018 (Vic) a further review will be conducted in 2023. The review will take into consideration changes to legislation, local context, actions achieved and what new actions need to be incorporated to drive further improvements in the management of domestic wastewater across the municipality into the future.

4 Regional Profile

4.1 Shire Description

The Gannawarra Shire is located in northern Victoria and covers an area of 3,736 square kilometres (Figure 4-1). Primary centres are Kerang, Cohuna and Koondrook. Kerang is approximately a three hour drive north of Melbourne. Smaller outlying communities include Leitchville, Quambatook, Murrabit, Lake Charm, Lalbert, Macorna and Mystic Park.

The Shire has a population of approximately 10,459 (as at the 2016 Census). Gannawarra Shire has an ageing population with 27.6 per cent of the population being aged 65 years and over. The median age is 49.

Population numbers for the primary centres increased slightly at the 2016 Census, however population of smaller outlying towns and districts experienced a decline.

Housing development remains relatively low and centred on the primary centres of Kerang, Cohuna and Koondrook.

With 57 lakes, swamps and marshes, the Gannawarra region forms one of Australian's largest and most important wetlands.

The majority of land within the Gannawarra Shire is land subject to inundation with the Avoca River, Loddon River, Little Murray River, and the Pyramid Creek, plus associated tributaries running through the municipality. Gannawarra is bordered by the Murray River with associated tributaries, such as the Gunbower Creek, running through the shire.

The area is characterised by a warm climate with average summer temperatures of 31°C and average winter temperatures of 14°C. The average annual rainfall is 373 millimetres.

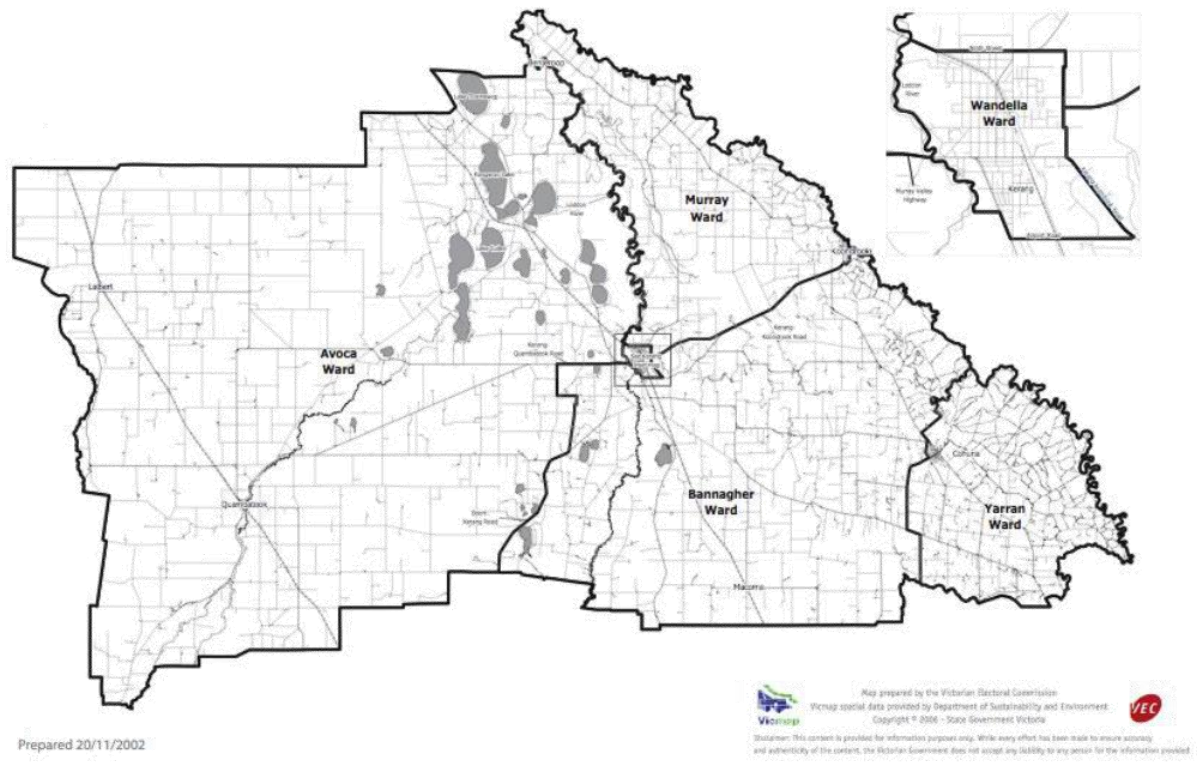
Despite ongoing changes to irrigation and ongoing rural change, the major industry of the region remains agriculture supporting over 20 per cent of local employment.

Tourism is associated with the Murray River, Kerang Lakes and Gunbower Island.

There are no declared water supply catchments located in Gannawarra Shire.

Figure 4-1 Map of Gannawarra Shire

Gannawarra Shire Council



5 Current Wastewater Situation

5.1 Overview

Wastewater in the Shire of Gannawarra is managed by one of the following methods:

- Reticulated sewerage in some towns;
- Combination of reticulated sewerage and septic tanks within towns;
- Septic tanks in unsewered towns; and
- Septic tanks in rural living estates and farming areas.

The Gannawarra Shire Council is responsible for the management of domestic wastewater wherever reticulated sewerage is not provided.

The regional water authorities (Coliban Water, Lower Murray Water and Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water) are responsible for implementing and maintaining reticulated sewerage (and water) systems.

Table 5-1 indicates which towns or areas of the municipality are seweraged and which areas rely on septic tanks systems (or both).

Table 5-1 Current Wastewater Management in Gannawarra Shire

Current wastewater management	Towns/Localities	Major Issues
Reticulated sewerage	Cohuna* Kerang* Koondrook* Leitchville* Murrabit*	Policies and guidelines for future growth
Septic tanks in seweraged towns	Cohuna* Kerang* Koondrook* Leitchville* Murrabit*	Future growth to connect to existing system
Septic tanks in unsewered towns	Lalbert* Macorna* Quambatook*	Options for managing wastewater in unsewered towns Planning for sustainable growth
Septic tanks in rural living estates and farming areas	Golf Links Estate, Cohuna Borough Drive, Kerang* Kangaroo Lake Lake Charm Mystic Park* Farming Land	Management of individual septic tanks Policies and guidelines for future growth

*Towns with a reticulated water supply

The number of onsite domestic wastewater systems across the Gannawarra Shire is estimated at between 2,000 and 2,500.

On-site wastewater systems, also commonly referred to as septic tank systems, can comprise one or more of the following:

- All waste tank systems (septic tank and absorption line);
- Aerated wastewater treatment systems - AWTS (aerobic package treatment plants and irrigated effluent disposal area);
- Blackwater (toilet effluent) only septic systems with greywater discharged directly to the ground – commonly referred to as split systems;
- Composting toilets; and
- Greywater re-use systems.

EPA approves all systems over 5,000 litres, however those discharging solely to land up to 100,000 litres per day don't require a licence. All other systems over the 5,000 litre threshold require a licence.

These properties are not considered within this DWMP.

5.2 Wastewater Management Challenges

Wastewater management challenges in the Gannawarra Shire arise due to a combination of factors, including:

- Poor land capability for wastewater disposal, which reduces the ability to dispose to land;
- Small allotments and inadequate space for wastewater disposal;
- Inadequately sized disposal areas;
- Ageing and/or poorly maintained systems;
- Non-compliant systems.

Many of the septic tanks systems in use throughout the Gannawarra Shire which were approved prior to amalgamation of the Shires of Cohuna, Kerang and Borough of Kerang in 1995, and that have not been altered or upgraded since, will no longer comply with the current EPA Guidelines and Standards.

Wastewater management issues are exacerbated in unsewered towns and areas that have a reticulated water supply or a license to extract water from lakes and waterways. Provision of reticulated water reduces the imperative to conserve water, compared to rainwater-only supply. This tends to result in greater household water use, leading to larger volumes of wastewater being discharged, beyond the intended capacity of the system and disposal area.

Household fittings such as dishwashers, top load washing machines, bath tubs and spas also add load to onsite wastewater systems and disposal areas.

The visible impact of poor on-site wastewater management has been masked in recent years due to ongoing dry conditions and drought. However, in average and higher rainfall years, the impacts of poor wastewater management can be seen in street drains and runoff into neighbouring properties in non-sewered township and rural living estates.

Desludging of Domestic Wastewater Management Systems

Over time, the sludge and scum layers build up and need to be removed for the septic tank to function properly. The sludge and scum needs to be pumped-out with a vacuum suction system by an authorised person. The frequency of desludging depends on a number of variables. A well-functioning septic tank – one that is not overloaded with liquid, organic matter or synthetic material – typically only needs to be desludged once every 3 to 8 years (depending on the size of the tank with most domestic systems that treat ‘all waste’ being 3,200 litre capacity).

The Quambatook Night Soil Depot at the former Quambatook landfill site is the only location within Gannawarra Shire available for the disposal of raw sewage generated from the desludging process of domestic wastewater management systems.

While this is an EPA licensed site for the authorised disposal of sludge from septic tank systems, this site is nearing the end of its life. Council manages this EPA licensed disposal site. This site is required to be upgraded to comply with current standards or replaced by alternative options.

While the scope of a DWMP does not extend to the disposal of sludge from septic tank systems this has been included in this DWMP so as to capture this issue in a Council strategy and work towards a solution.

There is also potential to investigate partnering with Coliban Water to develop a septic waste discharge point at the Cohuna Wastewater Treatment Plant.

5.3 Values Requiring Protection

Inappropriately managed domestic wastewater poses a number of risks to public health, environmental and economic values (refer section 2.2 for details). Critical among these is public health, which is important across all towns/areas considered.

Environmental and economic values vary according to the local situation. Some of the key values in the region include:

- The Murray River is Australia’s longest river. It provides economic benefits to the region from tourism and agriculture and is also a source of raw water that is used to produce potable water for many towns along the river.
- The Gunbower Forest is part of the Gunbower and Koondrook-Pericoota Forests. The Gunbower Forest covers 19,540 hectares and is designated as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar convention. It is an important breeding area for colonial waterbirds as well as being visited by migratory birds listed under international treaties; the Japanese Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (JAMBA) and the Chinese Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (CAMBA). The forests also have strong social and cultural meaning for the indigenous communities of the region. (Department of Sustainability and Environment, 2003)
- Kerang Wetlands are designated a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar convention. The site is part of an extensive wetland system comprising 100 wetlands that occur within the Loddon-Murray Region. The site covers an area of 9,419 hectares and comprises permanent and temporary wetlands. It is an important breeding area for colonial waterbirds as well as being visited by migratory birds listed under international treaties; JAMBA and CAMBA. It includes the world’s largest ibis rookery at Middle Reedy Lake. The wetlands are also rich in Aboriginal cultural heritage providing a reliable source of water as well as food, medicines, shelter

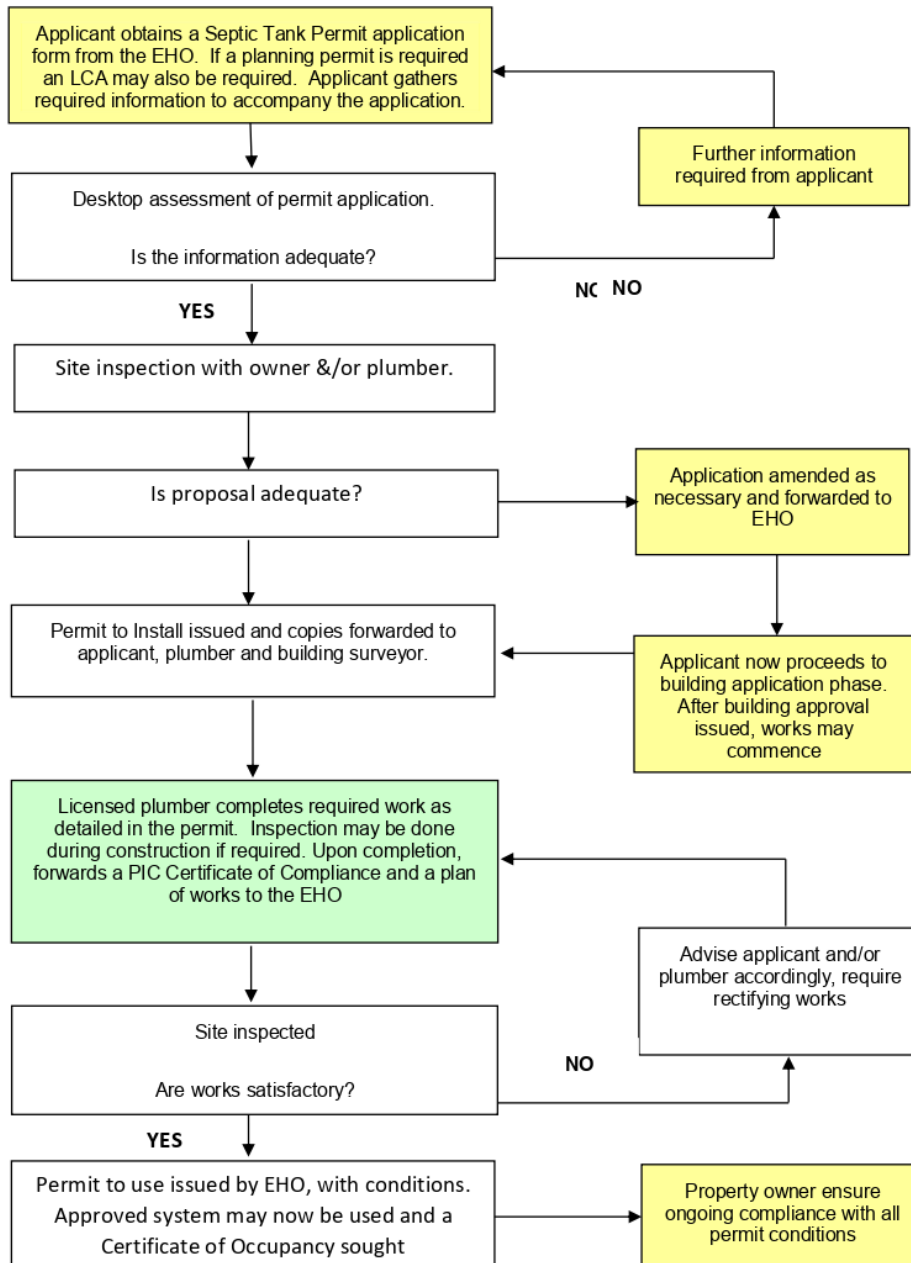
clothing and food. The Wetlands also provide significant economic benefits around tourism, recreation and most importantly, irrigated agriculture. The wetlands are used for storage and conveyance of irrigation water as well as flood mitigation

- The Torrumbarry Irrigation Area covers 167,000 hectares along the River Murray from Gunbower in the east to Nyah in the west and southwards to include the towns of Cohuna and Kerang. In the past, dairy farms have dominated around Cohuna and Leitchville, while mixed farming is more common around Kerang where fat lambs and beef cattle are raised, and cereal, fodder, lucerne and oil seed crops are also widely produced.
- The Pyramid-Boort Irrigation Area covers 166,215 hectares and extends from the Waranga Western Channel (WWC) in the south, to the Macorna Channel in the north. The township of Macorna is the only Gannawarra Shire town that falls into this irrigation area.
- Many other waterways, such as the Gunbower Creek, the source drinking water supply for Cohuna, are also important for regional agriculture.

Note that at the time of reviewing this DWMP in 2020 significant changes to the irrigation industry across Gannawarra Shire are underway.

5.4 Septic Tank Approval Process

The following diagram outlines the Shire’s process for approving septic tank permit applications.



It should be noted that a Land Capability Assessment (LCA) outlining options for the onsite treatment of wastewater does not imply a planning permit will be given. An LCA identifies the constraints for wastewater treatment and options for mitigation; however, the existence of an LCA does not automatically mean that the identified management actions will occur.

5.5 Land Capability Assessment

A Land Capability Assessment (LCA) may be required prior to approval of a septic tank permit. The Land Capability Assessment Framework 2014 offers standard guidelines and criteria for undertaking LCAs. There is however little guidance on the qualifications of a person carrying out a LCA. As a result, the type, quality and level of detail provided by consultants in LCA reports varies considerably. This variation and uncertainty regarding the technical capabilities of consultant authors introduces an element of risk when determining whether or not to grant approval for domestic wastewater disposal. Guidelines and a Model Land Capability Assessment Report template prepared by the MAV aimed to standardise and improve LCA reports across Victoria however this remains an issue.

Note that at the time of reviewing this DWMP in 2020 a Land Capability Assessment Minimum Standards Guide is being developed by City of Greater Bendigo that is aimed at improving LCAs received by the Gannawarra Shire Council and surrounding councils.

5.6 Monitoring and Compliance Systems

Local government is responsible for ensuring domestic wastewater systems operate effectively and that property owners comply with the condition on Septic Tank Permits and that any Nuisance conditions arising from domestic wastewater systems are abated.

While Council is capable of enforcing compliance for installation of new systems (dating back to April 1995), monitoring and enforcement of older wastewater systems is significantly hampered by poor historic records.

Systematic shire-wide monitoring is not possible due to the lack of knowledge regarding the exact number and type of wastewater systems and location of disposal fields. There are often no records, or incomplete records, pertaining to the original permit conditions of older systems.

Aerated wastewater treatments systems (AWTS) require regular servicing and notification to Council that a service has been completed. Incomplete records for older AWTS installations, and an inadequate reminder system, results in many AWTS systems not being serviced according to the manufacturer's standards.

It is therefore difficult for Council to implement an adequate compliance regime unless there is an obvious breach resulting in visible off-site discharge of effluent.

A clear non-compliant situation exists in the case of split systems where greywater is discharged directly outside the property boundary. These systems no longer comply with exiting legislative requirements but an old and valid permit may still exist.

The legislated power to act on old, now inappropriate permits and to force compliance is through the Nuisance provision of the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*.

A comprehensive monitoring and compliance program for Gannawarra Shire will require:

- Establishment of a comprehensive database to record details of all domestic wastewater systems; and
- Additional resources (financial and staff) within the Environmental Health Department.

Note that at the time of reviewing this DWMP in 2020 the Victorian Government intends that a new Environment Protection Amendment Act 2018 will take effect from 1 July 2020. It is expected that this legislation will provide more stringent guidance to councils on monitoring and compliance of septic tank systems. A further assessment will be undertaken at this time.

5.7 Auditor General's Report

In the 2006 audit report 'Protecting our Environment and Community from Failing Septic Tanks', it was found that agencies were not effectively protecting the environment from poorly performing onsite systems. Since then policy has evolved, priorities for water authorities and community views have changed, and councils and water authorities have implemented a range of new initiatives to better understand and manage domestic wastewater risks.

This issue was re-examined in the 2018 report 'Managing the Environmental Impacts of Domestic Wastewater' to determine whether agencies are effectively protecting the environment and public health from poorly performing onsite systems.

The audit focused on the management of domestic wastewater in two parts of metropolitan Melbourne where unsewered areas have been identified as high-risk—the Yarra Ranges and the Mornington Peninsula. The performance of the two responsible councils, and the responsible water authorities, were examined. The regulatory and oversight roles of EPA and DELWP were also examined.

A summary of the findings includes:

- Managing risks by addressing information gaps and improving risk assessment frameworks;
- Addressing environmental and health impacts through water quality monitoring programs, and understanding exposure to potential risks and impacts through the use of permits for onsite systems, compliance inspections and education of property owners;
- The provision of sewer to backlog areas through various backlog programs and projects;
- Investigate and evaluate alternative wastewater services that can deliver environmental and health benefits more cost-effectively and efficiently;
- Address longstanding issues with the regulatory framework and its tools to improve clarity around roles, responsibilities, enforcement powers and processes which impede effective implementation of the framework by councils and water authorities. This includes enforcing connection to sewer;
- Improving reporting and accountability- Councils must plan effectively and report their results to ensure that their activities are transparent and that they are accountable to the community and other levels of government. Property owners must also report maintenance activities to Council, and water authorities need to report to councils the number of properties that connect to sewer in a timely way; and
- Consider how integrated water cycle management can benefit the community and the environment, rather than planning and managing different water and wastewater streams in isolation.

6 Local Wastewater Management Profiles

6.1 Priority Townships and Locations

Information collected by the Gannawarra Shire Council in preparing the Country Towns Water Supply and Sewerage Program – (Paladin White, 2005), together with local knowledge and experience of Environmental Health Officers, has allowed priority townships and localities to be identified for further consideration by this DWMP. These towns and localities are listed below:

By assessing values, threats and wastewater management issues, a numerical ranking has been assigned to the priority towns and localities in the Gannawarra Shire. The outcomes of the risk assessment are summarised in Table 6-1.

Land capability for effluent disposal was classed from existing soil datasets which covers most of the irrigated areas of the Shire. Data was not available for the dryland areas. Maps for towns showing the land capability for effluent disposal are in Appendix 3.

The following sections discuss each town/locality, including the relevant wastewater management issues, the risk assessment results and options for improving the wastewater management.

Table 6-1 Ranking of Priority Towns/Localities in the Gannawarra Shire

Priority Towns	Rank
Cohuna Golf Links	1 – High
Quambatook	2 – High
Kangaroo Lake	3 – High
Cohuna	4 - Moderate
Lake Charm	5 - Moderate
Koondrook	6 - Moderate
Kerang	7 – Moderate
Lalbert	8 – Low
Cohuna Island Road	9 – Low
Macorna	10 – Low

6.2 Septic Tanks in Sewered Towns

6.2.1 Cohuna

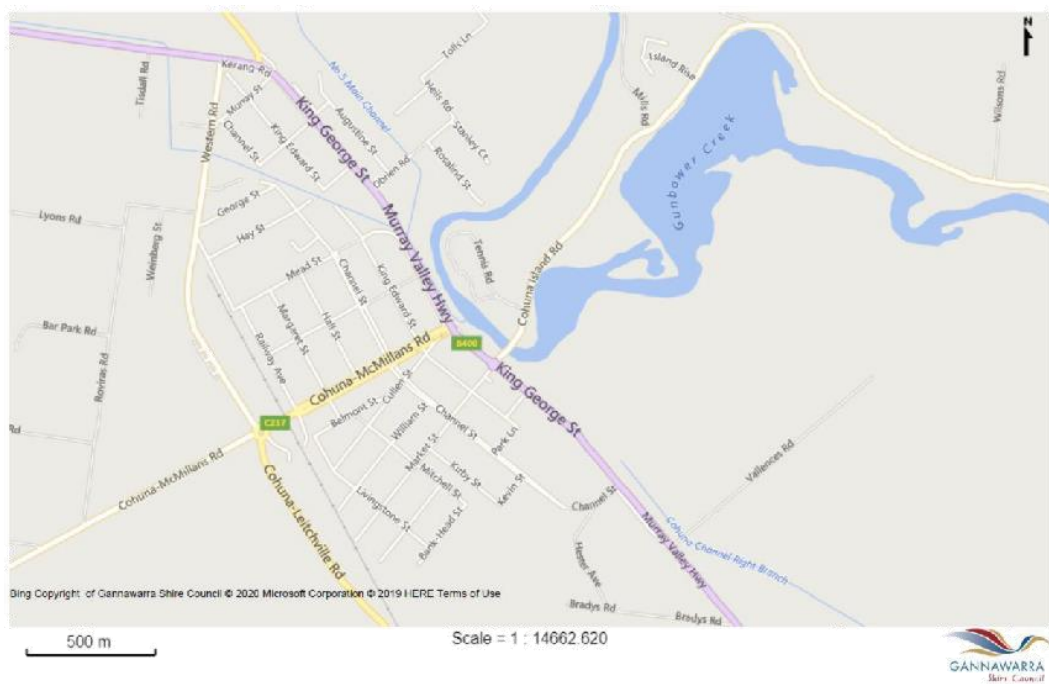
Description

Cohuna is located on the Gunbower Creek in the eastern end of the Shire and has a population of 2,458 (based on the 2016 Census). Cohuna supports the surrounding agricultural areas and tourism associated with the Murray River and its tributary, the Gunbower Creek, as well as Gunbower Island.

The Murray River ecosystem is a high value economic and environmental asset, providing for irrigation of farms surrounding Cohuna as well as recreation and tourism. The river also provides important riparian habitat and supports a diversity of instream fauna.

Most homes in Cohuna were connected to reticulated sewerage in the 1990s. While newer developments have connected to the reticulated sewerage system over recent years, there are homes on the town fringes that still have onsite wastewater disposal systems.

Coliban Water provides water and wastewater service to Cohuna with reticulated water sourced from the Gunbower Creek.



Key Wastewater Management Issues

- Stormwater outfall is to the Gunbower Creek via the Barr Creek;
- Relatively flat topography and variable land capability (ranges from low to very good across the town – Appendix 3) can result in sillage pooling in depressions;
- Septic systems may be in close proximity to irrigation channels which supply water for domestic purposes to rural users and following treatment, for Cohuna's potable water supply.
- A small subdivision north of the town along the Cohuna Island Road was identified as a significant issue in 2006 primarily due to the small block sizes – the Island Rise subdivision has since been connected to the reticulated sewerage system.
- A review of the risk rating of Cohuna Island Road is included as a future action due to its proximity to the Cohuna Water Treatment Plant and Gunbower Creek.

Risk Assessment

Cohuna has very high public health values and moderate to high environmental values threatened by a range of poor wastewater management practices.

Based on the risk assessment, Cohuna is the fourth highest priority township in the Gannawarra Shire.

6.2.2 Kerang

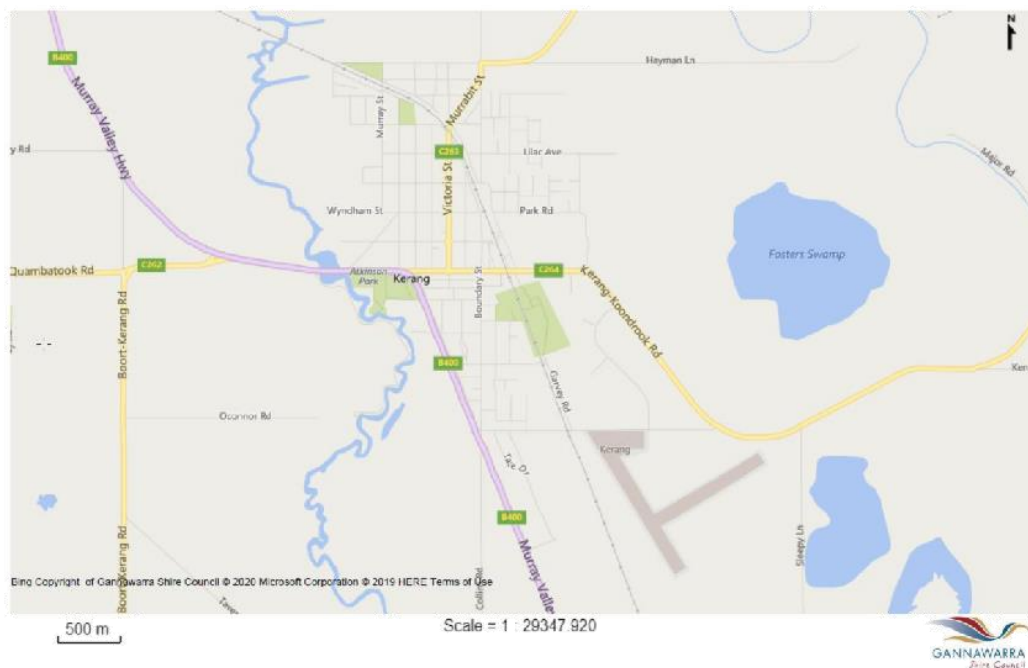
Description

Kerang is the main service centre in Gannawarra, has a population of 3,893 (based on the 2016 Census) and is located in the centre of the Shire on the Loddon River.

The town has been serviced by a reticulated sewerage system since the 1930s. This system has received upgrades and extensions to service most homes within the town.

Lower Murray Water provides water supply and wastewater management services to Kerang and water is sourced from the Goulburn Murray Water channel system, Murray River and the Loddon River. Water for Kerang’s potable water supply comes primarily via a pipeline from the Murray River at Koondrook.

Stormwater from Kerang discharges to the Loddon River which is also a source of water for domestic purposes for some downstream users.



Key Wastewater Management Issues

- The all-waste systems have problems being overloaded where there are more than two residents per home;
- Some all-waste systems do not have alarms to warn of pump failure so problems may go unnoticed;
- The transpiration beds are poorly maintained and are of an inadequate size;

- The aerated wastewater treatment systems generally were found to be operating satisfactory though the irrigation areas may not be of sufficient size in wet years;
- Relatively flat topography and low to very low land capability (Appendix 3. Effluent Disposal Maps Area 5 and 6) makes onsite effluent disposal difficult and ponding treated effluent and/or sillage is common, especially in wet seasons;
- Septic systems may be in close proximity to irrigation channels which supply water for domestic purposes to rural users and following treatment, the potable supply for the town.

Risk Assessment

Kerang has a very high public health values and high environmental values threatened by a range of poor wastewater management practices.

Based on the risk assessment, Kerang is the seventh highest priority township in the Gannawarra Shire.

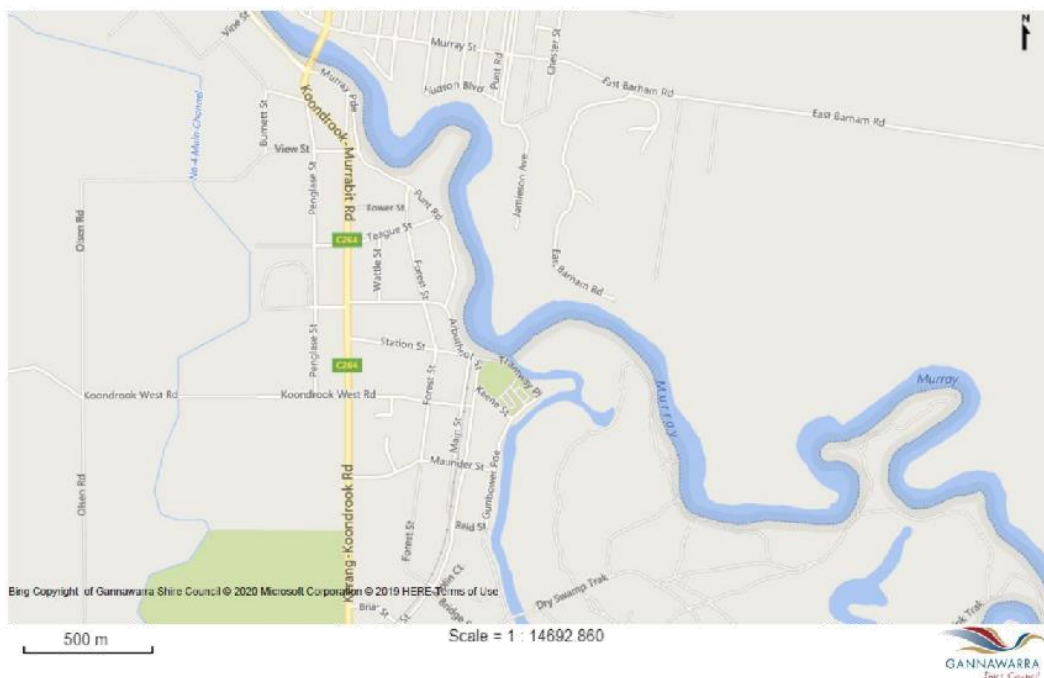
6.2.3 Koondrook

Description

Koondrook is located on the Murray River north-east of Kerang and has a population of 991 (as at the 2016 Census).

The reticulated sewerage system in Koondrook was commissioned in 2000. A number of homes on the fringes of the town are not connected to the system. Most of the septic tanks in use in Koondrook are split systems with sullage disposed directly to the land surface.

Lower Murray Water provides wastewater and water supply services to Koondrook. The water supply is drawn from the Murray River. Council has constructed a wetland to capture and treat stormwater from part of the town prior to discharge to the Murray River.



Key Wastewater Management Issues

- Most of the older septic systems are split systems with sullage disposal untreated to the surface.
- Most of the land within Koondrook has poor to moderate capability for effluent disposal (Appendix 3. Effluent Disposal Maps Area 7)

Risk Assessment

Koondrook has very high public health values and high environmental values threatened by a range of poor wastewater management practices.

Based on the risk assessment, Koondrook is the sixth highest priority township in the Gannawarra Shire.

6.2.4 Leitchville and Murrabit

Note that the townships of Leitchville and Murrabit are not considered as part of the risk assessment within this DWMP.

While prior to the installation of sewerage systems, both townships experienced significant environmental and public health risk, the installation of sewerage systems means that domestic wastewater is no longer considered a risk.

6.3 Septic Tanks in Unsewered Towns

6.3.1 Macorna

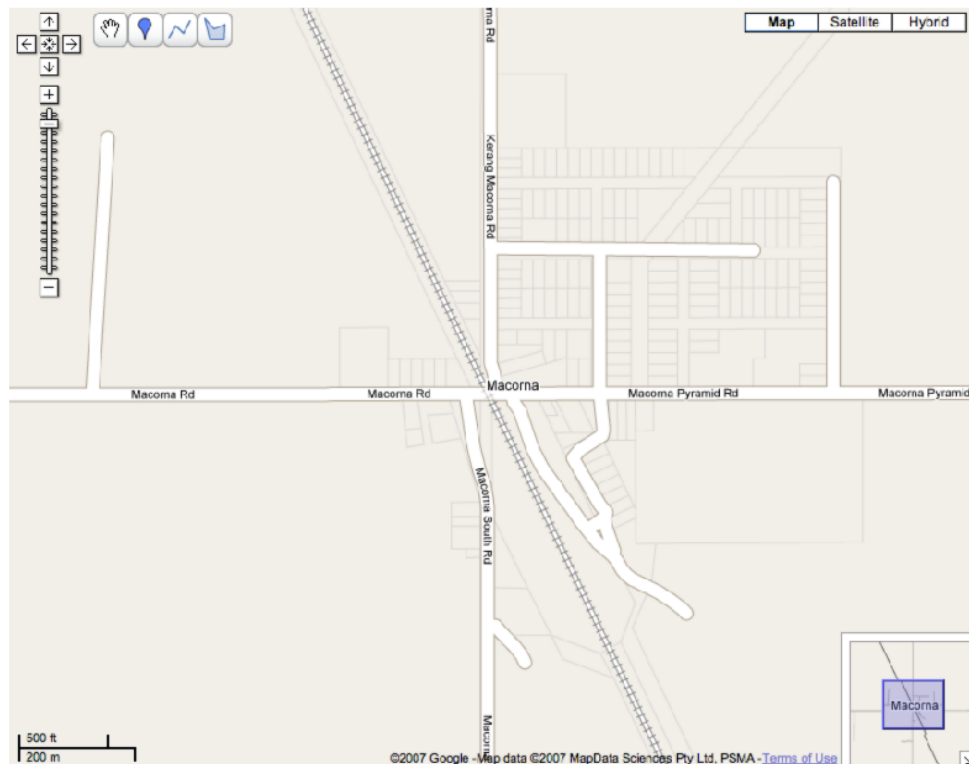
Description

Macorna is a small hamlet, 30km south east of Kerang off the Loddon Valley Highway. The town has a population of less than 90 (as at the 2016 Census).

A major subdivision of land in Macorna took place in 1885. Many blocks are less than 1,000 square metres. The land is flat and has very poor land capability for effluent disposal (land capability class for effluent disposal varies between 6a and 6b). This, together with small block size, has prevented construction of a dwelling on most allotments.

The township has a roughly formed earthen stormwater system. There are no natural waterways through or near the town.

The Macorna Recreation Reserve has an effluent pond for onsite effluent treatment and disposal.



Key Wastewater Management Issues

The key wastewater management issues at Macorna include:

- Small block sizes with insufficient area for sustainable domestic wastewater disposal;
- Heavy soils with slow infiltrations resulting in a poor land capability for effluent disposal.

Macorna is a low priority, unsewered town.

An Urban and Rural Strategy (Parsons Brinckerhoff, 2007) recommended that land currently zoned Township within Macorna should be zoned Farming to indicate that the town is not suited to further urban development. This re-zoning has not occurred to date.

The land within the "township" of Macorna is zoned Township Zone (TZ) and the surrounding land is Farming Zone (FZ). Whilst the township boundary contains the TZ blocks, some land around the boundary contains small FZ lots.

Within the TZ a planning permit is not required for a dwelling.

A minimum lot size of 4,000m² is required to build.

Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment tables show that Macorna has very high public health values and low environmental values threatened by a range of poor wastewater management practices.

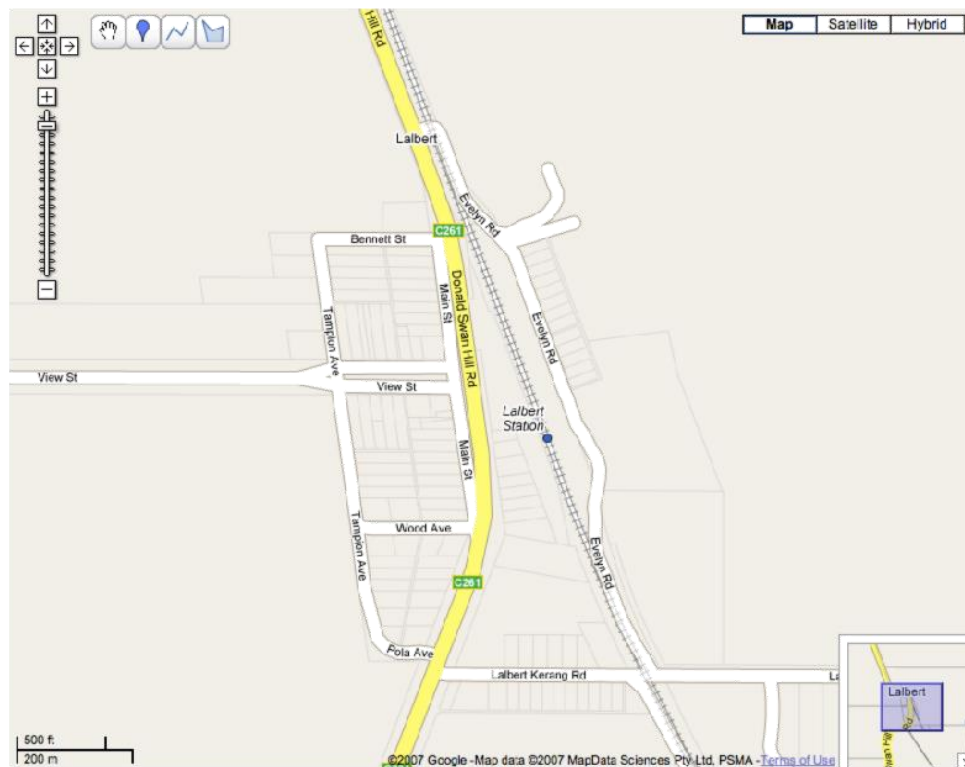
Based on the risk assessment, Macorna is the lowest priority township in the Gannawarra Shire.

6.3.2 Lalbert

Description

Lalbert is located on the western fringe of the Shire on the Donald Swan Hill Rd approximately 75 kilometres west of Kerang. The town has a population of 151 (as at the 2016 Census).

Lalbert has a water supply managed by Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water sourced from storages in the Grampians or from Murray River via the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline.



Key Wastewater Management Issues

- Some split systems are discharging to the surface;
- Systems are poorly maintained;
- Upgrades to toilet facilities at the recreation reserve have been carried out.

Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment show that Lalbert has a very high public health values and low environmental values threatened by a range of poor wastewater management practices.

Based on the risk assessment, Lalbert is the eighth highest priority township in the Gannawarra Shire.

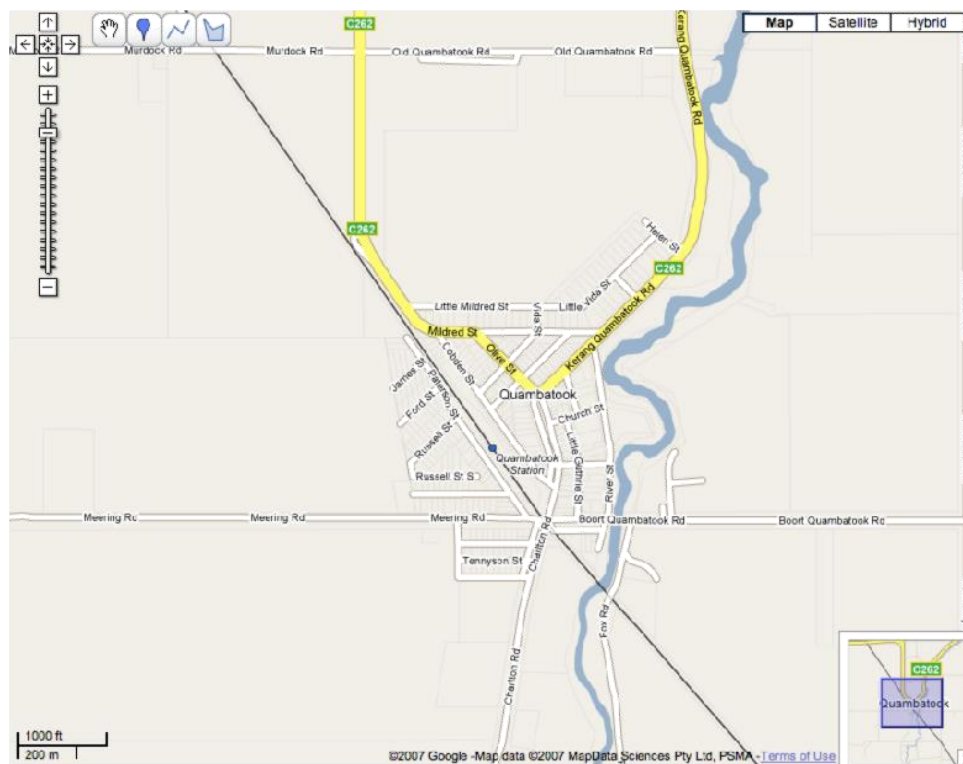
6.3.3 Quambatook

Quambatook is located 40 kilometres west of Kerang on the Avoca River. It has an ageing population of 250 (as at the 2016 Census).

Quambatook has a reticulated water supply from the Normanville Pipeline, managed by Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water.

The stormwater is collected in table drains and discharged to the Avoca River. A scheme to collect and treat the stormwater from the town and grains silos for use on the local recreation reserve has been completed.

The caravan park, golf club and football club combined have an effluent pond for onsite effluent treatment and disposal.



Key Wastewater Management Issues

A review of the wastewater issues at Quambatook in 2005 (Paladin White) noted the following wastewater problems:

- Old and poorly maintained septic systems;
- Undersized systems and disposal field for some commercial premises and community facilities which experience intermittent high loadings; and
- Avoca River receives stormwater and runoff from Quambatook

- Heavy clay subsoils have a low capacity to treat and retain wastewater ;

The former Quambatook Night Soil Depot is the only location within Gannawarra Shire available for the disposal of raw sewage generated from the de-sludging process of Domestic Wastewater Management Systems.

Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment tables show that Quambatook has very high public health values and moderate environmental values threatened by a range of poor wastewater management practices.

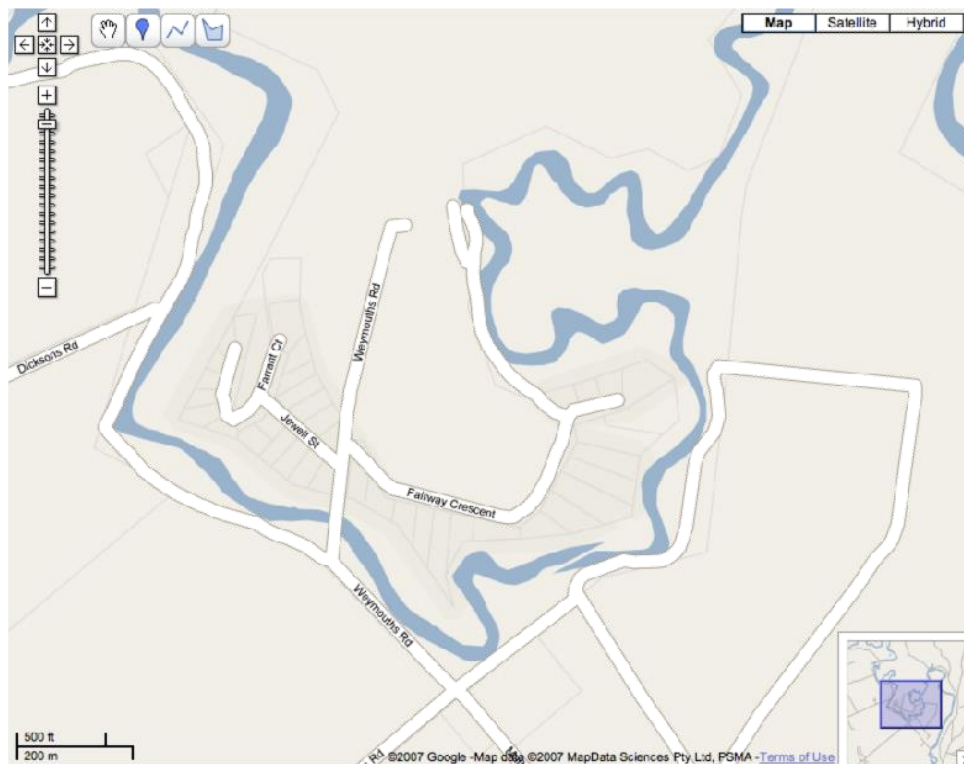
Based on the risk assessment, Quambatook is the second highest priority township in the Gannawarra Shire.

6.4 Septic Tanks in Rural Living Estates

6.4.1 Golf Links Estate, Cohuna

The Golf Links Estate is located north of Cohuna on the Gunbower Creek. The estate was established in the 1970s. It is a small residential estate and there are no community facilities.

Water supply is a non-reticulated, non-potable supply from individual entitlements pumped from the Gunbower Creek with rainwater collected in tanks for drinking purposes.



Key Wastewater Management Issues

A review of the wastewater issues at the Golf Links Estate in 2005 (Paladin White) noted the following wastewater problems:

- Offsite discharge of greywater;
- Onsite ponding of surface water (including some greywater);
- Inadequate setback of disposal fields from Gunbower Creek and from neighbouring properties (in breach of EPA Code of Practice);
- Inadequately sized, poorly managed and sited disposal fields;
- Poorly maintained systems;

- No provision for a reserve field now required by the EPA;
- Properties have a water right resulting in some heavily watered gardens reducing disposal efficiency as well as high in-house water use placing pressure on disposal fields;
- Eight vacant blocks cannot be developed due to area and location constraints;
- Deep, poorly structured clays have poor internal drainage have a low capacity to treat and retain wastewater onsite;
- Stormwater and runoff flow directly into the Gunbower Creek which is also a water supply for residents.

Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment tables demonstrate that the Golf Links Estate has very high public health values and moderate to very high environmental values threatened by a range of poor wastewater management practices.

Based on the risk assessment, the Golf Links Estate is the highest priority in the Gannawarra Shire.

6.4.2 Cohuna Island Road

The Cohuna Island Road area is located between the Gunbower Creek and the Murray River north-east of Cohuna. It is a rural living estate set amongst farming land.

The Gunbower Creek and Murray River both have significant economic and environmental values providing for irrigation, recreation and tourism, riparian habitat and supporting a diversity of instream fauna. Gunbower Creek is the source of Cohuna's potable water supply. The northern fringes of the locality around the Gunbower Forest Ramsar Site which is also one of the six icon sites identified by the Murray Darling Basin Commission Living Murray Initiative.

The land has a flat topography. The area has not had a comprehensive land capability assessment.

Capability assessment of land elsewhere adjacent the Murray River indicates there is complexity and diversity of land types immediately adjacent to the river.

Key Wastewater Management Issues

- Some areas have sandy soils which have high percolation rates which have excellent drainage, but may hide problems associated with system failure;
- Blocks are too small for effective onsite wastewater disposal;
- Poorly managed systems, particularly the packaged treatment plants with some not serviced according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment tables demonstrate that the Cohuna Island Road has very high public health values and low environmental values threatened by a range of poor wastewater management practices.

Based on the risk assessment, Cohuna Island Road is the ninth highest priority in the Gannawarra Shire.

Note that some properties along Cohuna Island Road have been connected to the reticulated sewerage system since 2007 including Council managed properties of Apex Park, Cohuna Caravan Park, Cohuna Recreation Reserve and Cohuna Pool, along with the Island Rise subdivision. Other properties along Cohuna Island Road remain reliant on septic systems for disposal of domestic wastewater. A review of the risk rating of Cohuna Island Road is included as a future action due to its proximity to the Cohuna Water Treatment Plant and Gunbower Creek.

6.4.3 Kangaroo Lake

Kangaroo Lake is 20 kilometres North West of Kerang. Residential development, both permanent and weekends, around the lake occurs at the north east corner and along the northern and western shores. No reticulated water is available to residents. Water supply is from rainwater tanks and the lake.

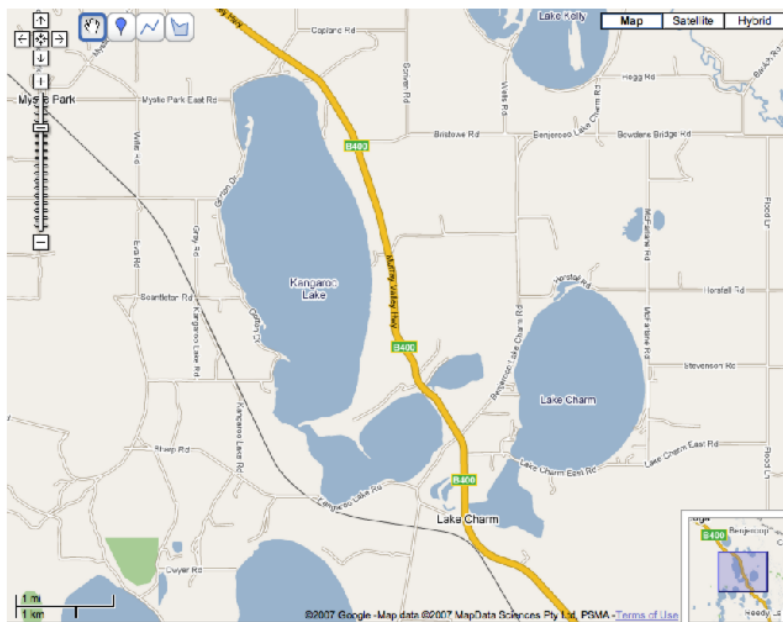
Beyond the fringe of lakeside development, there are areas of irrigated horticulture, largely grape vines.

Kangaroo Lake is a permanent freshwater lake and is popular for water-based recreation activities. The lake is also a water supply reserve, managed by Goulburn Murray Water as part of the Torrumbarry Irrigation System.

Crown Land on the western foreshore of the Lake is managed by the Kangaroo Lake Committee of Management.

Paladin White documented the properties of soils around Kangaroo Lake (Paladin White 2007) and found that the soils are predominantly loams with poorly draining clay subsoils are lesser areas of more permeable deep sandy loams and sandy clays. There are also areas with impermeable calcrete bands.

The Caravan Park has an EPA license for onsite disposal of effluent.



Key Wastewater Management Issues

- Land capability for effluent disposal in areas with tight clays, reactive sands and sandy loams with an impermeable calcrete layer through to poor land capability for effluent disposal varies to good land capability for effluent disposal with freely draining sands;

- Undersized disposal fields sited too close to the lake (should be setback 60m from foreshore);
- Properties too small to contain wastewater onsite;
- Some heavily watered gardens reduces the disposal efficiency and may result in runoff of effluent/sullage;
- Seasonal pressure on disposal fields and septic systems from holiday homes;
- Risk of effluent entering the lake directly through runoff or indirectly via subsoil intrusion, particularly on the northern and western shores where soils have high percolation rates; and
- Some more steeply undulating blocks have potential for wastewater to move offsite.

Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment tables demonstrate that Kangaroo Lake has very high public health values and very high environmental values threatened by a range of poor wastewater management practices.

Based on the risk assessment, Kangaroo Lake is the third highest priority township in the Gannawarra Shire.

6.4.4 Lake Charm and Racecourse Lake

Lake Charm and Racecourse Lake are located approximately 16 kilometres north west of Kerang.

Development around the Lake Charm is located in the south west and south east corners and along the eastern and northern shores and includes two caravan parks. Additional amenities blocks are located at the yacht club.

Development around Racecourse Lake is on the eastern shore and includes a caravan park, general store, service station, and a primary school.

There is no reticulated water supply and residents rely on rainwater tanks and the pumping from the lake for domestic purposes.

Paladin White documented the properties of soils around Lake Charm and Racecourse Lake (Paladin White 2007) and found that the soils are predominantly loam topsoils with poorly draining clay subsoils and lesser areas of permeable deep sand and sandy clays. There are also areas with impermeable calcrete bands.

Key Wastewater Management Issues

- Poor land capability for effluent disposal (slow percolation and calcrete barriers);
- Undersized disposal fields sited too close to the lake (should be setback 60m from foreshore);
- Properties too small to contain wastewater onsite;
- Seasonal pressure on disposal fields and septic systems from holiday homes;
- Risk of effluent entering the lake directly through runoff or indirectly via subsoil intrusion;
- Some more steeply undulating blocks have potential for wastewater to move offsite; and
- Some properties are low lying and wet conditions could reduce effectiveness of disposal.

Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment tables demonstrate that Lake Charm has very high public health values and low to very high environmental values threatened by a range of poor wastewater management practices.

Based on the risk assessment, Lake Charm is the fifth highest priority township in the Gannawarra Shire.

7 Action Plan

7.1 Introduction

A strategy has been developed to improve domestic wastewater management in the Gannawarra Shire. This is consistent with the goals and objectives for this DWMP, as outlined in Section 2.1.

7.2 Guiding Principles

The following key principles have provided guidance in development of the actions plans.

Appropriate Onsite Management

Individual onsite management of domestic wastewater is considered appropriate provided: allotments are large enough to contain all waste sustainably, soil types are suited to disposal, systems installed meet current EPA standards, and systems are managed and maintained appropriately. Where onsite management is not appropriate, Council will consider innovative solutions to domestic wastewater management, as well as traditional reticulated sewerage.

Protection of public health and the environment

Domestic wastewater poses a risk to public health and the environment. Raw sewage carries pathogens that can cause diseases such as hepatitis. It also contains nutrients that can cause environmental contamination resulting in algal growth in surface water. Councils have a responsibility to manage these risks and as such need to ensure the development of appropriate strategies.

Sustainable Development

Council aims to promote sustainable development of communities across the municipality. Strategic planning within the Shire will aim to incorporate domestic wastewater as a priority to ensure it is managed within the capability of the land.

7.3 Overview of Action Plan

The Action Plan consists of four priority areas to support the achievement of the guiding principles:

- Information Management
- Monitoring and Compliance
- Communication and Education
- Strategic Planning

Action Plan: Priority Area 1: Information Management

Council is responsible for implementing the requirements of the relevant legislation relating to onsite wastewater management systems. In order to do this effectively, Council's Environmental Health Officers must use an appropriate system that records and maintains the relevant data and allows for reminders to be set for land owners to either pump out or have their system serviced.

Council currently uses Treatment Plant Navigator as the data management system that allows for the management of wastewater specific information. Information within this system dates back to amalgamation in 1995 and at the date of review of this DWMP numbered 641 permits. This system does not allow for reminders to be set for land owners.

Council however has access to a specific Health Manager system and it may be more appropriate to consolidate systems. Resources to enable 641 permits to be transferred to a new system are currently not available within the Environmental Health team.

Action No.	What	How
1.1	Use Council's current Onsite Wastewater Management System database to input data relating to current installations and alterations	Accurately record all data relating to current and new installations and alterations throughout the installation or alteration process
1.2	Use Council's current onsite wastewater management system database to input data relating to past or historic installations or alterations	Through the process of complaint investigation, gather data relating to existing systems and input into database
1.3	Implement a management system to monitor compliance with existing system requirements	Investigate opportunities to incorporate database into Health Manager system. Maintain a register of odour and septic complaints to identify poor performing systems
1.4	Determine the number and location of septic tanks in the Gannawarra Shire	Develop a project and seek funding for resources to enable details to be collected and collated

Action Plan: Priority Area 2: Monitoring and Compliance

On construction of a new home or renovation of an existing home that incorporates a septic tank system, a septic tank permit is issued that details:

- The type of system and the conditions relating to installation and maintenance of the system;
- The approved installation plan incorporating positioning of the proposed effluent disposal area.

A compliance program seeks to ensure that property owners are complying with the conditions of the septic tank permit. This can be achieved by:

- Monitoring certificate of maintenance and sampling requirements submitted regularly by property owners;
- Conducting regular site inspections in high risk areas for high-risk systems.

Note that the maintenance and monitoring required is dependent on the type of septic system in place. Regular compliance monitoring is particularly relevant to Aerated Wastewater Treatment Systems (AWTS).

Compliance is a legislative responsibility for local government.

There is limited capacity with Council’s Environmental Health team to proactively monitor wastewater treatment systems across the Gannawarra Shire.

The most efficient and effective way to manage the risks associated with wastewater is to ensure that all new installations and alterations to existing onsite wastewater management systems are compliant now and going forward and to address non-compliance through the planning and building permit process.

Action No.	What	How
2.1	Investigate all wastewater complaints	When a complaint is received, information will be recorded in Council’s onsite wastewater management system database and investigated
2.2	Undertake Compliance Inspections for all new installations and alterations	Assess applications according to legislation, attend onsite and issue permits where appropriate
2.3	Assess planning referrals for proposed developments and building permits for alterations to existing buildings	When referrals are received from the planning and building department, make assessments of compliance, or otherwise of existing septic tank system
2.4	Develop an appropriate financial model to adequately resource the implementation, system inspection and monitoring of the domestic wastewater systems	Develop proposal for consideration of Council as part of budget process

Action Plan: Priority Area 3: Communication and Education

Poor wastewater management can arise because property owners don't know:

- They have a septic system;
- Their obligations and permit conditions;
- How a septic system works;
- How to prevent problems occurring;
- How to detect when a problem arises;
- The risks or detrimental impacts that can result from poorly operated septic systems.

This is exacerbated when there is change of home ownership and the new home owner is not made aware that they have a septic system and a septic tank permit applies to the property.

Action No.	What	How
3.1	Educational document to be distributed to applicants with a permit to install or alter an onsite wastewater management system	Update and promote Council's Septic Tank Owners Operation and Maintenance Guidelines and make this available from Council's website
3.2	Communication to community	Develop a communication strategy relating to onsite wastewater management systems

Action Plan: Priority Area 4: Strategic Planning

Consideration of domestic wastewater management should play a more significant role in determining town planning policy for unsewered towns and rural residential areas.

Council currently restricts development of small unsewered allotments that are unable to retain wastewater onsite. In the future reticulated sewerage is likely to be restricted to augmentation of existing schemes and areas where septic tank effluent poses a significant threat to environmental and public health values. This will have implications for landowners who perceive an existing entitlement to develop small allotments.

Council should seek to prevent subdivisions with allotments of insufficient size to ensure sustainable onsite effluent disposal.

This DWMP should also be used as an advocacy or supporting document for funding to support installation or expansion of reticulated sewerage systems in high priority growth areas.

One issue to be further investigated is the lack of EPA licensed sites for the authorised disposal of sludge from septic tank systems. Council manages an EPA licensed disposal site. This site is required to be upgraded to comply with current standards or replaced by alternative options.

Legislation changes should also be reviewed to ensure that this DWMP remains relevant.

Action No.	What	How
4.1	Ensure that the Minimum Lot Size Guidelines are adopted as a reference document	Promote a high level of understanding of the Guidelines across Council so that they are implemented into decision making by all relevant departments
4.2	Use this DWMP for advocacy or supporting document for funding to support installation and expansion of reticulated sewerage systems in high priority growth areas	Assess high priority growth areas identified in this DWMP for future advocacy and funding opportunities
4.3	Investigate alternative disposal methods for raw sewage from the desludging of domestic wastewater systems	Work with the EPA and other authorities as necessary to develop a solution
4.4	Review risk assessment of Cohuna Island Road, Cohuna	Develop project and seek funding to support a review of risk rating of Cohuna Island Road
4.5	Assess the performance of the various systems to inform future decisions related to approval of septic waste treatment systems	Investigate the development of a project and seeking funding for a system-based sampling and testing of the effluent of the treatment systems
4.6	Ensure that this DWMP remains relevant	Review legislation changes relating to the DWMP

8 References

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Victorian Auditor-General's Office, (2018). Managing the Environmental Impacts of Domestic Wastewater.

Appendix 1. Glossary of Terms

Sewage	Means any waste containing human excreta or domestic wastewater
Greywater or sullage	Domestic wastewater from bathrooms, kitchens and laundries
Blackwater	Waste directly from the toilet
Stormwater	Rainfall run-off carried through the stormwater system (ie. Town street drains and so on)
Failed systems with offsite discharge	Components of the septic system are no longer functioning so that untreated effluent is discharging beyond the property boundaries
Treated effluent with offsite discharge	The system is satisfactorily treating the waste but the distribution of the treated effluent is not functioning satisfactorily (eg. Blocked lines, compromised disposal field) and is discharging beyond the property boundaries (commonly occurs in wet weather)
Treated effluent with onsite discharge	The system is satisfactorily treating the waste but the distribution of the treated effluent is not functioning satisfactorily (eg. Blocked lines, compromised disposal field) and is discharging within the property boundaries
Treated effluent with offsite sullage discharge	A split septic system, where the blackwater is treated by the septic system and greywater is discharged directly to the stormwater system. Commonly permitted in the past but no longer complies with EPA regulation.
Reuse of wastewater	Onsite reuse of household greywater
Land capability	The capability of land to support a particular use and in this case, effluent disposal
Ineffective regulation	Many septic systems eg. Split systems discussed above, no longer complying with current regulation. However, local government cannot retrospectively change septic tank permits, so have no authority to require an upgrade of these non-compliant systems
Stormwater infrastructure	Stormwater infrastructure can contribute to wastewater management problems if it does not efficiently drain discharged effluent. Causing ponding and stagnation. It can also increase the risk of exposure of the public to effluent.

Appendix 2. Minimum Lot Size Guidelines

This guideline provides information to Council to assist with planning decisions and ensuring that new subdivisions have lot sizes that will ensure all effluent is contained onsite.

This guideline applies to all scenarios for onsite domestic wastewater management, regardless of treatment methods or land-application method.

Recommended Lot Sizes for New Subdivisions

The following lot sizes are considered appropriate for new subdivisions (considering only the issue of onsite domestic wastewater management). Determination of these lot sizes has included an element of conservatism (in particular, the flow rates specified are significantly higher than average rates per household). These values are designed to ensure that on-site wastewater management systems will operate effectively with minimal input from Council.

Soil Category	Typical soil texture	Indicative permeability (Ksat)		1000 litres/day
		Range (m/day)	Design (m/day)	
1	Gravels and sands	>3.0	-	-
2	Sandy loams	1.4 to >3.0	1.4	4000 m ²
3	Loams	0.5 to 3.0	0.5	
4	Clay loams	0.12 to 0.5	0.12	6000 m ²
5	Light clays	0.06 to 0.12	0.07	
6a	Medium clays	~ 0.06	0.06	
6b	Heavy clays	<0.06	0.04	8000 m ²
6c	Poorly structured heavy clays	<0.06	0.035	

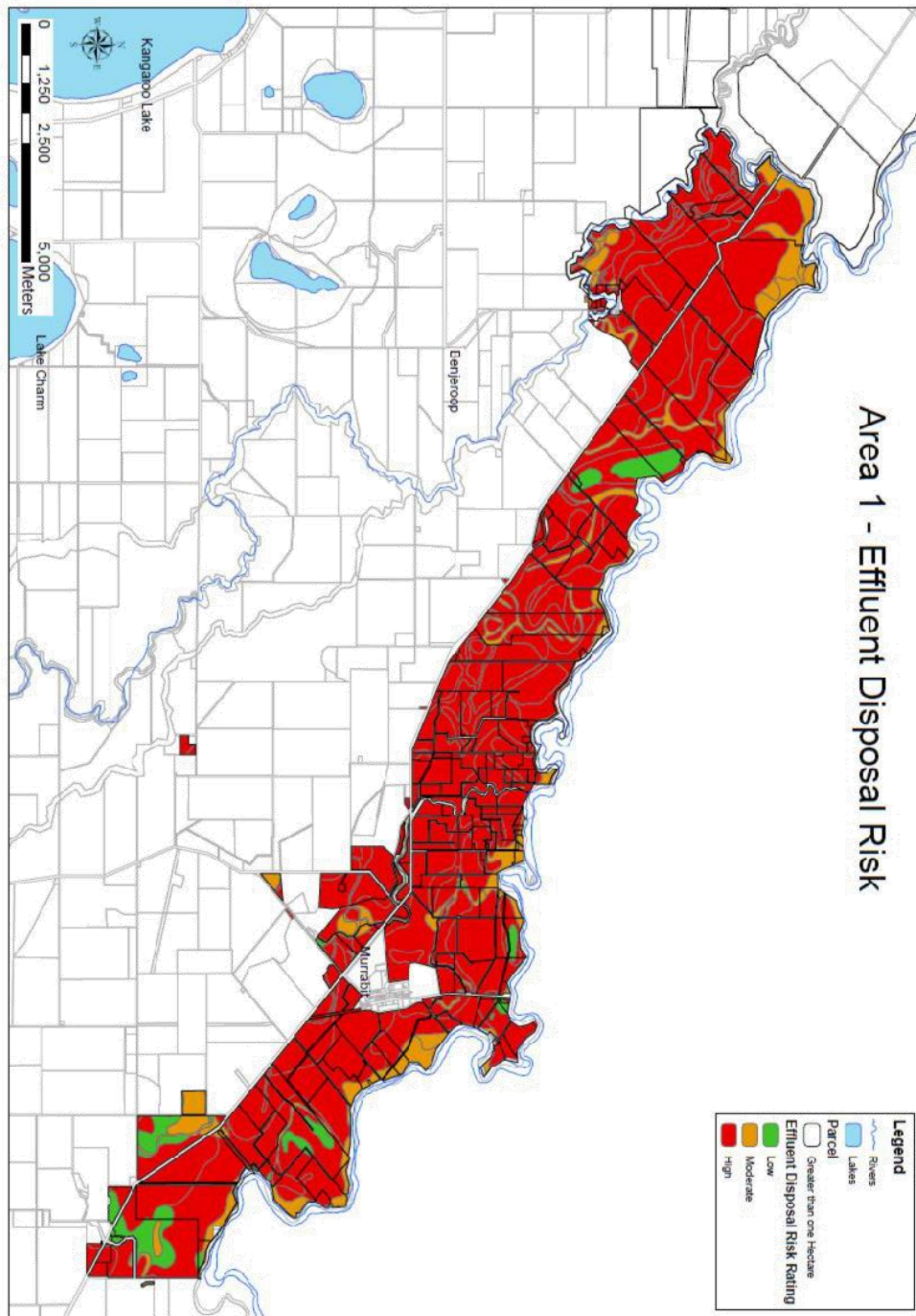
Notes:

- Calculations are based on 400 mm annual rainfall and 600 mm wide ETA trenches. (This is the standard trench width adopted by Council). Note that different widths may be adopted in different places and this may affect the lot sizes required).
- Based on <15% of the area of each lot to be set aside for effluent disposal.
- Setbacks account for at least half of this areas to be set aside.
- Treatment to 20/30 quality effluent may reduce the thresholds above the 1-2 categories.
- For sprinkler irrigation, larger lots will be required, generally at least 600 m²
- Other site limitations such as proximity to watercourses, shallow groundwater (<1.2 m), slope (> 20%) or shallow depth to bedrock (<0.5 m) may result in a requirement for a larger lot size, or may make the site unsuitable for onsite wastewater management.

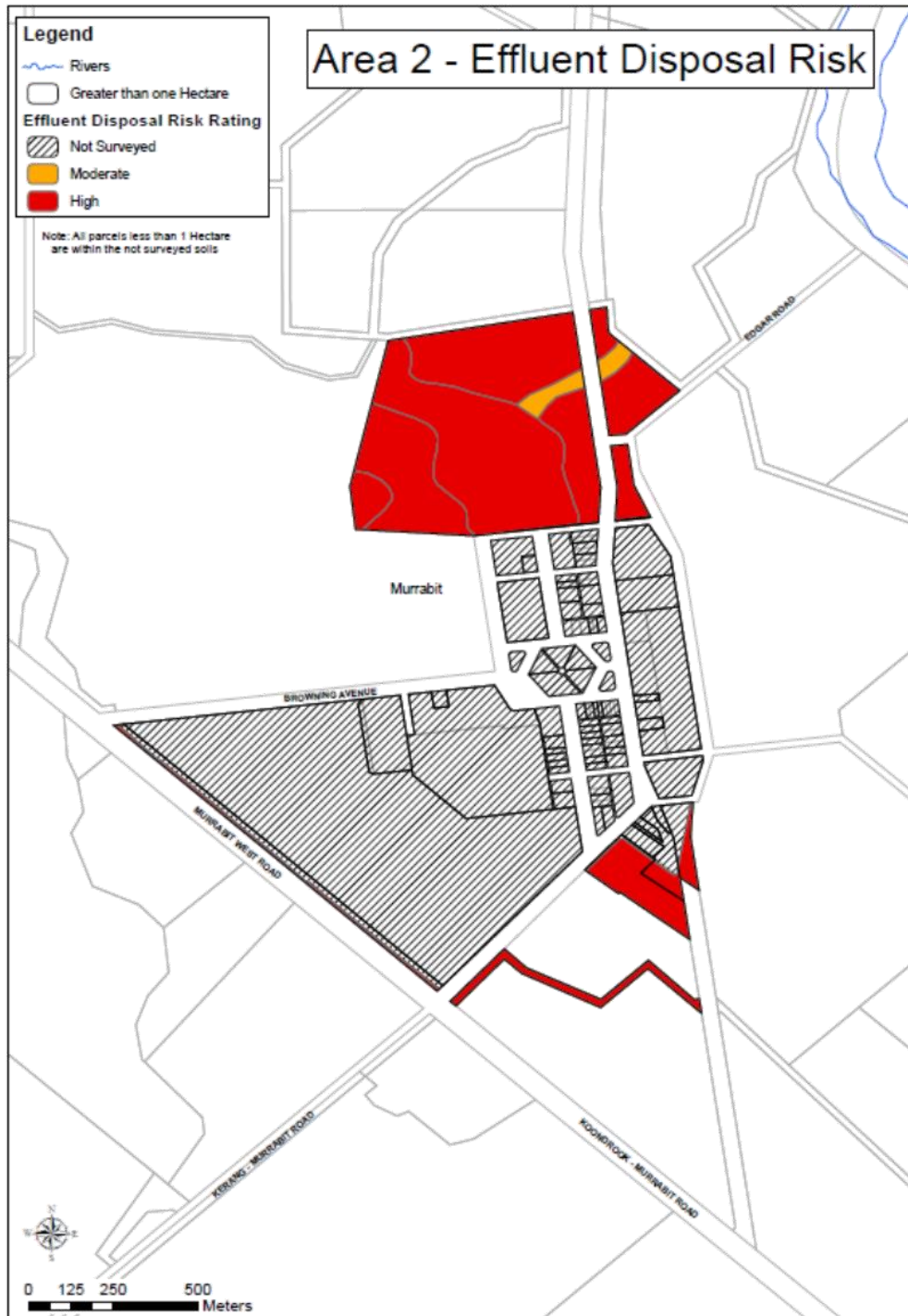
(Prepared by RMCG Consultants – 2007 Gannawarra DWMP)

Appendix 3. Land Capability for Effluent Disposal Maps

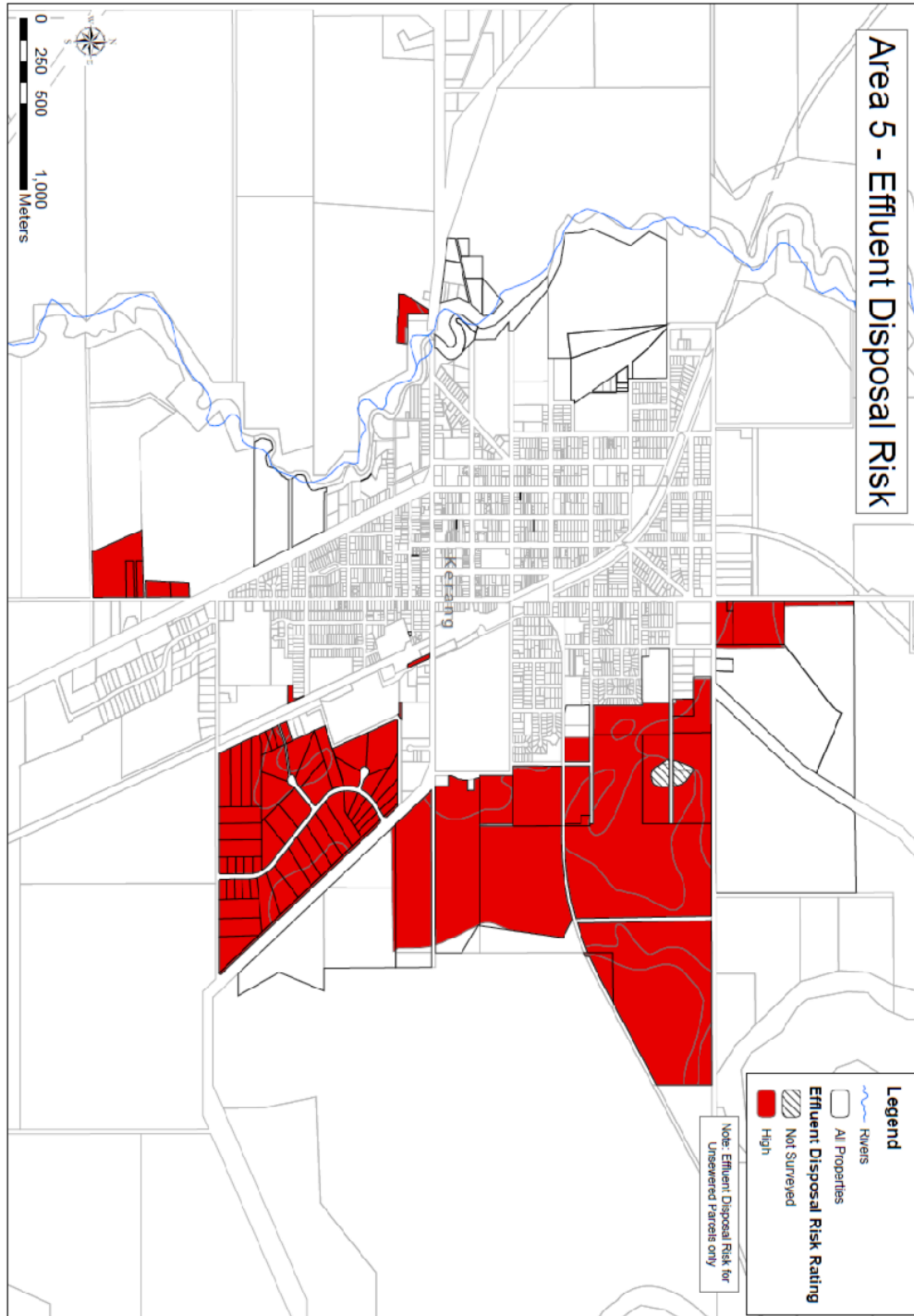
Area 1 – Murrabit and surrounds



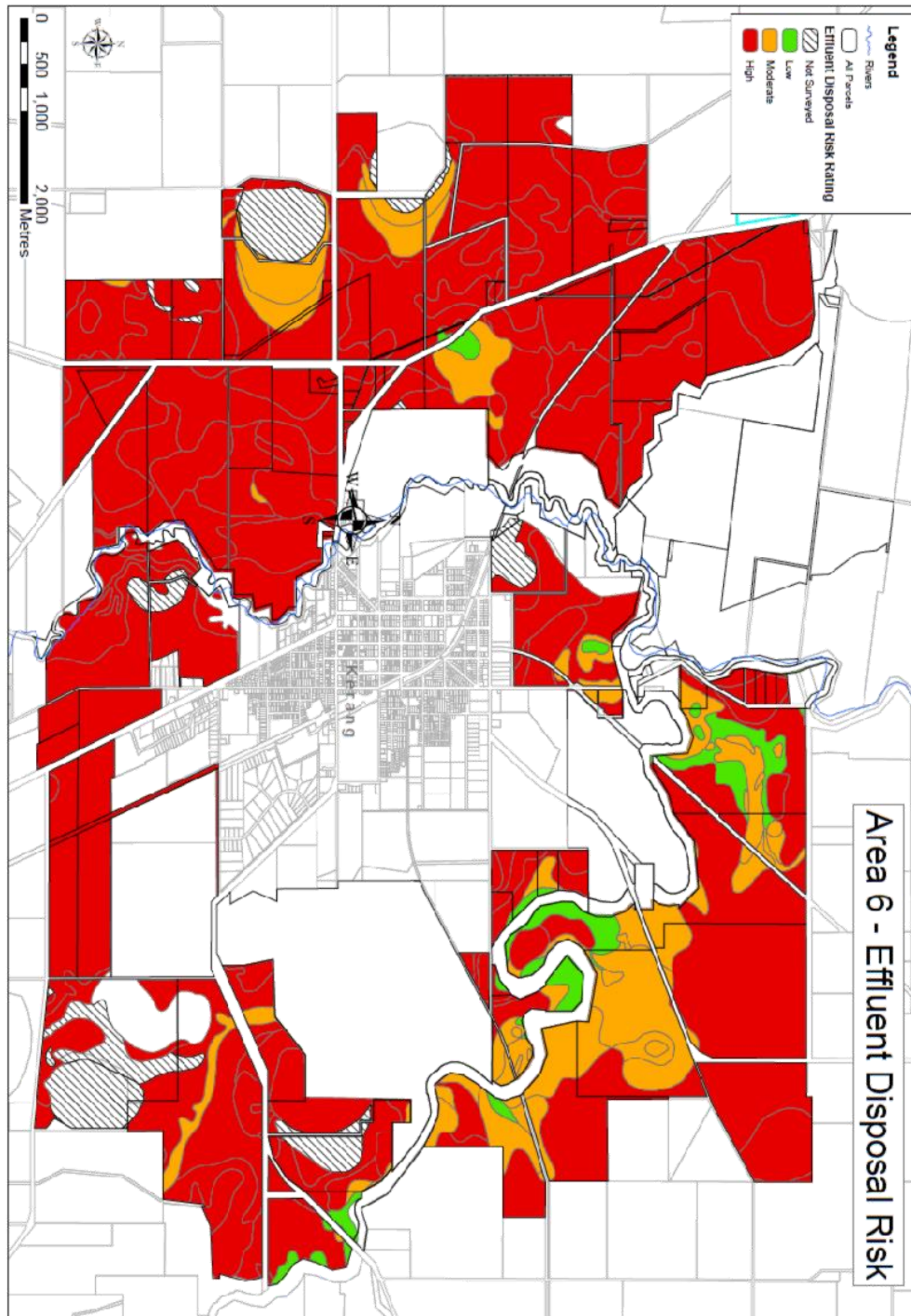
Area 2 – Murrabit



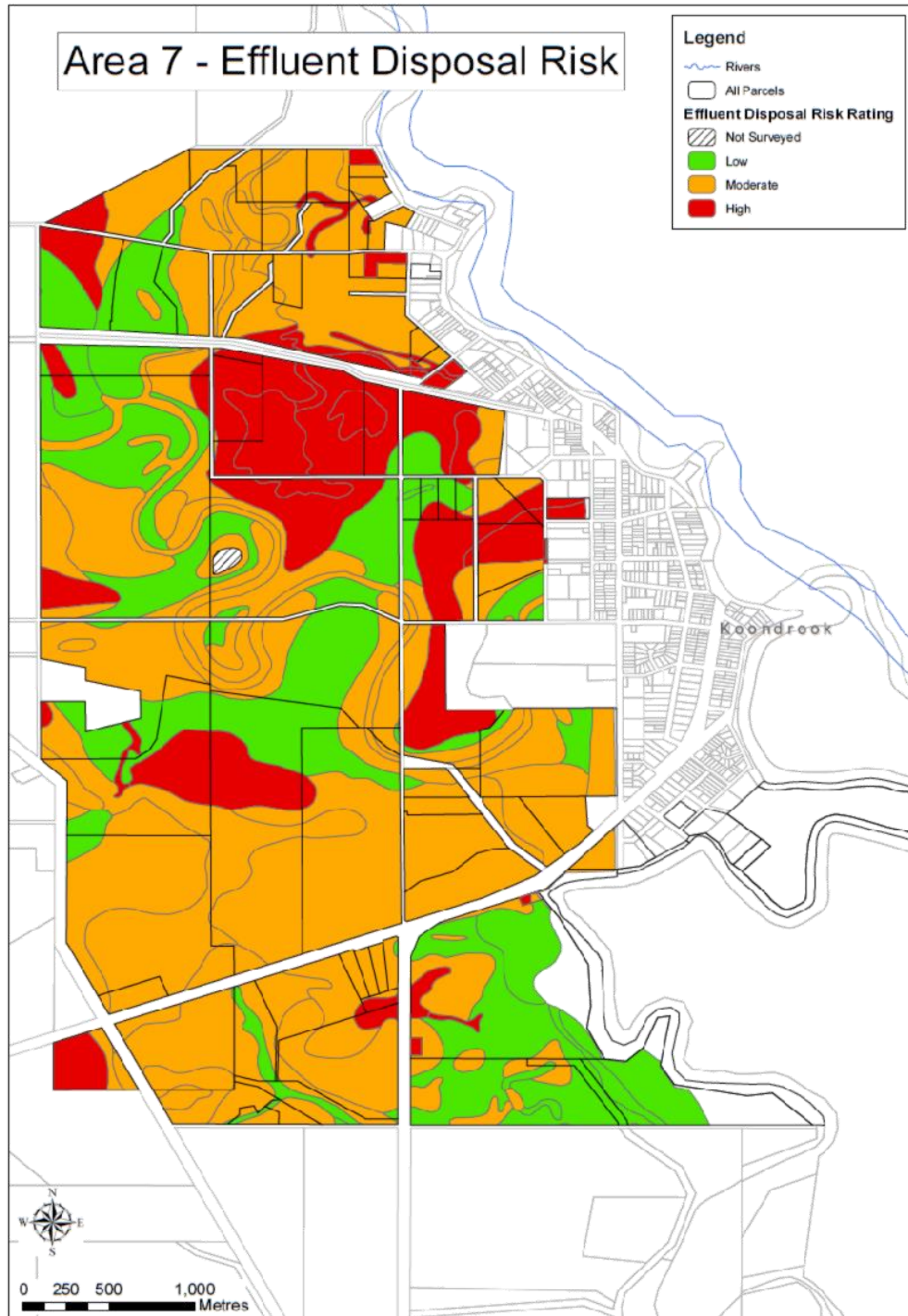
Area 5 – Kerang



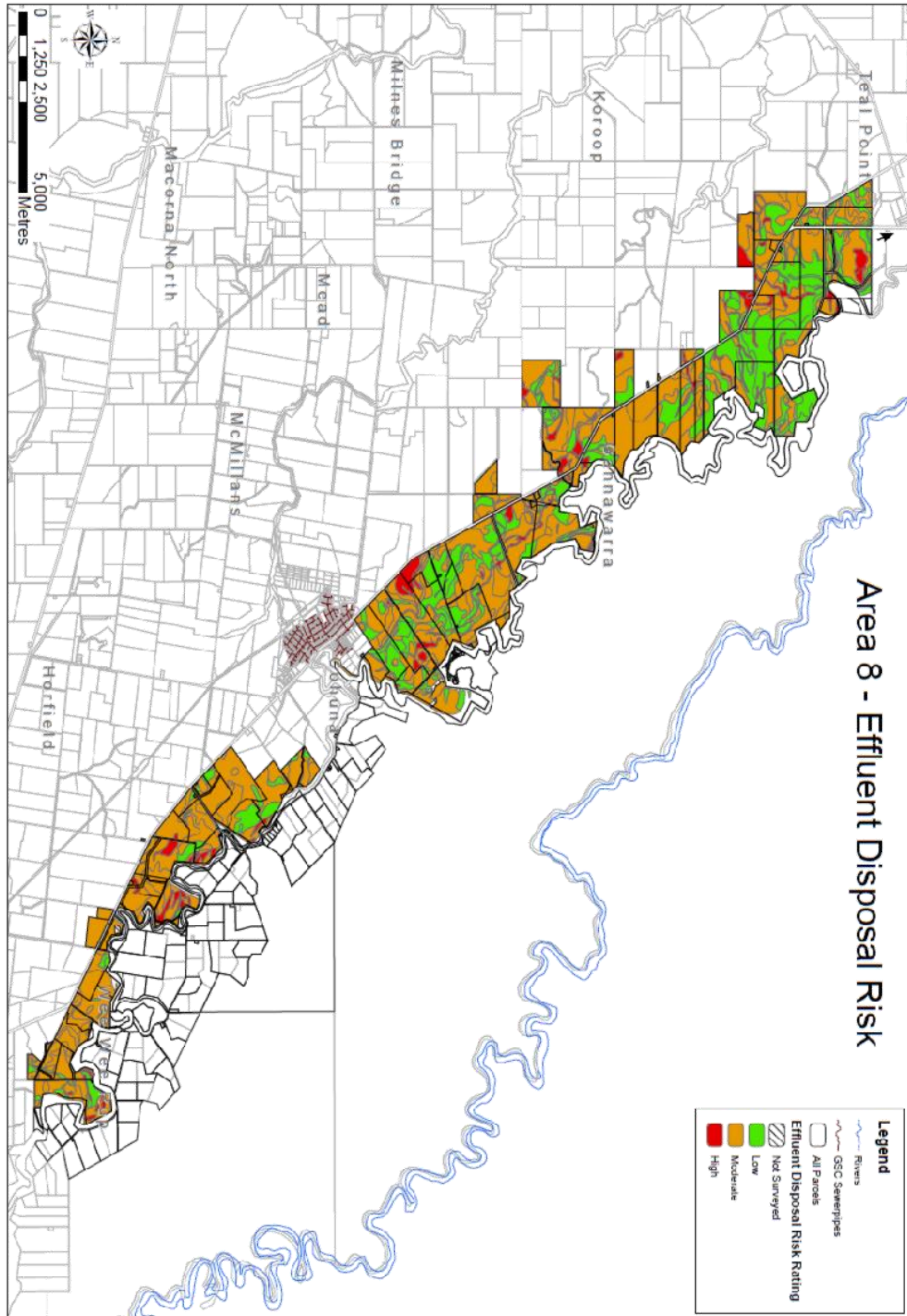
Area 6 – Kerang



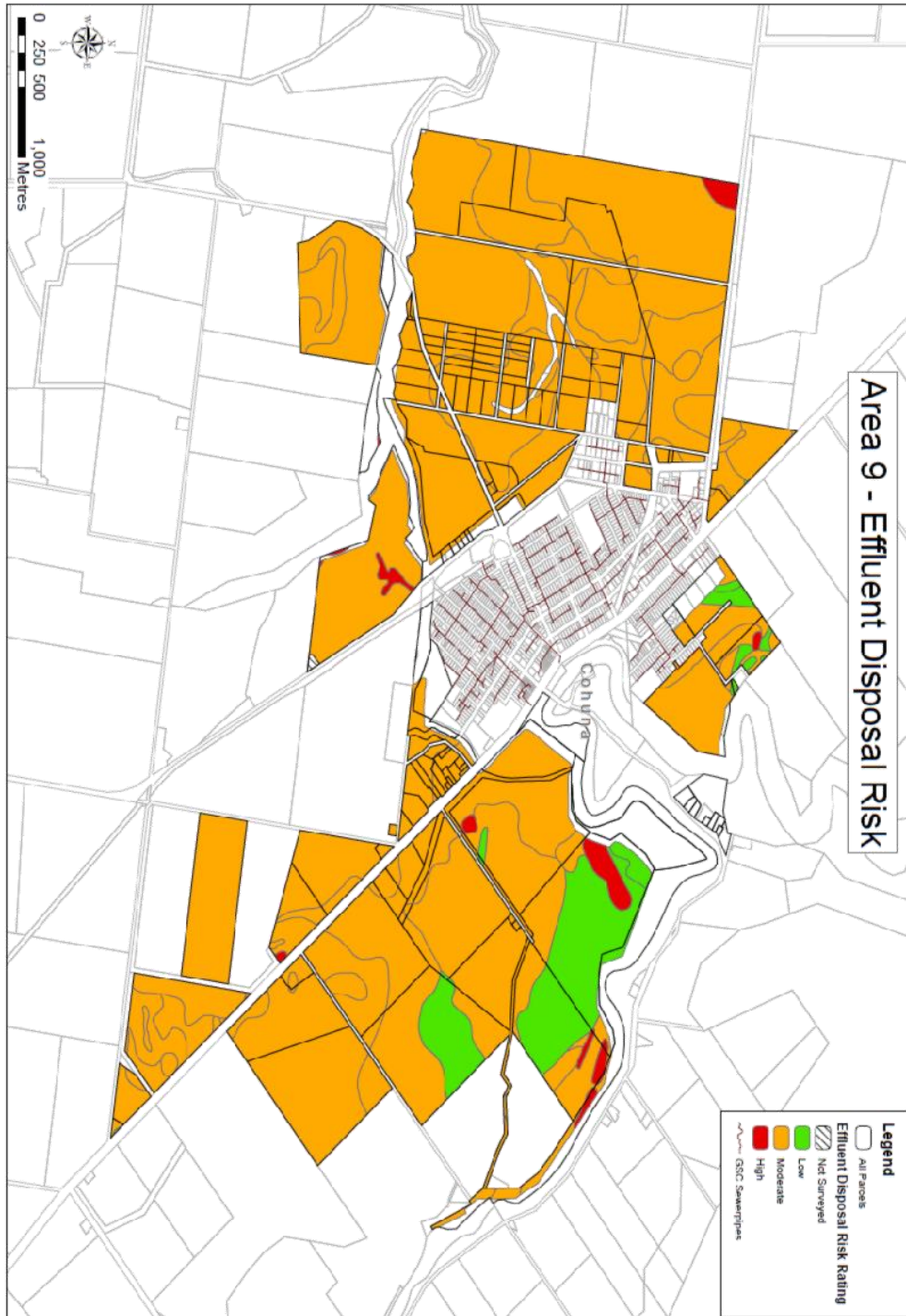
Area 7 – Koondrook



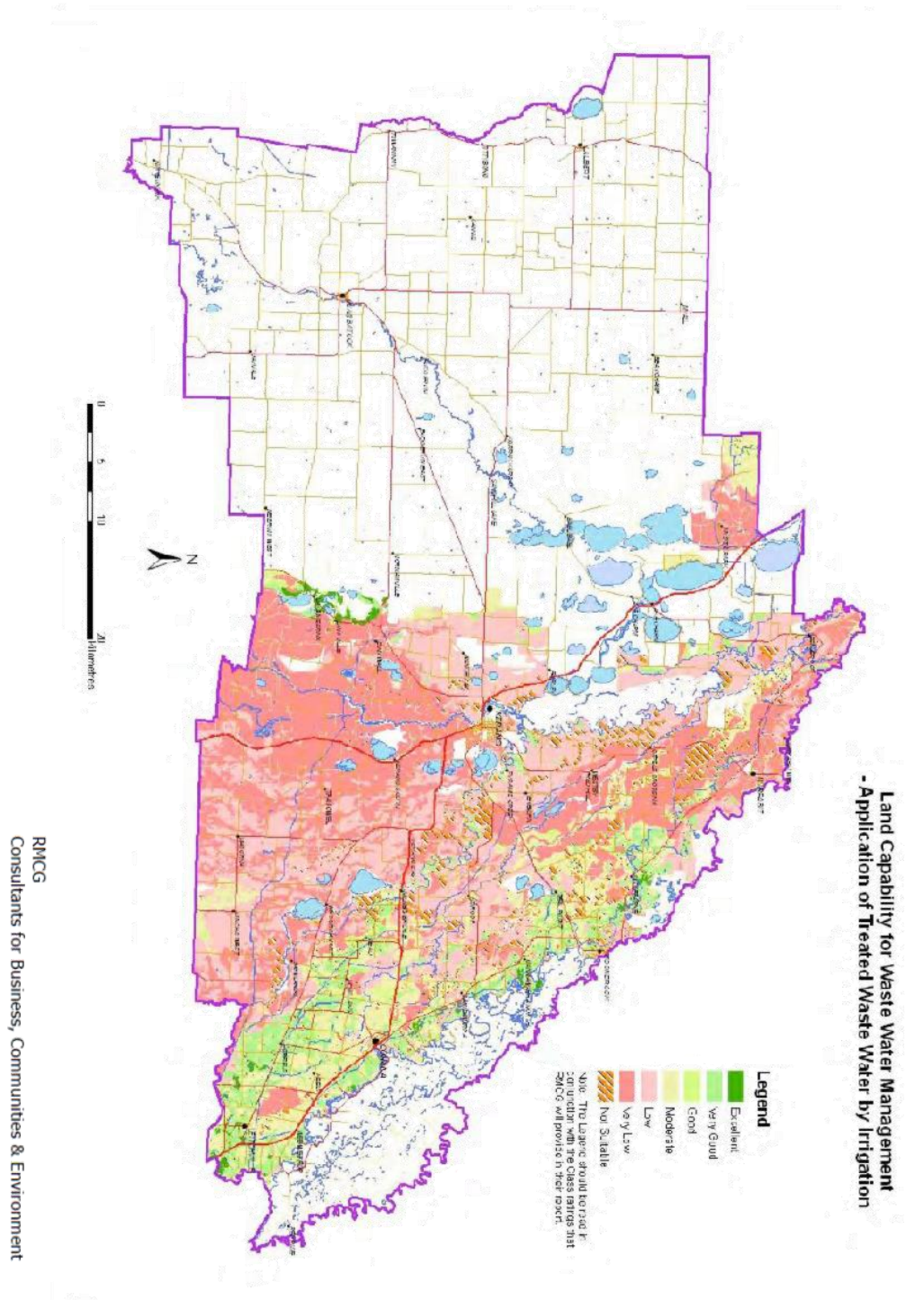
Area 8 – Cohuna



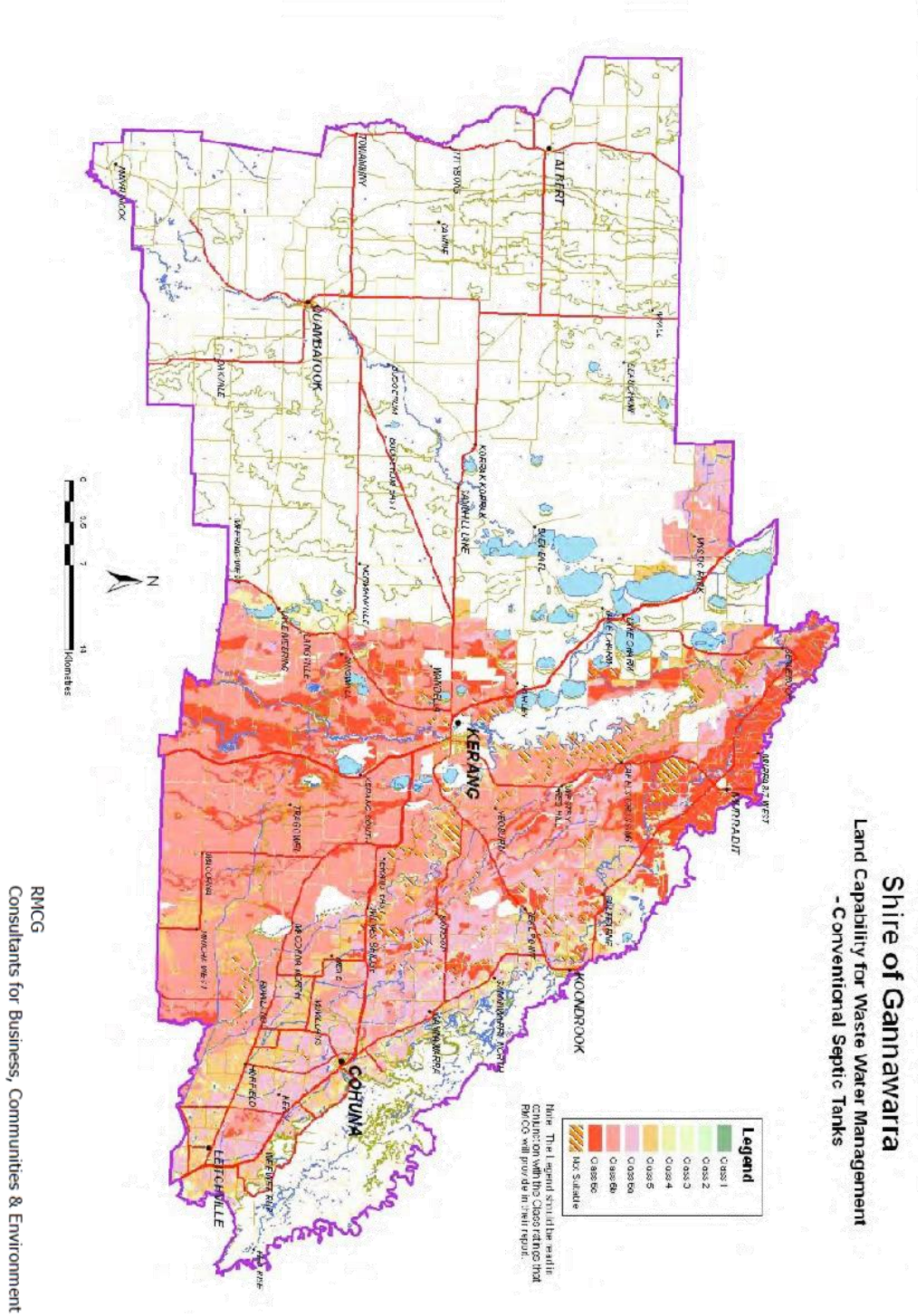
Area 9 – Cohuna



Shire of Gannawarra – Mapping for Irrigation Disposal



Shire of Gannawarra – Mapping for Trench Systems Disposal



7.4 APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMIT P19.116

Author: Kellie Burmeister, Manager Planning and Regulatory Services

Authoriser: Geoff Rollinson, Director Infrastructure and Development

Applicant: Joseph Giorgio

Owner: Joseph Giorgio

Proposal: Use of land for animal husbandry (pigeons) in accordance with the endorsed plan.

Location: Lot 5, LP136344, 3 Maunder Street, Koondrook

Attachments: 1 Application Documents [↓](#)

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve Planning Application P19.116 for use of land for animal husbandry (pigeons) in accordance with the endorsed plans and issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit at Lot 5, LP136344, 3 Maunder Street, Koondrook subject to the following conditions:

1. General Requirement

The use of the site in accordance with this permit and as shown on the endorsed plan must not be altered or modified without the written consent of the Responsible Authority.

2. Use of the Land

This permit allows the use of land for animal husbandry only by Mr Joseph Giorgio of 3 Maunder Street, Koondrook. Should Joseph Giorgio no longer reside on the land on a full time basis, this permit will expire.

3. Number of Pigeons

The maximum number of show pigeons kept on the land at any one time must not exceed 150.

4. Storage of Food Supplies

All feed must be contained in metal or plastic containers with vermin proof lids to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

5. Cleaning of Pigeon Lofts

- a) All pigeon lofts must be maintained in a clean and tidy state to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
- b) Pigeon feathers, droppings and excess bird food must be removed from all pigeon lofts at least two times a week and to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
- c) All diseased and dead birds must be immediately removed from the lofts and disposed of to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

6. Collection and Storage of Waste

All waste material must be stored on-site in a garbage bin with a vermin proof lid to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority and such waste must be removed from the site to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

7. Amenity

The use and development of the site must be managed so that the amenity of the area is not detrimentally affected, through the:

- Transport of materials, goods or commodities to or from the land;
- Appearance of any building, works or materials;
- Emission of noise, artificial light, vibration, smell, dust, waste water, waste products;
- Presence of vermin.

In the event of any such nuisance in the opinion of the Responsible Authority occurring, additional suitable procedures for suppression must be developed and implemented to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Note 1: A Keeping Animals Permit must be obtained from Council's Local Laws Department.

Note 2: The keeping of pigeons on the site must comply with the Code of Practice for the Housing of Caged Birds.

Note 3: North Central Catchment Management Authority

Flood levels for the 1% AEP (100 year ARI) flood event have been estimated for this area under provisions of the Water Act 1989. The applicable 1% AEP flood level for the location described above is 77.8 metres AHD.

North Central CMA advises that in the event of a 1% AEP flood event it is possible that the property may be subject to inundation from Gunbower Creek and the Murray River. However, it is recommended that a licensed surveyor be engaged to determine the exact effect of the applicable flood level on the property.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is being presented to Council to determine a planning application for the use of land for animal husbandry at 3 Maunder Street, Koondrook.

The application was advertised to surrounding property owners and occupiers and two written objections were received.

The proposal is considered to be appropriate for the site and consistent with the provisions of the Gannawarra Planning Scheme.

PURPOSE

To seek Council's decision of planning application P19.116 for use of land for animal husbandry.

DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officer preparing this report declares no Conflict of Interest in regards to this matter.

COUNCIL PLAN

Council Plan 2017-2021 – Strong Healthy Communities– Provide a range of opportunities that promote active and healthy lifestyles and social connectedness.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The subject site is located at 3 Maunder Street, Koondrook. The site is approximately 1,502.58 square metres in size. The subject site comprises an existing dwelling and pigeon coops which are located towards the rear of the property. The remainder of the site comprises of garden area. Access to the site is provided off Maunder Street which is an unsealed road.

Land to the north, east, south and west of the site is zoned General Residential Zone Schedule 1 (GRZ1). All of the residential allotments directly adjoining the subject site have been developed upon and typically comprise a single dwelling and associated outbuildings. The subject site is located within a well-established part of Koondrook's township. Approximately 22 dwellings are located within 100m of the subject site and the main street of Koondrook is located approximately 466m from the site.

It appears that Mr Giorgio has kept pigeons on his premises for a number of years prior to November 2019, however it is difficult to determine exactly how many pigeons have been kept on the premises previously. Under Council's Local Law No. 1 – Community Amenity the maximum number of pigeons that may be kept on private land less than 0.5ha, in a built up area, is 50.

Following a complaint, it was brought to Council's attention that Mr Giorgio was keeping an excess number of pigeons on his premises without an excess animal numbers permit. Following a discussion with Council's Local Laws Officers, Mr Giorgio lodged an application for Keeping Animals Permit with Council's Local Laws Department and planning permit application with Council's Planning Department for use of land for animal husbandry.

CONSULTATION

The application was referred to North Central Catchment Management Authority (NCCMA) under Section 52 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1989*. The NCCMA offered no objection to the granting of a planning permit and provided advice regarding flood levels for the 1% AEP (100 year ARI) flood event.

The application was also referred internally to Council's Engineering, Building, Environmental Health and Local Laws Departments who offered no objection to the proposal. The Local Laws and Building Department provided conditions and/or notes.

Notice of the application was given by mail on 4 December 2019 to adjoining property owners and occupiers. Two objections were received.

The key issues raised in the objections were:

- Concern regarding an increase in the number of pigeons permitted to be kept on the premises in the future.
- Concern regarding noise impacts from the cooing of the pigeons.
- Opinion that the applicant is reliant upon cats to reduce any vermin present on the subject land and concern that the cats are not confined to the applicants premises.
- Question regarding for what purpose the applicant was housing the pigeons on his property.
- Concern that the proposal will result in the attraction of 'wild' pigeons.
- Concern regarding the management of pigeon faeces.

In response to the issues raised by the objector, the following relate to how Council will address each of the points should approval be granted for the proposal.

- Should the application be approved, a condition would be included on the permit which restricts the number of pigeons which are to be kept on the land at any one time to 150.
- It is thought that the noise associated with the cooing of pigeons would not be unreasonable in terms of other wild birds and other noises within Koondrook such as Arbuthnot Sawmills.
- The applicant has denied using cats to reduce any vermin present on site and has stated that he owns one cat which is caged in the evening.
- The applicant is a member of Twin Cities Fancy Pigeon Club and the pigeons are used for showing.
- There does not appear to be any evidence that these housed pigeons would attract wild birds. There have been many VCAT cases that do not substantiate this claim.
- The pigeon cages have cement floors and are cleaned twice weekly. All excrement is taken by trailer offsite.

ASSESSMENT

The subject land is situated within the General Residential Zone Schedule 1 (GRZ1) pursuant to Clause 32.08 of the Gannawarra Planning Scheme. One of the purposes of the GRZ1 is 'To allow educational, recreational, religious, community and a limited range of other non-residential uses to serve local community needs in appropriate locations'. Another purpose of the GRZ1 is 'To encourage development that respects the neighbourhood character of the area'.

Pursuant to Clause 32.08-2 of the Gannawarra Planning Scheme, a permit is required for the use of land for animal husbandry. Under the Gannawarra Planning Scheme the term animal husbandry is defined as 'Land used to keep, breed, board or train animals including birds.' The land use term animal husbandry should not be confused with the land use term domestic animal husbandry which is defined as 'Land used to keep, breed, board or train domestic animals.'

The whole of the subject site is covered by the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO). One of the purposes of the LSIO is 'To ensure that development maintains the free passage and temporary storage of floodwaters, minimises flood damage, is compatible with the flood hazard and local drainage conditions and will not cause any significant rise in flood level or flow velocity'.

No retrospective planning approval is being sought for the buildings and works associated with the development of the pigeon coops on the subject land. It is noted that in this instance the buildings and works associated with construction of the pigeon coops does not require planning approval. Clause 62.02-2 of the Gannawarra Planning Scheme states that any requirement in the scheme relating to the construction of a building or the construction or carrying out of works (other than a requirement in the Public Conservation and Resource Zone) does not apply to buildings and works associated with cat cages and runs, bird cages, dog houses and other domestic animal enclosures associated with the use of the land as a dwelling.

Neither Clause 32.08 (General Residential Zone) nor Clause 44.04 (Land Subject to Inundation Overlay) specifically states that a permit is required for buildings and works associated with bird cages ancillary to the use of land as a dwelling.

DISCUSSION

Clause 32.08-13 (GRZ1 Decision Guidelines) sets out a number of matters which the Responsible Authority must consider before deciding on an application. Some of the matters that the Responsible Authority must consider are:

- The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework;
- The purpose of this zone;
- Whether the use or development is compatible with residential use.
- Whether the use generally serves local community needs.
- The scale and intensity of the use and development.

There are a number of VCAT cases which have dealt with matters similar to this. Of particular note is *Watts v Horsham RCC & Ors* [2-12] VCAT 1051 (19 July 2012). This particular application was to review the decision of the responsible authority to refuse permission for pigeon keeping at 60 Mardon Drive, Horsham. The Tribunal concluded that the decision of the responsible authority should be set aside and a permit was granted which allowed the construction of two pigeon lofts for the purpose of animal husbandry (the keeping, breeding and training of racing pigeons) to accommodate a maximum of 50 breeding pigeons and 100 racing pigeons. The member concluded that a permit should be granted because the proposed use will not have unacceptable amenity

impacts and there was no basis for the claim that the use poses a significant risk to the environment or the health of the community or nearby neighbours.

VCAT cases 490/2007 and P219/2007 provides direction on the number of pigeons required to trigger the requirement for a permit. The Tribunal found that the keeping of up to 100 racing pigeons on the land, in association with the use of land for the purpose of a dwelling, constitutes a hobby which does not require any separate planning approval. This rationale has been upheld in a number of other decisions concerning the keeping of homing pigeons such as *Black v Stonnington CC* [2012] VCAT 1659 (31 October 2012). In this case the Tribunal stated that 'Clause 62 of the Planning Scheme states that no permit is required to keep various animals including birds if they comprise part of the usual domestic activities of a dwelling. Notwithstanding that clause, the Tribunal has found that keeping more than 100 pigeons comprises an activity that is more intensive than being ancillary to a dwelling. It constitutes a separate use (animal husbandry).

The State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF)

- Clause 11 (Settlement) states that 'Planning is to prevent environmental and amenity problems created by siting incompatible land uses close together.'
- Clause 13.03-1S (Floodplain management): The objective is 'To assist the protection of life, property and community infrastructure from flood hazard.'
- Clause 13.05-1S (Noise abatement): The objective is 'To assist the control of noise effects on sensitive land uses.'
- Clause 13.07-1S (Land Use Compatibility): The objective is 'To safeguard community amenity while facilitating appropriate commercial, industrial or other uses with potential off-site effects.'

Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF)

- Clause 21.04-2 (Flooding): The objective is 'To manage flooding and floodplains so as to minimise loss and damage to property and infrastructure, and to preserve the function of floodplains to convey and store floodwater.'

Particular Provisions

No particular provisions apply to the assessment of this application.

The decision guidelines of Clause 65

The proposal generally complies with the provisions of Clause 65.

OPTION ANALYSIS

1. To approve Planning Application P19.116 and issue a Notice of Decision to grant a planning permit subject to appropriate conditions. The objector has the opportunity to appeal Council's decision at VCAT.
2. To approve Planning Application P19.116 and issue a Notice of Decision to grant a planning permit with amended conditions. The objector has the opportunity to appeal Council's decision at VCAT.
3. To refuse Planning Application P19.116 and issue a Notice of Refusal stating the grounds of refusal. The permit applicant has the opportunity to appeal Council's decision at VCAT.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk implications to Council.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications to Council.

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that Council approve planning permit application P19.116 as the proposed use will not have unacceptable amenity impacts to surrounding landowners and occupiers. Any amenity type issues can be managed by the conditions contained within the report.



**GANNAWARRA
SHIRE COUNCIL**

Planning Enquiries
Phone: (03) 5450 9333
Web: www.gannawarra.vic.gov.au

GANNAWARRA SHIRE COUNCIL	
File:	4-0813
	25 NOV 2019
Rego No.	P19-116
Referred To:	LSSP Copies To: KB

Office Use Only	Fee:	\$
Application No.:	Receipt No.:	
Date Lodged:	/ /	Ward:
Date Allocated:	/ /	Zone(s):
Allocated to:	Overlay(s):	

WORKING COPY

To be retained for a minimum of 3 months

Ref No:

Application for Planning Permit

Use this form to make an application for a planning permit and to provide the information required by section 47 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and regulations 15 and 38 of the *Planning and Environment Regulations 2005*.

Supplementary information requested in this form should be provided as an attachment to your application. Please print clearly or complete the form electronically (refer to How to complete the Application for Planning Permit form).

Privacy notice

▲ Information collected with this application will only be used to consider and determine the application. It will be made available for public inspection in accordance with section 51 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Need help with the application?

If you need help to complete this form, read *How to complete the Application for Planning Permit form*. For more information about the planning process, refer to *Planning: a Short Guide*. These documents are available from your local council, the Planning Information Centre (Ph: 03 9637 8610, 8 Nicholson Street, Melbourne), or www.dse.vic.gov.au/planning.

Contact council to discuss the specific requirements for this application and obtain a planning permit checklist. Insufficient or unclear information may delay your application.

① Has there been a pre-application meeting with a council officer?

Yes No

If yes, with whom? Date: / /

The land

② Address of the land. Complete the Street Address and one of the Formal Land Descriptions.

Street Address

Street No.:	Street Name:
3	MAUNDER
Suburb/Locality:	Postcode:
KOONDROOK	3580

Formal Land Description

▲ This information can be found on the certificate of title.

Lot No.: on Lodged Plan, Title Plan or Subdivision Plan No.:

OR

Crown Allotment No.: Section No.: Parish Name:

③ Title information. Attach a full, current copy of title information for each individual parcel of land, forming the subject site.

④ Describe how the land is used and developed now.
eg. single dwelling, three dwellings, shop, factory, medical centre with two practitioners, licensed restaurant with 80 seats.

Three Dwellings

⑤ Plan of the land. Attach a plan of the existing conditions. Photos are also helpful.

The proposal

▲ You must give full details of your proposal and attach the information required to assess the application.

If you do not give enough detail or an adequate description of the proposal you will be asked for more information. This will delay your application.

- 6 For what use, development or other matter do you require a permit?

Read *How to complete the Application for Planning Permit form* if you need help in describing your proposal.

Housing of cage pigeons
See Attached

- 7 Additional information about the proposal.

Contact council or refer to council planning permit checklists for more information about council's requirements.

Attach additional information providing details of the proposal, including:

Any information required by the planning scheme, requested by council or outlined in a council planning permit checklist.

Plans showing the layout and details of the proposal.

If required, a description of the likely effect of the proposal (eg. traffic, noise, environmental impacts).

- 8 Encumbrances on title.

Encumbrances are identified on the certificate of title.

Is the land affected by an encumbrance such as a restrictive covenant, section 173 agreement or other obligation on title such as an easement or building envelope?

No, go to 9.

Yes, Attach a copy of the document (instrument) specifying the details of the encumbrance.

Does the proposal breach, in any way, the encumbrance on title?

No, go to 9.

Yes, contact council for advice on how to proceed before continuing with this application.

▲ Note
Council must not grant a permit that authorises anything that would result in a breach of a registered restrictive covenant (sections 61(4) and 62 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*). Contact council and/or an appropriately qualified person for advice.

Costs of buildings and works/permit fee

Most applications require a fee to be paid. Where development is proposed, the value of the development affects the fee. Contact council to determine the appropriate fee.

- 9 Estimated cost of development for which the permit is required.

Cost \$ **▲** You may be required to verify this estimate.
Write 'NIL' if no development is proposed (eg. change of use, subdivision, removal of covenant, liquor licence)

- 10 Do you require a receipt for the permit fee?

Yes No

Contact, applicant and owner details

11 Provide details of the contact, applicant and owner of the land.

Contact

The person you want Council to communicate with about the application.

Name: JOSEPH A GIORGIO

Organisation (if applicable):

Postal address: P.O Box 98

KOONDROOK VIC Postcode: 3580

Contact phone:

Mobile phone: 042 91006 851

Email:

Fax:

Indicate preferred contact method

Applicant

The person or organisation who wants the permit.

Same as contact. If not, complete details below.

Name:

Organisation (if applicable):

Postal address:

Postcode:

Owner

The person or organisation who owns the land.

Same as contact Same as applicant

Where the owner is different from the applicant or contact, provide the name of the person or organisation who owns the land.

Name (if applicable):

Organisation (if applicable):

Postal address:

Postcode:

Checklist

12 Have you?

Filled in the form completely?

Paid or included the application fee?

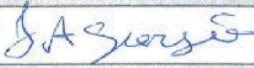
Attached all necessary supporting information and documents?

Completed the relevant council planning permit checklist?

Signed the declaration on the next page?

Declaration

- ⑬ This form must be signed. Complete one of A, B or C
- ⚠ Remember it is against the law to provide false or misleading information, which could result in a heavy fine and cancellation of the permit.

<p>A Owner/Applicant</p> <p>I declare that I am the applicant and owner of the land and all the information in this application is true and correct.</p>	<p>Signature </p> <p>Date: <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/></p>
<p>B Owner</p> <p>I declare that I am the owner of the land and I have seen this application.</p>	<p>Signature</p> <p>Date: <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/></p>
<p>Applicant</p> <p>I declare that I am the applicant and all of the information in this application is true and correct.</p>	<p>Signature</p> <p>Date: <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/></p>
<p>C Applicant</p> <p>I declare that I am the applicant and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have notified the owner about this application; • and all the information in this application is true and correct. 	<p>Signature</p> <p>Date: <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/></p>

Lodgement

Lodge the completed and signed form and all documents with:

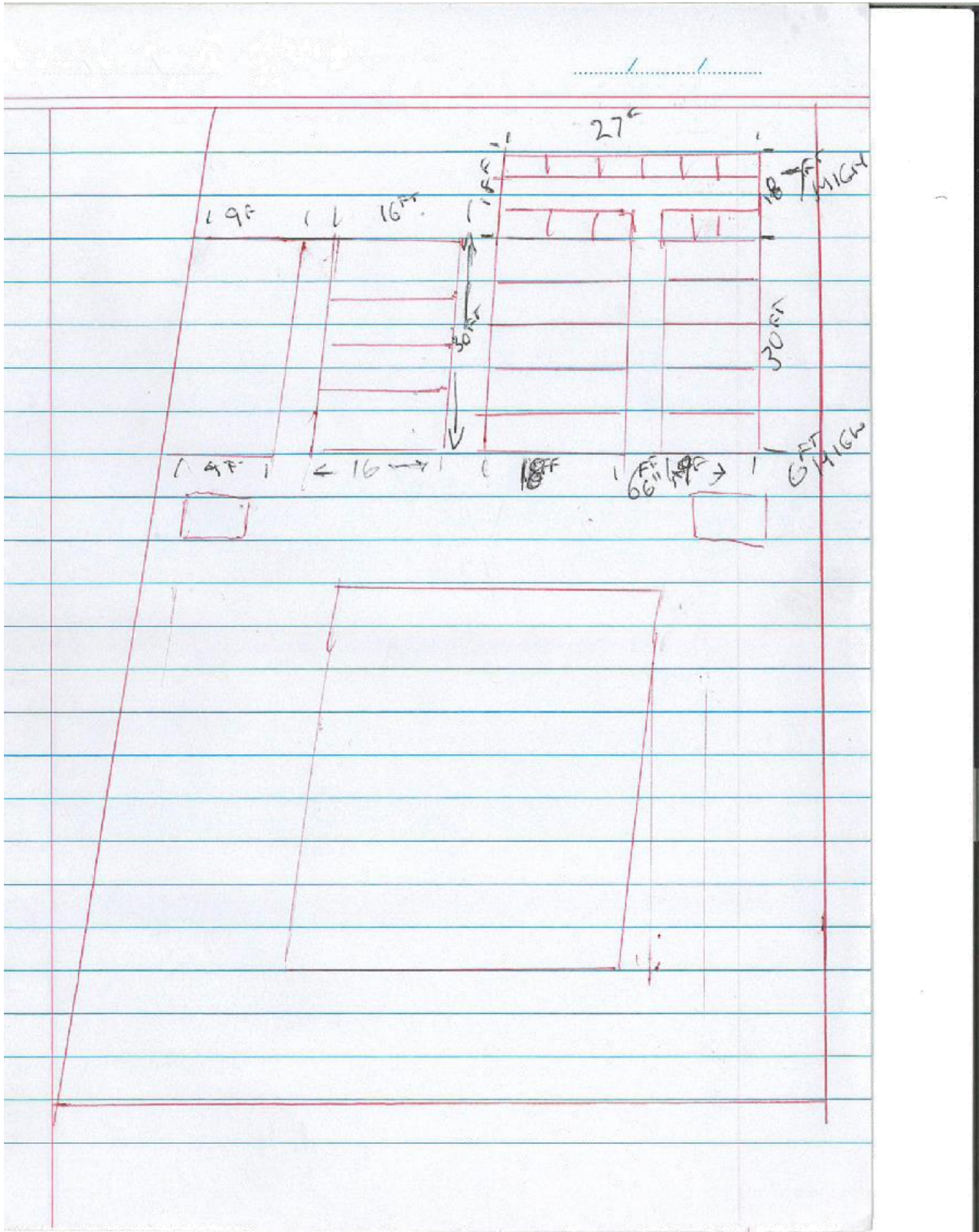
For help or more information

Gannawarra Shire Council
 PO Box 287, KERANG VIC 3579
 49 Victoria Street, KERANG VIC 3579
 Telephone: (03) 5450 9333
 Fax: (03) 5450 3023
 Email: council@gannawarra.vic.gov.au

Proposal

- Housing of cage pigeons

- All cages have cement floors which is cleaned every 3 days. The waste leaves the premises by a trailer to a local farmer for his garden and trees.
- All feed bins are sealed in a shed
- All excess water from cages is emptied to a water cart.
- To stop vermin entering cages small bird wire is used.
- All area around cages are clean



4-Dec-2019



Scale = 1 : 457,380

10 m



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GANNAWARRA SHIRE COUNCIL
 Local Law No. 1 – Community Amenity
 Part 11 – Schedule 1: Discretion Guidelines

GUIDELINES

GUIDELINES

YOUR ANIMALS

37. KEEPING ANIMALS

These Guidelines as determined from time to time are incorporated in this local law for determining whether an offence has occurred or whether to issue a permit for keeping animals.

This Table gives the maximum numbers and types of animals that may be kept on private land in each category without an excess animal numbers permit.

Table of Animal Numbers and Types

0.15 HA

Type of Animal	In Flats, Units Or Townhouses	On Land Less Than 0.5 Ha. # in a built up area	On Land 0.5 Ha. to 2 Ha. # * in a built up area	Farm Zone
Dogs	1	2	2	5
Cats	1	2	2	2
Poultry (no roosters)	0	6	30	Municipal Planning Scheme Applies
Large or Noisy Birds (including Roosters)	0	0	10	
Pigeons	0	50	150	
Domestic birds (caged)	2	50	100	
Horses/donkeys	Prohibited	0	2	
Cattle	Prohibited	0	5	
Sheep/goats	Prohibited	0	10	
Pigs	Prohibited	0	0	
Any other livestock	Prohibited	0	2	

0.5 hectares = 1.236 acres, 2 hectares = 4.94 acres

* Animal numbers on private properties exceeding 2 ha in built up areas are subject only to those restrictions applicable under the Municipal Planning Scheme.

In determining whether to grant a Permit for the keeping of Animals where the number exceeds that determined by the Council as set out in the Table above, the Council or an Authorised or Delegated Officer must take into account the following guidelines -

- (1) whether a Planning Scheme Permit Application may be required, such as for boarding or breeding of animals;
- (2) the land-use and size of the applicant's land and that of adjoining allotments;
- (3) the proximity of adjoining properties and dwellings;
- (4) the amenity of the area;
- (5) the type and additional numbers of Animals to be kept;
- (6) the likely effects on adjoining owners;
- (7) the adequacy of Animal accommodation and fencing; and
- (8) any other matter the Authorised or Delegated Officer reasonably believes is relevant to the application.

38. ANIMAL ACCOMMODATION

These Guidelines as determined by Council from time to time are incorporated in this local law for determining reasonable accommodation for kept animals.

In determining what is reasonable accommodation for kept animals and whether such accommodation is adequately maintained, an Authorised or Delegated Officer must consider the following guidelines.

- (1) whether a Planning Scheme Permit Application may be required, such as for boarding or breeding of animals;
- (2) the type of Animals to be kept and whether those animals are adequately secured within the property boundary;
- (3) the height of the accommodation;
- (4) the location of the accommodation having regard to the amenity of the area;
- (5) the size of the accommodation in terms of its adequacy to house the proposed number and type of Animals;
- (6) the security of the accommodation in terms of the Animals to be housed in it;
- (7) whether all excreta and other waste are removed and/or treated as often as necessary so that they does not cause a nuisance or offensive condition;
- (8) whether all excreta and other waste are stored in a fly and vermin proof receptacle until removed from the premises or otherwise disposed of to the satisfaction of the Municipal Environmental Health Officer;

GANNAWARRA SHIRE COUNCIL
Local Law No. 1 – Community Amenity
Part 11 - Schedule 1: Discretion Guidelines

GUIDELINES

- (9) whether the ground surrounding the accommodation is drained to the satisfaction of the Municipal Environmental Health Officer;
- (10) whether the area of land within three (3) metres of the area or structure in which the animal is kept free from dry grass, weeds, refuse, rubbish or other material capable of harbouring vermin;
- (11) whether all food, grain or chaff is kept in vermin proof receptacles;
- (12) poultry housing or similar animal housing must not affect the amenity of an area or neighbouring properties by noise or offensive odour; must have adequate roofing, drainage, be rat proof, have a floor paved with impervious material and must comply with any relevant Code of Practice.
- (13) whether the area where Animals are kept is thoroughly cleaned and maintained at all times in a clean and sanitary manner to the satisfaction of the Municipal Environmental Health Officer; and
- (14) any other matter/issue pertaining to the accommodation that the Authorised or Delegated Officer reasonably believes is relevant.

GUIDELINES

7.5 GEOGRAPHIC PLACE NAMING - KOONDROOK DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE PROPOSAL

Author: Stuart McDougall, Data Analyst

Authoriser: Geoff Rollinson, Director Infrastructure and Development

Attachments: 1 Sidney Reid Profile [↓](#)
2 Koondrook Reserve Names [↓](#)

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the names proposed by the Koondrook Development Committee – Sidney Reid Reserve and Willow Park in accordance with Council Policy No. 098 - Asset Naming and the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the December 2019 Ordinary meeting of Council, the name changes proposed by the Koondrook Development Committee - Sidney Reid Reserve and Willow Park - were agreed to be advertised in accordance with Council Policy No. 098 - Asset Naming and the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria. Community consultation was held in March 2020 and Council can now choose to formally adopt the names and make recommendation to the Office of Geographic Names (OGN) to continue the process of registration and gazettal.

PURPOSE

For Council to adopt the names proposed by the Koondrook Development Committee:

- (a) Council will rename the Koondrook Environmental Reserve - bordered by Koondrook-Murrabit Road, Penglase Street and View Street - to the Sidney Reid Reserve.
- (b) Council will formally name the reserve containing the Koondrook Swimming Pool to Willow Park Reserve.

ATTACHMENTS

1 Sidney Reid Profile
2 Koondrook Reserve Names

DISCUSSION

A request was received from the Koondrook Development Committee to formalise the names of a number of parks and reserves in Koondrook to more closely reflect names in current use. These names would then be recognised on VICNAMES which is the register of geographic names in Victoria.

It is proposed that:

- Koondrook Environmental Reserve be renamed to “Sidney Reid Reserve” as proposed by the Koondrook Development Committee (Sidney Reid profile attached to this report).
- Koondrook Swimming Pool Reserve be official named “Willow Park Reserve” which it has been locally known as and signed as such for many years.

Both of the above proposed names comply with the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria 2016.

RELEVANT LAW

Under the *Geographic Places Names Act 1998*, Council is a naming authority for any public or private road, feature or locality within Victoria for the purposes of naming, renaming, changing boundary alignments or street numbering and must adhere to the *Naming rules for places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities 2016* guidelines.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Council at the December 2019 ordinary meeting resolved to authorise officers to advertise name changes.

OPTIONS

Council has the options to either:

- Accept the proposed name changes and allow the proposed name changes to be submitted to Geographic Names Victoria for approval.
- Reject the proposed name changes and restart community consultation with Koondrook Development Committee.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Council commenced a 28 day community consultation period with advertisements on Council's website and the Gannawarra News between 3 March and 31 March 2020, which provided an opportunity for community objections or submissions.

Two submissions were received.

One submission related to Willow Park naming from a committee member of the Koondrook Pool Committee – communication clarifying that the Koondrook Swimming Pool was not being renamed, rather it's the reserve that the pool is within that is being officially named. The other was regarding the need for greater use of aboriginal/first peoples naming.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Not applicable.

COLLABORATION

Not applicable.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

Not applicable.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Under the *Geographic Places Names Act 1998* the Geographic Names Victoria (GNV) assists the Registrar of Geographic Names by liaising with naming authorities such as municipal councils, government departments and authorities to ensure the VICNAMES register is regularly updated.

On behalf of the Registrar, GNV participates in ongoing communication with service providers such as the Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority (ESTA), Australia Post and other

organisations, ensuring that proposals from naming authorities conform to the *Naming rules for places in Victoria, Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities –2016*.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Policy No. 098 - Asset Naming.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

This report will be considered in an open Council meeting.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officer preparing this report declares no conflict of interest in regards to this matter.

CHAINSAW CARVING OF OUTSTANDING KOONDROOK CITIZEN – Mr Sidney C P Reid JP

Mr Sidney Carl Percival Reid was born at Grafton NSW. He first came to Koondrook to manage the Koondrook redgum sawmill for the Estate of the late Alexander Arbuthnot and at the time of his death was Managing Director of the mill (trading under the name of Arbuthnot Sawmills Pty Ltd). He was responsible for converting the sawmill from steam to electricity in 1962.

In addition to his sawmilling activities he was for a time engaged in dairy farming at Gannawarra and was one of the first to grow tobacco on the sand hills of Gannawarra. He also proved that sultanas could be grown locally and was the founder of the IXL Stores Koondrook, which he later disposed of to Mr A A Hird.

During his time in Koondrook, Mr Reid had a deep sense of citizenship to which he made a generous contribution, being one who possessed a tremendous capacity for getting things done. In earlier years he was the Secretary of the old Koondrook Race Club (the grandstand from which was moved to the Koondrook Football Ground).

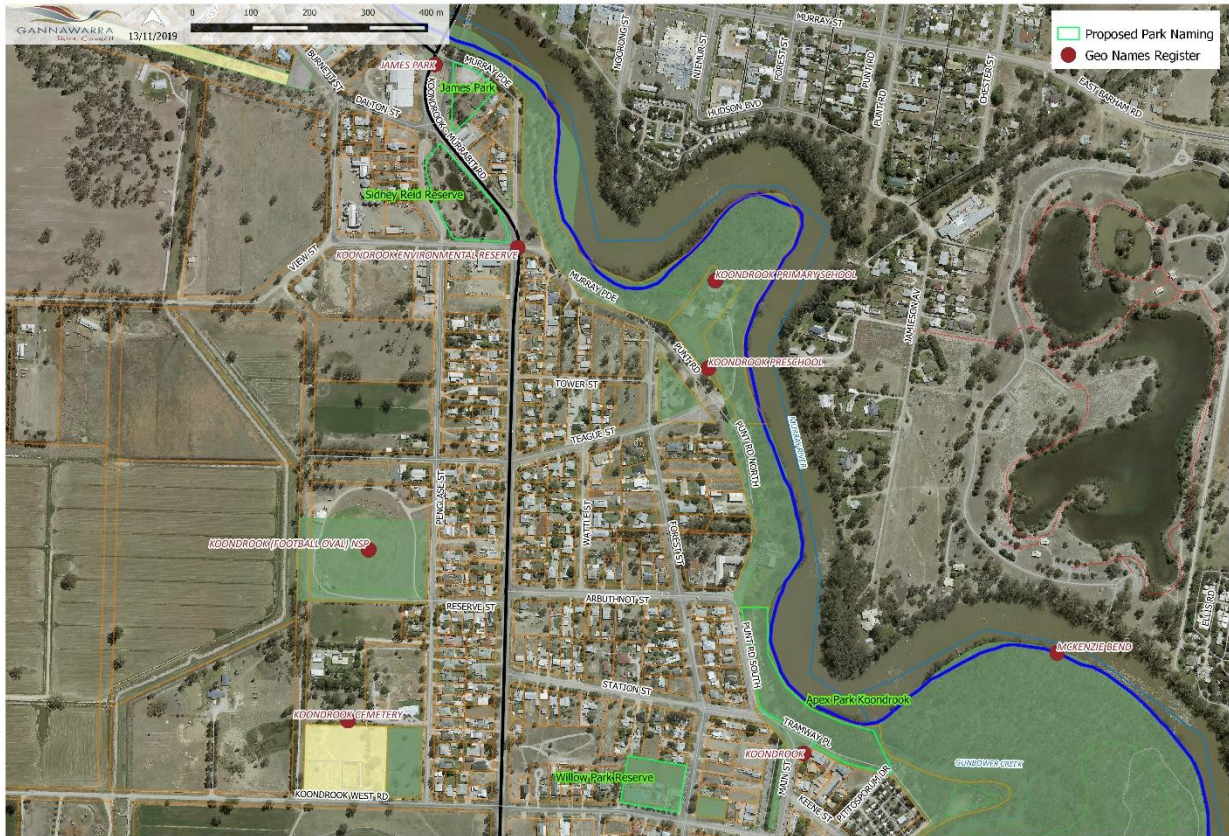
He was a Justice of the Peace, a former member of the Koondrook Progress Association, Koondrook Hall Committee and most other local organisations. President of the first Barham & District Hospital Committee, he was Chairman of the Hospital Board which position he held until his retirement in 1960, when he was appointed as the first Life Member of the Hospital.

A most generous person, he gave freely to many charities, was ever ready to help a worthy cause and always lending a hand or doing a good turn for someone.

Sidney CP Reid died in his sleep at his home at Koondrook in July 1962, aged 72.



Geographic Naming - Koondrook Park Naming



7.6 KANGAROO LAKE LAND TRANSFER - ROAD DISCONTINUANCE - DECISION**Author:** Stuart McDougall, Data Analyst**Authoriser:** Geoff Rollinson, Director Infrastructure and Development**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION****That Council :**

- 1. Discontinue the road reserve adjacent to 94 Mystic Park East Road (refer to Plan – L6-11898) under Section 206, schedule 10 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, by way of a public notice in the government gazette.**
-

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After a public consultation process undertaken by Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) part of a road reserve has been identified as surplus government land. DELWP proposes to sell the land, subject site plan: L6-11868 to the owner of the adjoining property, Allotment 31D-Section 4: 31D~4\PP2120.

PURPOSE

This report seeks Council's approval to discontinue the unused government road reserve.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

DISCUSSION

DELWP has undertaken a public consultation process to identify surplus government property and identified part of an unused government road reserve at the north end of Kangaroo Lake which runs from Mystic Park East Road to the Murray Valley Highway as surplus. The adjoining property owner to the south is interested in purchasing the land.

DELWP proposes to sell the land (subject site plan: L6-11868) shown below to the owner of the adjoining property (Allotment 31D-Section 4: 31D~4\PP2120).



Subject site description: full width of the road reserve that is adjacent to land parcel Allot. 31D Sec. 4 Parish of Benjeroop.

- Land area is approximately 2200sqm – (with merged land area would make the resultant property a similar size as 72 Mystic Park East Road).
- Planning Zone is Farm Zone – (same as the neighbouring properties).

This unused road reserve is one of three between Mystic Park East Road and the Murray Valley Highway.

RELEVANT LAW

Schedule 10 of the *Local Government Act 1989* - Powers of Councils over roads.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Council resolved at the June meeting to give public notice, invite submissions and consider at August meeting.

OPTIONS

Council has the follow options:

- Discontinue the unused road reserve;
- Reject the proposal and continue discussion with DELWP.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Nil

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Public notice was given and submissions were invited. No objections were received from the public.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Not applicable

COLLABORATION

Council works with DELWP collaboratively for the management of government land with respect to roads, property and crown land.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

Not applicable.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2017 – 2021 – Our Community is consulted on issues that will affect them.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

This report will be considered in an open Council meeting

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officer preparing this report declared that they have no conflict of interest in regards to this matter

7.7 DRAFT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2020-2025**Author:** Paul Fernee, Manager Community Engagement**Authoriser:** Stacy Williams, Director Community Wellbeing**Attachments:** 1 [Community Engagement Strategy 2020-2025](#) ↓**RECOMMENDATION****That Council**

- 1. Adopt the Community Engagement Strategy 2020-2025 as presented and attached to this report**
- 2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to make amendments to the document to correct any minor drafting errors that do not materially alter their intent.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Through a review of the Communications and Engagement Strategy 2016-2020 and subsequent community consultation, a new Community Engagement Strategy 2020-2025 has been developed. This strategy addresses new requirements under the *Local Government Act 2020* with recommendations established to align with best practice community engagement. After gaining Council endorsement for a community consultation process at the July 2020 Council meeting, the strategy is now presented for Council's adoption.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to adopt the Community Engagement Strategy 2020-2025.

ATTACHMENTS

DRAFT Community Engagement Strategy 2020-2025

DISCUSSION

Council's Communications and Engagement Strategy 2016-2020 has been under review over the past seven months. Taking into consideration implementation of a new *Local Government Act 2020*, and exploring best practice community engagement, a new Draft Community Engagement Strategy has been developed. The strategy utilised feedback from a survey provided to the community from 14 February 2020 to 13 March 2020 and after linking outcomes to new requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Best Practice engagement processes the strategy was endorsed for community feedback at the July 2020 Council meeting.

After a period of exhibition from 15 July 2020 until 21 August 2020, Council did not receive any feedback or submissions in relation to the draft strategy.

This was after a consultation program which included multiple features in *Gannawarra News*, social media posts, media release and through the Mayoral radio interview.

Noting this, some minor administrative changes have been made to the draft strategy that was available for public comment, generally reflecting responsibilities for implementation of actions within the document.

RELEVANT LAW

Council's Community Engagement Policy to guide community consultation for the organisation has yet to be developed under the *Local Government Act 2020*. As per the *Local Government Act 1989* (Section 223), an opportunity for public comment was endorsed at the July Council meeting, and undertaken.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

This report is presented as a follow up from the July Council meeting, where Council endorsed the Draft Community Engagement Strategy 2020-2025 for public feedback.

Council originally adopted a Communications and Engagement Strategy 2016-2020 in 2016, which this proposed strategy will replace.

OPTIONS

After placing the draft strategy out for feedback from the 15 July 2020 until 21 August 2020 and receiving no responses, it is recommended Council adopt the Community Engagement Strategy 2020-2025 as presented.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community consultation was undertaken through an online and paper based survey to help inform the development of the draft strategy, with Council receiving 329 responses.

The draft strategy was made available for public comment from 15 July 2020 until 21 August 2020 with no submissions received.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The strategy recommends significant change and innovation in the way Council engages with the community, including more interactive and online engagement and shift in the way Council undertakes project planning.

COLLABORATION

Not applicable.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The strategy does highlight a need for some expenditure over the life of the document, although this would be incorporated in Council's annual budgeting process, with no significant expenditure recommended.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Identified in the Council Plan 2017-21 Good Governance and Healthy Organisation – Engagement:

1. Our community is consulted on issues that will affect them
2. Improve the community's ability to self-access information on Council's services and programs

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

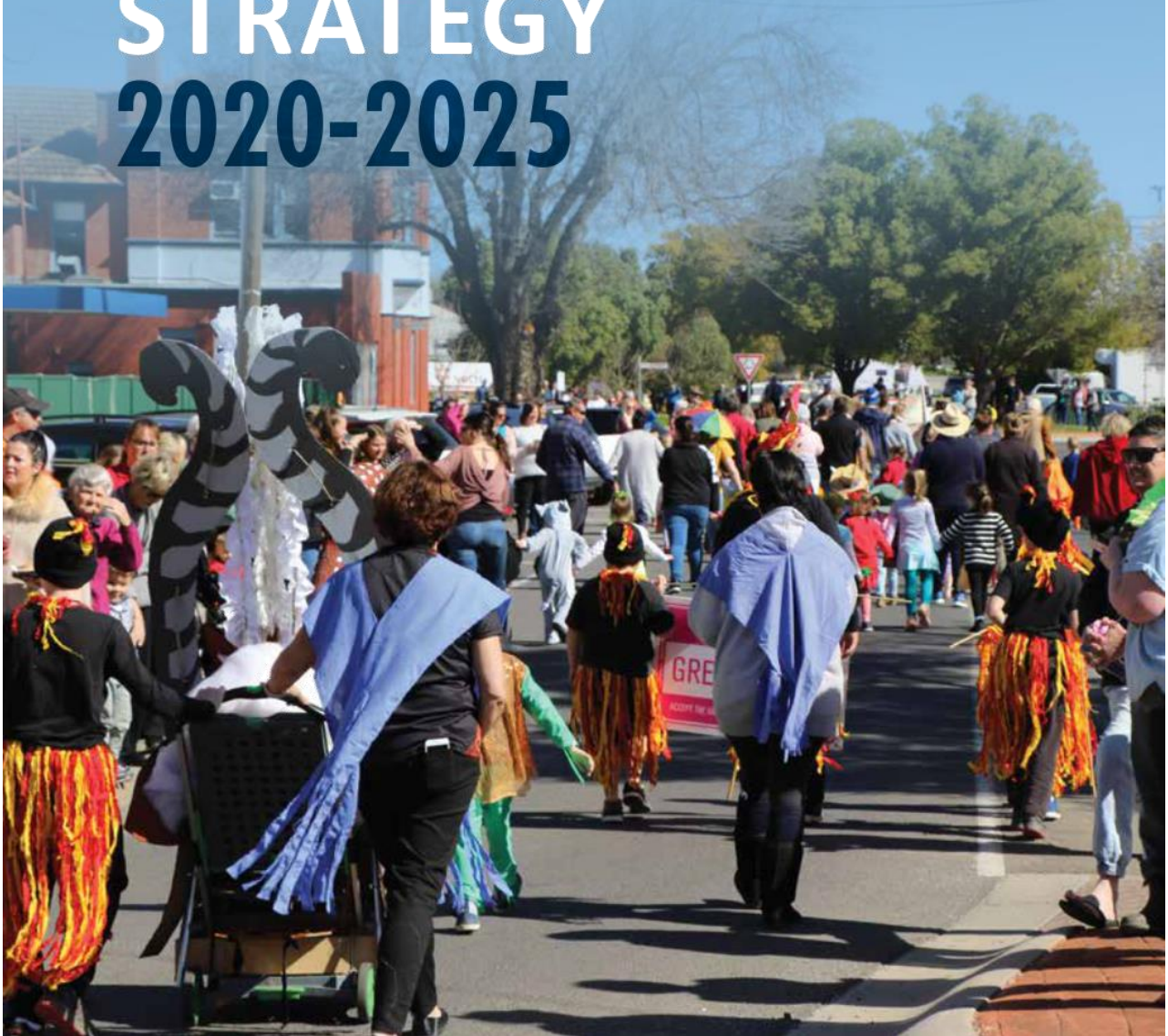
This report will be considered in an open Council meeting.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officer preparing this report declares that they have no conflict of interest in regards to this matter.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2020-2025



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Interaction with our community happens daily and in various ways, therefore it is essential that Council communicates and engages with its community effectively. Effective engagement with the Gannawarra community, decision makers, partners and Council's own staff regarding Council's vision, plans and processes, is key to building a strong, informed, transparent and inclusive society.

Council's role is to represent and serve its community. This can only be achieved if it enables effective communication and engagement and by listening and responding to the needs of our community and other stakeholders.

Effective engagement enables Council to collect valuable information from our community and to consider that information in future decision-making. Engagement also means the community is involved in Council decisions and processes, which offers residents ownership of projects and services.

This strategy seeks to ensure timely, effective, dependable and targeted communication and engagement ensuring the community has access to information that is relevant, clear and transparent. This will be delivered through the alignment of this strategy to the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum, as it applies to Local Government identified in the *Local Government Act 2020*.

The strategy incorporates goals, builds upon and further improves communication and engagement with all Council stakeholders, including the local community, Councillors and Council staff, that are achievable and measurable for a small rural Council.

Importantly, the strategy encourages a whole of Council philosophy to engagement, ensuring consistency in messaging and frameworks to guide decision making, whilst exploring interactive engagement tools to further increase opportunities for participation in decision making by the community.

This document also aims to assist Council to share its story with the community to celebrate successes and build community pride.

The strategy will be reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis to ensure the actions outlined are being addressed and the goals and actions set out in this document are being achieved.



GANNAWARRA SHIRE COUNCIL

PURPOSE

The *Community Engagement Strategy 2020-2025* outlines Council’s commitment to provide our Gannawarra community with genuine opportunities to contribute to and inform strategies, projects, services and decisions that affect them.

The strategy guides the delivery of community engagement processes across the organisation to better inform decisions in the planning of services, setting budgets, identifying and planning projects and developing policies and strategies.

Council acknowledges that engagement should be a planned process that aims to work with our community and stakeholders to shape decisions and actions in the delivery of Council’s services.

Strategic goals will be informed by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum:

INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
We will inform and engage by maintaining an honest dialogue with our community.	We commit to sharing information about Council’s projects and services with our community, giving them a reasonable opportunity to express their views, and taking those views into account in decision making.	We will work with our community to ensure they are included in the process of Council decision making that affects their community.	We will ensure the community are enabled to participate in the decisions that affect them.	We will build understanding of Council’s goals and priorities and work to empower our community to achieve community-led initiatives.

This strategy has been developed considering the IAP2 spectrum and community consultation, ensuring Council’s engagement with the community is committed to these principles, being transparent and deliberative.

BACKGROUND

Gannawarra Shire Council aims to communicate and engage with stakeholders to improve our service delivery, to build community capacity and ensure our community feels connected and involved in the Gannawarra's future. We will strive to be transparent in our actions and to fulfil our responsibilities to our community and partners.



COUNCIL'S ADVOCACY STRATEGY

Advocacy is a process that challenges inequities by collaboratively and actively working with communities and key stakeholders to bring about changes in policy, process, practice and attitudes in order to ensure communities' rights are upheld.

Advocacy is also about working in partnership. We have key partnerships with other local government authorities, State and Federal Governments, community and health organisations, and most critically we advocate to empower our communities.

REFERENCES

There are a number of references that should be considered as a part of the strategy development, one of these being the *Local Government Act 2020*. This legislation requires Council to undertake deliberative engagement, which can be broadly considered as authentic engagement with the community; good representation of the community in engagement activities; clear demonstration of how all views have been considered; accessible and relevant information available to the community to ensure the decision-making process and the community's level of influence is clear in each instance and that participants are fully informed. Council, under this legislation is also required to have a Community Engagement Policy which outlines the principles of engagement for the organisation.

The Victorian Auditor General's report "Public Participation and Community Engagement: Local Government Sector" (May 2017) utilised the IAP2 spectrum to analyse community engagement at a number of Councils in Victoria. The report found that many Councils have strong community engagement frameworks or plans, but these should be aligned with best practice and provide practical guidance to staff on the implementation. Additionally, a more robust evaluation of engagement measures would establish opportunities to improve the practices moving forward.

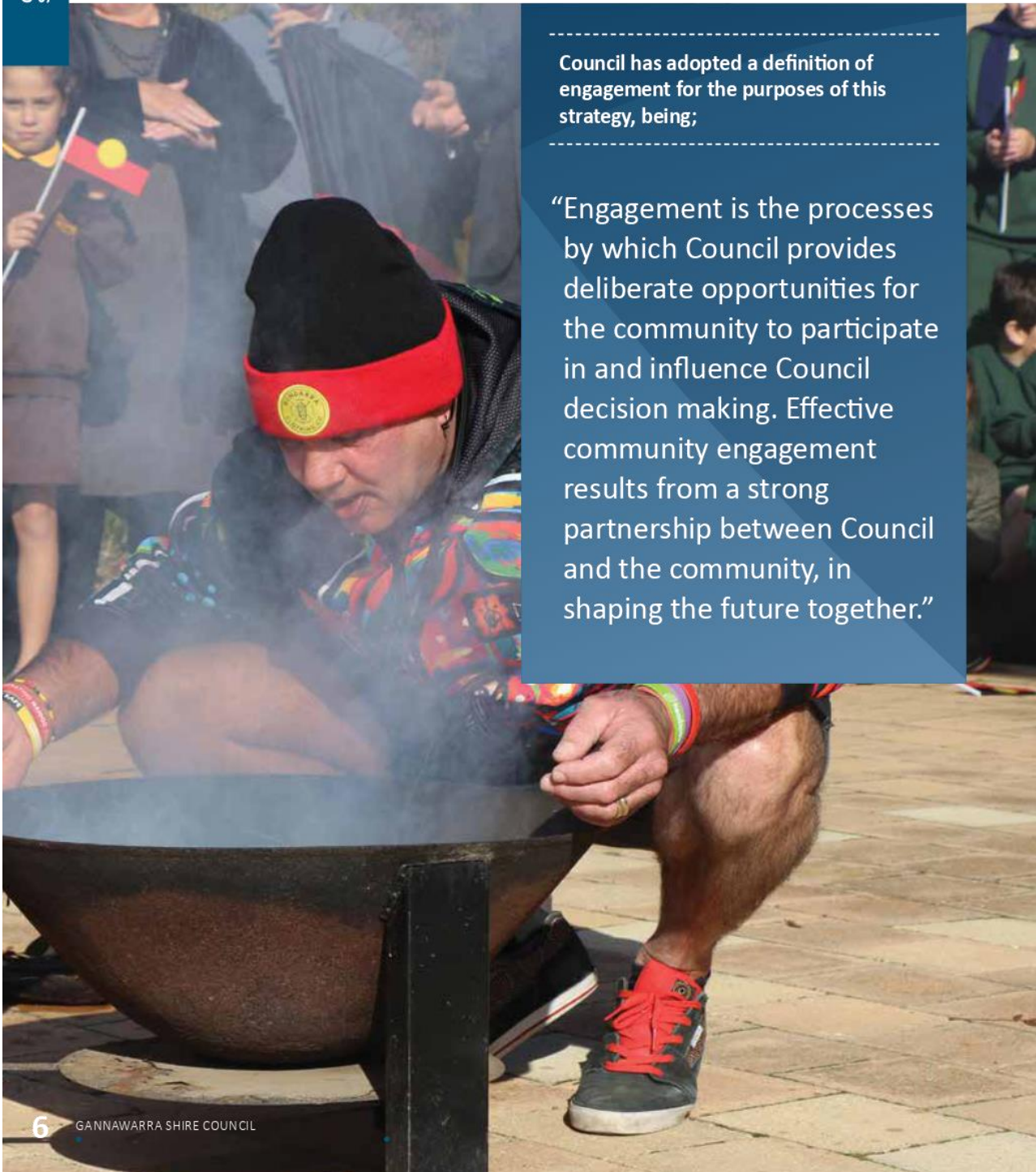
Gannawarra Shire Council's Council Plan 2017-2021 and Advocacy Strategy, both articulate support for community engagement:

Council Plan - Good Governance and Healthy Organisation – Engagement:

Strategies – Strategic Indicators:

- 1. Our community is consulted on issues that will affect them**
 - Council's performance with community consultation and engagement above industry benchmarks
- 2. Improve the community's ability to self-access information on Council's services and programs**
 - Increased traffic through Council's website
 - Increase in the number of online transactions

ORGANISATIONAL DEFINITION OF ENGAGEMENT



Council has adopted a definition of engagement for the purposes of this strategy, being;

“Engagement is the processes by which Council provides deliberate opportunities for the community to participate in and influence Council decision making. Effective community engagement results from a strong partnership between Council and the community, in shaping the future together.”

WHO IS THIS STRATEGY FOR?

Council's key stakeholders can be broadly categorised into the following four groups:

COMMUNITY

Council is elected by and responsible to its community, this includes:

- Residents
- Community groups
- Service users
- Businesses
- Tourists/Visitors

INFLUENCERS

Influence the ability of Council to gain funding and benefit from policy decisions:

- State and Federal Government representatives
- Media
- Local business and community leaders
- Leadership organisations such as the Murray Tourism Board or Council cluster organisations
- Municipal Association of Victoria
- Focus groups

PARTNERS:

Ensure Council is able to offer its range of services to the community:

- Organisations and businesses which partner with Council to deliver services
- State and Federal Government agencies
- Neighbouring councils
- Municipal Association of Victoria
- Local health services

ORGANISATION

Responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Council and the ability of Council to serve its community:

- Councillors
- Council staff
- Volunteers
- Contractors



HOW DO WE COMMUNICATE AND ENGAGE

Council undertakes various forms of engagement with the community which include media releases, newspaper advertising, newsletters, social media content and radio advertising.

Community engagement at Gannawarra Shire Council is a purposeful and planned process.

Council has open and respectful relationships with local media outlets, community groups, organisations and politicians.

Existing communication and engagement methods (excluding phone calls, emails, meetings and face-to-face communication that occurs on a day-to-day basis) consist of:

- **Media releases** – A number of releases are distributed to local media outlets (print, radio and television) as well as local community newsletters and neighbourhood houses.
- **Gannawarra News** – Fortnightly advertorial in the *Koondrook-Barham Bridge*, *Gannawarra Times* and on Council’s website and emailed via MailChimp to community development committees and progress associations, that covers works updates, events and new plans, projects, Mayor’s message and opportunities for consultation.
- **Gannawarra Connect** – A hard copy community newsletter written and distributed by Council at least six times per year, which provides updates on Council services and projects.
- **3SH/MIXX FM contract** – Two radio interviews with the Mayor each month and advertising used for a range of Council services and events.
- **Councillor in the Loop** – Weekly newsletter of works and internal news. Distributed to Councillors, senior staff and management team.



COMMUNICATION

- **Facebook** – Regular posts about events, projects and services on Council's four pages:
 - Gannawarra Shire Council's Facebook page: approximately 3,169 followers.
 - Gannawarra Library Services Facebook page: approximately 500 followers.
 - Gannawarra Healthy Lifestyles Facebook page: approximately 322 followers.
 - Gannawarra Children's Centre Facebook page: approximately 565 followers.
- **Twitter** – Regular posts about events, services and projects: approximately 866 followers.
- **LinkedIn** – Regular posts about projects and services.
- **YouTube** – Regular posts about projects and services.
- **Staff newsletter** – Monthly all staff newsletter, which covers human resources and payroll messages, as well as events, project updates, Council news and social/personal achievements.
- **Website** – Publishes news, *Gannawarra News*, grants information and events for residents, visitors and media outlets.
- **Public notices** – As required by the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- **Intranet** – To communicate with staff about operational issues.
- **Posters, brochures and flyers** – Distributed in hard copy and electronic form to various community organisations and businesses e.g. Art & Culture yearly brochure.
- **Noticeboards** – Display of posters, service information and tourism information across various noticeboards within our communities.

ENGAGEMENT

- **Seniors Advisory Group** – Group of local senior residents who meet four times a year to discuss issues affecting older people in the community.
- **Partnership meetings** – Such as Gannawarra Local Agency Meeting, Murray River Group of Councils and resource and emergency management forums.
- **Face-to-Face Engagement** – Council officers and Councillors regularly meet with community members and community groups regarding different Council services and projects.
- **Community development and progress groups in each town** – Council officers and Councillors regularly attend to provide information on current projects and services and to collect feedback from members of the group.
- **Kerang Elders Group** – Councillors and staff work with the Kerang Elders Group on local issues



CONSULTATION OUTCOMES – WHAT THE COMMUNITY TOLD US

In the development of this strategy, Council released a survey to gain feedback on our current engagement practices and opportunities for improvement. Stakeholders – including residents, business owners, community group representatives, media outlets and political representatives – had the opportunity to complete the Community Engagement Survey, which was open for submissions between 14 February 2020 and 13 March 2020.

The survey was able to be completed using the following methods:

- Online via SurveyMonkey; and
- In hard copy, with copies available for collection at Council’s Customer Service Centres, Gannawarra Library Service branches, at the Quambatook Store, and via Council’s Community Care employees.

As part of the survey process, four listening post sessions were held throughout the Gannawarra:

- Cohuna on 27 February (12 noon-1pm);
- Kerang on 5 March (10am-11am) and 12 March (12 noon-1pm); and
- Koondrook on 12 March (8.30am-9.30am).



329

people completed the survey, either online or in hard copy

80%

of the 329 people who completed the survey used Social Media more than once a day



63%

received information from Council via Social Media



51%

of respondents said they engage with Council via phone



35%

said they engaged with Council in person



60%

of respondents did not engage with Council using Social Media



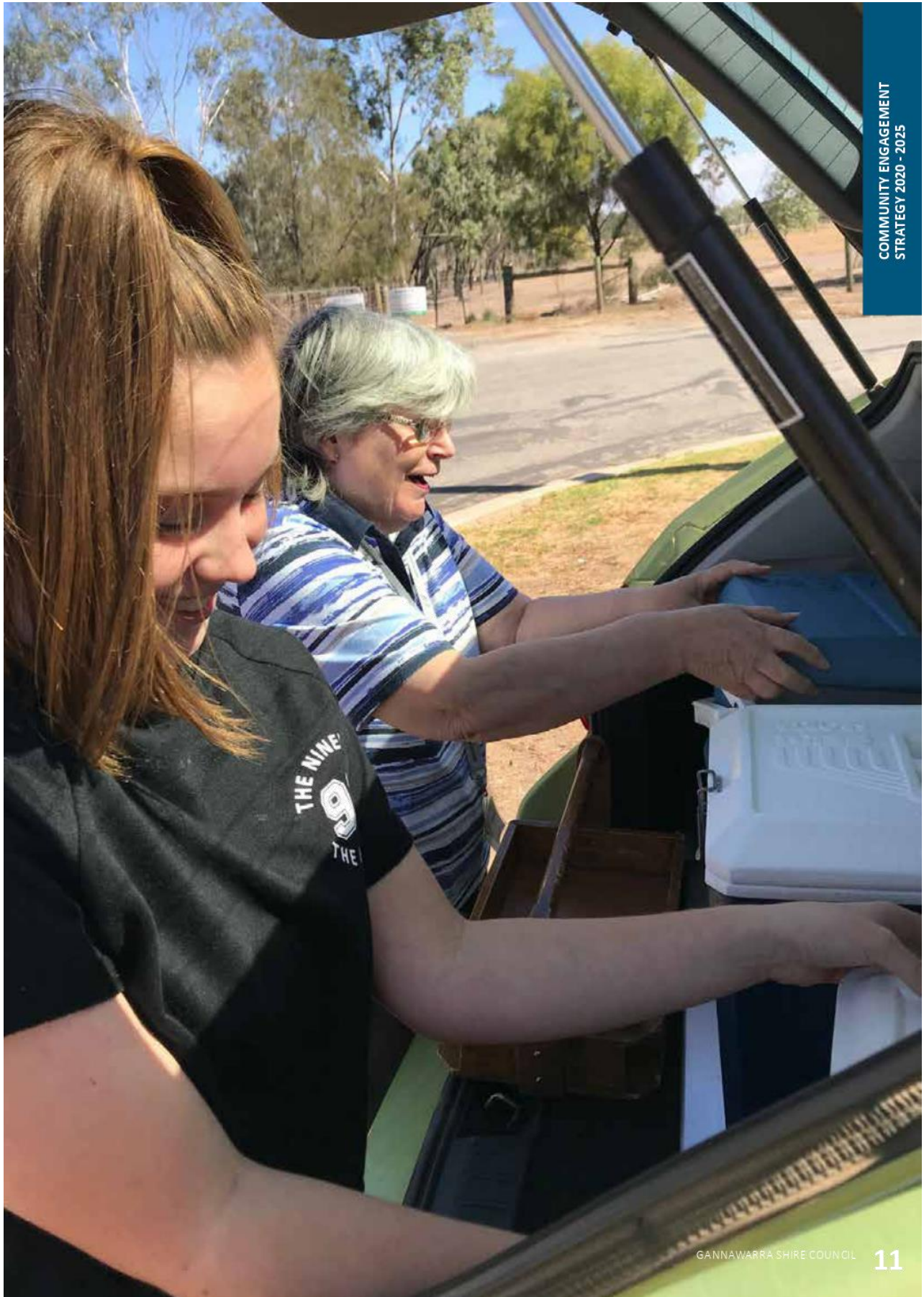
67%

of respondents said they accessed Council’s website in the past six months



59%


of respondents indicated they did not feel they were able to contribute to Council’s decision making process



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
STRATEGY 2020 - 2025


GANNAWARRA SHIRE COUNCIL 11






50% of respondents stated they would prefer Council connects with them to provide a flow of information back and forth through community forums and meetings.


The survey made it clear that many community members who are not linked to the internet, would prefer Council connected with them via a letter and posters put up in local shops.




57% of respondents felt they could not influence Council's decisions.



17% thought they could influence Council's decisions.




67% of respondents said they understand the role of Local Government.




50% said they understand the information provided to them by Council.


From this we learn that we need to be clearer and more concise in the information we provide our community.




61% of respondents agreed that the community needs to contribute to have ownership of Council projects and plans.

The top three types of information the respondents would like to receive from Council are as follows:

- 

1. Council grants and projects
66%
- 

2. Major projects and advocacy
65%
- 

3. Events
63%

The top five preferred methods of receiving information from Council were ranked as follows:

- 

1. Social media
- 

2. *Gannawarra News*
- 

3. News articles in local newspapers and community newsletters
- 

4. Council meetings, community consultation sessions, forums or meetings
- 

5. Council website



OPPORTUNITIES

Although residents are largely happy with their involvement with Council and how much information they receive, the results of the February/March 2020 Community Engagement Survey indicate that there is scope for Council to improve the engagement process overall. This would ensure residents know how their feedback influenced decisions and that it was considered in Council's decision-making.

Council has made constructive improvements in its community engagement through implementation of actions from the previous *Communications and Engagement Strategy 2016-2020* which is indicated in the results from Council's February/March 2020 Community Engagement Survey. The focus will continue to be improved on engagement with our community by continually monitoring our strategy and ensuring we implement the actions outlined.

There are areas where improvements can be made to create a better understanding of Council's goals and functions with staff and the community, and to move from informing our community to engagement. For Council to get their messages and information out to the community, we need to broaden and deepen our reach by providing more diverse ways of communicating, through more two-way dialogue with our partners and our residents and more interactive opportunities.

REACHING A BROADER SECTION OF THE COMMUNITY

Through feedback, and anecdotally, Council utilises many of its communication and engagement channels effectively. Although it appears that the same groups of residents are being consulted regularly, while others are not. This strategy aims to increase Council's ability to communicate with a wider variety of residents and stakeholders to ensure all residents have the opportunity to provide input to Council and/or participate in the decision making process.

Key items identified as part of the Strategy's Action Plan that will address this include:

- Investigate holding community Q&A forums with Councillors and staff either physically or online
- Mailing a regular newsletter to residents homes
- Investigate the viability of holding regular 'street talk' and 'listening post' sessions with Councillors and staff
- Explore further opportunities to engage with Gannawarra's young people
- Make greater, more meaningful use of online, written and verbal feedback from our residents

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

IMPROVING COMMUNICATION FLOW

While some stakeholders are kept up-to-date, we need to continue to ensure information flows smoothly internally and externally. There are multiple ways that information flows into Council and out to stakeholders and residents, which sometimes means people are not kept informed of important information where they aren't connected with a certain method of communication.

Key ways to address this include:

- Establishment of a Community Engagement Framework to guide engagement on all community projects and services which can be utilised across all departments.
- Undertake a review of all Council written and electronic communication materials.
- Determine whether Council staff are receiving all the messages that the community receives and identify gaps in messaging.
- Improving internal communication so community receives consistent response.

IMPROVING THE WAY WE ENGAGE

While Council does conduct community engagement sessions, there are always opportunities to improve how this is done to ensure maximum community collaboration. Engagement around specific projects can sometimes be better planned, implemented and communicated back to those involved. This will ensure community ownership of projects.

Some of the key items that will address this concern include:

- Develop a standard process to incorporate community consultation and engagement into project development. This will include a specific communication and engagement plan for each major project and review of consultation at the end of a project.
- Consult regularly with partners and stakeholder groups such as the Seniors Advisory Group, Kerang Elders and Gannawarra Local Agency Meeting (GLAM) on key issues around service delivery and strategic priorities.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIONS



GANNAWARRA SHIRE COUNCIL

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1. INFORM

We will inform and engage by maintaining an honest dialogue with our community

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
<p>1. Uphold standards set out in the Customer Charter We will ensure staff are informed about the Customer Charter.</p>	Ongoing	Community members are responded to promptly and thoroughly	Customer service team, relevant managers and directors, Community Engagement Team
<p>2. Continue to promote Council activities through media releases Regular media releases sent to local media, and (where relevant) a wider media audience.</p>	Ongoing	Send at least 15 media releases per month, sharing online and through Council's email database	Communications Coordinator
<p>3. Publish the <i>Gannawarra News</i> fortnightly Coordinate content and liaise with the <i>Koondrook-Barham Bridge</i> and <i>Gannawarra Times</i> to ensure <i>Gannawarra News</i> is published every fortnight in accordance with deadlines.</p>	Ongoing	Information about Council's services, current events and projects is published in the <i>Koondrook-Barham Bridge</i> and <i>Gannawarra Times</i>	Communications Coordinator
<p>4. Promote Council news and events through local radio Liaise and coordinate with local radio and the Mayor for regular interview spots. Media releases and other information is sent to local radio, including community service announcements. Continue to organise advertisements for broadcast on commercial radio to inform the community of Council activities.</p>	Ongoing	Information about Council's events and projects is aired on local radio stations	Communications Coordinator Communications Coordinator Relevant directors and managers
<p>5. Continue daily engagement on social media Regularly post updates on social media channels, including media releases, relevant advertisements, community notices, opportunities for community members to have their say and other information as required.</p>	Ongoing	Page likes and followers continue to grow, positive interactions with people are occurring online, residents are sharing information via social media Provide reports on 'analytics' and adjust posts based on results	Communications Coordinator
<p>6. Publish a clear and engaging Annual Report and find new ways to promote its content to stakeholders Provide online links to the Annual Report through Council's website and social media channels.</p>	Annually	Annual Report is clear, simple and accessible to most readers. Copies are distributed in hard copy and online	Community Engagement Manager, Communications Coordinator
<p>7. Maintain branding/style guidelines to ensure all Council communication is presented clearly and consistently Maintain and update the branding and style guide document that incorporates Council templates for staff use.</p>	June 2021	All of Council's documents are presented consistently clearly and in an engaging way	Communications Coordinator

	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
8.	<p>Continue to broadcast Council meetings 'live' online</p> <p>'Live' streaming of Council meetings provides more opportunity to communicate with residents, and the wider community.</p>	Ongoing	Feedback from Councillors and the community is constructive and positive	Community Engagement Manager, Communications Coordinator
9.	<p>Promote services provided on Council's website</p>	Ongoing	Regularly promote elements of the website, advising the community of the resource	Communications Coordinator
10.	<p>Continue to publish information about community projects through a range of channels including social media, online and hard copy</p>	Ongoing	Project updates are shared via media releases, social media, on the website, through paid advertising and shared directly with through flyers community members	Community Engagement Team, Executive Leadership Team
11.	<p>Continue to produce <i>Councillor in the Loop</i> for Councillors, management and executive staff</p>	Ongoing	All Councillors and senior staff are aware of achievements in all areas of the organisation and are up to date on all current events and projects	Communications Coordinator, All departments
12.	<p>Continue to publish <i>Gannawarra Connect</i>, Council's newsletter, to provide hard copy updates about Council services and projects</p>	Ongoing	Publish and distribute <i>Gannawarra Connect</i> at least six times a year to the Gannawarra community	Communications Coordinator

2. CONSULT

We commit to sharing information about Council's projects and services with our community, giving them a reasonable opportunity to express their views, and taking those views into account in decision making

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
<p>13. Develop a standard communication plan for staff to undertake community consultation and use to assist in project development at a local level</p> <p>Incorporate opportunities for community to be more involved at the planning stage.</p>	December 2020	Community Engagement Plan established for each project	Community Engagement Manager, Coordinator Community Partnerships, Project Managers
<p>14. Undertake regular consultation with the community on Major Projects, including an undertaking of needs analysis</p>	Ongoing	Public consultation sessions are conducted as required, with adequate notice provided to the community	Executive Leadership Team, relevant directors and managers
<p>15. Prepare a template community communication and engagement plan for major infrastructure projects</p>	December 2021	Communication Plan completed for each project	Community Engagement Team
<p>16. Consult regularly with Community Progress Groups and Township Forums on key issues around project delivery and strategic priorities</p> <p>Where appropriate, include engagement with groups as part of the community consultation process for major projects and other Council activities.</p>	Ongoing	Dates of all community group meetings are shared to all relevant Managers and topics for consultation are prepared before each meeting	Relevant directors and Managers, Community Engagement Team
<p>17. Undertake a review of all Council written and electronic communication material and develop ways to better utilise these methods in a coordinated, branded way (i.e. Department newsletters, radio advertisements, social media)</p>	June 2023	Review undertaken and proposal developed	Communications Coordinator
<p>18. Investigate the development of a community feedback process for Gannawarra libraries and Customer Service Offices, either utilising a physical or digital method</p>	June 2021	Feedback process developed at Kerang and Cohuna libraries and Customer Service Offices	Library Manager and Community Engagement team.
<p>19. Continue Mayoral Listening Posts</p> <p>Consider a mix of physical and virtual listening posts to enable greater access to this process</p>	Ongoing	Mayoral listening posts conducted annually across the shire	Mayor and Community Engagement Team

3. INVOLVE

We will work with our community to ensure they are included in the process of Council decision making that affects their community

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
20. Investigate and develop Council's current website to provide more interactive engagement e.g. online forms, booking events and making payments	June 2022	Website redeveloped to include online payments and more interactivity with Council services	Executive Leadership Team, ICT and Managers
21. Make greater use of online surveys and feedback forms so Council can collect useful information on specific issues Incorporate online feedback forms onto Council's website via the 'Have your Say' page. Where appropriate, provide and promote links to online surveys (using platforms such as Survey Monkey) to collect feedback on issues and Council activities.	Ongoing	Residents can have their say about a specific project or service	Community Engagement Team
22. Expand the current live streaming of Council meetings to other civic events to enable more community participation	December 2020	Live streams successfully undertaken	Communications Coordinator
23. Continue to develop video content for social media campaigns Investigate the viability and value-add in developing a regular YouTube community message.	Ongoing	More content to be shared across social media and through Council's website	Communications Coordinator
24. Explore the development of regular Council e-newsletter using existing email lists (such as planning groups, schools and businesses).	June 2021	Fortnightly e-newsletter established	Communications Coordinator
25. Investigate the development of regular online Q&A sessions or Forum with Councillors, Executive Team and the community Our community have indicated they would like the opportunity to provide questions to Councillors and staff.	January 2021	Plan and implement a regular Q&A session	Executive Leadership Team, Community Engagement Team
26. Explore the feasibility of an annual community forum, bringing together key community groups in a large scale community planning exercise	December 2021	Establish feasibility study and expected outcomes	Community Engagement Manager
27. Ensure all communication methods and materials are accessible for residents of all abilities Continue Council's subscription to 'ReadSpeaker' - online content can be instantly converted to audio Provide training for frontline staff in accessing language and accessibility aides. Review existing documents and, where required, have alternative documents available that meet the needs of people with vision impairment or limited English proficiency. Regularly review and update Council's website to ensure it meets W3C web accessibility standards.	June 2022	'ReadSpeaker' subscription ongoing Ensure frontline staff are trained in accessing language and accessibility aides, so that documents are available to meet the needs of people with vision impairment or limited English proficiency Review of documents undertaken	Community Engagement Team
28. Explore the application of 'augmented reality' (AR) for marketing and promotions within the Gannawarra. These opportunities may include Arts and Culture, Libraries, Tourism, Economic Development and Customer Service.	June 2024	Investigation completed and key services and applications identified	Community Engagement Team, Manager, Executive Leadership Team

4. COLLABORATE

We will ensure the community is enabled to participate in the decisions that affect them

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
<p>29. Respond to community queries and feedback – ‘Close the Loop’</p> <p>When Councillors, Executive staff or managers attend community meetings, workshops or consultations, any feedback from the participants/ community, should be responded to.</p>	Ongoing	Email, written or verbal communication is made to participants in consultation sessions, community development committee and progress association meetings attended by Councillors or executive staff	Coordinator Community Partnerships and Executive Leadership Team
<p>30. Explore including a section in the Annual Report (where possible) or another key document about key engagement processes through the year, feedback received and what consequent changes were made.</p>	Annually	Engagement	Community Engagement Team
<p>31. Work with each community to develop and maintain community plans (Community Profiles) that guide Council decision making for each area.</p>	Annually	Community profiles updated and presented to Council	Community Engagement Manager
<p>32. Appropriate officers to regularly attend community planning/progress association meetings to inform and update community members, receive feedback and provide information on Council outcomes.</p>	Ongoing	Community groups are involved in projects, events and initiatives	Executive Leadership Team and Managers
<p>33. Investigate developing online engagement capacity through services such as OurSay or Social Pinpoint to assist with in-depth community consultation around key community projects or service planning.</p>	June 2022	Residents are engaged in future Budget development, projects and service planning	Coordinator Community Partnerships and Manager Community Engagement
<p>34. Explore the use of Council GIS mapping to enable community-led planning of future projects.</p>	June 2021	Utilise GIS mapping in future engagement plans for key projects	Community Engagement Manager
<p>35. Develop Council’s Community Engagement Policy.</p>	February 2021	Council’s Community Engagement Policy developed	Governance Manager, Community Engagement Manager
<p>36. Explore opportunities to bring ‘like’ community groups together on a regular basis to share ideas and build capacity. i.e. Mens sheds from different communities.</p>	June 2023	Target groups meeting twice yearly with specific outcomes generated	Community Engagement Team

5. EMPOWER




We will build understanding of Council’s goals and priorities and work to empower our organisation and our community to achieve community-led initiatives

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	MEASURE	RESPONSIBILITY
<p>37. Continue to improve centralisation of information and messages for distribution from all sections of Council</p> <p>Remind staff to consider the Community Engagement team when considering community engagement and media processes.</p>	Ongoing	Staff regularly utilise the engagement team for support	Community Engagement Team
<p>38. Develop a Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit to guide Council staff on community engagement.</p>	December 2021	Framework and Toolkit established. Staff training undertaken	Community Engagement Team
<p>39. Explore ways to effectively support and upskill Progress Groups and town forums, enabling more capacity for community led initiatives.</p>	June 2023	Training identified and implemented with community	Community Engagement Team
<p>40. Provide Councillors and relevant staff (i.e. those who regularly engage with the media) with media training.</p>	December 2021	Identified staff and Councillors have received training	Communications Coordinator, Human Resources Manager Governance CEO Office
<p>41. Develop regular communication with local political representatives and government agencies to ensure Council’s priorities, projects and concerns are clearly conveyed in a timely manner</p> <p>Update Council’s <i>Advocacy Strategy</i> referencing Council’s priorities, projects and concerns, and relevant methods of engagement.</p> <p>Through wider regional council membership groups (i.e. Murray River Group of Councils), continue to advocate political representatives and agencies regarding regional priorities, projects and concerns.</p>	<p>September 2021</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p><i>Advocacy Strategy</i> is updated and adopted by Council</p> <p>Wider concerns of the region are recognised and addressed, resulting in community benefits</p>	<p>Executive Leadership Team, Community Engagement Manager</p> <p>Mayor, CEO and Councillors</p>



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7.8 COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM 2020

Author: Paul Fernee, Manager Community Engagement

Authoriser: Stacy Williams, Director Community Wellbeing

Attachments: 1 Community Grants 2020 - Events [↓](#)
2 Community Grants 2020 - Community Support [↓](#)

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorse the allocation of the 2020 Council Community Support Grants, totalling \$70,000.
2. Endorse the allocation of the 2020 Council Community Events Grants, totalling \$13,500.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After a five week application period, Council's Community Grants Program for 2020 closed with 32 applications in total.

Separate assessment panels for each category reviewed the applications against the criteria and taking into consideration the challenging setting of the current pandemic, developed recommendations for funding that are within Council's annual budget for the program.

The report is presented to Council for endorsement of the recommendations for funding of sixteen community support projects, and six community events.

PURPOSE

This report is presented for Council endorsement of successful Community grants applications, both community support and events streams for 2020.

ATTACHMENTS

Community Grants 2020 – Events Category

Community Grants 2020 – Community Support Category

DISCUSSION

The Community Grants program was opened on Monday 27 July 2020 and closed on Monday 24 August 2020.

The framework for Council's Community Grants program is outlined below:

	Allocated	Total of applications received this round
Community support category:	\$70,000	\$117,775
Events category:	\$13,500	\$19,500
TOTAL	\$83,500	\$137,275

A list of applications recommended for funding is included as an attachment to this report.

In the Community Events category it is recommended six applications submitted be endorsed by Council. Initially this category received eight applications, however two were submitted in the incorrect category and were subsequently moved into the Community Support category.

It is recommended that 16 of the 26 applications submitted to the Community Support category be endorsed by Council. Each of these applications has demonstrated compliance with Council's overall objectives. Applications have been assessed as meeting the eligibility criteria set by Council in the grant guidelines.

In this funding round, the recommended projects include projects which focus on improvements to community facilities and buildings and equipment to support local groups, amongst other initiatives.

Applications recommended for endorsement would find it difficult to compete for grant support from other external funding sources, or have made unsuccessful attempts to secure other funding in the past.

RELEVANT LAW

Not applicable

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

The Framework for Council's Community Grants program was approved by Council in November 2017.

OPTIONS

Funding recommendations have been made to Council for the two categories available in Council's 2020 Community Grants program as assessed by two separate panels, and it is recommended Council endorse the allocation of the funds as outlined within the attachments.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Funding provided through this funding program supports economic and social sustainability within small communities.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The community were informed of the funding submission period of Monday 27 July 2020 until Monday 24 August 2020 through Council's various communications methods, including local papers, Council's website, radio and social media channels.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

A number of applications have demonstrated adaption to the current COVID-19 social distancing requirements, which was considered by the assessment panel when reviewing the Community Events funding stream.

COLLABORATION

Not applicable.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The 2020 community grants program funding amount was included in Council's 2020-21 budget.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Community grant applicants were encouraged to consider how their projects would link to the Council Plan 2017-21 and the relevant community profiles.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

This report will be considered in an open Council meeting.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officer preparing this report declares that they have no conflict of interest in regards to this matter.

Assessment Events Grant applicants - Aug 2020

Application ID	Applicant organisation name	Project Title	Total Amount Requested	Total Project Cost	Which Community in Gannawarra	Recommended for Funding
Event001-E-Aug20	Bendigo Diocese Trusts Corporation	Gannawarra Shire Toy Run and Hamper Distribution.	\$5,000.00	\$19,500.00	Kerang	\$5,000
Event002-E-Aug20	Gannawarra Tennis Club	The Warra Festival	\$2,000.00	\$6,000.00	Cohuna	\$500
Event003-E-Aug20	Cohuna Bowls Club Inc.	Future Gannawarra Bowls Champions	\$5,000.00	\$5,745.00	Cohuna	\$500
Event004-E-Aug20	Kerang Progress Association Inc.	Kerang New Year's Eve Party in the Park 2020	\$5,000.00	\$13,000.00	Kerang	\$5,000.00
Event006-E-Aug20	Lakes Community Development Group	Celebrating Small Town Achievements	\$500.00	\$1,500.00	Lakes District	\$500.00
Event008-E-Aug20	Kerang Community Market Inc	Kerang Community Market	\$2,000.00	\$5,000.00	Kerang	\$2,000.00
					TOTAL	\$13,500

Community Support applications - Aug2020

Application ID	Applicant organisation name	Project Title	Total Amount Requested	Total Project Cost	Community	Recommended for Funding
CS001-CSAug20	Country Fire Authority	Cohuna Digital Community Engagement	\$5,000.00	\$14,920.00	Cohuna	\$5,000.00
CS003-CSAug20	Nondescripts Cricket Club	Cohuna Recreation Reserve Number 2 multi-purpose facility	\$5,000.00	\$10,000.00	Cohuna	\$5,000.00
CS004-CSAug20	Cohuna Golf Club Inc	Carpet Replacement Cohuna Golf Club House	\$4,650.00	\$19,650.00	Cohuna	\$4,650.00
CS008-CSAug20	Quambatook Football Netball Club	SAFETY FENCING CHILDRENS PLAY AREA	\$5,000.00	\$6,416.49	Quambatook	\$5,000.00
CS013-CSAug20	Kerang and District Community Centre Inc	Keeping Us Safe	\$4,042.00	\$5,042.00	Kerang	\$4,042.00
CS014-CSAug20	Mallee Eagles Football Netball Club	Training Future Sporting Stars	\$4,990.00	\$8,800.00	Lalbert	\$4,990.00
CS016-CSAug20	Kerang Landcare Group	Kerang Swamps to Wetlands Development Plan and Trail Design	\$5,000.00	\$8,000.00	Kerang	\$5,000.00
CS017-CSAug20	Murrabit Recreation Reserve Committee of Management	Murrabit Recreation Reserve Table Upgrade Project	\$5,000.00	\$7,920.00	Murrabit & District	\$5,000.00
CS020-CSAug20	Koondrook Swimming Pool Inc.	New Ride On Mower	\$5,000.00	\$7,500.00	Koondrook	\$5,000.00
CS021-CSAug20	Cohuna Neighbourhood House Inc.	Stage Two: All-Abilities Community Garden	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	Cohuna	\$5,000.00
CS025-CSAug20	Lalbert Golf Club Incorporated	Lalbert community tractor upgrade	\$5,000.00	\$8,000.00	Lalbert	\$5,000.00
CS027-CSAug20	Kerang Amateur Swimming and Lifesaving Club	Kerang Swim Club Website	\$1,000.00	\$1,540.00	Kerang	\$1,000.00
CS028-CSAug20	Lake Charm Landcare Group	Pause at Charm	\$4,800.00	\$7,081.30	Lakes District	\$4,800.00
CS030-CSAug20	Cohuna Kangas Football & Netball Club Inc.	Cohuna Recreation Reserve Multi Purpose Complex	\$4,920.00	\$4,920.00	Cohuna	\$4,920.00

Council Meeting Agenda

Application ID	Applicant organisation name	Project Title	Total Amount Requested	Total Project Cost	Community	Recommended for Funding
Event007-E-Aug20	Cohuna and District Progress Association Inc	COVID 19 Equipment	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00	Cohuna	\$3,598.00
CS002-CSAug20	Kerang Group of Legacy	Legacy Widows \$50 Food Voucher/ Bathroom Pack	\$4,000.00	\$4,885.90	Kerang	\$2,000.00
					TOTAL	\$70,000.00

8 URGENT ITEMS**9 NOTICES OF MOTION**

Nil

10 DELEGATES REPORTS**10.1 DELEGATES REPORTS****Author:** Mel Scott, Executive Assistant - Chief Executive Office**Authoriser:** Tom O'Reilly, CEO**Attachments:** Nil**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Council has memberships with peak Local Government associations, local and regional forums along with statutory committees. Some memberships require that a Councillor be appointed to act as a delegate to formally represent Council; typically in a voting capacity. This Agenda item provides an opportunity for Council appointed delegates to present a verbal update on any pertinent matters arising from Council's membership on the following associations.

Association	Appointed Council Delegate
Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance	Cr Brian Gibson
Loddon Campaspe Group of Councils	Mayor
Loddon Mallee Waste and Resource Recovery Group (LMWRRG)	Cr Lorraine Learmonth
Municipal Association of Victoria	Cr Brian Gibson
Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)	Cr Brian Gibson
Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMPC)	Cr Steve Tasker
Murray River Group of Councils (MRGC)	Mayor

NB: * Audit Committee - no delegate report is required as the Audit Committee formally reports back separately to Council in accord with the Audit Committee Charter.

81 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Nil